

The Institutional Dynamics of the Separation of Bachelor's Degree in Social Communication

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ABSTRACT – The Institutional Dynamics of the Separation of Bachelor's Degree in Social Communication. This study examines how the dynamics of institutional logics (re)configured the social practice of Social Communication education during the separation of bachelor's degrees in a public higher education institution. The results reveal that the separation of bachelor's degrees was driven by a dominant professional logic, which prioritizes technical training and practice for the market. However, the organization demonstrated resistance to this technicist approach, integrating elements of academic and normative logics into a hybrid logic. This hybridization allowed the institution to preserve critical and reflective practices, reconciling academic and market demands without compromising teaching autonomy.

Keywords: Institutional Logics. Social Practices. Higher Education.

RESUMO – A Dinâmica Institucional da Separação dos Bacharelados em Comunicação Social. Este estudo examina como a dinâmica das lógicas institucionais (re)configurou a prática social da educação em Comunicação Social durante a separação dos bacharelados em uma organização de ensino superior pública. Os resultados revelam que a separação dos bacharelados foi impulsionada por uma lógica profissional dominante, que prioriza a formação técnica e a prática para o mercado. No entanto, a organização analisada demonstrou resistência a essa abordagem tecnicista, integrando elementos das lógicas acadêmica e normativa em uma lógica híbrida. Essa hibridização permitiu que a instituição preservasse práticas críticas e reflexivas, conciliando demandas acadêmicas e mercadológicas sem comprometer a autonomia docente.

Palavras-chave: Lógicas Institucionais. Práticas Sociais. Educação Superior.

Introduction

Transformations in Brazilian education have been the subject of extensive scholarly investigation (Saviani, 2021). Events such as the enactment of the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education¹ (LDB) in 1996, for instance, marked a period shaped by the neoliberal orientation that characterized the government of that time and influenced higher education in the following decades (Oliveira; Morais, 2025; Chaves; Santos; Kato, 2020; Morais; Santos; Paiva, 2021; Diniz; Oliveira; Lima, 2021; Slongo-Garcia et al., 2024). Several areas within higher education were affected by the LDB, such as Social Communication, which, in 2009, underwent the repeal of the mandatory journalism degree requirement. Building on the transformations of 2009, in 2013 professionals, faculty members, and representatives of regulatory bodies in Brazil initiated a series of discussions aimed at separating the tracks within the Social Communication program, ultimately leading to the creation of three distinct bachelor's degrees in Journalism, Public Relations, and Advertising and Propaganda.

These changes in Social Communication were argued to be justified by the need to modernize bachelor's programs, fostering greater alignment between classroom learning and professional practice (Faccin; Ferreira, 2018). However, this phenomenon was not limited to Brazil; similar trends can be observed in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in other countries (Upton; Warshaw, 2016; Duncheon; Hornbeck, 2025), where market-oriented practices have been incorporated into public universities, encouraging the pursuit of external funding sources, partnerships with the private sector, and curricular reforms.

Transformations in the field of education, as seen in Social Communication, depend on institutional mechanisms to gain legitimacy and influence organizations to modify their educational practices, which are (re)produced within HEIs (Slongo-Garcia et al., 2024). In this regard, Upton and Warshaw (2016) have highlighted research opportunities in the field of education - particularly within public universities - through a perspective that intertwines institutional contexts and practices, underscoring the relevance of studying institutional logics and phenomena such as complexity and hybridity.

Accordingly, our article addresses the following research question: How did the dynamics of institutional logics in the separation of bachelor's degrees (re)configure the social practice of education in Social Communication within a public higher education institution? To explore this question, we conducted a case study in a public university in Brazil, here referred to as Alpha.

To analyze these transformations, we adopted the Institutional Logics approach to explain the changes that culminated in the creation of the various bachelor's degrees in the field of Social Communication in Brazil, as well as their impact on educational practices. We also worked with multiple levels of analysis (practices, organizations, and field), considering that the phenomenon under study is intrinsically linked to historically constructed social patterns expressed in practices,

values, beliefs, and norms (Friedland; Alford, 1991). These elements enable individuals to (re)produce their livelihoods, organize themselves in space and time, and interpret their social reality (Thornton; Ocasio, 1999). In specific fields such as education, institutional logics interact through symbolic (meanings) and material (practices) dimensions, configuring education as a social practice composed of interrelated subcomponents (Langley; Tsoukas, 2017).

Thus, we address a topic that remains underexplored in the fields of education and Institutional Theory: understanding how the fragmentation of degree programs occurred and analyzing the microfoundations of the social practice of education, which was (re)configured within a public HEI through the dynamics of institutional logics. We draw on Schatzki's (2024) perspective, which suggests analyzing specific social phenomena to explore the interaction between different institutional logics and social practices. While some studies, such as Fávero and Guimarães (2019) and Slongo-Garcia et al. (2024), have focused on identifying different logics, there is a lack of research investigating the dynamics of the institutional context and its impact on the (re)configuration of educational practices in a specific case.

Furthermore, we contribute to identifying situational and temporal factors that promote the emergence, predominance, and/or combination of institutional logics. In doing so, we elucidate how the incorporation of different elements into practices can lead to change. Finally, we seek to broaden the understanding of the drivers and impacts of the transformations that led to the separation of bachelor's degrees in the field of Social Communication.

This article is structured into four sections. Following the introduction, we present the theoretical framework, focusing on institutional logics and the practice perspective. Next, we detail the methodological approach adopted in the research and, finally, we present the findings and discuss the conclusions and contributions.

Institutional Logics and Social Practices in Education

Institutional logics can be understood as the grammar of valuation practices, regularities, rules, and conventions that sustain these moments of valuation and shape their internal and external relations (Friedland; Arjaliés, 2021). In other words, they represent a set of material practices and symbolic constructions that operate as a dynamic triad connecting subject, object, and practices (Friedland; Alford, 1991; Friedland et al., 2014; Friedland; Roose; Mohr, 2025).

Research in the institutional field suggests that each organizational field is governed by institutional logics (Zilber, 2016), which explain why organizations adopt certain practices (Uriarte et al., 2019). These logics structure reality, influence behaviors, and shape interactions among individuals, organizations, and other entities. The coexistence of multiple logics is common, forming complex systems that define practices and the meanings actors assign to them (Pimentel; Slongo-Garcia, 2021).

Multiple institutional logics generate contradictions and complementarities that shape institutional relations. Often, one logic temporarily dominates, competing with others and promoting cycles of recursivity in which logics both shape and are shaped by field actors, prevailing for specific periods (Friedland; Alford, 1991; Goodrick; Reay, 2011; Slongo-Garcia; Matitz, 2024). This reciprocal interaction affects symbolic (meanings) and material (practices) dimensions, influencing the structuring of socially accepted behaviors (Oliveira; Mello, 2016).

