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Analytical Lens for Investigating CSOs and State Relations: The Contributions of Coproduction and Institutional Logics Perspectives

https://doi.org/10.1515/npf-2023-0005
Received January 23, 2023; accepted July 26, 2023

Abstract: The 1990s saw what Della Porta (2020. “Building Bridges: Social Movements and Civil Society in Times of Crisis.” Voluntas 31 (5): 938–48) calls the renaissance of civil society, from which studies on the relations between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the state grew exponentially. Based on this context, this theoretical essay aims to demonstrate how the theories of coproduction and institutional logics can be used in a complementary way to understand these relations. We use a qualitative methodology of extensive literature review and study of the proposed concepts. We identify six contributions of this complementary use: (i) CSOs-state coproduction processes take place on institutional fields, (ii) Coproduction encompasses the mobilization of institutional logics’ material and symbolic resources, (iii) Structural mechanisms influence coproduction, (iv) Institutional logics bring both collaboration and conflict dimensions into coproduction processes, (v) Coproduction helps operationalize studies in institutional logics, and (vi) Institutional logics influence coproduced results. We hope that our theoretical–analytical contributions can be applied in empirical studies and improved in the future.

Keywords: civil society organizations; coproduction; institutional logics; relationships; state

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1 Introduction

State-centered theories were prevalent in the field of Social Sciences and Public Administration for a long period. In the 1980s, the main understanding was that after World War I, the state became the dominant organization in society, with autonomy and structure based on the control and maintenance of order (Skocpol 1985). In the following decade, however, Friedland and Alford (1991) published their seminal work “Bringing Society Back In”, undoing the prevailing understanding and bringing up issues such as governance and political participation. It witnessed the renaissance of civil society (Della Porta 2020), from which studies on the relations between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the state have grown exponentially. They are done through multiple lenses: partnerships, networks, collaboration, cooperation, coproduction, etc. (Osborne 2009).

Coproduction stands out for this paper. It is the process of producing goods, services, or policies in which actors from different organizations participate (Ostrom and Baugh 1973). Coproduced processes essentially build value, beyond outputs, for the relationships established among all actors (coproducers) in producing the good, service, or policy (Alford 2015).

Friedland and Alford’s (1991) work also brought to the discussion a new concept: the one of institutional logics. Institutional logics are conceived as macro components of the institutional relationships that make up institutional orders: large subsystems that order the institutions of society (Friedland and Alford 1991; Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012). They are sets of socially constructed historical patterns from material practices, values, beliefs, rules, and assumptions that underlie the material and immaterial relationships within institutions (Thornton and Ocasio 2008).

We believe that these two concepts can be combined to enrich analysis, and some of their gaps overcome. In this sense, through this theoretical essay, based on a broad literature review, we aim to demonstrate how the theories of coproduction and institutional logics can be used in a complementary way to understand the relations between CSOs and the state.

Research that jointly mobilizes these two pieces of literature has already been produced (Andreassen 2018; Baker and Irving 2016; Holanda and Mendonça 2022; McMullin 2016; Minkiewicz, Bridson, and Evans 2016; Rasmussen, Skjerning, and Burau 2023). Among them, we mobilized, to illustrate our propositions, the works of Holanda and Mendonça (2022), McMullin (2016), and Rasmussen, Skjerning, and Burau (2023). The other papers (Andreassen 2018; Baker and Irving 2016; Minkiewicz, Bridson, and Evans 2016), in turn, emphasize coproduction at an individual, consumer/volunteer level with an organization. Our work differs from them in that our
focus is on how coproduction and institutional logics can be applied to understand group-level CSO-state relations (Brudney and England 1983).

Doing that, we meet what is proposed by Abramson, Kim, and Toepler (2021) as one of the main topics of interest in the debate about the nonprofit sector, by discussing the “various dimensions of the government/nonprofit relationship” (Abramson, Kim, and Toepler 2021, 401) through complementary, supplementary, and/or adverse relationships.

The essay is divided into five sections in addition to this introduction. First, our methodology is presented. In the following two sections, we summarize the concepts of coproduction and institutional logics. Then, we place the contributions of the complementary use of these two theoretical lenses. Finally, there are the final remarks.

