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Capacidades institucionais que dotam a agência individual e coletiva para a mudança institucional (Revisitando Selznick)

Institutional capabilities that endow the individual and collective agency for institutional change (Revisiting Selznick)

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RESUMO

A corrente sociológica do neoinstitucionalismo organizacional incorporou diversas abordagens de análise para compreender as instituições, que apresentam perspectivas tanto macrossociológicas quanto microssociológicas. Na perpectiva macro, a ação dos atores sociais é definida pelas instituições e, na perspectiva miro, há uma ênfase na ação dos atores sociais na dinamica institucional. Esse estudo conduz uma revisão crítica da literatura do velho institucionalismo organizacional, focando o constructo capacidade institucional proposto por Selznick e, desenvolve uma analise comparativa entre essas capacidades e as identificadas no neoinstitucionalismo organizacional e suas derivações teóricas. A partir dessa análise é possível sintetizar uma alternativa para o estudo da mudança institucional, i.e., re-institucionalização, com base nas capacidades institucionais, as quais se configuram nos níveis individual e coletivo, e dotam o agência do ator social para a mudança institucional.

Palavras-Chave: Capacidades Institucionais; Agência Individual; Agência Coletiva; Mudança Institucional.

ABSTRACT

The sociological stream of organisational neoinstitutionalism incorporated diverse analytic approaches for understanding institutions that present both macro- and micro-sociological perspectives. In the macro perspective, the action of social actors is defined by the institutions; and, in the micro perspective, there is an emphasis on the action of the social actors in the institutional dynamic. This study conducts a critical review of the literature on the old organisational institutionalism, focusing on the construct of institutional capability proposed by Selznick, and develops a comparative analysis between these capabilities and those of organisational neoinstitutionalism, as well as approaches derived from it. From this analysis is possible to synthesise an alternative for studying institutional change (i.e., re-institutionalisation) based upon institutional organisational capabilities, which are configured at the individual and collective levels, and endow the social-actor agency for institutional change.

Key-words: Institutional Capabilities; Individual Agency; Collective Agency; Institutional Change.



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1 INTRODUÇÃO

Two streams are predominant in institutional theory: economic and sociological. In the former, the institutions play a key role in the economic development of countries and regions (NORTH, 2016; 2018), whereas in the latter the institutions are responsible by establishing the conduct (i.e., action) of the social actors (BERGER; LUCKMANN, 2017). The theoretical framework for present study centres on the sociological stream, and the theory is reviewed, starting with the work of Philip Selznick (1953; 1996; 2011; 2014) and the social construction of the reality by Berger and Luckmann (2017), passing through organisational institutionalism (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991), institutional logics (FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017; PACHE; THORN-TON, 2020), institutional entrepreneurs (HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017) and ending with institutional work (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019).

In all those analytical approaches to sociological institutionalism, the focus of attention is on the actor and social agent in an institutional dynamic. According to Alexander (1992) the social actor performs an action in accordance with the social structure, whereas the social agent performs an action through the freedom he or she holds. The constructs actor and social agent reflect a dichotomy present in social theories, and have their roots in various sociological approaches, presenting two dominant perspectives – objectivism and subjectivism – for understanding social phenomena (PARKER, 2000).

The sociological approach appeared in the 1940s, with Philip Selznick being one of its initial proponents, and it later became better known as old organisational institutionalism. According to this approach, the institution is defined as a social system constituted by objectives and procedures, which tend to have values included in their practices for influencing behaviour (SELZNICK, 1953, 2011). In other terms, institutions limit action both human and organisational.

After 20 years, neoinstitutionalism emerged in the works of Berger and Luckmann (2017). From this perspective, institutions are understood as sets of beliefs, habits and values coming from a social construction. This socially constructed reality is dependent on social actors belonging to a social group; that belonging comes from social actors who internalise the meaning systems of their respective contexts through social interaction and, consequently, determine their actions in terms of those meaning systems. The neoinstitutionalism began to be worked into organisational studies from the 1970s (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991), as institutions were understood as sets of rules, scripts and classifications. The continuity of organisations has become to earned through the ceremonial adoption of elements that constitute institutional context and that determine the action (POPADIUK; RIVERA; BATAGLIA, 2014). It later became better known as new organisational institutionalism.

Simultaneously, the analytical approach to institutional logics developed (FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017; PACHE; THORNTON, 2020) and was defined as the organising principles that shape the behaviour of the social actors – that is, actions. The central purpose of this approach is to explain institutional change; however, change appears to come from a combination of existing logics, and studies explaining how new institutional rationalities are created are lacking.

These analytical approaches provide evidence for a deterministic perspective for understanding the phenomenon of the institution. Here, there is a predominance of institutional force before the action of the social actors, who are mere epiphenomena of the social structures; social actors at the individual or collective levels are thus understood to be those who carry out their action in line with the institutions. The central criticism to the deterministic perspective is grounded in idea that the social actors not only perform their actions in conformity with the institutionalised elements, but that, in fact, the social actors do more than simply follow institutional standards (DORADO, 2005). From this critique, new agency-centred approaches in organisational institutionalism emerged, such as the 'institutional entrepreneur' (DiMAGGIO, 1988; MUTCH, 2007; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017) and 'institutional work' approaches (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019). This movement is referred to as the 'agentic turn' (ABDELNOUR; HASSELBRADH; KALLINIKOS, 2017).

Analytical approaches to the institutional entrepreneur aim to understand the practices developed by social actors capable of creating new institutions (DiMAGGIO, 1988; MUTCH, 2007; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017). This perspective tends to overestimate the role of the singular actor, and it is not clear how a social actor immersed in an institutional context can create new institutions. Here, 'agency' is understood as actions performed by superheroes (HAACK; SCHILKE; ZUCKER, 2021).

