# SELF-ASSESSMENT POLICY AND PERSPECTIVES FOR LEARNING AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION IN POSTGRADUATION PROGRAMS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN BRAZILIAN NORTHEAST REGION

## POLÍTICA DE AUTOAVALIAÇÃO, APRENDIZAGEM E INOVAÇÃO ORGANIZACIONAL NOS PROGRAMAS DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM ADMINISTRAÇÃO DO NORDESTE BRASILEIRO

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to investigate how the Self-Assessment Policy is being implemented and the perspectives for Learning and Organizational Innovation in Postgraduation Programs *stricto sensu* in Business Administration of public Higher Education Institutions (IES – Instituições de Ensino Superior) in Brazilian Northeast Region. Methodologically, a multi-case study was conducted with four Postgraduation Programs; evidence was produced from interviews and documentary research and treated through Content Analysis. The conclusion is Self-Assessment can be translated into an Organizational Learning process, in which the analysis of the knowledge produced can lead to changes and innovations in the Programs. Elements confirming the perspective of learning, based on facilitating aspects, arranged in four dimensions (Experimentation, Interaction with the external environment, Dialogue, and Participatory decision-making) were identified. There was also an assertive perception regarding the perspectives for Organizational Innovation, highlighting, among other aspects, changes in the training process, approximation to other sectors of civil society, and changes in the management model. The results can help discussions about Self-Assessment in the postgraduation scenario and contribute to insights understanding learning and innovation in Postgraduation Programs beyond isomorphic aspects.

**Keyword:** Self-assessment. Organizational Innovation. Postgraduation Evaluation System. Organizational Learning. Public Organizations.

## RESUMO

O objetivo desta pesquisa é investigar como está sendo implantada a Política de Autoavaliação e quais as perspectivas para Aprendizagem e Inovação Organizacional nos Programas de Pós-Graduação (PPG) *stricto sensu* em administração das Instituições de Ensino Superior (IES) públicas do Nordeste brasileiro. Metodologicamente, realizou-se um estudo de múltiplos casos junto à quatro PPGs, cujas evidências foram produzidas a partir de entrevistas e pesquisa documental e tratadas por meio da Análise de Conteúdo. Por meio dos resultados, concluiu-se que a Autoavaliação pode ser traduzida em um processo de Aprendizagem Organizacional, onde a análise acerca do conhecimento produzido pode conduzir mudanças e inovações nos Programas. Identificaram-se elementos que confirmam a perspectiva quanto à aprendizagem, assentados em aspectos facilitadores, dispostos em quatro dimensões (Experimentação, Interação com o ambiente externo, Diálogo e Tomada de decisão participativa), segundo o modelo teórico adotado. Constatou-se, também, uma percepção assertiva quanto às perspectivas para a Inovação Organizacional, destacando, entre outros aspectos, mudanças no processo formativo, aproximação de outros setores da sociedade civil e mudanças no modelo de gestão. Estes resultados podem auxiliar as discussões acerca da Autoavaliação no cenário da pós-graduação e contribuir com *insights* importantes acerca do entendimento sobre aprendizagem e inovação em PPGs para além dos aspectos isomórficos.

**Palavra-Chave:** Autoavaliação. Inovação Organizacional. Sistema de Avaliação da Pós-Graduação. Aprendizagem Organizacional. Organizações Públicas.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Brazilian Postgraduation *stricto sensu* Evaluation System was implemented in 1976 by the Ministry of Education and Culture at the time, giving to Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel, CAPES) the tasks of conducting and systematic monitoring of Postgraduation Programs (PPG) (CAPES, 2010; Morosini, 2009; Ferreira, Ferenc, & Wassem, 2018). The significant role in legitimizing this level of education is recognized, according to the qualified expansion of Sistema Nacional de Pós-Graduação (Postgraduation National System, SNPG), through the maintenance and elevation of the quality standards of professional training and scientific, technical, and technological production, essential to the socioeconomic and cultural development of the country (CAPES, 2010; Patrus, Shigaki, & Dantas, 2018; Barata, 2019).

After just over four decades of existence, Sistema de Avaliação da Pós-Graduação – Postgraduation Evaluation System – (PG) has new transformations in line with the policies of Plano Nacional de Pós-Graduação (National Postgraduation Plan – PNPG, 2011-2020), indicating the continuous improvement of the evaluation process, despite the inconsistencies, distortions, and criticisms, adapting to contextual needs (CAPES, 2010; Barata, 2019). The different criticisms about the external evaluation boosted the reflection, within CAPES, about the need of new models and practices aligned with a more active participation of the academic community, in order to consider the more direct involvement of the evaluated in the external evaluation process, in this case, through **Self-Assessment** (Leite et al., 2020).

From 2018, Self-Assessment began to make up an item evaluated in the item "Program" of the new Evaluation Form (CAPES, 2019c, 2019e). For Leite et al. (2020, p. 340), this change is essential, since "[...] evaluation is a political act interfering in life/implementation of the evaluated as people, processes, courses, institutions, programs, or public policies." In this sense, the insertion of Self-Assessment reinforces the concept of guaranteeing the foundations of autonomy and democratic practices through evaluation, presuming the search for the defence of quality manifested in the differences between Programs (Leite, 2006; Leite et al., 2020), capable of leading them to reflective behaviour.

The reflection proposed, in fact, is the change has significant implications in the management and institutional policies of the Postgraduation Programs, as well as in the learning processes and strategic orientation for the change, because the practice is based on the conception of an internal reflection self-managed and continuous process, actively

involving different organizational actors (CAPES, 2019f). Therefore, understanding the rebates is essential to deepen the debate recommending advances in Postgraduation National System.

The objective of Self-Assessment is to create a training and **learning** process to enable reflection, based on the results achieved, as a central aspect in the correction of trajectories and projections about organizational improvement (CAPES, 2019c; Leite et al., 2020). For Leite et al. (2020), the collective will project Self-Assessment as a **mechanism of change and innovation** depending on the vocation of each Program. In this area, it is understood that learning is connected to the control and strategic planning of the creation, capture, and internalization of organizational knowledge (Basten & Haamann, 2018), and the development of organizational insights (Patky, 2020). They influence the organization's ability to assimilate new ideas, strengthen creativity, and aptitude for the recognition of new opportunities (Padilha et al., 2016). Thus, "[...] organizational learning allows the development, acquisition, transformation, and exploration of new knowledge, enabling organizational innovation" (Gonçalves & Machado, 2017, p. 428).

Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate how the Self-Assessment Policy is being implemented and the perspectives for Learning and Organizational Innovation in Postgraduation Programs *stricto sensu* in Business Administration of public Higher Education Institutions (Instituições de Ensino Superior – IES) in Brazilian Northeast Region. This is introductory research[1], involving a study with four Programs, considering the perception of representatives of CAPES Self-Assessment Working Group (WG) and coordinators and representatives of Self-Assessment and/or Strategic Planning Committees of these Postgraduation Programs.