Although a single institutional logic may be dominant, the coexistence and blending of elements from different logics is possible, giving rise to the phenomenon of hybridity (Gonçalves; Silva, 2021; Oliveira; Mello, 2016). Hybridity emerges from the combination of elements belonging to different logics, creating new practices that reflect this mix (Glynn; Lounsbury, 2005; Teixeira, Roglio; Ferreira, 2017). In this way, full overlap of logics becomes unnecessary, as actors can adopt and disseminate practices originating from multiple logics (Mars; Lounsbury, 2009; Mutch, 2020).

Institutional hybridity, as Upton and Warshaw (2016) observe, can be seen in North American universities as a way of dealing with tensions, blending market-oriented practices with education to produce what they call academic capitalism. Shields and Watermeyer (2020), in turn, analyze the competition among institutional logics within U.K. universities, showing how individuals rationalize the university itself as an institutional logic amid competing ones. Kunkle (2022) examined U.S. community colleges and their educational incentive programs, demonstrating how actors draw on elements of dominant logics to justify and structure their actions.

While Upton and Warshaw (2016) and Shields and Watermeyer (2020) examine hybridity in developed countries, in Brazil it takes on a different form that is marked by technicist approaches, curricular fragmentation, and standardization, characteristics typical of developing contexts. These particularities enrich debates on the subject by discussing how institutional adaptation occurs under different circumstances. In this sense, analyzing the interactions among institutions, individuals, and organizations within social systems becomes essential to understanding how diverse cultural contexts foster the emergence of distinct logics (Thornton; Ocasio; Lounsbury, 2012).

Institutions influence both symbolic and material dimensions, with practices materializing these influences while remaining open to actors' interpretation. This process leads to the continual incorporation of elements from different logics, resulting in the evolution or creation of new organizational practices. More than mere actions, practices are complex phenomena composed of interrelated subcomponents (Langley; Tsoukas, 2017). Sustained by systems of reproduction and sanction, they manifest in reality as social practices (Schatzki, 1997).

To analyze practices as microfoundations of institutions, it is essential to consider both material and symbolic aspects, as well as the

tensions that may emerge. Understanding how practices are organized requires examining their governance structure, which comprises three key elements: understandings, rules, and teleoaffective structures (Schatzki, 2003). Understandings refer to the shared knowledge and skills necessary to perform a practice. Rules consist of formal or informal guidelines that direct and constrain how practices should be carried out. Teleoaffective structures combine motivations and objectives that give practices meaning and purpose, integrating rational and emotional dimensions. In other words, teleoaffective structures are socially defined sets of goals, actions, and feelings considered appropriate for guiding behavior in a given context. These elements work together to sustain and shape the execution and evolution of social practices across different settings.

Practices do not operate in isolation. Rather, they connect individuals to the institutional context in which they are embedded. For example, Santos and Alcadipani (2015) show that academic activities serve this connecting role by linking individuals to the rules, values, and objectives of institutions. This dialectical relationship between practices and institutions provides a deeper understanding of organizational change and adaptation processes. In this regard, Friedland and Arjaliés (2021) reinforce the importance of studying practices as a key pathway for investigating transformations in educational institutions.

Building upon this literature, this study seeks to advance understanding of hybridity and social practices by applying the institutional logics approach to analyze curricular transformations in Social Communication programs at a public university in Brazil. The next section details the methodology adopted to conduct this investigation.

Methodological Approach

Our study is guided by the following research question: How did the dynamics of institutional logics (re)configure the social practice of education in Social Communication during the separation of bachelor's degrees within a public higher education institution? To address this question, we conducted a case study in a federal higher education institution, here referred to as Alpha. Recognizing the importance of analyzing beyond observable actions, we triangulated data through the examination of historical documents and interviews with individuals directly involved in the period of change. These data sources were selected given the historical nature of institutional phenomena (Oliveira; Mello, 2016).

The choice of the case followed the guidelines of Angrosino (2009) that it should be relevant and present no major obstacles to conducting the research. The case of Alpha presents particular features that enrich the analysis: (i) the development of specific guidelines for the Public Relations (PRT) program, even in the absence of formal guidelines from the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) for the operation of this program; (ii) the centralization of decisions in the hands of course coordinators, minimizing the role of administrative

staff and contrasting with the national movement toward participation and public dialogue; (iii) the exclusion of students from the debate regarding the separation of the bachelor's degrees; and (iv) the creation of administrative mechanisms that reduced the number of elective courses and directly impacted students' education. These actions were autonomous and diverged from what was suggested by the MEC.

For the document analysis, we reviewed 124 documents that included regulations on changes to the undergraduate program and official documents produced at Alpha, such as minutes from collegiate and departmental plenary meetings. Applying the criteria of Merriam (2016), we selected 34 documents, totaling 975 pages, organized as follows: 25 minutes from departmental and collegiate meetings and 9 regulatory documents. The selection of interviewees (Table 1) began with a preliminary interview with a faculty member and the coordinator of the Bachelor's in Social Communication (BSC) program. This first conversation suggested other participants who were willing to contribute to this study, totaling three faculty members, three students, and two administrative staff members, who represent different perspectives on the process of separating the bachelor's degrees and allow for triangulation of the data with the collected documents.

Table 1 – Description of the Interviewees' Profiles

ID	Position	Role in the Development of the Studied Phenomenon
Beit	Associate Professor	Participated in meetings with faculty and students regarding the separation of degree tracks, especially the Bachelor's in Journalism.
Gimel	Associate Professor	Participated in meetings with faculty regarding the separation of the Public Relations bachelor's degree.
Dalet	Assistant Professor	Participated in meetings with faculty, students, and researchers regarding the separation of the Advertising and Propaganda bachelor's degree.
Hei	Student	Student of the Social Communication (BCS) program in the Public Relations track during the degree separation period; their class remained under the previous curriculum.
Vav	Student	Student of the Social Communication (BCS) program in the Advertising and Propaganda track during the degree separation period; their class remained under the previous curriculum.
Zayin	Student	Student of the Social Communication (BCS) program in the Journalism track during the degree separation period; their class remained under the previous curriculum.
Cheit	Administrative Staff	Worked in the Social Communication department's office during the transition process for the degree separation.
Teit	Administrative Staff	Worked in the Social Communication department's office during the transition process for the degree separation.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

It is important to highlight that this study does not aim for statistical generalizations but rather (re)constructs the historicity of Alpha during the period under study based on the interviewees' accounts. The analysis of documents and interviews made it possible to understand the patterns that compose institutional logics, revealing specificities of the field of Social Communication, as well as the changes that occurred in practices and the perceptions of those involved, recorded in memory or written sources. While historical documents allowed us

to understand the institutional and practical changes at Alpha, the interviews complemented the analysis by incorporating subjective perceptions about the process.