2 Methodology

A broad narrative literature review was carried out regarding the theoretical lenses, which were studied and analyzed in depth. To avoid possible biases, some of the techniques for narrative review based on lessons from systematic reviews (Haddaway et al. 2015) were applied, these being:

- consider only papers indexed in recognized bases: Web of Science and Google Scholar;
- define key search terms: “coproduction” and “institutional logics”;
- search for seminal texts from both pieces of literature.

The main references mobilized on coproduction covered: its first definition (Ostrom 1993; Ostrom and Baugh 1973), its redefinition based on the relationships established between coproducers (Boyle and Harris 2009), the approach to be used in this paper (Brudney and England 1983; Nabatchi, Sancino, and Sicilia 2017), the delimitation of what is not coproduction (Bovaird and Loeffler 2012; Boyle and Harris 2009), and the generation of value from coproduced processes (Bovaird and Loeffler 2012). In turn, the references on institutional logics was about: their definition (Friedland and Alford 1991; Jay 2013; Thornton and Ocasio 2008; Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012), their types of interaction (Besharov and Smith 2014; Lee and Lounsbury 2015), the role of institutions and new institutionalism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Scott 2014), and institutional field (Scott 2014; Wooten and Hoffman 2008).

After this first stage of the literature review, the propositions brought in this theoretical essay were established. Suddaby (2010, 2014) states some basic elements in the construct building, that we follow:
Definition: the definitions of coproduction and institutional logics were studied and explored, and are presented in Sections 3 and 4 of this paper, to bring more clarity to these concepts and, consequently, also to the assumptions based on them;

Scope conditions/contextual circumstances: the contextual circumstances of application of the constructs are established based on the institutional logics literature, which is theorized from contemporary capitalist society;

Semantic relationship: the semantic relationship of the assumptions is given based on their exploration and explanation in Section 5 of the paper;

Coherence/logical consistency: The constructs’ coherence and logical consistency are based on the frequent return to the theoretical lenses of coproduction and institutional logics and the search for cases in the consolidated literature that exemplify them.

3 The Coproduction Concept in the Governance Literature

During the 1970s, Elinor Ostrom highlighted the role of citizens and the collaboration between different organizations in public services, defining the concept of coproduction. Coproduction expresses the idea of mutual and active engagement between actors from various organizations. It seeks to overcome the distorted views of the role of the state as the sole provider of the public good (Ostrom and Baugh 1973). This joint action generates synergy, allowing results that would not be achieved if each of the parties acted in isolation. Through coproduction, it would be possible to bring more efficiency to the public sector (Ostrom 1993, 1996; Parks et al. 1981).

Especially since the 2000s, the concept was rethought by several authors, who expanded its determination as they brought to light the issue of the relationships established between coproducers (Alford 2015; Bovaird 2007; Boyle and Harris 2009; Brandsen and Honingh 2015; Frank et al. 1996; Poocharoen and Ting 2015). These authors seek to rethink the focus previously given by Ostrom and her colleagues to the efficiency of coproduction processes, based on a still economistic lens, establishing that “If human relationships are removed from the delivery of public services in the name of ‘efficiency’ – either between professionals and users or between users and friends and neighbors – then this undermines innovation, flexibility, and learning, and the ability of any public service organization to achieve its objectives creatively and effectively” (Boyle and Harris 2009, 8).

In this vein, what is coproduced must be considered, beyond the results dimension, also for its outcomes and values. From the coproduced activity, the
construction of value could occur in five dimensions: (i) value directly for the user; (ii) value for larger groups, usually of people close to the user; (iii) social value, fostering interaction and social cohesion; (iv) value for the environment, which ensures the sustainability of the policies that go through it; and (v) political value, which supports the democratic process (Bovaird and Loeffler 2012).

In this sense, coproduction has positive impacts both individually and collectively (Bovaird and Loeffler 2008), generating effectiveness, efficiency, and democratization for the course of public policy, satisfaction and involvement for the coproducers, as well as social cohesion (Voorberg, Bekkers, and Tummers 2015).