The institutional work approach focuses on the practices performed by the actors, as well as the multiple effects they can have on institutions, including creation, maintenance and disruption (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019). In this approach, 'agency' is defined in terms of reflective ability. The development of new practices is dependent on the degree of reflexivity possessed by social actors (ABDELNOUR; HASSELBLADH; KALLINIKOS, 2017), and actions can be either intentional or not (BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019). This approach fails, however, to expose the underlying mechanisms involved in the reflective process.

In both the entrepreneur and institutional work approaches there is a tentative movement towards transforming actors into social agents. The social agent must be understood as one who performs an action through the freedom he or she holds (AL-EXANDER, 1992); in other words, social agency is understood as an action not determined by existing contextual institutions. Both analytical approaches focus on the institutionally non-compliant practices developed by the social actors, nonetheless there is an absence of studies that explain how those practices emerge and institutionalize in a given institututinal context (SCOTT, 2014).

At the same time, the emergence of new studies based on the capability approach has been observed, and these studies aim to configure social agency and its role in the institutional dynamic (TEAGUE, 2009; HUANG, et al., 2017; ANDERSON, 2020; LAINE, et al., 2020). In these studies, 'agency' is understood in terms of institutional capabilities that endow social actors at the collective level for the establishment of new institutions; however, it is not clear the process by which those institutions are created or the previouslly existent institutions are changed.

It can thus be inferred that the agency responsible for institutional change must be understood in individual and collective terms and not only at the collective level. At the individual level are the actions performed by individuals endowed with capabilities that make it possible to develop new ways of doing the things. At the collective level are the processes that lead to the establishment of new social practices both at the organisation and at the institutional context level. This study therefore seeks to answer the following research question: what are the institutional capabilities that endow agency at the individual and collective level for institutional change?

In response to this question, this study engages in a theoretical discussion, substantially supported by the assumptions identified in organisational institutionalism, more specifically in the works of Philip Selznick, such as attributes for the institutional construction, as well as those identified in organisational neoinstitutionalism and its derived approaches which provide substantial elements for the institutional process and consider actors as social agents.

The research method followed three phases. The first was a critical review of the literature on old sociological institutionalism (SELZNICK, 1953; 1996; 2011; 2014), focused on the construction of institutional capabilities. The second was a comparative analysis between these capabilities and organisational neoinstitutionalism (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991; BARLEY; TOLBERT, 1997; SCOTT, 2014; POPADIUK; RIVERA; BATAGLIA, 2014), with a special emphasis on the theoretical extensions for explaining institutional change, namely: the institutional entrepreneur (DiMAGGIO, 1988; MUTCH, 2007; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017); institutional work (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY, 2006; LAW-RENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011); and institutional logics (FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019; PACHE; THORNTON, 2020). In the third and last phase, we synthesise an alternative conceptual model for studying institutional change (i.e., re-institutionalisation) based upon institutional capabilities.

The present study makes two theoretical contributions to the line of research of institutional change based on institutional capabilities: the identification of the institutional capabilities of agency, that is,



action, at the individual and collective levels that promote institutional creation or change (re-institutionalisation); and the proposition of the re-institutionalisation process as a complex process that integrate the micro (individual) and macro (institutional context) levels. Therefore, this paper is organised into six sections, including this introduction. The second section addresses old organisational institutionalism, identifying the institutional capabilities in the works of Selznick and comparing them with the more recent institutional capability approaches. The third section discusses the central assumptions of organisational neoinstitutionalism regarding the institutional process. The fourth section analyses the notion of actors as social agents proposed in the institutional approaches linked to the agentic turn. Section five proposes the conceptual model of the institutional creation and change (re-institutionalisation) process, highlighting the necessary capabilities at the individual and collective levels. Finally, the sixth and final section presents the final conclusions.

2 OLD ORGANISATIONAL INSTITUTIONALISM: DISTINCTIVE CAPABILITIES FOR (RE)INSTITUTIONALISATION

In the 1940s, Philip Selznick found a new perspective for studying institutions based on the notions of values and symbols. For Selznick (1953) institutions are defined as social systems that influence the behaviour of organisations; in other words, institutions serve to limit both human and organisational action (SELZNICK, 2011). These studies on institutions were initiated in response to structural sociology and its deterministic and macro-sociological perspective. Selznick distinguished the organisation from the institution. Whereas organisations are technical instruments of engineering that are inflexible and economically rational, an institution is defined as being a '[...] living organisation in a concrete social environment' (SELZNICK, 2011, p. 20). Selznick (1953) adopted an adaptive perspective on the organisation in response to the institutional context. Any organisation could thus be transformed into an institution through a process of the 'infusion

of values' – that is, institutionalisation (SELZNICK, 2011) – resulting in a distinct character. Investigating the formation of this distinctive character or organisational identity does not involve focusing on efficiency. When we study the character, 'we are interested in the competences [...] an organisation acquired' (SELZNICK, 2011, p. 42) in the process of institutionalisation.

Selznick's studies (1953; 2014) identify two capabilities that play a key role in the institutionalisation process (infusion of values): the capability for identification of and conformation with the institutional matrix and the capability for identification of and insertion into the dominant organisational coalition at the field of action in which the organisation is. Philip Selznick's studies explicitly present an intraorganisational perspective (DAVID; TOLBERT; BOGHOSSIAN, 2019).

The capability for identification of and conformation with the institutional matrix can be identified in Selznick's (1953) work on the Tennessee Valley Authority, in which institutionalisation is seen as the formation of the organisational character, which is acquired through organisational conformation with internal and external pressures. He provided evidence for the importance of this capability in guaranteeing organisational perenniality and warned organisations to 'test the environment for finding the demands that can truly to transform in effective threats' (SELZNICK, 2011, p. 145). This capability can also be identified in 'The Organizational Weapon' (SELZNICK, 2014). Selznick (1953, p. 20) found that, 'to become established, she [an organisation] [...] should find support among local institutions [...] developing well-adjusted working relationships with them [...]'. Thus, the organisation needs not only to identify the dominant coalition that constitutes the field in which it operates, but also be included within that coalition.