Based on the collected data, we structured the analysis into two distinct stages: (I) identification of the ideal types of institutional logics during the period of separation of the bachelor's degrees, and (II) application of the configurational approach to explore the governance structure of practices before and after the separation (Langley; Tsoukas, 2017; Schatzki, 2003). This approach enabled us to understand how practices are situated and transsituated within institutionalized historical contexts. Through configurational analysis, we identified interconnected practices that form a broad and connected structure (Langley; Tsoukas, 2017), demonstrating the changes in the governance structure of practice in relation to the institutional context.

To operationalize the analysis, we performed interpretive content analysis (Flores, 1994), which consists of techniques to understand the information generated by the data through the categorization and analysis of each category (Table 2). The analysis was conducted in four steps: (1) floating reading of the documents, (2) coding of excerpts into units of analysis, (3) categorization of the codes into thematic categories for analysis, and finally, (4) interpretation of the categories.

The analytical categories were formulated after the data coding, grouping similar excerpts into broad categories (Table 2). Subsequently, these categories were analyzed and refined to ensure coherence with the study's objectives. For this refinement, we used as a basis the theoretical dimensions of institutional logics and social practices, demonstrating the occurrence of hybridity and transformations in Alpha's practices.

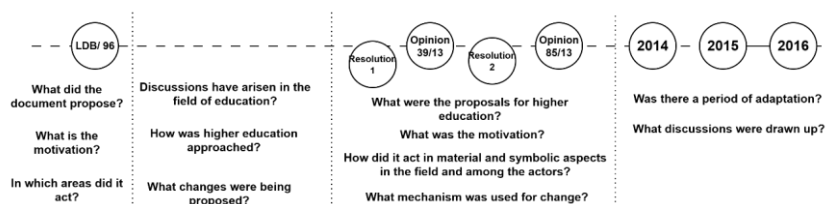
Table 2 – Categories of Analysis

Category (1)	Category (2)	Definition
Institutional Logics	Institutional Dynamics – Multiple Logics – Competition – Dominance – Hybridity	Interactions among multiple logics within the same field, resulting in competition, dominance, and hybridity. Dominance occurs when one logic becomes prevalent over a given period (Oliveira; Mello, 2016). Hybridity refers to the phenomenon in which a new institutional logic emerges by combining elements from other existing logics.
	Institutional Logics in the Social Communication Field	Institutional logics that guide practices, beliefs, and values in the Social Communication field, with utilitarian, social, and normative orientations. These logics were identified through the ideal types model proposed by Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012) and are presented in the data analysis.
Social Education Practice at Alpha	Governance Structure	Understandings: Skills and knowledge required to carry out actions that help assign meaning to different situations experienced by actors.
		Rules: Explicit formulations, principles, precepts, and instructions that prescribe, guide, direct, censor, or instruct what should be said and/or done by practitioners.
		Teleoaffective Structures: A hierarchically organized and "normative" set of ends (objectives, interests), means to achieve them (projects, tasks, actions), and emotions (feelings, affections, moods) that are accepted and advised (Schatzki, 2003).

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

To analyze the data, we considered the institutional logics that influenced the field of Social Communication and, by extension, Alpha during the period of separation of the bachelor's degrees. To detail how we identified these logics, we present in Figure 1 the criteria used in our interpretation.

Figure 1 – Interpretation of Institutional Logics



Source: Prepared by the authors (2024)

With the aim of typifying the institutional logics in the field, we used the ideal types proposed by Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012), identified through the regulations and other collected documents. The ideal types made it possible to identify elements that compose institutional logics with utilitarian, academic, and normative orientations, which influenced the practices observed at Alpha and the formation of a hybrid institutional logic. In addition, through the meeting minutes and interviews, we investigated the pre-existing practices and those that emerged over the analyzed period, comparing them with the previous context. This process allowed us to identify how practices were impacted and transformed in response to institutional dynamics.

Case Characterization

Alpha is a federal university, accredited by the MEC as a public organization, offering a wide range of educational programs. Its activities include on-campus courses in technological education, undergraduate degrees, specialization programs (*lato sensu*), master's and doctoral degrees (*stricto sensu*), as well as Distance Education (EAD) programs at both the undergraduate and graduate (*lato sensu*) levels.

The Bachelor's in Social Communication (BSC) program at Alpha was authorized in the 1960s. In 1969, the BSC minimum curriculum was adopted, aligned with the guidelines of the Federal Council of Education and inspired by UNESCO's teaching model, promoting the training of the so-called "Polyvalent Communicator." However, it was with MEC Resolution 02/84 that the specificities of the Social Communication field were listed, defining exclusive syllabi for each track: Journalism (JOURT), Public Relations (PRT), and Advertising and Propaganda (APT).

In response to the 2002 national curriculum guidelines for Social Communication, established by CNE/CES Resolution 16/2002, Alpha

initiated a curriculum reform process that reduced the number of mandatory courses and increased the number of electives. This process culminated, in 2013, in the autonomy of the JOURT and PRT tracks, which became independent bachelor's degrees in Journalism (BJOUR) and Public Relations (BPR), according to CNE/CES Opinion (*Parecer*) 85/2013. Despite the absence of specific national guidelines for Advertising and Propaganda (BAP), Alpha decided to create a separate bachelor's degree for this area, aligning itself with the changes implemented in the other tracks.

Discussions about curriculum restructuring took place in 2014, following a broader movement in the field, with debates held in departmental plenaries and course councils, leading to the launch of the first entrance exam for the new bachelor's programs in 2016. During the transition period, the Department of Social Communication faced the challenge of managing four distinct programs simultaneously (BSC, BPR, BAP, and BJOUR), each with its own coordination. This transitional scenario extended until the graduation of the last BSC cohort and the completion of the first BJOUR, BPR, and BAP cohorts, between 2020 and 2021. The coexistence of these four programs and the implementation of various adaptive measures created a unique context that serves as the foundation for our analysis of the institutional logics and social practices that shaped education at Alpha.

Institutional Context of the Social Communication Field

1995 marked the beginning of significant changes in higher education in Brazil, driven by a market-oriented approach that prioritized privatizations, the expansion of enrollment capacity, and an increase in student admissions (Saviani, 2010). This expansion, supported by state strategies, affected the academic environment; particularly faculty members, who were encouraged to seek external funding from private entities. This movement also facilitated the transfer of technology and patents from public universities, integrating them into a neoliberal model of education (Catani; Oliveira; Dourado, 2001; Saviani, 2010; Melo; Rodrigues; Alves, 2021). Transformations in the labor market, such as the growing emphasis on professionalization and technical specialization, pressured higher education to adapt in order to meet new societal demands and comply with the Ministry of Education (MEC) guidelines, ensuring resources to sustain ongoing academic activities (Catani; Oliveira; Dourado, 2001; Slongo-Garcia et al., 2024).