To consider the discussion, in addition to this introduction, some sections were organized: 2. Conceptual Domain; 3. Methodological Domain; 4. Analysis and Discussion of Results; 5. Final Considerations; and References.

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[1] The requirement of Self-Assessment in Brazilian Postgraduation scenario is recent and "[...] as much as it is a Form instituted, it will not take place overnight" (Leite et al., 2020, p. 350). Therefore, the changes are in the process of being institutionalized. Regarding the relationship of themes, a plausible association was found based on the literature.

## 2 CONCEPTUAL DOMAIN

### 2.1 REGULATION AND SELF-ASSESSMENT POLICY AT BRAZILIAN POSTGRADUATION

Institutional Evaluation is understood as an "[...] evaluation project that allows a balance of the direction of the institution in search of quality (mission and functions)". It is used, in particular, for the evaluation of public policies of institutions, such as those of the educational sector (Leite, 2006, p. 465). The origins of the institutional evaluation are from the 1990s, from the Programa de Avaliação Institucional das Universidades Brasileiras (Institutional Evaluation Program of Brazilian Universities – PAIUB) (Falleiros, Pimenta, & Valadão Júnior, 2016; Griboski, Peixoto, & Hora, 2018) that had as a target "[...] to build a collective, flexible, transparent, consistent, and mainly reliable evaluation process" within the IES, based on qualitative evaluation and emphasis on self-assessment (Griboski, Peixoto, & Hora, 2018, p. 179). This was subsequently consolidated with the creation of the Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Superior (National System of Evaluation of Higher Education – SINAES), by Law # 10,861/2004, consisting of three fronts: Institutional Evaluation; Self-Assessment; and External Assessment (Lehfeld et al., 2010; Griboski, Peixoto, & Hora, 2018).

At the postgraduation level, although the evaluation trajectory is extensive and consolidated, there is a continuous questioning (Leite et al., 2020), since, in addition to other contradictions, historically, the evaluation process of the Brazilian Postgraduation has summative character and not a training nature, ranking the Programs in line with the distribution of public resources to promote research (Patrus, Shigaki, & Dantas, 2018; Maldonado & Bitencourt, 2019). More recently, CAPES (2019f) recognized, although external evaluation guarantees compliance with basic standards, it is not formative. To overcome this conception, based on primarily quantitative indicators, Maldonado and Bitencourt (2019, p. 431) highlight the need to build paths that enable an evaluation "[...] less classificatory and excluding and more formative and inclusive", such as the "[...] autonomous, formative, and broad participation process of the academic community at all educational levels" (Leite et al., 2020, p. 339).

Thus, from the maturing of the evaluation process, CAPES (2019f) certified the need to broaden the focus, seeing in the process of Self-assessment, already employed in international practices, a promising experience in this direction, seeking to ensure the "[...]

involvement of the evaluated programs, in addition to the minimum standards ensured by the external evaluation" (CAPES, 2019f, p. 05).

The Postgraduation Programs are then encouraged to systematically implement their Self-Assessment Policies, comprising processes of self-analysis, planned, and self-managed by the academic community, involving teachers, students, graduates, technical-administrative team, and other organizational actors (CAPES, 2019f). The first purpose is to be a formative, reflective, and learning process, assisting in the decisions of organizational improvements (CAPES, 2019f; Leite et al., 2020). Therefore, it is possible "[...] to constitute a process in which evaluator and evaluated seek a qualitative change" (Andriola & Souza, 2010, p. 47).

## 2.2 SELF-ASSESSMENT, LEARNING, AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION: NECESSARY ARTICULATIONS

Organizational learning patterns begin in interactions between individuals, resulting in socially constructed knowledge (Antonello & Godoy, 2010; Abel, 2015), important for organizational adaptations (Olejarski, Potter, & Morrison, 2019), and it is incorporated at the organizational level through elements such as culture, structure, processes, and procedures (Picoli & Takahashi, 2016; Basten & Haamann, 2018; Cuffa & Steil, 2019). Thus, it is assumed that "[...] organizational learning is the creation and application of new knowledge in political processes and innovation in the implementation of public policies" (Cuffa & Steil, 2019, p. 113).

Organizational Innovation, in turn, can be translated into changes in organizational structures, processes and administrative systems, and management practices (Damanpour, 2014), focusing the structural and managerial aspects of the organization, as well as the processes of learning and adaptation to environmental changes (Lam, 2005). The conception is connected to the effective implementation from the creation or adoption of a new notion or behaviour for a given organization (Alharbi et al., 2019).

In this perspective, studies approach innovation as a product of the learning process, individual or collective, or the ability of the organization to learn (Chiva, Alegre, & Lapiedra, 2007; Alegre & Chiva, 2008). To this end, there is a set of skills and resources at the organizational level facilitating learning called Organizational Learning Capacity (Alegre & Chiva, 2008).

To apprehend the construct Organizational Learning, the model proposed by Chiva, Alegre, and Lapiedra (2007), composed of five dimensions, according to Chart 1, was followed.

**Table 1** Conceptual Model of Organizational Learning Capacity

| Dimensions | Description |
|---|---|
| Experimentation | Encouraging new ideas/suggestions within organizations, involving the experimentation of these ideas, creativity, and the search for innovative solutions, subsidized by the use of different methods and procedures, and enabling changes in work processes. |
| Tendency to risk | "[...] tolerance of ambiguity, uncertainty, and errors" (p. 227), in other words, the importance of recognizing and assuming influential errors in the ability to learn is emphasized. |
| Interaction with external environment | It is associated with relationships with the environment, where the organization does not have direct control, but suffers influences, involving the relationship and exchange of motivation with different actors of the environment. |
| Dialogue | It is related to the construction of a common understanding and collective meanings, considering organizational communication, collective investigation, and everyday experiences. |
| Participatory decision-making | It refers to the level of influence employees have in decision-making processes, reflecting greater involvement, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and quality in results. |

Source: Prepared by the authors based in Chiva, Alegre, and Lapiedra (2007).

In recent literature, research has shown ways to study innovation in Postgraduation Programs *stricto sensu* in Brazil, demonstrating possibilities that deal with the limitations for innovation given the scenario of coercive isomorphism through CAPES Evaluation guidelines (Andrade et al., 2018); and, on the other hand, the conception that the role of innovation should permeate the entire organizational structure of Postgraduation Programs (Pereira, Vieira, & Damião, 2018), in addition to contributing to explain the score obtained by the Programs in the external evaluation process (Comes, Cavalcante, & Toda, 2019).