Accordingly, Selznick discusses two strategies for the organisation: co-optation and insertion. Co-option is the recruitment of members belonging to influential organisations (SELZNICK, 1953), while insertion involves members of the organisation entering associative entities in the field of action that represents groups and organisations advantageously positioned as sources of power (SELZNICK, 2014).

Only by understanding the institutional environment can the organisation hope to change that environment (SELZNICK, 2014). In other words, it is necessary to know the institutional matrix. To foster change and establishment in the field of action, the organisation needs to belong to the dominant coalition, which is responsible for defining the institutional matrix. Institutionalisation as a values-infusion process involves temporal extension (SELZNICK, 1953; 2011). Analogous to the power concept is an attribution related to people that extends to the organisations to which they belong. Selznick's (1953) normative view of the rationality in separating institutions into formal and informal elements was the basis for distinguishing organisational institutionalism into old and new.

More recently, the following studies characterise agency as institutional capabilities and its role in the recreation and establishment of public policies with the most varied aims, including economic development (TEAGUE, 2009), mobility of public policies (ANDERSSON, 2020) and environmental disaster prevention programmes (LAINE, et al., 2020).

Teague (2009) sought to identify the factors responsible for the economic growth experienced in Ireland in the 1990s (i.e., the Celtic Tiger phenomenon) and showed that economic growth results from the presence of a local institutional structure. The model developed and implemented in Ireland in the 1990s was based on the construction of new local institutions that were responsible for both developing human capital and establishing working relationships throughout the country. The construction and establishment of these institutions was dependent on the institutional capabilities endowing social actors with agency. The distinction of institutional capabilities between the time of creation and the establishment of new institutions is not clear; however, what is observed is that agency, understood in terms of institutional capabilities, is located at the collective level and is in the sphere of government.

In a more recent study Andersson (2020) proposed to assess the mobility of urban policies by adopting the perspective of capabilities to identify the institutional capabilities responsible for establishing a new institutional rationality – that of "green cities" in Sweden. Political mobility is the circulation of ideas and models across the globe (BORÉN; GRZYŚ;

YOUNG, 2020). Andersson identified three institutional capabilities: relational, knowledge and mobilisation. Relational capability involves establishing links with the main social actors of a sector to obtain support and political influence. Andersson's definition here differs from Selznick (1953; 2014), because for a social actor to change something, the actor must belong to the dominant coalition. Knowledge capability concerns what constitutes the institutional rationality of the "green city" within the countryside based on technical knowledge related to sustainable construction. This specific knowledge is inserted into universities and technical centres that seek to qualify human capital and, at the same time, makes possible the legitimisation process through the dissemination of these ideas and values at the field of action level, which can be understood as mobilisation capability (ANDERSSON, 2020). The construction and establishment of new public policies at the individual level was not based on a reflexivity capable of creating something new, but on replicating something that already existed.

In line with Anderson's study (2020), Laine et al. (2020) highlighted the key role of institutional caapbilities in the development and implementation of environmental programmes, such as those against flooding in areas of potential risk. They contemplated the three capabilities identified by Andersson (2020), emphasising the constituent elements of institutional capabilities related to intellectual, social, and political capital. Intellectual capital is related to knowledge and learning capability. Social capital refers to the network of social relationships in each institutional context. Political capital is related to the ability to obtain support either from public organisations or from private organisations (LAINE, et al., 2020). These three types of capital are called institutional capitals that, coherently orchestrated, can be used at the collective level (CARS, et al., 2017).

What is observed in these studies is the identification of institutional capabilities through their role in the recreation and establishment of a new institution or even changes to an existing one; here, institutional capabilities endow the social actor at the collective level with agency. However, it is not clear how new institutions are created. The next section presents the new organisational institutionalism and

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the theoretical assumptions related to the institutional process.

3 NEW ORGANISATIONAL INSTITUTIONALISM: INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS

New organisational institutionalism, also known as organisational neoinstitutionalism, emerged from the works of Berger and Luckmann (2017), which present a micro-sociological perspective for understanding institutions. The micro-sociological perspective must be understood in ontological terms as parameterized by individualism; here, the understanding of social phenomena takes place through subjectivity. Following this approach, institutions are defined as sets of beliefs, habits and values that structure the cognition of the social actors. This definition corroborates in disregarding the power concept in institutional analysis, because it is understood that the meaning systems are internalised by the social actors in a consensual way, and institutions are created from a social construction of reality.

Here, the institutional process consists of two phases: institutionalisation and legitimisation. Institutionalisation includes the externalisation of the thoughts of actors through their objectification in symbolic systems and the means through which these symbolic systems are internalised by other actors. The interaction between the social actors creates reciprocal typifications of concepts, beliefs, habits, and values, i.e., instittutions, constructing a shared meaning system that regulates both behaviour and interpretations of the reality. Legitimisation rationally justifies the established institutions for the social group (BERGER; LUCKMANN, 2017). Thus, once created, the meaning system gradually acquires a moral status that shapes interactions, future negotiations and the socialisation of new entrants to the social group (BARLEY; TOLBERT, 1997).

The time concept is here defined in terms of socio-cultural and historical context (BERGER; LUCKMANN, 2017). The socio-cultural context is important for characterising and justifying institutions at a particular moment in the history based on the notion of *dasein* (HEIDEGGER, 2010); however,

it is simplistic view, because the institutionalisation must be parameterised by events that occur over time.

This concept of the institution began to be worked into organisational studies starting in the 1970s (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991; BARLEY; TOLBERT, 1997) and was developed in response to the macro-sociological perspective, according to which institutions are defined as sets of rules, scripts and classifications that are created to influence the behaviour of organisations. The macro-sociological perspective must be understood in ontological terms as configured by collectivism, where understanding takes place through objectivity.