Although these changes were presented as responses to societal needs, they reveal public sector decentralization strategies that favored the expansion of the educational market, particularly through the growth of Distance Education (EAD) and increased private investment (Slongo-Garcia et al., 2024). To explain this phenomenon, we analyzed the content of both general education regulations and those specifically related to Social Communication.

In 1996, with the enactment of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education² (LDB), schools and Social Communication departments began debates that led to the flexibilization of curricula,

granting greater autonomy to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to design their pedagogical projects (Saviani, 2010). The mandatory minimum curriculum was eliminated, and by 1999 new curricular guidelines for the field began to be discussed. These changes were formalized in 2002 with CNE/CES Resolution 16/2002, which defined parameters such as the minimum and maximum duration of degree programs.

With the exponential growth of higher education after the LDB, the MEC recognized, in 2009, the need to address emerging imbalances, including the simplification of program names in the Social Communication area. In the same year, the Supreme Federal Court (STF) eliminated the mandatory journalism degree requirement, a decision later extended to Public Relations with Ordinance 595/2010. These changes were justified by the need to adapt to economic and social transformations but sparked controversy among professionals and academics, who criticized the utilitarian view imposed on the field (Silva; Lopes; Batista, 2020; Moraes; Santana, 2023).

In 2013, the MEC issued Opinions (Pareceres) 39/2013 and 85/2013, establishing specific curricular guidelines for Journalism (BJOUR) and Public Relations (BPR) programs. These proposals emphasized technical training and professional practice, drawing criticism from the National Association of Graduate Programs in Communication³ (COMPÓS), which warned about the risks of field fragmentation and the weakening of critical and interdisciplinary education. The National Executive Board of Social Communication Students⁴ (Enecos) expressed similar concerns, fearing negative impacts on research and teacher preparation.

In response to the criticism, the MEC stressed the importance of prioritizing specialized training in degree programs, arguing that excessive emphasis on general content could devalue professional practice and its principles. To overcome these divergences, a new approach was developed with a clearly defined objective: to reinforce professional practice. Based on this, the following curriculum axes were established: (1) humanistic foundation; (2) specific foundation; (3) contextual foundation; (4) professional training; (5) processual application; and (6) laboratory practice. By proposing broad curricular axes, the MEC provided Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) with the flexibility to adapt their curricula according to their specific contexts and needs.

During the curriculum review process, the MEC committee received several suggestions, including: making supervised internships optional; allowing the *Trabalho de Conclusão de Curso* (TCC – final thesis/project) to take a theoretical format; recommending but not requiring the presence of professional journalists on evaluation boards; reducing the minimum workload; and increasing flexibility in distributing academic activity hours. After analysis, the committee decided to keep the supervised internship mandatory and set the minimum course workload at 3,000 hours.

The enactment of Resolution 1/2013, directed at the Bachelor's in Journalism (BJOUR), reinforced the importance of integrating theory and practice to better prepare students for the labor market. Similarly, Resolution 2/2013 outlined the curricular structure for the Bachelor's in Public Relations (BPR), aimed at training professionals to meet the institutional, administrative, and market needs of organizations. The BPR curriculum was divided into two main areas of knowledge (communication and organizations) with a total of 3,200 training hours, including laboratories, supervised internships, complementary activities, and a final thesis/project. The curricular structure was organized into four key training axes: (1) General, (2) Communication, (3) Public Relations, and (4) Supplemental.

The transformations in the Social Communication field reflect tensions among different institutional logics, which legitimized proposals aligned with neoliberalism. These tensions reveal an ongoing dispute between symbolic dimensions, which construct meaning, and material dimensions, which shape practices aimed at persuading society. Understanding the context in which these changes occurred is essential to clarify the dynamics of institutional logics and their impacts. In the next section, we present the ideal types of institutional logics operating within the Social Communication field and analyze their influence on Alpha.

Identification of Ideal Types

The ideal types presented in this section are analytical constructions of reality developed by Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012) based on the concept proposed by Max Weber. This analytical tool is used in studies seeking to identify historical constructions, such as the institutional logics in the field of Social Communication. Within the context of the institutional logics that drove change in the area, the guidelines developed by the MEC generated debates among different spheres of Social Communication, including the profession, academic development, and the autonomy of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Based on the events described in this section, we developed the ideal types of the predominant logics in the field of Social Communication after the period beginning in 1995, as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3 – Ideal Types of Institutional Logics in the Social Communication Field

Ideal Type Components	Social Communication as Profession	Academic Social Communication	Normative Social Communication
Description	Higher education in Social Communication must prepare students for professional practice. Education in this field should equip students with technical competencies to perform their work.	Higher education in Social Communication should foster intellectual preparation, guiding students toward dialogue within the academic sphere. It should also enable the abstraction of complex knowledge and the growth of scientific research.	Social Communication as a higher education program should be regulated, with rules that protect professional practice and academic training. This logic encourages that professional activity and teaching be supported by normative instruments.
Root Metaphor	The professional practice of communication	Communication as an intellectual activity	Social Communication as a result of normative control
Sources of Legitimacy	Positions held	Participation in the academic environment	Compliance with regulations
Sources of Authority	Industry professionals	Academics and intellectuals	Regulatory bodies
Sources of Identity	Professional class	Academic environment	Public discussion spaces
Normative Basis	Belonging to the professional class	Belonging to the intellectual sphere	Belonging to a regulated activity
Focus of Attention	Relationships with industry professionals	Relationships with researchers	Attention to issued regulations
Strategic Orientation	Increase participation as a professional	Increase participation in intellectual debates	Increase participation in public discussions
Mechanisms of Informal Control	Professional associations and unions	Professors and academics	Public debates promoted by various actors
Economic System	Capitalism	Academic capitalism	Normative capitalism

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

The Social Communication as Profession logic is characterized by practices that influenced education with the aim of preparing professionals in the field with practical knowledge. This logic is metaphorically represented by professional practice, under which the academic seeks education with the sole and exclusive purpose of receiving resources in exchange for their work. The legitimacy of this type of logic lies in the professional position held, with the professional class serving as its core identity. In this logic, control is exercised through professional entities such as unions and other associations.

The Academic Social Communication institutional logic is centered on the intellectual preparation of students within the academic space. It represents a logic in which the abstraction of concepts and the advancement of scientific knowledge are fundamental to the teaching of Social Communication. Its metaphor frames communication as an intellectual activity, with legitimacy derived from the participation of actors within the academic sphere. Control over practices and behaviors in this logic is exercised by professors and other academics.

