FROM AUTONOMOUS AGENCY TO EMERGENT NETWORKS: THE DEVELOPMENT OF FILM COMMISSIONS IN BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the development of local film commissions in Brazil through the actions of local agents. While dealing with institutional voids stemming from decades of governmental neglect regarding the audiovisual sector, film commission representatives adopt individual and networked strategies. Although enacted locally, these strategies aim at solving structural dilemmas, e.g., the lack of strong legislation for film commissions, and strengthening the Brazilian audiovisual industries at large. By analyzing qualitative interviews with a comprehensive sample of film commissioners, we discuss how, in challenging institutional landscapes, development is often propelled by the intrinsic motivations of local agents, who might devise parochial solutions for (larger) institutional problems. Moreover, we argue that, despite traditionally seen as well-organized agreements between various parties, strategies applied dispersedly and individually by local agents can also contribute towards a common goal for audiovisual policy.

Film Commissions; Networks; Cultural Policymaking; Institutionalization; Brazilian Film Industry

Introduction

Film industries worldwide are known for transitioning from a centralized production system to a dispersed, networked industry (Robbins, 1993). Part of the ecosystem for film production is supported by the work of film commissions: organizations typically established by governmental bodies aimed at attracting audiovisual projects to a place and facilitating location filming (Cucco and Richeri, 2021). Most film commissions remain in high-income nations in North America, Europe and Asia. Still, in the past two decades, such organizations have also expanded to countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean (Martens, 2023). Whereas more developed film commissions efficiently attract film production with subsidies, tax exemptions and extensive logistical support, emerging film commissions might lack the funds, infrastructure and institutional support to compete on equal footing. Such is the case of Brazil, where the enduring governmental neglect of the audiovisual sector (Rêgo, 2005) poses numerous setbacks for its burgeoning film industry. Yet, this does not seem to discourage local bureaucrats from developing film commissions and fostering the creative industries scene at large. In light of this scenario, this study examines the development of film commissions in Brazil by unveiling the challenges faced by their representatives and the emerging strategies aimed at institutionalizing these organizations in a promising yet uncertain audiovisual landscape.

We understand the challenges that film commissions endure through the concept of institutional void, i.e., an absence or underdevelopment of clear rules and norms by which policymaking and local actors should abide (Hajer, 2003). Emerging markets are known to present a number of institutional voids, to which local bureaucrats respond by devising formal and informal strategies. In this study, we follow the conceptualization of strategy as practice (Ezzamel and Willmott, 2008; Samra-Fredericks, 2003; Vaara, Kleymann and Seristö, 2004), which enables us to focus on micro-level actions of local bureaucrats in Brazil and analyze their perceptions regarding the impacts of local-level policymaking on nation-wide frameworks. Through in-depth online interviews with 15 film commission representatives, we observe that public agents deal with regulatory, structural and relational challenges, ranging from the absence of filming regulations in a city to staff and budgetary deficits. To circumvent them, they adopt autonomous strategies to develop film commissions, such as standardizing filming procedures and sensitizing public agents about the importance of these organizations. Among the existing practices, network formation emerges more prominently. Because local public agents lack sufficient political power to impact regulation-making and structural changes in cultural policy, their parochial solutions involve cultivating a rather complex web of relationships with local, regional, national and, in some cases, international entities. This paper, thus, follows a strand of research that has observed networked forms of policymaking and governance (Berry et al., 2004; Rhodes, 1997), particularly in emerging markets where institutional voids prevail (Bothello et al., 2019).

Although research in Public Administration shows that public bureaucrats are more responsive to external political demands and media pressure (Vimkute and van der Voet, 2023), in the case discussed in this study, we argue that it is the intrinsic motivation of individual public agents that propels the development of film commissions. Public agents engage in a rather personalized and individual form of political action, contrasting the impersonality usually expected from a governmental agency (Weber, 1968). The autonomous doings of individual bureaucrats and their emerging networks indicate a loosely coupled, dispersed, yet coherent collective aim of developing the institutional audiovisual landscape in Brazil.

This study contributes to the literature on cultural policymaking by showing how policy is made locally at the fringes of public administration, often taken on by the personal motivation of local bureaucrats. As such, our study advances an understanding of cultural policy from a bottom-up perspective. Secondly, we contribute to the literature on public administration of the arts by exploring how strategy-making can be dispersed, pragmatic and autonomous (rather than an all-encompassing top-down strategy) and still contribute to a common goal, which, in this case, is the development of a historically uncertain audiovisual industry. Lastly, we argue that public agents engage in autonomous acts of solving institutional voids in their own ways through sensitization, networking, and the establishment of basic organizational practices. This indicates that public agents in challenging institutional landscapes may devise parochial solutions for larger institutional problems.