However, it is observed that social construction theory does not exclude structural determinism, because human beings become social actors as they internalise meaning systems. Action in the social construction of reality emanates from collective meaning systems. The social acceptance of the actor comes from the actor's conformation with the systems of meaning (i.e., institutions) existing in a particular social context. The regulatory and normative spheres corroborate to form a conception of institutional environment with an authoritative character, because in an institutionalised context there is greater control, which implies an absence of alternatives for action (ZUCKER, 1977). The institution, then, presents a substantial force in restricting the actions of social actors. The institutional environment is formed by a cognitive perspective of super-socialisation (BAR-LEY; TOLBERT, 1997; SCOTT, 2014; TOLBERT; ZUCKER, 2019). The power concept has been neglected in studies on organisational neoinstitutionalism in structural terms.

DiMaggio and Powell (1991, p. 64), in trying to answer the question of 'why there is such startling homogeneity of forms and organisational practices?' invariably fell for the legitimacy concept as the basis for understanding the behaviour and structure of organisations (WHITTINGTON, 2017). Legitimacy is understood as a symbolic value based on the perceptions of the social actors, who understand that certain behaviours and actions are in conformity with the norms and values of a socially constructed context (SCOTT, 2014; DEEPHOUSE, et al., 2017). To gain legitimacy, organisations conform to the scripts, rules and classifications that constitute the

institution (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991). In other words, legitimacy comes from the ceremonial adoption (POPADIUK; RIVERA; BATAGLIA, 2014) and presentation of a deterministic perspective. Homogeneity, a characteristic of the legitimacy phase of institutionalisation, indicates that a field has reached maturity. At this stage, organisations tend to have the same practices and behaviours (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991). The central focus of past studies is explicitly on the homogeneity of organisational forms; in other words, they aim to explain the domination of institutions. Organisational neoinstitutionalism invariably looks at how the institutional environment defines and restricts action.

A new analytic approach was developed in the 1990s with the central aims of understanding the complexity of institutional change, which is known as the institutional logics approach (FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991). Pache and Thornton (2020) asserted that institutional logics are socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices that include the assumptions, values, and beliefs by which individuals and organisations give meaning to their daily activities, organise the relationship of space and time and by which they are socially reproduced. Institutional logics are organising principles which shape and structure the cognition of social actors and, are responsible for defining the cognitive abilities of the actors guiding the interpretation of their experiences, indicating the correct way to behave (PACHE; THORNTON, 2020). In light of this, institutional logics influence modes of understanding and interaction in collective life (FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017), disregarding the power concept in institutional analysis, because the meaning systems are responsible in structuring the cognition of the social actors.

Several studies have demonstrated the influence of institutional logics on the actions of the social actors, including institutional logics of intrapreneurial units to foster organizational innovation (BELAIR-GAGNON; LEWIS; AGUR, 2020), how organisational founders adhere to multiple logics (ALMANDOZ; MARQUIS; CHEELY, 2017), how logics interfere in decisions regarding adaptation and organisational change (PACHE; THORNTON, 2020), the emergence of conflicts within an organisation

when there are contradictory logics (ZILBER, 2017), thus presenting a deterministic perspective. This is in line with Haveman and Gualtiere (2017), who emphasise that institutional logics determine both the ends and mean of social actions.

The analytical approach of institutional logics provides a macro-sociological perspective for understanding institutional dynamics, as is explicit in Friedland and Alford's (1991) contextualisation of society as an interinstitutional system containing several sectoral systems, each of which represents and acts in a given social space. In other words, each sectoral system has a set of expectations reflected in the behaviour of the social actors. The change in this analytical approach is understood in exogenous terms, because it is based on the combination of the properties of the divergent logics present in a given context. The institutional logics approach suggests that structure determines actions (HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017).

In both old and new organisational neoinstitutionalism, social actors are mere epiphenomena of the institutional structure. A theoretical effort has been made in recent decades to consider agency in institutional dynamics, and this change of emphasis is called the 'agentic turn' (ABDELNOUR; HASSELBRADH; KALLINIKOS, 2017). Two analytical approaches stand, focused on the institutional entrepreneur (DiMAGGIO, 1988; MUTCH, 2007; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017) and institutional work (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY, 2006; LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019).

4 THE AGENTIC TURN: ACTORS AS SOCIAL AGENTS

DiMaggio (1988) then used this concept to answer the question of how institutions emerge and made the concept central for understanding the institutional processes, because the institutional entrepreneur is able to create new institutions (HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017). This approach explicitly adopts a micro-sociological perspective to explain institutional dynamics. Institutional entrepreneurs are characterised by the capability for identification of opportunities and mobilisation of resources, high

analytical ability, innovative actions and autonomy (DiMAGGIO, 1988; MUTCH, 2007).

The institutional entrepreneur represents a heroic rationalism according to Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca (2011). Assuming that an individual is capable of creating or changing an institution, this approach presents a simplistic view, because an individual is not able to gather all of the resources necessary to create an institution (SUDDABY; BITEKTINE; HAACK, 2017). Leblebici et al. (1991) have pointed out that the creation of an institution requires a variety of social actors, each with different attributions, and underlined the collective action in institutional process. Wijen and Ansari (2007) have pointed out how the institutional entrepreneur can be used to explain collective decisions. Collective action works in complex conditions that contain divergent interests and dispersed actors. The resolution of divergent interests drives both change and the creation of new institutions. It requires attributes that often transcend the capabilities of a single actor (i.e., an institutional entrepreneur).

This analytical approach explicitly focuses on the rationality of social actors, and agency is a constituent element of the institutional entrepreneur concept that is neglected. To reduce the rational perspective, inserted the concept of immersed agency, which is essential for understanding power, into the analytical approach of institutional entrepreneur. Immersed agency is understood in terms of social position, which is based on the number of interorganisational relationships (HANSEN, 1997). In the central position, the actor has legitimacy and has greater access to resources within a field. In the peripheral position, the actor has difficulty in accessing resources. For this author institutional change is the result of actions performed by peripherally positioned actors, because the difficulty in accessing resources encourages the search for substitute resources and the development of new strategies. Hardy and Maguire (2017), however, have shown that central actors are responsible for innovation, because they have inter-field relations, from which innovations emerge.