In their latest publication, Bovaird and Loeffler (2012, 42) state that “coproduction can be seen to be either a pathway to improving public services or publicly valued outcomes”. They started to adopt an understanding that public value refers to the balance between quality in results and prioritization using principles of public governance.

Several studies characterize different activities as coproduced. We chose to consider Bovaird and Loeffler’s (2012) definition according to which coproduction refers to processes in which coproducers make “better use of each other’s assets and resources to achieve better outcomes or improved efficiency”. In the case of CSOs-state relations, for coproduction to occur, both producers have to participate cooperatively and actively (Brudney and England 1983), making the processes occur synergistically. If only the state participates, conforming to the traditional provision, or only CSOs participate, conforming to self-organized provision, there is no coproduction.

The performance of organized community-based collectives began to be discussed by Brudney and England (1983), who separate coproduction between individuals, groups, and collectives. The performance of third sector organizations in coproduction processes, in turn, has been studied focusing on their role in the provision of public services. It was done from the perspective of the CSOs-citizens relations in this process of service production (Brandsen and Pestoff 2006; Verschuere, Brandsen, and Pestoff 2012).

In this paper, we will adopt the conception of CSOs acting with the state, which is configured as coproduction in groups. It occurs when a specific category of unusual producers, who share similar concerns, attributes, and interests, produces, together with the usual producers, a product or service (Brudney and England 1983; Nabatchi, Sancino, and Sicilia 2017). This type of coproduction usually relies on formal coordination mechanisms (Brudney and England 1983).

For coproduction to effectively occur, a series of requirements must be met. To understand them, we have constructed Table 1, below, based on case study research produced by The New Economics Foundation (NEF) (2014), and the characteristics listed by the consolidated literature on the subject.
Table 1: Requirements for co-production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis categories</th>
<th>NEF (2014) categories</th>
<th>Featured categories of literature</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active participation</td>
<td>Recognition of people as assets, breaking their passive role in receiving services</td>
<td>Recognition of people as policy assets Existence of direct and active contributions from citizens</td>
<td>Boyle and Harris (2009), Brandsen and Honingh (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of skills</td>
<td>Use of existing skills of all actors to produce services</td>
<td>Taking advantage of citizens’ characteristics (skills, values, etc.)</td>
<td>Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalyst effect</td>
<td>Transforming the usual producers into catalysts for change at the expense of their action as service providers</td>
<td>Learning by policy-producers about the different forms of agenda formation Compatibility and openness of public organizations with citizen participation</td>
<td>Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouragement</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Users’ encouragement in their transformation into co-producers</td>
<td>Alford (2015); Ostrom (1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking barriers</td>
<td>Breaking barriers between co-producers</td>
<td>Coordination between citizens, usual producers and agency Teamwork within the public agency and between co-producers</td>
<td>Alford (2015); Ostrom (1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Availability of both parties to perform the work</td>
<td>Alford (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
<td>Existence of incentives for reciprocity between co-producers</td>
<td>Reciprocal and balanced relationship between public service professionals and policy users Valuing the relationships between the various actors and their work</td>
<td>Boyle and Harris (2009), Brandsen and Honingh (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer networks</td>
<td>Establishment of peer support networks, sharing experiences to expand the capacity of services</td>
<td>Sharing experiences, innovative capabilities and knowledge</td>
<td>Alford (2015), Bode and Taco (2014), Boyle and Harris (2009)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on this framework, we observe that for the production of a good, service, or policy to occur through a coproduction process, it is necessary to have: active participation of coproducers, use of their abilities, sense of belonging, catalyzing effect, encouragement to participation, breaking down barriers, willingness to participate in the process, reciprocity among coproducers, peer networks, and process redesign.

Coproduction occurs, therefore, in the execution of the various stages by coproducers with a high level of participant engagement. The activities would be undertaken in such a way that there would be synergy among them and the process would occur organically and cohesively (Bovaird et al. 2016; Brudney and England 1983).

It is noteworthy that these categories translate from an ideal conception of coproduction, a theoretical construct that emphasizes certain characteristics for analysis, but which may not be found in its pure form in reality, as we will see below.