Network and Strategies in Policymaking

Networks are socially constructed "strategic alliances" for operations (Anderson et al., 2010) as much as an alternative to extreme decentralization or centralization (Powell, 1990). In management studies, networks are typically associated with clusters, creative production, and localized geographical economies contributing to innovation (Whittington et al., 2009). The reciprocal linkages among people allowing resources to flow often result in a less hierarchical, leaner and dynamic organizational structure whereby regional agglomeration fosters distinct embeddedness. Pursuing innovation is, however, not the only aim of network formation. In public administration, for example, diverse linkages between local, regional and national policymaking units typically make a stronger case for robust local administration (Lecy et al., 2014).

Changes in the public sector have altered its governance structure and attracted attention to the disintegration of local, regional, and national policy levels. This movement towards local policymaking and cooperative relationships among independent organizations has unfolded many "policy networks" at the fringes and centers of public administration worldwide (Robbins, 1993). The concept originally emerged from the works of White (2002), Granovetter (1983) and Powell (1990), further developing into networked forms of policymaking and governance (Berry et al., 2004; Rhodes, 1997). Scholarship in public administration and networks has increasingly incorporated bottom-up views and local agencies to cater to pressing demands by local agents whose scope of action is rather limited in the public

bureaucracy (Homsy et al., 2018). In some cases, the formation of networks reflects the absence of structural organization, especially when informality arises to organize local economies. Even though the adoption of networking as a response to challenges is not limited to emerging market problems, it has been observed that the prevalence of institutional voids in emerging markets accentuates the intensity of political networking (Bothello et al., 2019).

According to the strategy-as-practice literature, strategy can be seen as discourse or as a socially constructed object of knowledge emerging from discourse (Ezzamel and Willmott, 2008). Through strategies, initiatives can be constructed around common knowledge (Vaara, Kleymann and Seristö, 2004). Specific discursive practices create opportunities for engaging with peers (Samra-Fredericks, 2003). Seeing strategies as a practice allows us to unveil the social web of relations and micro-level situations that manufacture planning. In this article, our goal is not to analyze the acts of film commission representatives from the perspective of strategy-as-practice but to understand whether autonomous acts can compose a loosely coupled strategy by individuals acting at the fringes of institutionalization[1]. This agenda is rather overlooked since scholarship pays attention to well-formed organizational boundaries in which strategies are part of the lexicon and work. The idea of emergent strategies originates as a project through "autonomous strategic behaviour, [which] then subsequently becomes realized as a consequence of mobilizing wider support to provide impetus, manipulating strategic context to legitimate the project by constructing it as consonant with the prevailing concept of strategy and altering structural context to embed it within organizational units, routines, and objectives" (Mirabeau and Maguire, 2014). In our cases, such constructed actions are only collectively organized through networks since film commission representatives act autonomously and individually locally. Regner (2003) says that strategy-making in the organization's periphery tends to be more inductive than deductive. It is characterized by exploration and establishing new knowledge structures rather than exploiting current ones. For our purposes, this means acting through network-making to avoid acting alone. Still, some issues remain regarding creating new paths when institutional voids are so preeminent that they force public agents to pursue alternative routes.

Responsiveness and Institutional Void in the Public Sector
According to the Principal-Agent model, public sector responsiveness is designed to be receptive to superior hierarchies (Vimkute and van der Voet, 2023; McCubbins, 1985) or stakeholders (Bryer, 2007). Public administration studies have long explored the influence of external demand on bureaucrats' behavior (Fernández-i-Marín et al., 2023; Koop and Lodge, 2020). To a great extent, the public bureaucrat's behavior is expected to respond to societal pressures. The public administrator and policymaker is, thus, a representative of the public (Saltzstein, 1992). In some cases, public agents respond not to superior hierarchies but to existing institutional voids in local and regional contexts and weak institutions. Despite reforms and economic progress, weak institutions still feature in policymaking and public administration scholarship (Ge et al., 2019).

Local emerging markets are typically characterized by institutional voids, which refer to the absence or underdevelopment of market structures, governments, or infrastructures that support local commerce and civil society. In many cases, the lack of institutional support is visible through the lack of formal institutions, rules, regulations and contract-enforcing mechanisms that regulate informality. Institutional voids have been commonly associated with so-called emerging nations (Khanna and Palepu, 1997; Puffer, McCarthy and Boisot, 2010). Without formal institutions, actors may find ways to construct a reasonable substitute for formal support by governments or markets (Peng et al., 2009).