The Normative Social Communication logic prioritizes the regulation of professional and academic activities in the field of Social Communication. Its metaphor positions Social Communication as a result of regulation, while legitimacy stems from compliance with these regulations. Authority in this logic lies with the sanctioning actors—those responsible for drafting and approving the regulations—while informal control is exercised through public debate.

Placing the identified logics within these ideal types, it becomes evident that, in the process of separating the Journalism (JOURT) and

Public Relations (PRT) tracks, these logics directly influenced institutional decisions, encouraging the revision of practices and behaviors. The professionalization movement of the period was guided by the dominant Social Communication as Profession logic. Under this logic, debates emerged around the role of the social communicator in different areas of knowledge—such as journalism and public relations. From this perspective, the profession needed to be fragmented to achieve more effective professional performance.

The coexistence of multiple institutional logics directly impacted the field. For instance, when deliberating on the curricular guidelines that govern higher education, the APT track did not receive specific guidelines in normative documents. For JOURT, the decision was made by a committee that chose to disregard some of the suggestions received and applied a similar approach to PRT, as detailed in Opinion 1:

The CNE/CES Commission, formed to analyze the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Undergraduate Journalism Program, presented its proposal to the Higher Education Chamber of the National Education Council during working meetings. After in-depth discussion, the majority of CES/CNE council members considered it more appropriate to maintain the Supervised Internship as mandatory and, as a result, to adjust the minimum course workload. This position was accepted by the CNE/CES Commission (PARECER 1, 2013, p. 6, our translation).

Despite the participation of multiple actors in the debates, the dominant Social Communication as Profession logic guided the committee's opinion. However, the presence of the Academic logic also influenced the functioning of the bachelor's degrees, for example, in the courses, axes, and guidelines defined by HEIs through extensive debate on academic autonomy. The implementation of these decisions was carried out by the commission, resulting in Resolutions 1 and 2 of 2013 for the BJOJR and BPR programs, respectively.

The Normative Social Communication was observed in normative documents, serving as a sanctioning mechanism for curricular changes. However, these regulations were permeated by the influence of other logics, incorporating elements related to both professional practice and academia. The dominance of the Social Communication as Profession logic resulted in a process often described as technicist—that is, the training of communication professionals became centered on technical skills, to the detriment of critical and reflective development. Consequently, decisions regarding the degree tracks treated human capital as a resource for generating economic value. This approach runs counter to the mission of education to encourage debate and reflection—central aspects of the Social Communication field, which has historically valued dialogue and critical thinking.

The autonomy granted by the LDB to private HEIs allowed them to adapt their Social Communication programs to the demands of the professional market, thereby minimizing the social role of the communicator. Against this backdrop, the next section examines a public university, referred to as Alpha, where it is possible to identify the application of institutional logics and their impact at the practice level.

Institutional Dynamics and Alpha's Response

Characterization of the Social Practice of Education at Alpha

Alpha also needed to adapt to institutional demands during the separation of the bachelor's degrees under discussion. At certain points, changes in the organization's practices were necessary, as highlighted in Table 4, which presents the governance structure of the education practice at Alpha.

Table 4 – Governance Structure of the Educational Practice at Alpha

Understandings	Each group of actors involved in the practice of education possesses the skills necessary for this practice. For example, faculty members hold academic expertise related to the content and specificities of their courses; administrative staff have administrative skills; program coordinators possess organizational abilities and an understanding of the knowledge areas for each program; and students need study and learning skills.
Rules	The practice of education is guided by instruments that can be classified as external (sanctioned by Brazilian educational regulatory bodies) and internal (manuals, resolutions, and other instruments produced by the University and its departments).
Teleoaffective Structures	Different actors experience emotions, feelings, and perceptions in diverse ways. Although the changes sparked resistance and frustration at all levels within Alpha, the educational practice was guided by institutionally shaped objectives to respond to social demands. The means to achieve these goals were coordinated differently among the actors.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

The governance structure of the education practice at Alpha was analyzed by considering its subcomponents. A set of essential elements was identified for each group. Faculty members participate in pedagogical discussions, prepare and teach classes, develop pedagogical maturity and creativity, and evaluate students. Students select courses, attend classes, interact with faculty, engage in projects, and complete assessments. Administrative staff, in turn, play a supporting role for students, faculty, and program coordinators. These practices are interconnected through the actors and the constitutive elements of the academic environment.

Faculty Participation in the Practice of Education

Interviewees highlighted the importance of professors' participation in collegiate meetings, where teaching strategies are discussed, mandatory and elective curriculum components are defined, requests for leave are addressed, and administrative issues are considered. However, the presence of institutional logics in the process of separating the bachelor's degrees led to significant changes in these meetings. As Greenwood et al. (2011) argue, institutional logics manifest through organizational practices. At Alpha, we observed that meetings were adapted: instead of general gatherings involving all department faculty,

meetings began to be planned and held separately for each program. Consequently, discussions that once focused on planning a single program and addressing academic aspects shifted to include topics such as the reallocation of courses and the number of students enrolled in each degree.

Practices became heterogeneous to accommodate different institutional tensions, as actors themselves construct practices to respond to institutional dynamics and seek legitimacy (Lee; Lounsbury, 2015). In this context, meetings began to include rules established by the committee responsible for the separation of the bachelor's degrees and by the MEC, demonstrating how Alpha incorporated institutional logics into its daily routines. As professor Beit noted: "[...] the debates had already existed since 1998, [...] we held an entire discussion (collegiate) to first define what the common curriculum would be, including defining codes, workload, syllabi and courses, and the scheduling of courses [...].". Thus, the meetings of the collegiate and the programs that discussed the new guidelines were documented in nine minutes between 2014 and 2016.

Nevertheless, as they experience the institutional context, actors may produce heterogeneous practices to meet the various logics of the field (Cotrim; Ryngelblum, 2023; Greenwood et al., 2011). The practice of faculty meetings at Alpha expanded to other spaces, showing how actors sought to maintain beliefs and values already embedded in the organization. Discussions extended beyond the internal environment into external arenas, such as academic conferences, aiming to gather opinions that reflected societal demands at the time. Professor Hei described how new elements were incorporated into the practice of education: "Meetings were called by the coordination and one by CACOS (Academic Center of Social Communication), they were held in the auditorium, basically presenting the changes and answering questions."

Beyond modifications to practices, distinct perceptions among interviewees were evident. Many mentioned the minimization of different actors' participation, generating dissatisfaction regarding the decisions made. Professor Vav, for instance, reported being informed about the changes by colleagues, expressing frustration with his limited involvement in the process.