This being said, to establish the necessary articulations, Self-Assessment is assumed in this research as an instrument for the construction of knowledge about and for the Program (CAPES, 2019f), especially to help in promoting improvements about the institutional objectives (Andriola & Souza, 2010; Leite et al., 2020)[2]; and, on the other hand, the conception that learning and innovation result from the accumulation of knowledge (Lam, 2005; Alegre & Chiva, 2008; Alves, Galina, & Dobelin, 2018).

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[2] The final report of CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group (2019f), for example, provides references (Watson & Maddison, 2005), considering Self-Assessment as an Organizational Learning process, comprising the cycles of Self-Assessment (planning, data, and quality) and the uses (decision making and building institutional reputation).

Thus, in an attempt to establish a theoretical model guiding the research, the conceptual model of Chiva, Alegre and Lapiedra (2007) is resumed, making the necessary articulations with Organizational Innovation and the Self-Assessment Policy (Figure 1).

**Figure 1** Theoretical model of research
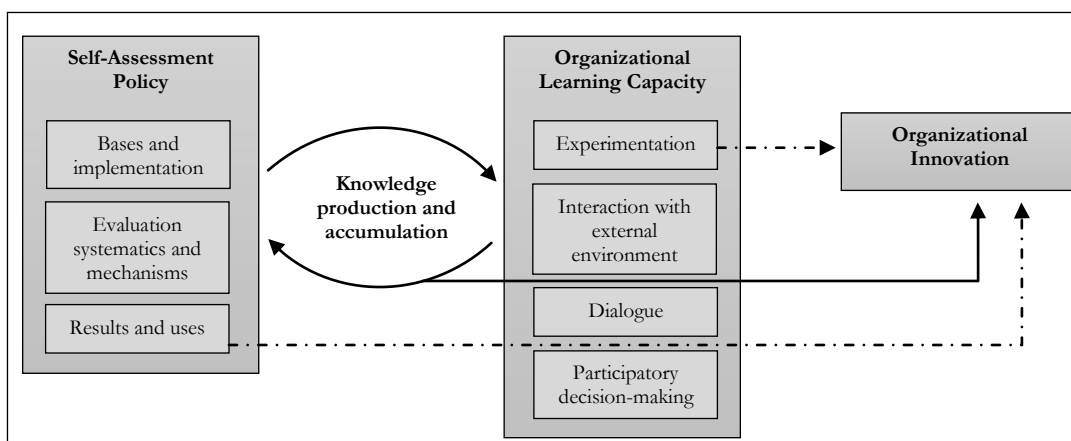


Source: Prepared by the authors based on the literature (2021).

The processes resulting from Self-Assessment are articulated to Organizational Learning processes enabling the construction and accumulation of knowledge about the Postgraduation Program, which can generate Organizational Innovation directly, from this relationship, or indirectly, by two other routes. In this research, the dimension "Propensity to risk" was disregarded, considering the type and nature of the organizations studied.

## 3 METHODOLOGICAL DOMAIN

To investigate how the Self-Assessment Policy is being implemented and the perspectives for Learning and Organizational Innovation in Postgraduation Programs *stricto sensu* in Business Administration in Higher Education Institutions in Brazilian Northeast Region, the interpretive paradigm was assumed. The knowledge is produced from the interpretation of individuals' subjective meanings in a given natural context (Burrell & Morgan, 1979), associated with a critically reflective perspective (Pozzebon & Petrini, 2013). Therefore, it is qualitative research (Creswell, 2010) with descriptive and interpretative purpose.

To situate the research scenario, a mapping was carried out identifying, in the Northeast Region, specifically in Business Administration subarea[3], 16 academic Postgraduation Programs responsible for 16 masters and 8 doctoral courses: eight have classification 4; five have classification 3; two have classification A; and one has classification 5. Eleven Postgraduation Programs are in federal public institutions, one in a state public institution and four in private institutions. This reflects the representativeness of academics Postgraduation Programs *stricto sensu* in Business Administration in public Higher Education Institutions in about 75% in Brazilian Northeast region[4].

Regarding the research strategy, a multiple case study was made, looking at four cases to learn the investigated phenomenon (Stake, 2005). The cases were selected using three predefined criteria: 1) belonging to public Higher Education Institution, since most of the Postgraduation Programs *stricto sensu* are located in public institutions and lead the Brazilian scientific production (Bertero, 2009), and 12 Programs were identified; 2) have undergone a complete cycle of External Evaluation, because it is assumed that this experience is relevant regarding the maturity and legitimacy of Postgraduation Programs in the Postgraduation National System (CAPES, 2017; 2019e), reducing the number to 8 Programs; and 3) availability of research participants. Among the coordinators of the 8 Postgraduation Programs contacted, only 5 gave positive feedback. Due to the absence of signature in the Free and Informed Consent Form (Termo de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido – TCLE) of one in time and respecting ethical procedures[5], the case was excluded, resulting in a *corpus* consisting of 4 Programs.

Sources of evidence included online interviews through the tool Google Meet with semi-structured script with coordinators and representatives of the Self-Assessment and/or Strategic Planning Committees of each Postgraduation Program studied, as well as representatives of CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group/GT, considering the involvement of these actors in the orientations about the Self-Assessment Policy. In addition, documentary research was carried out, based on the reports sent to Coleta CAPES 2019 and 2020 by the Programs and made available in Plataforma Sucupira, emphasizing the latter. Therefore, there

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[3] Courses of the sub-areas of Public and Companies Administration are considered.
[4] Available in: https://sucupira.capes.gov.br/sucupira/public/consultas/coleta/programa/listaPrograma.jsf. Accessed: 19 Jun 2020.
[5] Research project approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa – CEP), according to the Certificate of Presentation for Ethical Appreciation (Certificado de Apresentação para Apreciação Ética – CAAE) # 40448520.3.0000.5546, ensuring the protection of research participants.

are fundamentals in multiple perceptions and interpretations to make the meanings more evident (Stake, 2005).

To ensure anonymity, codes were assigned to Postgraduation Programs, interviewees, and documents, according to Chart 2.

**Table 2** Cases selected for investigation and sources of evidence

| Self-Assessment Programs and Work Groups/CAPES | | | | Interviewed | | Documents |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Code** | **Basic area** | **Classification** | | **Code** | **Position** | **Code** |
| | | **ME** | **DO** | | | |
| Alfa PGP | Business Administration | 4 | 4 | Interviewee C | Vice coordinator | Sucupira Report Alfa PGP |
| | | | | Interviewee D | Member of the Strategic Planning Committee | |
| Beta PGP | Public administration | 5 | 5 | Interviewee E | Coordinator | Sucupira Report Beta PGP |
| Gama PGP | Business Administration | 3 | - | Interviewee F | Coordinator | Sucupira Report Gama PGP |
| | | | | Interviewee G | Chairman of the Self-Assessment Commission | |
| Delta PGP | Business Administration | 3 | - | Interviewee H | Coordinator | Sucupira Report Delta PGP |
| | | | | Interviewee I | Chairman of the Self-Assessment Commission | |
| Self-Assessment Work Group (CAPES) | | - | - | Interviewee A | Work Group Coordinator | - |
| | | - | - | Interviewee B | Work Group Member | - |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2021).