### 4 The Institutional Logics Concept in the Organizational Studies

In organizational studies, new institutionalism understands the institution as a socially constructed body that results from planned and unplanned actions and interactions from non-rational social processes.

Institutions are social structures and mechanisms present in all spheres of life, which influence, regulate, delimit, and give perspectives to individuals’ behavior, being created individually or in groups, and shaping these individuals or groups, in a reciprocal relationship of agent-institution and institution-institution interaction (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1977; Scott 2014). In this process, institutions outline the ends to be achieved, and also the means and mechanisms that will be used to achieve these ends. Individuals, groups, and organizations make use
of institutions on behalf of their goals (Friedland and Alford 1991), whether they are of public or private value.

Society operates on three fronts: (i) competition and negotiation among individuals, (ii) conflict and coordination among organizations, and (iii) contradiction and interdependence among institutions (Friedland and Alford 1991). These interactions can occur in various forms of complementarity and/or dispute, causing organizations and individuals to constantly change the existing institutional relations in society.

Institutional logics should be thought of as capable of providing a coherent set of organizational principles for a domain of social life, thus forming a “relational space” (Wooten and Hoffman 2008). Accordingly, institutional environments should be conceived beyond their material aspects (structures and practices), but also by their immaterial and symbolic components (ideas and meanings).


In the case of investigations into the relations between CSOs and the state, we are especially interested in the community and state logics, whose main attributes are presented in the following Table.

Table 2: State and community institutional orders and logic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional order/logics characteristics</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic assumption</td>
<td>State as a redistribution mechanism</td>
<td>Common borders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democratic participation</td>
<td>Union of wills; belief in trust and reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimacy source(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democratic participation</td>
<td>Commitment to community values and ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority source(s)</td>
<td>Bureaucratic domination</td>
<td>Commitment to community values and ideology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity source(s)</td>
<td>Social and economic classes</td>
<td>Emotional connection and reputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bases of norms</td>
<td>Citizenship in the nation</td>
<td>Group participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bases of attention</td>
<td>Interest group status</td>
<td>Personal investment in the group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bases of strategy</td>
<td>Increase of the collective good; public action; implementation of policies; accountability</td>
<td>Status increment; honor of members and practices; public action; solidarity; altruism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency source(s)</td>
<td>Coordination of public resources; creating rules; execution power</td>
<td>Organization and collective action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Laws; public procurement rules; duty of transparency</td>
<td>Participants expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Budget and electoral cycles</td>
<td>Campaign moments; inflection points; funding cycles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Jay (2013) and Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury (2012).
The state logic can be characterized by its survival dependent on the ceremonial demands of highly institutionalized environments, conforming to the definition of a more bureaucratized institution. It privileges issues such as legal coordination arrangements and hierarchical, bureaucratic, and rational procedures (Lee and Lounsbury 2015; Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012).

The community logic is based on the idea of directing collective efforts to organized citizenship (Lee and Lounsbury 2015), whose main characteristics are the definition of common values (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012), with multiple authority and participatory governance (Costa et al. 2014). Within it, CSOs depend on managing the demands of internal relations and external boundaries, divided into a heterogeneous range of configurations.

5 Coproduction and Institutional Logics in the Investigation of CSOs-State Relations

In this essay, we argue that the complementary use of the theoretical lenses of coproduction and institutional logics can generate theoretical-analytical contributions for both theories, as well as for the investigations in which they are employed. In this section, we list such contributions.

5.1 CSOs-State Coproduction Processes Take Place in Institutional Fields

Institutions and their institutional logics are elements of organizational life that operate at various levels. They are present at the macro (societal) level of institutional orders, but also at the meso level, of institutional fields, and the micro level, of individuals and organizations. Coproduction, in turn, occurs at the latter two levels.

When it comes to the CSOs-state partnerships, we are talking about the meso level, the institutional fields. They are arenas of interaction between individual and organizational actors, who interact more among themselves than with other actors, according to a system of common meanings (Scott 2014) based on their relational/structural and symbolic/meaning dimensions (Machado-da-Silva, Guarido Filho, and Rossoni 2006).