In addition to meetings, lesson preparation is a core component of the Social Communication education practice. For their classes, faculty members consult the Course Pedagogical Project (PPC), plan topics, activities, and assessments, review the academic calendar, define course objectives, identify the necessary competencies, and develop lesson plans. In this process, it is possible to observe how the prevailing field logics, particularly the professional logic, influence practice. Professor Beit reinforces this perspective by mentioning the incorporation of "new competencies" following the separation of the bachelor's degrees. These competencies were updated to align academic training with market demands, prioritizing the practical application of knowledge acquired at the university. Hei also highlighted the revision

and introduction of new courses, now directed toward the professional practice of each bachelor's degree.

However, actors may perceive these changes in different ways. Gimel, for example, observed that the courses they taught did not change, but there was a significant alteration in lesson preparation due to the curriculum restructuring: "I feel a difference; the main course I teach [...] used to be offered in the third year, and now it's offered in the second, and I think that causes a difference [...] because of the curriculum." This change in course offering, without altering content planning, illustrates how curricular adjustments can influence the execution of pedagogical practices. In addition, Gimel highlighted a modification in the design of interdisciplinary projects, now more closely aligned with what is being taught at the time, indicating that seemingly small variations, such as the timing of a course, can significantly impact the development of academic projects.

Professor Dalet noted that the changes did not have a significant impact on him, although his teaching workload increased. He also mentioned that the Advertising and Propaganda (BAP) program adopted an approach similar to the Journalism (BJOUR) and Public Relations (BPR) programs, incorporating elements from those degrees. The modifications aimed to meet a specific professional profile, maintaining the practice of preparing lessons while integrating new guidelines and a market-oriented approach to respond to institutional dynamics.

With changes in lesson planning, the activity of pedagogical maturity and creativity was expanded to adapt to the new curriculum. This adaptation involved analyzing the professional market, adjusting teaching to the practical demands of the field, and evaluating pedagogical innovations to determine their relevance and applicability in the classroom. Beit explained this dynamic, highlighting how these elements influence pedagogical practice: "[...] I keep thinking all the time if what I'm doing is working or not. For example, [...] this year I wanted to use active methodologies, make the student the protagonist; some things worked and some didn't."

In the previous curriculum configuration, integrating professional practice into classroom discussions was not formally established. However, the curriculum review promoted changes in existing courses. This adjustment influenced how maturity and creativity are applied in lesson preparation. Dalet emphasized: "[...] the routine of lesson preparation, yes, there I feel a difference, because we started to have several new courses, with another configuration, another syllabus, and other programmatic content that we didn't have before [...]."

The practice of teaching underwent changes, with a reduction in the exposure to theoretical content, favoring activities aligned with market demands and the inclusion of courses focused on professional practice. From the faculty perspective, there were criticisms about curriculum fragmentation and the creation of short-duration courses: "[...] there are too many courses, and many courses with a small workload

[...]” (Gimel). However, from the students’ perspective, the implemented changes reflected market requirements. Student Hei shared the following observation:

The new curricula, in my view, value each of the programs much more individually; this was evident simply by comparing the freshmen’s courses with ours. In addition, they are programs much more focused on professional practice, while ours was geared toward research, which is not necessarily bad, but the new curriculum prepares students better for the job market, and that’s something I felt was missing in mine.

Beit mentions the comparison made by students with a private institution, where journalism is taught with a practical emphasis from the very beginning of the program, signaling students’ interest in a curriculum that prioritizes professional practice over theoretical discussions. Students argue that theoretical abstractions gain meaning through practice, suggesting the need for a comprehensive evaluation of classes to better align teaching with professional expectations. As Beit summarizes:

[...] a course I used to teach as an elective—and I think it should be mandatory—became part of my regular teaching load [...] so things changed; my personal work organization has changed [...] I prefer the courses I’m teaching today. [We] are a relatively new field, and pedagogical maturity is something that builds up over time; this (the separation of the bachelor’s degree tracks) led us to a rapid process of pedagogical maturity [...] this year I wanted to use active methodologies, making the student the protagonist.

The interviews also revealed changes in pedagogical practices, with the skills required in the Social Communication (SC) degree programs leading to a stronger market-oriented focus. This shift sparked debates about traditional teaching methods, which favored theoretical abstractions, in favor of a more practice-driven approach, while still valuing reflection on action. Hei viewed this modification positively:

The programs, in essence, have been enhanced. This is because now each of them requires professors who are properly trained in the specific area, which is the minimum one would expect from a higher education program. Until that point, the professors teaching PR (Public Relations) were mostly journalists. This does not necessarily disqualify them, but on many occasions, I saw professors literally forget the name of our program, which, for me, was simply unacceptable.

As can be observed in several accounts, the dynamics of institutional logics led to adaptations in various practices. Faculty members chose to include approaches that brought students closer to the professional market, adapting an existing practice to align with the professional logic. As highlighted by other authors (Cotrim; Ryngelblum, 2023; Greenwood et al., 2011), this represents a response behavior to the institutional context, in which the organization produces heterogeneous and modified practices as a reaction.

It was also possible to identify how rules, understandings, and perceptions changed in an environment influenced by institutional logics. As Santos and Alcadipani (2015) argue, academic practices connect individuals to the institutional context, producing responses to in-

stitutional dynamics. At Alpha, faculty members reported a shift in understanding that they should adapt to the professional market, as well as the introduction of new rules with the separation of the bachelor's degrees and the establishment of program-specific meetings. Perceptions manifested in different ways as changes unfolded, ranging from agreement, frustration, and indifference to enthusiasm.

However, to fully understand the governance structure of the Social Communication education practice in relation to institutional logics, it is necessary to examine the roles of other actors, such as students and administrative staff.

Participation of Students and Administrative Staff in the Practice of Education

The changes generated by the adaptations in the programs led to the need to reassess the profile and training of professors. However, students faced challenges with these changes, especially with the reduction in the number of elective courses available in the department. Zayin, a student in the program, reported that: "[...] every semester it was a fight with the coordination office, there weren't enough electives for everyone.". Thus, the new curricular structure created competition for course spots and difficulties for those needing to retake courses, ultimately affecting students' educational trajectories.

Despite these problems, Zayin highlighted the benefits of the curricular reform, appreciating the introduction of innovative educational experiences, greater accessibility to extension projects, and more relevant and contemporary courses, considering these changes positive for the program. The interaction with professors and coordinators, however, revealed divergent opinions, although the changes resulted in a learning environment more closely aligned with students' expectations regarding the applicability and relevance of the knowledge acquired.

Alpha did not agree to make its curriculum entirely oriented toward professionalization. With the aim of fostering scientific research among students, Alpha included the research lines from its graduate programs (*stricto sensu*) in its PPC. In addition, it maintained courses related to the humanistic axis, while also encouraging theoretical debates related to each bachelor's program.