The data were treated based on the Content Analysis technique; they were categorized, ordered, summarized, and analysed according to the three phases diagrammatized by Bardin (2016), culminating in a systematic analysis. In the pre-analysis phase, the interviews were transcribed, and documents were collected in the Plataforma Sucupira, and, among other actions, the analytical categories were defined (Chart 3).

**Table 3** Categories and elements of research analysis

| Construct | Analytical Categories | Literature |
|---|---|---|
| Self-Assessment Policy | Fundamentals and implementation of Self-Assessment | Leite (2006); Andriola and Souza (2010); Lehfeld et al. (2010); Griboski, Peixoto, and Hora (2018); Patrus, Shigaki, and Dantas (2018); Maldonado and Bitencourt (2019); CAPES (2019f); Leite et al. (2020). |
| | Systematics and Self-Assessment Mechanisms | |
| | Results and Uses of Self-Assessment | |
| Organizational Learning and Innovation | Experimentation | Chiva, Alegre, and Lapiedra (2007); Alegre and Chiva (2008); Antonello and Godoy (2010); Abel (2015); Picoli and Takahashi (2016); Basten and Haamann (2018); Cuffa and Steil (2019). |
| | Interaction with the external environment | |
| | Dialogue | |
| | Participatory decision-making | |
| | Perspectives for Organizational Innovation | Lam (2005); Damanpour (2014); Alves; Galina and Dobelin (2018); Andrade et al. (2018); Pereira, Vieira, and Damião (2018); Come, Cavalcante, and Toda (2019); Alharbi et al. (2019). |

Source: Prepared by the authors (2021).

Then, the material was exploited, assigning the codes to the information identified through the analytical categories. Finally, the results were treated through inference and interpretation, transforming the results obtained into information endorsed with significance and validity through a category analysis (Bardin, 2016). Thus, a comparative analysis of the cases was performed (cross-case analysis).

## 4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### 4.1 SELF-ASSESSMENT POLICY IN THE PROGRAMS STUDIED

To describe the implementation of the Self-Assessment Policy, aspects related to three analytical categories were considered. Regarding to **Fundamentals and implementation of Self-Assessment**, conception, planning and structure, objectives, articulation to Strategic Planning, alignment to the Comissão Própria de Avaliação (Internal Evaluation Commission – CPA), support of the Vice President Office of Postgraduation Studies (PRPG), facilitators and hinderers were observed.

As for the conception, it was found the Postgraduation Programs investigated established concepts that found and guide Self-Assessment practices, in general, conceived as a process of continuous improvement. In addition, Beta Postgraduate Program was addressed to the training character, to favour the diversity of subjects and plurality of conceptions, as seen in Patrus, Shigaki, and Dantas (2018) and Maldonado and Bitencourt (2019); and Delta Postgraduate Program highlighted the learning element as the main objective of Self-Assessment, such as CAPES (2019f).

It is understood that these conceptions are articulated to the decision-making process, given the actions presuming the monitoring of the performance and quality of the Programs, through the analysis of organizational structures and processes, as well as external relations and the different impacts on society undertaken by the Postgraduation Programs. The apprehensions corroborate the perceptions of representatives of the CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group, Interviewees A and B, when they direct the internal evaluation process to identify problems and propose solutions, as well as the studies of Hortale and Moreira (2008), Andriola and Souza (2010), and Leite et al. (2020), on the construction of a knowledge supporting improvement decisions.

As far as planning and structure, excepting Delta Postgraduation Program, other Programs already had internal evaluation mechanisms, although little systematized, as illustrated in the excerpts of the interviews:

> [...] for us of the Program [...], effectively, the only change in our perspective is to have to structure some committees and delimit some resolutions, right?! As Self-Assessment resolution. But, in a way, we had already implemented Self-Assessment of the Program [...] (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation Program).
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> [...] in fact, we consider that we can not say we never did Self-Assessment, but it was not a structured process (Interviewed E – Beta Postgraduation Program).
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> [...] we already had some indicators [...], we had an evaluation, but it was not systematized evaluation. And then, with the demands, it got better in relation to this (Interviewee F – Gama Postgraduation Program).

It was observed CAPES regulatory changes reinforced practices already undertaken by some Programs, boosting the systematization and formalization, through the establishment of specific commissions. In particular, Delta Postgraduation Program later established a unified commission to address Strategic Planning and Self-Assessment following a resolution of University's Vice President Office of Postgraduation Studies (PRPG).

It is noteworthy Alfa, Beta, and Delta Postgraduation Programs used, in a strategic way, the knowledge produced internally to assist the development of the self-assessment process, and respectively: a thesis was used to structure a self-assessment instrument; know-how of the Teaching Learning and Evaluation area of the Program to think about ways of self-assessment was pursued; and a survey of information was carried out prior to the definition of the Self-Assessment Policy. In addition, Alfa, Gama, and Delta Postgraduation Programs institutionalized their policies through a resolution, normative instruction, and regulation, respectively.

Excepting Alfa Postgraduation Program, others made explicit in Sucupira reports the definition of the steps used for the effective implementation of the Policy, which are, to some extent, similar to the model suggested by CAPES (2019f).

About goals, Postgraduation Programs defined directions reflecting the stimulus to continuous reflection about institutional, strategic, and operational elements, and internal and/or external activities supporting the training process, the production of scientific knowledge, and the different ways of impact on society. Beta, Gama, and Delta

Postgraduation Programs have defined more specific objectives, offering a better view of what is intended to be achieved through Self-Assessment achieving, according to Leite et al. (2020), a qualifier relevant to the establishment of an organizational improvement schedule.

Regarding to the articulation of Self-Assessment to Strategic Planning, we observed postures aiming to enable this communication as being fundamental to the achievement of the objectives. The association was based on the perspective of using the results of Self-Assessment as a way to support the elaboration of Strategic Planning, as seen in Alfa, Gama, and Delta Postgraduation Programs, or as a mutual feedback relationship, in which planning is a condition *sine qua non* to internal evaluation, as expressed in the Beta Postgraduation Program. The following excerpts illustrate this relationship:

> [...] for us to be able to carry out our Strategic Planning, we had to do a Self-Assessment beyond that [...] that existing in the Program, which was a much more operational Self-Assessment (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

> [...] we have to have a well-structured planning for us to be able to evaluate what is being planned and made, etc. We need to make a diagnostic evaluation to plan. We consider planning and self-assessment are two instruments that should go together (Interviewee E - Beta Postgraduation Program).