Actors endowed with legitimacy in a given field tend use power to maintain the institutional status quo, which is a significant problem facing the concept of immersed agency and the institutional entrepreneur. Kingston and Caballerro (2009, p. 156) have stressed that, 'Frequently, existing institutions create groups with a vested interest in preserving the status quo, which can prevent institutional change'. In fact, the institutional entrepreneur approach does not explain how actors immersed in an institutional context can develop or create a new institution, because these actors are numbed by the institutional force.

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006, p. 2015) defined an alternative proposal centred on institutional work as being a 'purposeful action of individuals and organisations for the creation, maintenance and disruption of institutions'. More recently, Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca (2011, p.52) re-defined institutional work as being the 'practices of individual and collective actors that aim at the creation, maintenance or disruption the institutions'. They focused on social and collective actors. There also appears to be a predominance of an instrumental rationality, because action is motivated by objectives or expected results (WEBER, 2019); here, actions are motivated by the desire to affect institutions, so the agency is performed intentionally, because the aim is to obtain a specific result. The identification of the actions developed by the social actors that affect social structures and institutions is the central focus of this analytical approach from a micro-sociological perspective (LAWRENCE; SUD-DABY; LECA, 2011). Beunen and Patterson (2019) have recently shown that actions can be either intentional or not, and this can affect institutions.

For Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca (2011) an action is only triggered after the social actor, through a cognitive effort, recognises the institutionalised standards, which are a source both of reflexivity and institutional continuity. Reflexivity is based on the institutional patterns embedded in social routines, and the actions responsible in creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions are dependent on the degree of reflexivity (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011). Agency has been defined in terms of reflective capability (ABDELNOUR; HASSELBLADH; KALLINIKOS, 2017); however, there is an absence of clarity about the underlying mechanisms and the parameters for evaluating the degree of reflexivity.

Both the institutional entrepreneur and institutional work approaches are centred on new actions or practices responsible for affecting institutions; however, there is an absence of studies explaining how practices emerge and become consolidated at the field level (ABDELNOUR; HASSELBLADH; KALLINIKOS, 2017). The power concept is neglected by both analytic approaches, because institutionalisation occurs consensually among social actors. Institutional change breaks the status quo, so there are existing conflicts due to the presence of divergent interests among the social actors.

5 A PROPOSAL OF THE DYNAMICS OF INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS AND THE COLLECTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTIONAL CAPABILITIES NECESSARY FOR (RE)INSTITUTIONALISATION

The institutional theoretical background discussed in previous sections revealed the variety of analytic approaches available within organisational institutionalism, highlighting that there remains dissension in the understanding of institutional life. Table 1 presents the main characteristics of the approaches analysed.

As shown in Table 1, one similarity between old institutionalism (SELZNICK, 1953; 1996; 2011; 2014), seminal organisational neoinstitutionalism (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991; POPADIUK; RI-VERA; BATAGLIA, 2014; SCOTT, 2014) and the theoretical extension of institutional logics (FRIED-LAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017; PACHE; THORNTON, 2020) is the adoption of a macro-sociological perspective to explain institutional life, but the focus of old institutionalism on intra-organisational factors to explain organisational adaptation stands out (SELZNICK, 1953), whereas seminal organisational neoinstitutionalism and its theoretical extensions focus on the interorganisational level (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991; FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017; SCOTT, 2014; PACHE; THORNTON, 2020). Suddaby (2010) asserted that this theoretical behaviour is the legacy of the seminal organisational neoinstitutional theorists in a move away from the premises established in the old institutionalism.

Considering institutionalisation process, seminal organisational neoinstitutionalism argues that organisations obtain legitimacy through the cerimonial adoption of social standards considered legitimate within the institutional context in which they are inserted (POPADIUK; RIVERA; BATAGLIA, 2014). This conformation is understood in terms of the internalisation of hegemonic meaning systems in the context (BERGER; LUCKMAN, 2017). Legitimacy is a symbolic value (DEEPHOUSE, et al., 2017) that allows not only organisational perenniality, but also enables access to the respective social group.

At the same time, for the theoretical extension of institutional logics (FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017; PACHE; THORNTON, 2020), the institutionalisation process is understood as a combination of attributes coming from divergent rationalities that are either situated or not in an institutional environment (WITTMAYER, et al., 2021). Nevertheless, neoinstitutionalism and its theoretical extension of institutional logics fail to explain the mechanisms responsible both in the identification of the institutional matrix and in the process through which the values are incorporated.

It is also observed that these analytical approaches contain an acquiescence relative to the institutional force in the face of the action of the social actors – that is, a deterministic perspective and a non-agentic conception. Thus, organisational neoinstitutionalism and the theoretical extension of institutional logics are centred on the surface of the institutionalisation process; in other words, they focus on one specific part of institutionalisation process. The former explains the homogeneity of organisational forms (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991), but do not explain how those forms emerge. Institutional logics aim to explain institutional change through the combination of attributes of existing logics, but does not elucidate how new logics emerge.

To understand the institutional process in its entirety (i.e., from the emergence to the promulgation of new institutions), it is necessary to assume that the social actors are constituted by the attributes that enable them and, consequently, the organisations to which they belong. Here, DiMaggio and Powell (1991) has argued that the advance in organisational neoinstitutionalism is dependent on an analysis at

the intra-organisational level, because access to the organisation enables understanding of the internal dynamics from an institutional perspective. Some studies have looked at the intra-organisational level and focused on new organisational roles before institutionalisation (ELSBACH, 2017), the degree to which organisational founders adhere to the multiple logics (ALMANDOZ; MARQUIS; CHEELY, 2017) and the emergence of conflicts within an organisation coming from contradictory logics (ZILBER, 2017). However, these studies tend not to look at the attributes that constitute the social actors responsible for the intra and interinstitutional dynamics or the dynamics at the intra-organisational level, which is dependent on the institutional environment.