These institutional fields are spaces of interaction where community and state logics generally predominate. It is worth noting that, although we are talking about two predominant logics that inform the nature of the functioning of the state and
CSOs, as they operate in a variety of political spaces and in different areas of policies, other logics may also affect, for example, the public policy area sub logics, as health, education, culture, social assistance, among others.

By emphasizing the multiplicity of logics in the field of state and CSOs relations, we have that they relate to each other in such a way as to generate a new institutionality given by the interaction between actors and structures within this field, characterized here by the phenomenon of coproduction. The creation of this new institutionality is achieved through combinations of state and community institutional logics and materialized to the extent that there is a broad sharing of information, knowledge, experiences, organizational principles, values, and beliefs that affect the actors in this relationship.

The study by Gazley, Cheng, and Lafontant (2018) can be illustrative of this proposition. The authors discuss the dependence of some public services on charities, specifically in the case of national and state parks in the United States. We can infer from this case that there is a field, constituted by the government, responsible for these parks, and CSOs, defined by the authors as “friends of the parks” or “park foundations”, filled with actors that share common meanings concerning the importance of the preservation and maintenance of these parks. The sharing of meanings about fundraising and volunteering among these actors leads to the creation of a new institutionality in the face of the economic instabilities experienced in the field, which allows these goals to be achieved. It would not be possible without the participation of all the actors.

The same can be seen in Lotta’s (2017) discussions of coproduction arrangements in health care in Brazil. This area can be considered a field to the extent that it is a more consolidated and systematized policy area, and that has greater integration regarding intersectoral relations, given the existence of the Unified Health System (SUS) in the country. In this way, there is closer and more frequent interaction between health actors from different federation levels and different social sectors than with actors from other areas.

What we propose, therefore, is when such logics interacts in spaces dedicated to coproduction between state and CSOs, institutional new orders emerge. Furthermore, this recombination can occur in multiple ways and can generate different coproduced results.

5.2 Coproduction Encompasses the Mobilization of Institutional Logics’ Material and Symbolic Resources

If coproduction occurs from the active participation of actors from different organizations in the production of a good, service, or policy, it then depends on the
mobilization by these actors of material and symbolic resources linked to institutional logics.

In her comparative study of community regeneration organizations in Sheffield, England, and Lyon, France, McMullin (2016) shows how differences in the norms, narratives, values, and assumptions of these organizations in each case, linked to the logics of service delivery and social solidarity, respectively, are translated into distinct coproduction activities. In the same sense, Andion, Becker, and Victor (2012), when discussing whether Brazilian Private Social Investment¹ (ISP) is a form of coproduction of public goods, demonstrate how certain characteristics that make up the ISP hybrid logic (e.g. voluntary engagement, civic participation of individuals and organizations in the public sphere, etc.) influence the practice of coproduction in the country’s social sector.

In this way, we propose that, when applied to state and community logics, the sources of legitimacy of state and community logics, for example, respectively, democratic participation and the union of wills, and the belief in trust and reciprocity, are mobilized so that categories such as “active participation”, “catalyzing effect”, and “breaking down barriers” of coproduction can be boosted. Similarly, the “use of skills” of coproduction is linked to the employment of the strategy bases, sources of the agency, and structure of these logics, contained in Table 2.

### 5.3 Structural Mechanisms Influence Coproduction

Just as individuals and organizations influence the institutions of which they are a part, these institutions influence these individuals and organizations. According to new institutional theories, the actions of individuals and organizations are intertwined with their societal context, so it is impossible to explain either one without considering the other (Friedland and Alford 1991).

Studies on the motivations of different actors that lead them to coproduce (Alford 2009, 2014; Fledderus and Honingh 2016; Parks et al. 1981; Van Eijk and Steen 2014; Vanleene, Voets, and Verschuere 2015) usually give primacy to the agency of these actors, highlighting their willingness to participate in coproduction processes. However, it is necessary to question how reflexive these actors are and to consider, beyond the agency, the structural mechanisms involved in this participation decision.