> The self-assessment committee prepared the first report in November 2020 [...], it will serve to prepare the strategic planning for the next four-year period (2021-2024) (Gama Postgraduation Program Sucupira Report, 2020, p. 19).

> [...] Self-assessment, therefore, is very important, without it we cannot make a good Strategic Planning because exactly the whole basis of Strategic Planning is to make, initially, a reflection of who we are, where we go, what we want... (Interviewee I – Delta Postgraduation Program).

Interviewee B, representative of the CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group, corroborates it stating "[...] you can make a Strategic Planning and within it the evaluation, or you can make an evaluation and then assemble a Strategic Planning from the diagnosed data you have taken from the evaluation". Thus, the articulation is understood as fundamental, supported by the emphasis on the strategic orientation of the current CAPES Evaluation scenario (CAPES, 2019e; 2019f).

Referring to the alignment to Internal Evaluation Commission of the University, the Postgraduation Programs studied, in general, developed the Self-Assessment Policies in

accordance to the principles and guidelines of the Institutional Evaluation. It is noteworthy that, for Alfa Postgraduation Program, the "evaluation made by the student", as a component of the self-assessment process, began to make up the Institutional Self-Assessment Policy, as a shared action in the process conducted by the Internal Evaluation Commission. In addition, the search for specialized guidelines is emphasized, according to Interviewee F (Gama Internal Evaluation Commission), "[...] for a lack of experience too, one of the first things we did was to look for the Internal Evaluation Commission.". These efforts reflect compliance with the guidelines highlighted by CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group representatives and recognition of experiences already consolidated in Brazilian higher education (Lehfeld et al., 2010; Griboski, Peixoto, & Hora, 2018).

As for the Vice President Office of Postgraduation Studies support, systematic actions were identified through strategies for the promotion and structuring of self-evaluating processes in Postgraduation Programs, as an essential factor also for the alignment of the policy at the institutional level (CAPES, 2019f; Leite et al., 2020). A highlight is the provision of a software, which allowed, Alfa Postgraduation Program to carry out an internal evaluation accessing CAPES data; and, on the other hand, allowed Delta Postgraduation Program to access indicators and compare other Programs, simulating an evaluation. In the words of the interviewees:

> [...] the University developed a system called "Semente" and then, this system integrates CAPES and Sucupira. So, they imported information from Sucupira, I think from the years 2017, 2018, 2019. And the teachers, from the area documents or the area document proposals, they made an evaluation of the Program (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

> [Vice President Office of Postgraduation Studies] here also released a system, [...] I think it was Stela at the time. [...] there was a system that we accessed that could verify data from our Program comparing data from other Programs and what was the position we were in (Interviewee H – Delta Postgraduation Program).

The support also included meetings, discussions, and orientations, which allowed the suggestion of models and instruments of Self-Assessment for the Programs, as observed in the Postgraduation Programs investigated, in addition to contact with international experiences, such as in Alfa Postgraduation Program, in particular, in which representatives of the Vice President Office of Postgraduation Studies and Evaluation and Self-Assessment Commission

went to University of Ghent (Belgium) to learn about Higher Education Institutions international practices of evaluation.

Moreover, to implement the Self-Assessment Policy, <u>facilitators</u> were observed, among them: Vice President Office of Postgraduation Studies support as a common factor for all Postgraduation Programs; previous experience with Self-Assessment mechanisms in the case of Alpha, Beta, and Gama Postgraduation Programs; access to software, in the case of Alfa and Delta Postgraduation Programs; and the integration of the team and the collaboration of teachers, in the case of Gama Postgraduation Program. On the other hand, as <u>hindering</u> aspects it can be observed: the context of the pandemic as a common factor; the resistance or lack of availability of teachers about collaboration in the process, in the case of Alpha and Beta Postgraduation Programs; and the short time to implement Self-Assessment, as well as the lack of experience with self-evaluating practices, in the case of Gama and Delta Postgraduation Programs.

Regarding to **Systematics and Self-Assessment Mechanisms**, evaluated dimensions, tools, monitoring, and actors were observed. As for the <u>evaluated dimensions</u>, Beta and Delta Postgraduation Programs established the Self-Assessment of the Program through the analysis of indicators distributed in dimensions inspired by CAPES Evaluation Form, which considers aspects related to the "Program", "Training", and "Impacts" (CAPES, 2019), adding the dimension "Management" to capture the different activities of Postgraduation.

According to Beta Postgraduation Program Sucupira Report (2020, p. 34-35), this last dimension was emphasized "[...] in order to value this central aspect for the success of the policy – although considering this dimension as integrated, in a transversal way, to all the relevant aspects, with emphasis on the item 'Program'". Gama Postgraduation Program also focused on four dimensions; however, it brought together the Management elements in the scope of the Evaluation of institutional aspects of the course, in parallel to dimensions Evaluation of the teachers, students, and graduates of the Program. Alfa Postgraduation Program, on the other hand, defined two evaluation flows, current, and formalized, dealing with more common and substantial aspects, respectively. This reflects the articulation of the Self-Assessment Policies of the Postgraduation Programs to the external Evaluation Form, according to CAPES guidelines (2019f).

About <u>tools</u>, in general, questionnaires were adopted through Google Forms, in addition to surveys via Currículo Lattes, research to CAPES external evaluation reports, and

meetings. It is noteworthy, although Delta Postgraduation Program uses the conventional mechanisms mentioned above, Interviewee I emphasized the importance of expanding data production techniques. In her words,

> [...] I like much more what we do, in terms of qualitative information [...] because in quantitative, when we do the evaluation, the evaluation itself [...] I'll get there, more or less, the answers, right?! And then I can risk [...] to lose that "other", which we always put in a quantitative and that can be very important. So, I prefer people to talk, I still think we should do Self-assessment, for example, talking, doing interviews (Interviewee I – Delta Postgraduation Program).

With regard to the <u>monitoring</u>, the Postgraduation Programs planned actions aiming the effectiveness of the Self-Assessment Policy through specific or more comprehensive adjustments throughout the internal evaluation process (Alfa Postgraduation Program); Meta-Evaluation mechanisms (Beta Postgraduation Program); review of Self-Assessment activities and articulation with the results of the University's Self-Assessment (Gama Postgraduation Program); or definition of the reassessment and feedback stage of the self-assessment process (Delta Postgraduation Program).