In administrative activities, Alpha centralized actions within program coordinations. Administrative staff (Teit and Cheit) reported that their advisory functions for faculty, students, and coordinators remained unchanged. They attributed this to the centralization of changes within the coordinations. In this way, Alpha established a direct communication channel with students to resolve curricular issues. However, there were distinct perceptions, as illustrated by Teit: "It hit everyone like a bomb and there were deadlines [...] the (head of department) centralized everything in himself [...]." (Teit)

This centralization altered communication between students and professors, while also highlighting the lack of personnel and administrative changes, which were noticed by both students and faculty, as described by professor Gimel:

[...] the process was very rushed [...] the difficulty professors had in adapting to the new courses, because the university has that [...] that course belongs to them and they'll never give it up, it was very complicated and it still is complicated.

In general, it is possible to identify that, as a result of institutional dynamics, some elements of the social practice of education at Alpha were modified. The governance structure, understandings, rules, and the teleoaffective structure made it possible to understand the practice from the perspective of professors, students, and administrative staff interviewed. However, how Alpha managed the institutional dynamics must be further explored, as discussed in the next section.

Hybridity: alpha's response to institutional dynamics

Multiple institutional logics operated within the Social Communication field during the separation of the bachelor's degrees, with the Social Communication as Profession logic acting as the dominant one. Specifically at Alpha, the period following field-level debates allowed us to identify the organization's response through hybridity, combining elements of the three logics identified in this study and forming a regional hybrid logic. While Alpha responded to institutional logics and modified its Social Communication education practices, it did so by integrating elements from distinct institutional logics.

Regarding hybridity, other studies have sought to explain the formation of hybrid institutional logics in specific contexts (Upton; Warshaw, 2016; Slongo-Garcia; Matitz, 2024). However, we aim to advance the understanding of what motivates the adoption of these logics. Our explanation starts from the observation that a public higher education institution (Alpha) positioned itself against certain changes, as noted in interviews with professors and in meeting minutes, especially regarding technicist and market-oriented approaches, since these could negatively impact other areas, such as academic research. Nevertheless, to respond to the demands of the dominant Social Communication as Profession logic, Alpha sought to incorporate practices adapted to the market and aligned with the organization's reality.

The justification for hybridity lies in the realization that, to operate within the Social Communication field, Alpha understood it needed to adapt to achieve legitimacy. Organizations seek legitimacy to be recognized by society, as Rossoni (2016) defines: "an organization is considered legitimate when its elements are supported by structural principles accepted within the social system." In the separation of the bachelor's degrees, beyond Alpha, we observed several actors, such as other higher education institutions, associations, and regulatory bodies, also striving for legitimacy, resulting in different perceptions and narratives regarding the proposed changes.

Following the approval of changes to the Social Communication bachelor's programs and the need to be recognized as a legitimate organization, Alpha adopted the practices proposed by the MEC and incorporated socially shared beliefs and values, such as carrying out the degree separation mandated by regulations and rethinking academic curricula. By implementing the proposed changes, Alpha complied with formal norms, but legitimacy extends beyond compliance; it also depends on social acceptance, which is built on practices and cultural values promoted by the organization itself, not merely official rules.

Although the pursuit of legitimacy served as a key driver for Alpha, other stakeholders needed to be considered in shaping academic practice. In this scenario, Alpha chose to maintain practices already socially accepted, seeking the support of groups with which it had strong ties, such as students and professors. Thus, the institution adopted a hybrid institutional logic that enabled dialogue and regional support through strategies such as debates with stakeholders involved in the degree separation and the creation of practices that addressed both professional/market demands and academic needs. In this way, the organization embraced an institutional logic shaped by democratic movements present in the debates about the proposed changes.

This discussion reveals the emergence of a regional hybrid logic, raising debates about the recursivity between organizations, the field, and the institutional context. The recursivity addressed in this article is a phenomenon rarely explored in institutional studies and can be defined as the capacity of actors to act upon the institutional context (Slongo-Garcia; Matitz, 2024), thereby deconstructing taken-for-granted meanings (York et al., 2016; Cloutier; Langley, 2013). Although we do not aim to discuss the intentionality behind recursivity, our analysis suggests that the quest for legitimacy in higher education institutions may lead them to adopt hybrid logics—a reasoning we defend based on our findings. Alpha incorporated elements from various logics to respond to its institutional context, adopting external institutional demands while adapting them to its own organizational needs.

However, it is important to add what some authors (Macedo; Cedro; Batitucci, 2024; Huang, 2024) point out regarding inequalities shaped by the institutional context. As a federal public organization, Alpha used hybridity as a bridge connecting the market and academia. Yet, other educational institutions—particularly in the private sector—may lack the legitimacy or resources Alpha had to adopt a hybrid logic. Although this study did not focus on the mechanisms of inequality, we observed that Alpha resisted and found legal pathways to insert academic elements into its curriculum and oppose technicist models. In different realities, educational organizations may face greater difficulty in adopting a hybrid institutional logic.

At the practice level, it is possible to observe that Alpha developed autonomous practices to structure its Social Communication degrees in a way that mirrored the segmentation into three distinct bachelor's programs—Journalism, Public Relations, and Advertising and Propaganda. However, the organization did not fully yield to the market-

dominant logic—a challenge that other institutions in different contexts might face due to limited resources and student resistance. Alpha agreed that programs needed to be updated for the professional market. We identified a pursuit of a curriculum aligned with market-valued professional competencies, but without fully adhering to a technicist model of education. The dynamics of institutional hybridity resulted in a diverse set of legitimate elements, with pedagogical maturity and creativity remaining fundamental.

Even with market demands, professors sought to preserve theoretical content through humanistic and contextual approaches, finding space to integrate these practices. In this sense, activities such as post-class evaluation began to include new elements, focusing on self-assessment by faculty, analysis of teaching situations that did not work well, identification of strengths and weaknesses, and possible improvements to the teaching and learning process. This process reflects the adoption of a hybrid institutional logic in pedagogical evaluation, combining elements of the academic logic of Social Communication with aspects of the professional logic. We refer to this approach as Multidisciplinary Social Communication, which seeks to reconcile and dialogue with the normative, market, and professional demands of the field while preserving the regional specificities of the organization.

The elements modified in Alpha's meetings reflected the dynamics of institutional logics, showing a possible conflict between the Social Communication as Profession and the Academic Social Communication logics. Through departmental and collegiate meetings, the centralization of decisions among professors and coordinators reduced the impact on administrative staff. In these meetings, the focus was on designing a reflective, theoretical, practical, and critical curriculum. To achieve this, the regional hybrid logic worked to establish guidelines for all degree programs, even when the MEC had not issued them for every program. Thus, within the organization itself, actors discussed and deliberated on the best way to structure their degrees, aiming to protect academic research, maintain professional updating, and foster a critical perspective on the concepts taught in classrooms, resulting in changes to their practices (Table 5).