By bringing institutional logics into the discussion of coproduction, we bring into play a contextual debate that has not yet been addressed through this theoretical lens. Actors, whether they are individuals or organizations, do not decide to

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¹ Private Social Investment is the way Brazilian philanthropy is called.
participate in a co-productive activity based on a decision detached from context. Starting from this assumption means assuming the principles of rational choice (Simon 1965), based on voluntarism and decision-making established by precise calculations that lead to the final objective, in a way that means and ends are hierarchized. There are, however, structural mechanisms, such as regulatory mechanisms, that conform, promote, or restrict these decisions and actions.

This can be seen in the discussions made by Lino et al. (2019) regarding how regulatory mechanisms influence coproduction. The authors study Brazilian municipal health councils as latent spaces of coproduction, created by legal regulation through formal coordination mechanisms. They demonstrate that elements such as manuals and structured processes can support and facilitate coproduction. In this sense, material aspects, such as rules and structures, have the potential to promote or undermine the coproduction process within the councils from their translation by different institutional logics. In the same vein, McMullin (2020) demonstrates how changes in the partnership model for contracting and performance management between the state and CSOs that work to provide welfare services to the population in Sheffield, England, have created barriers to coproduction activities.

We can say that institutional logics shapes the interests and preferences of actors present in fields and how these translate into repertoires of behavior to be mobilized (Friedland and Alford 1991).

It is important to say that what we argue here is not the primacy of structures, but the recursiveness between structure and agency. Studies in institutional logics, while considering that institutions shape actions, highlight that these same institutions are the fruit of them (Cloutier and Langley 2014). Thus, coproduction and institutional logics should be conceived from a relational approach. This perspective seeks to explain how we understand and situate action, considering that both structure and agency should be thought about and their relations explored, taking into account how actors are inserted in a given social context and respond to the situations present within it (Battilana and D’aunno 2009; Emirbayer 1997).

5.4 Institutional Logics Brings both Collaboration and Conflict Dimensions into Coproduction Processes

One of the properties that characterize coproduced processes, according to the consolidated literature, is that of reciprocity: the establishment of a balanced and mutual relationship between coproducers, as placed in Table 1. This is a point that has been receiving criticism from several authors (Bovaird and Loeffler 2012; Goodwin 2018; Mitlin 2008) for its excessively functionalist view, which ignores that
even in coproduced processes there are conflicts and asymmetries of power, capacity, and resources among the various actors involved.

Cultural and systemic impediments to the establishment of these reciprocal relationships are even more common when it comes to relationships established with the public sector, as is the case of partnerships between the state and CSOs. Ferreira’s (2015) paper about the crisis of the Welfare State in Portugal in the 2010s brings an example. According to the author, despite having instituted a Cooperation Protocol between CSOs confederations and the government, which established a set of measures aimed at the sustainability of some social policies through their coproduction, for a long period the government held substantial power on these organizations. The same can be seen in partnerships between the state and CSOs in France, where although there are clear examples of coproduction, “while the third sector is seen in some way as a partner, it is as a decidedly junior partner, controlled through regulations and conventions that determine its scope, purpose, and internal procedures.” (McMullin 2020, 8). It is in this sense that Bovaird and Loeffler (2012, 1121) state about the concept of coproduction: “it insists on an ‘equal and reciprocal relationship’, a condition which has been rarely encountered in the sphere of public services”.

Institutional logics bring to this discussion considerations of symbolic dimensions, which point to the differences between the participating actors, based on the logic to which they respond, will mediate possibilities of cooperation and conflicts.

By providing a set of organizational principles for actors to act upon at the individual, organizational, and societal levels, logics provides them with frames under which to justify their action. To the extent that institutional logics affect different levels, there is therefore a significance to action based on the choice made (Friedland and Alford 1991). Depending on how they affect a given space of interactions, institutional logics will shape what is done, in which direction: cooperation or conflict.

State and community institutional logics give direction to the various sets of actors through their different basic assumptions and characteristics, as occurs in the relations between the state and CSOs. From their interactions, different means and behaviors are available to the actors. It is from this narrow basis of action (Friedland and Alford 1991) that conflict occurs.