Regarding to the <u>actors</u> involved in Self-Assessment, the presence of teachers, students, graduates, and collaborators (collaborating professors and/or public or outsourced workers) was observed as common to Postgraduation Programs studies. In addition, Gama Postgraduation Program brought the figure of managers and Delta Postgraduation Program highlighted the importance of former teachers, social segments, and different organizations. As the basic premise of Self-Assessment, the relevance of this broad involvement of the academic community (Hortale & Moreira, 2008; Griboski, Peixoto, & Hora, 2018; Leite et al., 2020), with active roles in all stages of the evaluation process (Leite & Pinho, 2017) was perceived.

With regard to **Results and Uses of Self-Assessment**, aspects about the mediums for the dissemination of results and the definition of uses were observed. With regard to the <u>dissemination of results</u>, the preparation of reports and presentations as seminars as the most common medium for sharing the results of the self-assessment process was identified. In addition, the preparation of technical and scientific articles was mentioned, as in the case of Beta Postgraduation Program; the use of digital social networks in the case of Gama Postgraduation Program; and the preparation of a four-year Self-Assessment report,

agglutinating the results of the internal evaluation of the entire evaluation interstice, as in the case of Delta Postgraduation Program.

As for the uses of results, perspectives related to the strategic alignment of the matrix of the Program in relation to institutional objectives were observed, comprising the restructuring of the focus by updating the Concentration Area and Lines of Research. In the case of Alfa Postgraduation Program, for example, depending on the change in the training model, there is the prospect of building a new resolution for the Program. Gama and Delta Postgraduation Programs are discussing the changes in the Lines of Research, and Delta, in the Concentration Area. Beta Postgraduation Program, on the other hand, made changes in both aspects.

Thus, it is reiterated that the reflection on the results of Self-Assessment should be central to the correction of trajectories and definition of future projects (CAPES, 2019f; Leite et al., 2020).

## 4.2 LEARNING AND ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION IN THE PROGRAMS STUDIED

There are different elements related to learning capacity, such as resources and skills, facilitating the Organizational Learning process (Chiva, Alegre & Lapiedra, 2007; Alegre & Chiva, 2008). To identify these elements in the Postgraduation Programs investigated, the orientation was the dimensions of the conceptual model of Chiva, Alegre and Lapiedra (2007) – Experimentation; Interaction with the external environment; Dialogue; and Participatory decision-making.

**Experimentation** it is associated, among other things, with behaviours to stimulate creativity, new ideas and suggestions, as well as the search for innovative solutions, which can be subsidized by the use of different methods and procedures promoting changes in the organization (Chiva, Alegre, & Lapiedra, 2007). In this dimension, different elements in the Postgraduation Programs stood out, such as the need to consolidate a Culture of Self-Assessment, as a structuring aspect:

> Some Programs that have already been undertaking some actions, for sure, see this as a natural process of change [...], [...] of institutionalization and improvement of a process, but, on the other hand, there are Programs that are still in the process of [...] development of a Culture of Self-Assessment (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

> The Collegiate has also been configured as an essential space for the development of a culture conducive to the systematics of Self-Assessment (Beta Postgraduation Program Sucupira Report, 2020, p. 33).
>
> [...] it is not a problem of regulation, of setting up a commission [...]. For me, it is a more cultural problem, it is a problem of institutionalization of a Culture of Evaluation, of Self-Assessment (Interviewee I – Delta Postgraduation Program).

In addition, perhaps justified by the level of institutional maturity, considering the longevity and level of education, Alfa and Beta Postgraduation Programs expressed elements about the existing Self-Assessment mechanisms in the Programmes, use of internal knowledge, and changes in the perspectives of meaning as fundamental to expand the effective construction of internal evaluation, through reflection of new perspectives and postures leading to the proposition of innovative ideas. Nevertheless, the use of software, as in the case of Alfa and Delta Postgraduation Programs, illustrates a work procedure that enables the obtaining of important information for the learning process.

In this scenario, the articulation between different actions and their effects may culminate in the development of organizational knowledge and insights (Patky, 2020), as well as the incorporation of this new knowledge at the organizational level through culture, structure, processes, and procedures (Picoli & Takahashi, 2016; Basten & Haamann, 2018; Cuffa & Steil, 2019).

The **Interaction with the external environment** expresses aspects related to the relationship of the organization with the environment, in which it does not have control over the variations, but if it suffers the influences inherent to this environment (Chiva, Alegre, & Lapiedra, 2007). In this dimension, the main facilitating elements of Organizational Learning, common to Postgraduation Programs, are the issues of regulation, arising from the institutional changes in the CAPES Evaluation System, and the relationship with Vice President Office of Postgraduation Studies and Postgraduates. In addition, except Delta Postgraduation Program, other Programs presented elements contributing to the relevance of the relationship with other Programs. As for the contact with the community concerned, only Beta Postgraduation Program did not demonstrate this articulation.

The literature emphasizes these interactions with different actors of the environment, organizations, or individuals as fundamental for an organization that learn, because the exchange of stimuli influences organizational changes (Chiva, Alegre, & Lapiedra, 2007; Alegre & Chiva, 2008) and adaptation process (Cuffa & Steil, 2019).

In this context, two other aspects deserve to be highlighted. First, the question of compliance with transformations in the world of work, as observed in Alfa Postgraduation Program, there is a tendency to change the profile of Postgraduation Program admissions; and, connected to this, the need of adaptation, by the Programs, aiming the training scope expansion to incorporate practical competencies aimed at the market. "We believe the absorption condition of our graduates, [...] at least from the point of view of teaching and research has been compromised, it has been increasingly limited" (Interviewee C – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

And, concerning the risk of endogeny, highlight to the case of Delta Postgraduation Program, in which the need to open organizations for the expansion and consolidation of external relations, important for stimulating knowledge, was alerted, according to the speech of Interviewee I:

> [...] I think organizations usually tend to endogeny. Endogeny is that, we close in ourselves [...]. And then, even the information itself, the knowledge, everything we... Right?! It is almost like a bubble, [...] this is the image.

**Dialogue** reflects aspects supporting the construction of a shared knowledge, based on organizational communication, collective investigation, and the exchange of daily experiences (Chiva, Alegre, & Lapiedra, 2007). Among the different elements identified, the most common, given the formal rule, are the collegiate meetings, as a central internal communication space, as well as the involvement and engagement of faculty and students, and interactions and sharing of activities among teachers. In addition, the availability and sharing of information in different ways, in all cases studied, and the promotion of talking groups, in Delta Postgraduation Program, in particular.

Literature shows organizational learning patterns are related to the mechanisms of interactivity among individuals for the construction of new knowledge (Picoli & Takahashi, 2016; Basten & Haamann, 2018; Cuffa & Steil, 2019). Considering the process in a dynamic and multilevel way, it is necessary to mediate the interdependence of individual and collective experiences to develop an organizational learning (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999).