Selznick (2011) stands out among the studies focused on the intra-organisational level because of his assertion of the capability for identification of the institutional matrix of the field as responsible for organisational conformation in response to the institutional environment. Selznick (1953; 1996; 2011; 2014) did not study individuals, but rather the social structure resulting from the relationships that exist between them; organisational capabilities are formed by social actors (i.e., individuals) who make up the organisation.

Within organisational neoinstitutionalism, the agentic turn developed in an attempt to rescue the role of the agency in institutional dynamics from a micro-sociological perspective, and this appeared in the study of the institutional entrepreneur (DiMAGGIO, 1988; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017) and institutional work (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY, 2006; LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019). Studies that explain how the institutional process occurs (how new social practices emerge and are enacted) are still lacking (LOUNSBURY; CRUMLEY, 2007; SCOTT, 2014). The contribution of these approaches is based on the attempt to transform actors into social agents based on their attributes. Here, the institutional entrepreneur approach stands out when looking at the main attributions that shape an entrepreneur (DiMAGGIO, 1988; MUTCH, 2007; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017); however, these attributions aim to provide substantial support for explaining the entrepreneurs' possible institutional innovations, they do not explain how

the institutional entrepreneur (as social actors) detach from institutional numbness.

The analytical approach related to institutional work here stands out (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY, 2006; LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019). Institutional work argues that the dynamics of social practices (i.e., creation, alteration and disruption) are dependent on the degree of reflexivity among social actors. Reflexivity should be understood as a non-naïve, critical reading of reality based on a hermeneutic process performed by the social agent (RICOEUR, 1950; 1960). Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca (2011) have here highlighted the critical reflexibility of the social actor as a necessary condition for the recognition of institutionalised standards in the social practices of the field. Based on this reasoning, we argue:

Proposition 1: The institutional organisational capability for identification of the institutional matrix is necessary for the organisational conformation to the institutional environment and depends on the individual critical reflective capability of the social actors involved in the organisation.

Organisational neoinstitutionalism (DiMAG-GIO; POWELL, 1991; SCOTT, 2014), the theoretical extensions of institutional logics (FRIEDLAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERE, 2017; PACHE; THORNTON, 2020) and institutional work (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY, 2006; LAWRENCE; SUD-DABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019) do not discuss the position of the social actors (i.e., organisations) within a field or, consequently, their role in institutional dynamics. The institutional entrepreneur approach, however, argues that the effects on institutions are dependent on the social position of actors within an institutional context (HANSEN, 1997; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017). For Hasen (1997), institutional change is fostered by peripherally positioned actors; however, peripheral actors do not have the resources needed to foster change (LEBLEBICI, et al., 1991). Hardy and Maguire (2017) have pointed out that centrally positioned actors are generally responsible for affecting institutions; however, central actors endowed with legitimacy in a given field tend

to use power to maintain the institutional status quo (KINGSTON; CABALLERRO, 2009).

If central actors aim to maintain the institutional status quo, they thus form the dominant coalition of a field. Selznick (1953; 2014) has defined the dominant coalition as the specialised groups and organisations that are advantageously positioned as sources of power. Admittedly, for both institutional change and conformation, organisations need to identify not only the institutional matrix, but also the dominant coalition, which is responsible for defining the institutional patterns that constitute the organisational surroundings. The organisation thus needs to identify the dominant coalition, as suggested by Selznick (1953); the social actors can thus use their capability for reflecting in practices institutionalised in the field. Thus, we argue:

Proposition 2: The institutional organisational capability of identification of the dominant coalition is necessary for identifying the institutional matrix.

Although it seems clear that the variables 'power' and 'time' are essential for understanding the process of intra-organisational institutional conformity, both are neglected in the organisational neoinstitutional approach and its theoretical extensions. In organisational neoinstitutionalism, the institutional process is substantially supported by structural power (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991), while in the socially constructed reality analysis (BERGER; LUCKMANN, 2017) and institutional logics (FRIED-LAND; ALFORD, 1991; HAVEMAN; GUALTIERI, 2017; PACHE; THORNTON, 2020), the institutional process is understood in terms of acquiescence among the social actors and, consequently, power is not considered.

Nevertheless, in the institutional process, the identification of the institutional matrix of the field and of the dominant coalition are not sufficient for understanding both institutional change (i.e., re-institutionalisation) and organisational conformation (i.e., adaptation). Both institutional change and organisational conformation (i.e., the infusion of values of the institutional matrix into the organisation) necessarily imply conflicts of interest and a time horizon for their resolution, which then denotes resistance as

an inherent characteristic of human nature, because people tend to protect the status quo to guarantee their interests (DE PAULA, 2018).

Selznick (1996) stands out for his explanation of conflicts of interest. Contrasting old and new institutionalism, the main contribution of old institutionalism is substantially based on the figure of the institutional leadership that aims to 'reconcile internal efforts with the environmental pressures' (SELZNICK, 2011, p. 62). Managerial capabilities can thus be used to explain organisational adaptation. Institutional leadership is responsible for the management of conflicts (SELZNICK, 2011) that emerge during the institutional process. Based on this reasoning, we argue:

Proposition 3: The institutional organisational capability of conflict resolution is necessary for organisational conformation to the institutional matrix of the field.

As noted in Table 1, there is a predominant 'dualism' in the theoretical approaches of the organisational neoinstitutionalism and its extensions, which is a legacy of prior sociological theories. From the determinist perspective, action is defined by the social structure, while from the perspective of voluntarism, there is a tentative move in configuring agency in establishing organisational structure. This dualism is parametrised by two opposite perspectives for characterising social actors: actors as mere epiphenomena of social structures and the tentative transformation of actors into social agents.