In their study on the implementation of the Regulatory Framework for Civil Society Organizations (Law 13019 of 2014), which regulates partnerships between the government and CSOs in Brazil, Holanda and Mendonça (2022) show how the government and CSOs’ institutional logics do not establish a relationship free of conflicts and disputes, yet the actors still manage to coproduce the law implementation. The same is discussed by Rasmussen, Skjerning, and Burau (2023) who show that in the
processes coproduced by municipal administrations and voluntary sports clubs in Denmark, there is both conflict and complementarity of institutional logics.

Similarly, the theory of institutional logics helps to understand also how it occurs, from the understanding of how central different logics are to an organization or field – the level at which they are all important, occupying fundamental positions –, and how compatible they are – the degree to which they agree on the means and ends to be achieved (Besharov and Smith 2014). This discussion will be further developed below.

5.5 Coproduction Helps Operationalize Studies in Institutional Logics

Institutional logics are characterized by manifesting themselves in very broad, abstract categories that are difficult to operationalize empirically. To overcome this issue, their association with distinct theoretical, methodological, and phenomenological approaches is necessary (Durand and Thornton 2018).

What this essay proposes is that the association at the theoretical level of the pieces of literature of institutional logics and coproduction allows for greater operationalization of the former at least on two points.

First, we suggest that to the same extent that institutional logics may support the understanding of conflict in coproduced processes, coproduction categories applied by scholars may collaborate in understanding how conflicting institutional logics reconcile.

How participation and exchanges between networks are mobilized, and how the resources, capabilities, and incentives addressed in co-production are used can be interesting keys to better understanding the combination of different logics or even the emergence of new logics in partnerships between the government and CSOs (Bovaird et al. 2019).

The exchanges between institutional logics do not always occur in the same way, conditioning the construction of meaning to different spaces and times, as shown by studies on hybridity in the new institutional literature (Battilana and Dorado 2010; Denis, Ferlie, and Van Gestel 2015). As Cloutier and Langley (2014) state, studies in institutional logics have not yet produced typologies of how this happens. The categories mobilized by coproduction (Table 1) could then help operationalize analyses that seek to mobilize institutional logics to understand how interactions between actors with different worldviews produce meaningful results in goods, services, and policies.

In their study on social partnerships between Corporate Social Responsibility actors and CSOs in China, Yin and Jamali (2021) highlight how, despite their
contrasting business and social logics, the partnerships achieved varying levels of outcome values. In this case, despite some level of conflict, there was also conciliation. Using this example, we can say that active participation, one of the characteristics of the coproduction process, was fundamental to this result.

Another example can be seen in the paper of Vickers et al. (2017). In their study, the authors show how the logics of the state, market, and civil society, present in the context of social enterprise providers of health and wellbeing services in England, despite their tensions, act in a process of coproduction of public innovation. In this scenario, the organizational strategies and practices that facilitate the creative interaction between logics, and its reconciliation, are related to several of the requirements for co-production (Table 1): the use of the pre-existing skills of all the actors, the encouragement of participation, the redesign of processes, among others.

Second, we propose that the coproduction literature offers the institutional logics lens mechanisms of analysis that highlight the outcomes of the processes of production of goods, services, and policies in more concrete terms while allowing us to observe the influence of institutional logics on what is produced in coproduction processes, a topic addressed below.

### 5.6 Institutional Logics Influences Coproduced Results

We have already suggested that institutional logics can collaborate in understanding the motivation that leads actors to coproduce by bringing to light the structural and symbolic mechanisms that shape the decisions of these actors. We now propose to understand the effects of institutional logics on coproduced outcomes.

What we suggest here is that different forms of incidence of institutional logics generate different coproduced results. In this sense, the co-produced results can be different, even when dealing with similar processes, depending on the degrees of centrality – “the extent to which these logics manifest in core features that are central to organizational functioning” – and compatibility – “the extent to which the instantiations of multiple logics within an organization imply consistent organizational actions” – of institutional logics manifested in the fields in which the interactions occur (Besharov and Smith 2014, 365).