Another aspect that deserves to be highlighted is the relations of power and conflicts generated in the organizational environment. It has significant influence on the sharing of experiences and organizational communication, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

> [...] in this context, there are power relations, there are some conflicts that arise, but this is also part of this process. We need to understand that dialogue, divergence, as long as it is carried out with a lot of education, with great care, we need to respect the differences. Throughout the Postgraduation Program this happens, but the final result materializes at the organizational level, when we institutionalize these processes. So, I can experience and notice, clearly, this learning process taking place within the Program (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

The promotion of spaces of dialogue and collaborative reflections contributes to the development of a shared understanding in the investigated programs, which rescues the conception that organizational learning symbolizes knowledge socially constructed by organizational actors (Antonello & Godoy, 2010; Abel, 2015), and should express attributes such as communicability, consensuality, and integrality (Abel, 2015).

Finally, in **Participatory decision-making**, aspects reflecting the level of influence of individuals in decision-making processes, through involvement, organizational commitment, and quality of results (Chiva, Alegre, & Lapiedra, 2007) are related. Formal aspects were observed in the Programmes, because, given the nature of a Postgraduation Program, decisions are conducted in collegiate meetings and through commissions for specific purposes, having a greater or lesser participation of the different organizational actors, depending on the organization.

Noteworthy is the broad involvement of teachers, students, and employees in decisions conducted in Alpha and Beta Postgraduation Programs, in addition to the shared management, particularly in the latter, with cooperation between the three coordinations of the Postgraduation Centre in which the Program is inserted. In the words of the Interviewee E, "[...] our management is very shared [...]. We believe in shared management, participatory management.".

In the case of Delta Postgraduation Program, decisions are more centralized in the faculty and conducted in a bureaucratic manner, even if the importance of the involvement of the other actors is recognized. According to Interviewee H, "[...] it can be said that even in the committee there is no student. I think even [...] it is a tip, maybe look at the regiment to check if it could have some student. I don't know, particularly, in committee.". In consensus, the representative of CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group emphasized the relevance of the role of students and postgraduates in the measurement of the quality of the Programs, "[...] the student is very important in this process, and we tend not to value the student. The student is

even afraid of being valued because the student does not want to criticize the Program"
(Interviewee A).

Finally, another influential aspect in decision-making processes concerns the profile,
skills, and individual trajectories of teachers, as expressed by Interviewee C (Alfa
Postgraduation Program), since the type of knowledge produced tends to collaborate more
qualifiedly for the learning of the Program. This presumes the need to focus on mechanisms
of collective involvement for construction and socialization of knowledge, according to
Antonello and Godoy (2010) and Abel (2015).

In order to identify the **perspectives for Organizational Innovation** in the cases
studied, directions linked to management, comprising it "[...] as a strategy for the survival of
the Program, for the maintenance within the Postgraduation System at CAPES, for the
improvement of the positioning in the context" (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation
Program), as well as teaching and research was observed.

Some aspects deserve to be highlighted. The first of them refers to changes in the
formative process, as observed in the Alfa, Gama, and Delta Postgraduation Programs. The
reality stimulated the reflection of the Programs about the expansion of the formative scope,
as illustrated by the interviewees' statements:

> [...] it [the formation model] has a dimension of formation involving
> competence of theoretical knowledge, another one, methodological,
> epistemological knowledge, knowledge of research practice, knowledge of
> teaching practice, and knowledge of written production; [...]. And then we
> start thinking about another competency, a competence cantered on a
> guideline to the same practice. Thus, a more perspective aiming, who knows,
> to attract students with a more entrepreneurial profile, [...] that could also
> bring all the knowledge acquired within the Program to the world of
> organizations (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

> [...] there is a question related to the innovation of teaching, not that we will
> train people for the market, but it is, exactly, this interrelationship of the
> development base, of technological updating. [...] so, we are not a only
> academic master program and it is not professional (Interviewed G – Gama
> Postgraduation Program).

The second question is connected to this, there is a tendency, through the expansion of
the formative scope, to the rapprochement with other sectors of civil society, as also observed
in Alfa, Gama, and Delta Postgraduation Programs. In addition to the previous statements, the
following excerpt reflects this understanding:

I see it as a path of a differential, innovation, especially if it is closer to the society to create some specific improvement, that can really capture a specific demand and that can have this practical result of this demand of society, [...] it will be a trend in some innovative aspects (Interviewed H – Delta Postgraduation Program).

These perspectives corroborate the perception of the representative of CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group, when he/she states "[...] the Programs, for example, that will come to the conclusion 'no, I should not have a Program more applied to a specific situation of the community, of my region', they will have to change, and then it will be innovative" (Interviewee B). Likewise, they reflect that organizations are adaptive systems that make changes in their technical and/or social arrangements based on their internal aspirations, as well as external pressures (Damanpour, 2014).

In this direction, the context of Self-Assessment stimulated in Alfa and Delta Postgraduation Programs the reflection on the importance of establishing interaction practices with the external environment, capable of advocating the production of an essential knowledge to make changes in the organizational environment in the face of external influences (Damanpour, 2014; Olejarski, Potter, & Morrison, 2019; Cuffa & Steil, 2019). Going further, Interviewee I (Delta Postgraduation Program) brought the perspective on the promotion of open innovation mechanisms, as a method for the construction of knowledge from multiple visions and the definition of innovative solutions for the Program, emphasizing the ability to create and explore new fundamental knowledge for these practices (Alves, Galina, & Dobelin, 2018).

Furthermore, perspectives on changes in the management model of the Program, as in the case of Beta Postgraduation Program, in order to promote more collaborative management through the mandatory participation of teachers in management activities are highlighted. "[...] we believe this is a very innovative management way that we are proposing" (Interviewee E – Beta Postgraduation Program); beyond perspectives of use of digital social networks, as seen in Gama management, it was not a mechanism used by the Program, ensuring it the character of innovation.

Nevertheless, observing the context of CAPES transformations and the evidence produced, two aspects can positively or negatively influence the propensity of Postgraduation Programs to innovate were emphasized: paradigm shift of external evaluation; and regulation.

On the issue of paradigmatic change in evaluation, the role of the Programs in the external evaluation of CAPES was guided, because Self-Assessment opportunitizes self-

analysis by Postgraduation Programs from the construction of a continuous and systematic process according to institutional objectives, in addition to the results of the external evaluation. There seems to be progress, a character of autonomy, in this sense, in which programs and individuals are no longer only objects of external evaluation and start to figure actively, directly contributing to their process of analysis and development (Leite & Pinho, 2017; Leite et al., 2020).

This context may even signal an inversion of the focus of the external evaluation, in order to enable the evaluation of the Programs according to the scope of action and not through a "rule" predetermined by CAPES, allowing Postgraduation Programs focus on the qualified execution of their institutional objectives and not in actions based on external evaluation. It can be inferred from the following statements:

> I would say that, really, it is a very good opportunity because, by allowing the Program to perform the Self-Assessment and start to value it within the general evaluation of the Program, I think it allows each Program to verify its specialty [...]. So, it will value us as an institution, as something we do best [...] (Interviewee E – Beta Postgraduation Program).