One common strategy is the so-called "network-based" strategies, informal ties, and relational governance mechanisms. In principle, personal ties, local connections, and networks (formal or informal) can stabilize economic and non-economic activity by engaging actors in reciprocal, preferential, and mutually supporting agencies to coordinate resources, ideas, or strategies. In natural catastrophes, for example, when governmental support is too slow, civil society forms bottom-up networks of volunteers and gift-giving to solve the lack of sufficient institutional support. In other cases, networks can emerge not only as a response to a lack of institutionalization but as a superior strategy

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[1] We understand institutionalization based on Powell and DiMaggio's (1991) work, where "institutions" are viewed as a set of regularities, formal or informal, reflecting the process of rationalization and stabilization of rules and their structural components.

for sharing information, trust and good coordination of resources, especially if hierarchies are too demanding. This can generate more efficient and locally-attuned decisions (Uzzi, 1997). A substantial stream of research documents the prevalence of interpersonal networks, social capital, and informal institutions in the context of institutional voids. Trust, social norms, and personal ties are crucial to cooperation and regulating activities (Luo and Chung, 2005; Peng et al., 2009; Puffer et al., 2010; Xin and Pearce, 1996).

Institutional voids and their relation to networks of agents is a rather plural concept (Bothello et al., 2019) as they interface many orders – public, private, civil society, local and non-local (Mair, 2012). More often than not, institutional voids in local network contexts show how institutional orders may clash or differ and how informality and autonomous agency arise despite existing voids. We use the lens of network on public administration and the agency of local bureaucrats in given institutional conditions to inquire about the strategies of local policymakers at the fringes of institutional contexts, taking film commissions in Brazil as a case in point.

Methods

The data for this study was collected by the first author in the second semester of 2023 via in-depth, semi-structured online interviews. In total, 15 representatives of municipal film commissions from different regions of Brazil (Southeast, South, and Central-West) were interviewed. Most interviews were done one-on-one; only one interview was conducted simultaneously with two persons. The longest interview lasted 2 hours, and the shortest, 53 minutes, resulting in an average of about 1 hour and 20 minutes per interview. All interviewees consented to having their name and occupation disclosed in this study[2].

The sample selected for this research includes film commissions with different forms of governance and at different levels of development. Rio de Janeiro's and São Paulo's film commissions are part of state-owned companies (Riofilme and SPCine, respectively), which afford them larger institutional structures and more stable funding. Other film commissions are embedded in Secretariats of Culture, Tourism, Economic Development and/or Innovation, and present varying levels of development depending on the local circumstances of the cities and governments where they are situated. Two outlier cases are the film commissions of Poxoréu, in Mato Grosso, and Ribeirão Preto, in São Paulo, which are private initiatives managed by local media professionals with minimal (if any) budget. It is important to mention that all film commissions included in this research are operative, except the Floripa Film Commission, which is currently (at least temporarily) inactive.

This comprehensive panorama of film commissions in Brazil allows for the analysis of multiple perspectives on the challenges these organizations face and the strategies they adopt in their institutionalization process. These themes are divided into three sections on the following pages. The first one focuses on the various institutional voids that surround the operation of film commissions in Brazil. The second section discusses the strategies their representatives adopt at the individual level to deal with these challenges. Lastly, the final section delves into the practice of networking, which emerged as a crucial collective strategy for film commissions to achieve their goals.

Existing Voids: Mapping Current Challenges in the Institutional Landscape

Film commissions deal with regulatory, structural and relational challenges that disrupt their daily work and institutionalization process. In terms of *regulatory challenges*, we observe that, in Brazil, film commissions are often created to solve an absence or unclarity of filming procedures. In some cities, the public administration used to treat filming as an event before local film commissions came into being. This would make the acquisition of filming permits a very slow and bureaucratic ordeal for filmmakers. In the words of the film commissioner of Rio de Janeiro, Daniel Celli, film producers had to "go on a pilgrimage" across multiple Secretariats to obtain support for their projects. In other cities, filming was done very informally. As Celli puts it, producers often "knew someone, who knew someone," within relevant public bodies that would help them organize their shootings. Neither of these scenarios, however, was optimal to attract film producers, who need predictability and agility in managing their projects. The lack of a clear procedure often chased producers away, as respondents

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[2] The complete overview of interviewees is available with the authors upon request.

recall. The first regulatory challenge that film commissions face, thus, is how to structure a clear process for filmmaking in Brazilian cities.

A second regulatory issue that emerged from the interviews concerns the legal status of film commissions. Most film commissions are formalized via decrees, a non-binding type of legislation that policymakers can more easily ignore than laws. Although decrees provide a certain framework for the operation of the film commission, their fragility also generates instability in terms of the perpetuation of these organizations in the long term.