The consideration of agency in institutional dynamics is characteristic of the entrepreneurship and institutional work approaches, which are components of the agentic turn to explain institutional heterogeneity through new institutions or social practices (AB-DELNOUR; HASSELBLADH; KALLINIKOS, 2017). However, the institutional entrepreneur approach defends the notion of a superhero capable of creating institutions; it is not clear, however, how social actors immersed in their respective institutional contexts can perform a non-naïve reading of the social reality.

In this analytical approach, social actors are parameterised from a rational perspective, because the action performed is driven by pre-established objectives with an instrumental rationality (WEBER,

Table 1 Summary of the main characteristics of the theoretical approaches to organisational institutionalism

Theoretical approaches	Institutionalisation Perspective				Annuard		Danier			Time	
	Sociological		Organisational		Approach		Power			Time	
	Macro	Micro	Intra	Inter	Determinist	Voluntarist	Structural	Top Management Team	Natural Stratification	Yes	No
Old Institutionalism (Selznick)	×		×		×			×		×	
Socially Constructed Reality (Berger and Luckmann)		×		×	×				×		×
Seminal Organisational Neoinstitutionalism (DiMaggio and Powell)	×			×	×		×				×
Institutional Logics (Friedland and Alford)	×			×	×		×				×
Institutional Entrepreneur (DiMaggio)		×		*		×			*		×
Institutional Work (Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca)		×		*		×			*		×

Source: Elaborated by the authors

2019). At the same, the institutional work approach considers that responsible practices in influencing social structure result from reflective activity performed by social actors (LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019). Institutional change can certainly be fostered by individuals endowed with reflective abilities that qualify them to read a given reality from the identification of the dominant coalition, of the institutional matrix of the field and the demands that may become threats (SELZNICK, 2011).

Nonetheless, it is not enough to identify an institutional change that benefits the organisation. The desire for change will only materialise through a collective action involving the intra- and inter-organisational levels. However, collective action in institutional processes has been neglected both in organisational neoinstitutionalism (DiMAGGIO; POWELL, 1991; BARLEY; TOLBERT, 1997) and in its theoretical extensions (DiMAGGIO, 1988; FRIED-LAND; ALFORD, 1991; LAWRENCE; SUDDABY; LECA, 2011; GUALTIERI, 2017; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017; BEUNEN; PATTERSON, 2019; PACHE;

THORNTON, 2020). Leblebici et al. (1991) and Wijen and Ansari (2007) have, however, highlighted that the institutional process includes the presence of several social actors in a negotiation process. Collective action involves multiple social actors who are co-participants of a negotiation process in relation to the divergent interests involved.

Collective action in institutional change (i.e., re-institutionalisation) is parametrised in two distinct phases. The first phase of the collective action occurs at the intra-organisational level. However, the change of a social practice depends on a divergence that only materialises when identified and recognised among the actors in a given context as an anomaly; in other words, if the changes are not problematised, the existing practice will not be challenged (LOUNSBURY; CRUMLEY, 1997). Thus, it is necessary to establish acknowledgement of the anomaly and the alternative solutions through negotiation internal to the organisation. Once again, the figure of the intra-organisational institutional leadership proposed by Selznick (2011) stands out. This point conforms with the idea

that the activities related to leadership do not include routine.

[...] it is the function of a leader-statesman [...] to define the purposes of an existing group and to ensure that they become reality. These tasks are not routine and require the continuous dedication of the leaders. (p. 32)

Institutional leadership is responsible for activities to promote and protect values (SELZNICK, 2011), because institutional leadership is responsible for the 'creation of institutions [...]; reprocessing of technological and human materials for creating an organism that embodies new and strong values' (SELZNICK, 1984, p. 153).

The second phase of collective action is to bring established change from the intra-organisational level to the interorganisational level and thus promote changes in the institutional matrix of the field. However, change in the institutional matrix is fostered by centrally positioned actors within a field (HANSEN, 1997) or by peripherally positioned actors (HANSEN 1997; HARDY; MAGUIRE, 2017). Assuming that re-institutionalisation is dependent on the actor's position within a field leads to a theoretical fallacy. Actors in a central position tend to protect the status quo (KINGSTON; CABALLERRO, 2009), while actors in a peripheral position do not have access to the resources or power needed for the process of institutional change.

Selznick (2014) identified the dominant coalition as responsible for defining the institutional matrix in a given social context, as well as for maintaining social stability by protecting the values that constitute that matrix. However, what is observed is that the institutional social hierarchy is not static, but dynamic; in other words, social actors (i.e., organisations) that wish to promote a change in the institutional matrix can only do so if a dominant coalition shows mobility in the social hierarchy. It can thus be understood that any organisation can be a promoter change to the institutional matrix through its insertion into the dominant coalition, because the dominant coalition is responsible for the establishment and provision of political support to the institutional matrix (SELZNICK, 1953). Thus, we argue:

Proposition 4: The institutional organisational capability for identification and insertion of the organisation into the dominant coalition (legitimation) is necessary for the change of institutionalised patterns in the social practices of the field.

Once inserted into the dominant coalition, the organisation will develop strategies to legitimise its newly acquired position of power (SELZNICK, 2014); once legitimated (i.e., recognised by the dominant coalition), the organisation will trigger interorganisational collective negotiation in collective spaces, such as commercial associations, because trade associations play a strategic role (LAWRENCE, 1999) in institutional process. In this phase, it is necessary to establish the anomaly and potential solutions for it (LOUNSBURY; CRUMLEY, 1997); this is now negotiated inter-organisationally to reconstruct the collective meaning systems of the new social practice. Here, political tactics and institutional strategies are highlighted. Political tactics have been discussed by Popadiuk, Rivera and Bataglia (2014), who highlighted the need for the mobilisation and development of coalitions for any institutional change process; these coalitions provide substantial political support to the organisation as a promoter of institutional change.