> [...] it is a significant change that you change this axis, in saying: "look, as a postgraduation student, we do this and we can't meet these indicators that you say postgraduation needs to have quality in this way, taking into account our purpose and mission" [...]. So, this issue of the identity of the Programs is that I think CAPES will need to challenge itself, because what will evaluate whether the Program has quality can not be a standardization, [...] scope of action, action strategies, [...] this needs to be different (Interviewee C – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

Thus, "[...] there is already an innovation, there is already a paradigmatic change" (Interview B – CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group), and Self-Assessment emerges as a mechanism for improving the Evaluation System (Leite et al., 2020), assuming the tendency to a more formative evaluation (Patrus, Shigaki, & Dantas, 2018; Maldonado & Bitencourt, 2019). However, although these prospects of advances, it is necessary to reflect on the second question, on the regulatory logic of CAPES.

> [...] Self-assessment has a lot to do with CAPES regulation, since the regulation did not focus a lot. It did not require, in fact, any effort, [...] and I think [...] the Programs are reactive to the evaluation, because it is this evaluation that puts a Program at a level [...] of qualification, it provides more resources, more scholarships, greater visibility, a higher demand compared to those who are intending to do postgraduation studies. So, [...]

> the Programs react a lot to CAPES Evaluation System (Interviewed I – Delta Postgraduation Program).

Therefore, there is an alert to the risk of reproducing the regulatory logic that tends to drive the Programs through conditions of coercive isomorphism, which can hinder the innovation process in Postgraduation Programs, corroborating Andrade's study et al. (2018). In the words of Interviewee C (Alfa Postgraduation Program):

> [...] the impression I have is that there are many Programs that, despite all this discussion, serve a strictly biased and academicist view: "I need to do what CAPES is telling us to do, that's it. So, I go here, strictly, [...] play the game rule to ensure that I'm going to continue on my classification 4, my classification 5. I'm not going to think, exactly, on terms far beyond that.". Therefore, the possibility of innovation [...] reduces when the reasoning is like this.

For Andrade et al. (2018), few Programs innovate due to the process of coercive isomorphism in face of CAPES evaluation pressures. However, in this research, Postgraduation Programs demonstrated favourable perspectives for innovation, reinforcing studies that revealed the organizational climate addressed to innovation and creativity helps to explain the scores obtained in the external evaluation (Comes, Cavalcante, & Toda, 2019); and education and innovation must be integrated and permeate the entire structure of Postgraduation Programs (Pereira, Vieira, & Damião, 2018). Thus, according to CAPES Self-Assessment Work Group representative, Interviewee B,

> [...] Self-Assessment is a case. Those who know how to take advantage of it, will arrive at a much higher result than that requested by CAPES record, which [...] asks only how you acted [...]. And it is worth a few points. Now, it is worth the effort and change and innovation that it can bring into the Program. And that's what you expect!

Thus, it is understood as possible the reflection resulting from Self-Assessment is able to influence organizational changes under the domain of Organizational Innovation through the knowledge produced. In other words, "[...] this evaluation generates a sharing of knowledge when you use Self-Assessment as an instrument for change, as an instrument for innovation" (Interviewee D – Alfa Postgraduation Program).

## 5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The recent scenario of Brazilian Postgraduation manifests different paths of transformation, aiming at the improvement of Postgraduation National System. In recent years, CAPES has inserted Self-Assessment as an item evaluated in the context of external evaluation, understanding as necessary the qualitative focus, the formative character, and the expansion of the participation of the Programs in the evaluation process, generating significant reductions in managerial and political aspects of the Postgraduation Programs, as well as in strategic and learning processes.

In this context, in view of the objective proposed in this article, by stimulating the expansion of this reflective scope in the Programs, it was found, through the research findings, Self-Assessment can be seen under the focus of an Organizational Learning process, based on the production of knowledge about and for the Program, even having a strategic character. It was understood this accumulation of knowledge can lead to innovations through the analysis of results and decision-making focused on improvements. Moreover, it is important to remember the evidence demonstrated Self-Assessment can be an auspicious path regarding the strengthening and recognition of the particularities and identities of the Programs according to a vocation, if considered from the point of view of institutional autonomy.

Regarding the implementation of the Self-Assessment Policy in the Postgraduation Programs, it was observed the Programs followed, in general terms, the guidelines recommended by CAPES, presenting some similarities and differences in the leading of this process, either in a more or less systematized way, which also reflects the level of institutional maturity.

In view of these findings, it was identified the presence of elements to facilitate Organizational Learning, to confirm the understanding about the perspective that the learning process at the organizational level can be possible from Self-Assessment. Considering the evidence compared between the Programs, the conclusion was different characteristic elements, based on the dimensions of Chiva, Alegre, and Lapiedra model (2007), highlighting, for example, the need to consolidate a Culture of Self-Assessment as an element of the Experimentation dimension. There was also an assertive perception about the perspectives for Organizational Innovation in the Postgraduation Programs investigated, in which perspectives related to changes in the formative process were also observed, focusing

on practical competencies to enable the qualification of postgraduates to other sectors of civil society, bringing Postgraduation, market, and society as a common aspect to Alpha, Gama and Delta Postgraduation Programs.

Thus, in order to meet the general objective, it was concluded the knowledge generated from the reflections derived from Self-Assessment process can stimulate changes in the organizational environment under the domain of Organizational Innovation, since new knowledge, processes, and organizational practices can emerge from this learning. In other words, Self-Assessment reflects the production, sharing, and intensive use of knowledge when it is designed as a mechanism for change, innovation, and other strategic direction. While the insertion of Self-Assessment promotes such prospects for change, there is a long way to Postgraduation National System.

Considering that the discussions about the Self-Assessment Policy are recent, concrete experiences are still emerging, which even gives this research an introductory character, capable of conforming directions for future studies. Therefore, it is suggested to investigate the processes of Learning and Organizational Innovation from Self-Assessment from a longitudinal perspective, in addition to a quantitative and/or qualitative approach, from the perception of multiple actors, whether in public and/or private Higher Education Institutions.

In this direction, it can be seen the findings enable advances in relation to Self-Assessment, Learning and Organizational Innovation, demonstrating this research is not exhausted, but opens up new fields of research. Moreover, they provide a theoretical advance regarding this articulation and insertion in Postgraduation Programs, as well as a practical advance, by evidencing different elements can be applied in the management of the Programs, assisting the reflection on the implementation and execution of Self-Assessment from the experiences of other Postgraduation Programs.

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