What the coproduction literature has demonstrated is the contingency of these processes, and their main categories alone, have not accounted for a deeper understanding of why different co-producers engage, why it is necessary to consider how they are immersed in their institutional fields: what relative position they occupy, what forms of rationalization they use, mediated by institutional logics (Bovaird et al. 2019; Nederhand, Van Der Steen, and Van Twist 2019).
In the case of partnerships between the state and CSOs, even if there is coproduction, in the sense of the indispensability of the active participation of the coproducers in the production process, the various possible combinations between levels of centrality and compatibility will generate different results, as our model shows:

- **High centrality and compatibility**: the state and community logics are considered equally important in the process and there is a convergence on the means and/or ends to be adopted and achieved, generating results that can assume a hybrid form of the conceptions that feed into these two logics; Holanda and Mendonça (2022) work on the implementation of the Regulatory Framework for Civil Society Organizations study coproduction spaces called Councils for Fostering and Collaboration in two Brazilian cases: the municipality of Belo Horizonte and the state of Bahia. It was observed that in Belo Horizonte there was a harmonious coexistence between the logics of public authorities and CSOs, considered equally important and with aligned objectives so that the results achieved (e.g.: capacity building, changes in process flows, etc.) carried characteristics of both actors.

- **High centrality and low compatibility**: the state and community logics are considered equally important in the process, but they disagree as to the means and/or ends to be adopted and reached, generating highly disputed results that may tend towards the conceptions of either logic; In the same study mentioned above, Holanda and Mendonça (2022) show that in Bahia, although the participation of state and CSOs actors was considered equally important, the goals established between them were very disputed, leading to disputed results that ended up tending towards CSOs characteristics (e.g.: greater incentives for democratic participation).

- **Low centrality and high compatibility**: one of the logics is considered more important than the other in the process, but both agree on the means and/or ends to be adopted and reached, generating results that can assume a hybrid form of the conceptions that feed these two logics. In this case, in the face of sporadic disagreements, the logic that is considered more important tends to have more influence on actor’s decisions; In McMullin’s (2020) study on partnerships between government and CSOs in Lyon, France, when she says that CSOs are “junior partners”, we can infer that there is a logic in these relations that is considered more important, that of the government. Nevertheless, government and CSOs have common goals concerning community development and local social support. In this way, what is co-produced tends to have characteristics closer to those of the government. An example of this is the formalization of coproduction in pre-defined models of citizen participation to the detriment of more innovative approaches.
– Low centrality and compatibility: one of the logics is considered more important than the other in the process, and they disagree as to the means and/or ends to be adopted and reached, generating results aligned to the conceptions of the predominant logic. If it is the state logic, the results may be influenced in the sense that they correspond more to its operating rationality, based on bureaucratic domination and process hierarchization, for example. If it is the community logic, these results may be linked to the community’s values and ideologies. That is a hypothesis based on the other results found. We have found no examples of its practical application in the consolidated literature.

6 Final Remarks

Studies focusing on state and CSOs relations have been growing since the 1990s. In this context, both the literature on the coproduction of goods, services, and policies, and that on institutional logics have been extensively explored. Nevertheless, scientific research is an endless process, because for each answer found, multiple questions are raised.

It was to discuss and propose ways to address some of these questions that we wrote this theoretical essay. It aimed to demonstrate how the theories of coproduction and institutional logics can be used in a complementary way to understand the relations between the state and CSOs.

To this end, we list here six contributions: (i) CSOs-state coproduction processes take place on institutional fields, (ii) Coproduction encompasses the mobilization of institutional logics’ material and symbolic resources, (iii) Structural mechanisms influence coproduction, (iv) Institutional logics bring both collaboration and conflict dimensions into coproduction processes, (v) Coproduction helps operationalize studies in institutional logics, and (vi) Institutional logics influence coproduced results. We also bring examples to illustrate this joint use of the theories.

The discussions brought here are not exhausted in this essay. Our limitations concern the lack of empirical application of the theoretical assumptions proposed in case studies. In this sense, we hope that these assumptions will contribute to future studies, which may apply and improve them empirically.

Here we highlight the logics of the state and community, which we had already mobilized in our previous studies. However, in the CSOs’ relations with governments, the logics of religion, professional/managerial, and market are also present, which can be explored in the future to access how they can influence co-production processes.
References