Institutional theory has contemplated the strategies for this and yielded two antagonistic definitions (AMARANTE; CRUBELLATE; JUNIOR, 2017). In one, strategic options are conditioned or defined by the institutional context (PENG, 2017), thus presenting a deterministic perspective; in other words, in an institutionalised context, there is greater control, which implies an absence of alternative actions (ZUCKER, 1977). In the second definition, strategies are understood from a voluntarist perspective, as can be observed in the Lawrence's works (1999, p. 1985) where he emphasised that the institutional strategy 'is important because it provides a strategic lens with more openness and focus. Understanding their importance and the contingencies associated with its consecution can help [...] deal with the competitive environment in which they operate.'

Scoville and Fligstein (2020), in Field Theory, highlighted the primary role of the social actors in the institutional process through what he called of 'social ability', which is not only responsible for secur-

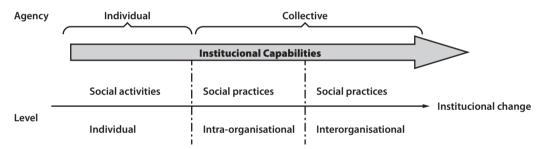
ing the social actor's position within an institutional environment but also for defining new rules that will define the social interactions. Both political tactics and strategic actions are key for managing conflicts that emerge in the institutional process. Based on this reasoning, we argue:

Proposition 5: The institutional organisational capability for conflict resolution is necessary for the change of institutionalised patterns in the social practices of the field.

It is thus concluded that re-institutionalisation is parameterised by phases, each of which requires different capabilities (i.e., institutional capabilities) related to institutional change. Figure 1 illustrates the institutional capabilities, which include the critical

reflective capability that endows individual agency, as well as the capability for identification of the institutional matrix, the capability for identification of and insertion into the dominant coalition and the capability for conflict resolution that characterises collective agency. This model enables a sophisticated understanding of agency whether at the individual or collective level, because, theoretically, the understanding of social actors endowed with agency has remained opaque in existent theory (HWANG, et al., 2019; MAIER; SINSA, 2020). Re-institutionalisation is fostered by social actors through a critical reflective ability that creates or alters a social activity. Jarzabkowski, Kavas and Krull (2021) defined these activities as actions performed by the actors and their interactions with other actors who aim to perform their obligations.

Figure 1 Institutional capabilities and their role in the connection between the micro, meso and macro levels in institutional change.



Source: Elaborated by the authors

The new social activity developed by the social actors that constitute an organisation will foment changes at the intra-organisational level when problematised (LOUNSBURY; CRUMLEY, 1997). Problematisation generates conflicts at the intra-organisational level, because the new social activity challenges existing practices (LOUNSBURY; CRUMLEY, 1997); in this context, the figure of institutional leadership stands out as responsible for conflict management (SELZNICK, 2011). Conflict is when discordant interests are perceived between parties (KRAUSS; ROHLEN; STEINHOFF, 2021), thus opening a space for collective negotiation (PRASSA, et al., 2020). The collective negotiation that occurs at the intra-organisational level has the central aim of constructing a meaning system for the new social activity. When the new social activity acquires a meaning system

and becomes a social practice, it will prevail in the organisation, because social practices are patterns of meaningful activities (JARZABKOWSKI; KAVAS; KRULL, 2021).

The establishment of new social practices at the intra-organisational level is thus dependent on the capabilities related to institutional leadership. The new social practice, once established at the intra-organisational level, may or may not foment the process of re-institutionalisation at the inter-organisational level (i.e., the institutional field). The organisation promoting re-institutionalisation needs to have social legitimacy, which is earned by ceremonial adoption (POPADIUK; RIVERA; BATAGLIA, 2014) and, as Selznick (2011) emphasised, the capabilities for identification of the institutional matrix.

Popadiuk, Rivera and Battaglia (2014) have indicated that, legitimate organisations ensure their place in trade associations and their participation in negotiations about the establishment of new standards, because trade associations play a strategic role (LAWRENCE, 1999) in disseminating new social practices at the interorganisational level. This dissemination is important for the recognition and, consequently, the problematisation of new social practices (LOUNSBURY; CRUMLEY, 1997) at the interorganisational level and fosters a divergence of interests (i.e., conflict). For Ranson et al. (1980) conflict is fundamental for the development of institutions.

In light of this, collective negotiation aim to establish a collective meaning (SCOVILLE; FLIG-STEIN, 2020) for new social practices at the interorganisational level. Legitimacy is a prerequisite of this, but it does not qualify the organisation to trigger re-institutionalisation. Selznick (1953) has highlighted the need for the capabilities to identify and insert the organisation into the dominant coalition, because the promoter organisation of re-institutionalisation should be part of the dominant coalition, with support from organisations that are advantageously positioned and sources of power (SELZNICK, 2014). The re-institutionalisation of a new social practice as advocated in this study is formed through the interconnection between individual and collective agency, which is substantially supported by institutional capabilities.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Through the analysis of seminal articles on old and new organisational institutionalism, this article sought to identify the capabilities that constitute agency at the individual and collective levels involved in re-institutionalisation. This objective was fully achieved.

The first contribution of this work is the classification of agency as individual and collective, each of which acts in distinct phases in the process of institutional change. The agency that starts the process of institutional change is situated at the individual level in the social actor with critical reflective capability. This determination is convergent with the new agen-

cy-centred approaches, such as those focused on the institutional entrepreneur. It differs, however, in that it refers to the potential changes needed to annul the existing demands in the field that are capable of generating threats, but do not necessarily imply a change in creating new social practices (or institutions). The establishment of a new practice is related to agency at the collective level as an action endowed with institutional capabilities that enable collective action both at the intra- and inter-organisational levels.

The second contribution involves a glimpse at the process of institutional change in an integral form – that is, for understanding how new ways of doing things emerge at the individual, intra-organisational and interorganisational levels. This implies a break with the existing paradox in organisational neoinstitutionalism, which here refers both to the macro and micro-sociological approaches, which focus exclusively on parts of the institutional process, thereby developing our understanding of the agency-structure dynamic.

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