Table 5 – Summary of Impacts on Practices

Group	Essential Practices	Identified Changes
Faculty	- Participate in pedagogical discussions - Prepare and teach classes - Develop pedagogical maturity and creativity - Evaluate classes	- Meetings held by program instead of departmental meetings - Planning aligned with market-driven competencies - Application of creativity in the teaching and learning process - Inclusion of new rules and guidelines by the MEC
Students	- Choose courses - Attend classes - Interact with faculty - Participate in projects - Take evaluations	- Reduction in the availability of elective courses - Reduced participation in the curricular change process
Staff	- Assist students, faculty, and program coordinations	- Centralization of changes and activities within program Coordinations

Source: Prepared by the authors (2024).

In summary, within Alpha's environment, which was dominated by formal guidelines, the emergence of a regional hybrid institutional logic led to significant transformations in academic practice. This logic not only introduced tensions and divisions among participants but also challenged established practices, leading to adjustments, contradictions, and even the creation of new practices. The adaptation to the hybrid logic by professors, students, and administrative staff at Alpha illustrates the formation of a new order, in which elements once guided exclusively by Normative Social Communication, such as laws and regulations influencing Social Communication, began to coexist with professional and academic values.

Alpha demonstrated disagreement with certain proposed changes, arguing that some alterations aimed primarily at aligning education with the market to obtain legitimacy. The institution employed recursivity by combining practices from different logics and developing a regionally specific hybrid institutional logic. To subvert certain rules it disagreed with, Alpha preserved practices associated with other logics, such as academic research, understanding that Social Communication degrees should maintain practices not exclusively market-driven. The hybrid institutional logic enabled the organization to act recursively and legitimately, using combined practices that met institutional demands while safeguarding its own academic mission.

Final Remarks

Our research explored the dynamics of institutional logics and their implications for the reconfiguration of educational practice within the context of the separation of Social Communication bachelor's degrees at a public higher education institution in Brazil. Through a case study at a higher education institution (HEI) referred to as Alpha,

we identified that the hybridization of institutional logics enabled the adaptation of educational practices while preserving normative, academic, and market-oriented elements.

Our study contributes specifically to the understanding of hybrid institutional logics within the Brazilian educational context—a phenomenon that has been explored primarily in universities in the United States and the United Kingdom. We highlight that hybridity allows organizations to adapt and respond to institutional dynamics. In a developing country such as Brazil, hybridity becomes a strategy to reconcile conflicting institutional demands. This study advances the theory of institutional logics by demonstrating the formation of a regional hybrid logic as a specific response to educational contexts in developing nations. By integrating professional, academic, and normative elements, Alpha preserved its academic autonomy and faculty freedom.

Although the separation of Social Communication degrees was debated by scholars, professionals, and public policymakers, its foundation lies in the neoliberal reforms that have influenced higher education in Brazil since the 1996 educational reforms. Godim and Johann (2021) reinforce this argument by pointing out that since 1964, economic and political goals have often outweighed social objectives, particularly affecting public educational institutions. The model impacting the Social Communication field emphasizes institutional budgeting, business profitability, and utilitarian training to supply professionals to the labor market. In contrast, it precarizes faculty work, reduces teaching autonomy, and undermines the critical reflection required by the profession. Furthermore, the market-oriented focus has resulted in the loss of interdisciplinarity, weakening students' critical potential and innovation in the field.

A similar pattern to the Brazilian case can be seen in HEIs in the United States and the United Kingdom, where neoliberal reforms have affected educational organizations, implementing technicist teaching models to serve the labor market and sustain budgets and private investments (Upton; Warshaw, 2016; Warshaw; Upton, 2020; Warshaw; Hearn, 2022; Kunkle, 2022). However, while technical training has prevailed in Brazil, in other contexts there are stronger efforts to balance market demands with the continuity and autonomy of educational institutions. Additionally, the need to respond to social and economic changes and to prepare students for labor market demands created tensions and motivated the separation of programs, shifting emphasis from theoretical education to a more practice-oriented approach—a change often criticized by experts for reducing critical and reflective training.

By understanding institutional logics in the Brazilian educational context, we can reflect on how these logics foster inequality. Alpha leveraged a hybrid institutional logic that enabled it to balance market and academic demands. However, we must question whether this hybrid logic is equally feasible for other types of institutions, such as private universities, which often yield more readily to professional market-oriented logics. Recent studies (Macedo; Cedro; Batitucci, 2024; Huang,

2024) indicate that unequal applications of institutional logics can occur within society. Conversely, our study suggests that the availability and compatibility of certain logics with specific types of organizations can reinforce inequality, influencing organizational responses, practice development, and even resource access. This is a point that warrants further exploration in future research.

We also contribute to the understanding of how institutional dynamics significantly impacted the microfoundations of educational practice in Social Communication, through changes in both symbolic and material elements. Adaptation to the hybrid institutional logic led to shifts in shared meanings and modifications in key elements of educational practices, such as lesson preparation and evaluation.

Importantly, our study highlights the emergence of the hybrid institutional logic we refer to as Multidisciplinary Social Communication, underscoring the importance of preserving spaces for critical debate and reflection among faculty and program coordinators, even within a market-dominated context. The modified practices reflected not only changes in the governance structure of educational practices and the rules imposed by regulatory bodies such as the MEC but also shifts in student expectations and satisfaction, signaling a reconfiguration of Social Communication education.

Additionally, our work sheds light on the tensions between the market-oriented Social Communication as Profession logic and critical, reflective education, contributing to understanding the challenges faced by public HEIs, which lack ties to private budgets and profitability pressures.

From a practical perspective, our findings suggest the need for a careful, public debate on educational policy, considering education as a democratic, critical, and reflective space. For academic coordinators and institutional leaders in public HEIs, the study offers insights into managing institutional tensions while preserving the organization's identity and autonomy.

As for limitations, this case study analyzed only one department within a single university, which constrains the generalizability of our findings to the described context. Future research could explore comparative cases across different institutions and countries, both public and private. Additionally, we acknowledge the complexity of institutional logics and their interactions, and our analysis could be enriched by studies investigating other potentially influential logics. Such studies could offer a deeper understanding of the interplay between competing or complementary logics and their impact on educational practices.

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Notes

- 1 Original: Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação
- 2 Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional
- 3 Associação Nacional dos Programas de Pós-Graduação em Comunicação
- 4 Executiva Nacional dos Estudantes de Comunicação Social

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Availability of research data: the dataset supporting the results of this study is published in this article.

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