Besides regulatory hindrances, film commissions located within Secretariats also struggle with *structural challenges* typical of government institutions in Brazil. The first one is staff shortage. Some film commissions are entirely run by only one person. Without enough employees, even basic demands from filmmakers can pose a challenge, as the film commissioner of Garibaldi, Melina Casagrande, describes: "[If we] need … to close a street, we need, I don't know, 15 people. There aren't 15 employees in the Secretariat. We have to pull [people] from Public Works, Environment, ask support from the municipality as a whole." On top of the deficit of employees, working for the film commission is often an extra function and unpaid labor to their representatives. Ten of the fourteen film commissions that participated in this research do not possess an entirely dedicated employee. Film commission workers accumulate functions, which leaves the film commission as "the extra [job], the late-night work," as the representative of the Gramado Film Commission, Juliana Sueli Sehn, describes.

Respondents also emphasized the lack of resources to manage and invest in the film commission. In the case of film commissions located in small cities, such as Gramado, Garibaldi and Antônio Prado, this occurs due to the division of federal funds for Culture across Brazilian municipalities, which is based on the number of inhabitants per city. More broadly, this financial challenge also derives from film commissions often being part of the Culture portfolio, which has historically received less governmental investment than other public administration sectors. This makes it difficult for smaller film commissions to fund crucial activities, such as creating a location catalog, improving their website, making a promotional video or participating in sector events.

Film commissions also face *relational challenges* when establishing productive relationships with certain stakeholders involved in the filming process. In São Paulo, certain neighborhoods are resistant to filmmaking, with residents sometimes actively disrupting location shootings, e.g., by intentionally making noise when scenes are filmed. Film commissions can also face resistance from the local audiovisual sector. Media professionals often want protection and support for their own productions, but not competition from producers coming from other states or countries. Therefore, they see the attraction policy of film commissions as detrimental to their own work.

The main relational issue reported by interviewees, however, is political discontinuity. Being relatively new organizations in the Brazilian cultural landscape, film commissions need to become known among other public bodies that will be involved in their efforts to facilitate film production, such as traffic departments and other Secretariats. These stakeholders need to understand the specific dynamics of film production and the role and importance of film commissions for their cities. Once established, thus, film commissions will start what many interviewees called a work of "sensitization" with these other public bodies. When there is a change in government, however, film commissioners need to re-introduce themselves and justify their role and relevance all over again. Many respondents used the expression "going back to square one" to convey their frustration with repeatedly needing to re-sensitize their peers. The Porto Alegre Film Commission coordinator, Joana Braga, gives the example of her own Secretariat: "Why … couldn't we evolve in a strategic planning for the film commission? Because the secretary was replaced seven times." According to Joana, this constant re-sensitization delays the film commission's development. In some cases, this discontinuity has even more drastic consequences. For the Florianópolis Film Commission, for example, it caused its complete paralysis. "[The person that] replaced me, I think they have other priorities; they are not advancing it much", explains its former representative, Vinicius de Luca Filho, "nobody took charge of the film commission. It became a ghost." The issue of political discontinuity is further aggravated by the use of decrees to formalize film commissions, which new public administrators can simply ignore.

Solving Institutional Voids: Emerging Autonomous Strategies

To circumvent these challenges, film commission representatives devise a series of autonomous strategies of regulatory, structural and relational order that are, at first, applied within their local scope

of action. However, since local public agents often lack sufficient political power to impact regulation-making and structural changes in local and national cultural policy, we observe that the most significant solutions implemented by these policymakers are based on their complex web of relationships with government and civil society members. When it comes to solving institutional voids, relational strategies take primacy over regulatory and structural ones.

Considering the lack of clear regulations for audiovisual production in their cities, film commission representatives will first simplify, debureaucratize and standardize filming procedures. For example, they will establish a clear communication channel for filmmakers, which can be as simple as a direct phone line and as sophisticated as an integrated online system that multiple Secretariats access when evaluating filming requests. Film commissions will also enforce deadlines for issuing filming permits and sometimes determine the pricing for filming in certain public locations.

In order to deal with structural challenges, an important strategy is the constant pursuit of funding. For smaller and independent organizations like the Rio de Bororos Film Commission, this involves applying for cultural subsidies. This, however, is a short-term strategy. As its executive director, Nides Freitas, acknowledges, the goal is to reach a state-level policy: "[We want the film commission as] a public policy of the state of Mato Grosso supported by law and continuity. Otherwise, we obtain an operational budget, [but] when the budget is over … where do we go with this idea?". As Freitas indicates, film commission representatives believe that obtaining the support of higher instances in the Brazilian public administration can help them overcome structural challenges. State governments can grant larger budgets to municipal entities, allowing film commissions to solve pending practicalities, e.g., hiring more employees. Such support would also help consolidate the existence of film commissions as a permanent cultural policy. If a state government believes in the importance of such organizations, it can develop state-level strategies to guarantee their continuation.

In order to circumvent the all-encompassing issue of political discontinuity, guaranteeing the continuity of film commission employees emerges as an effective solution. Permanent government staff members have extensive experience with the functioning of their film commissions and, in the event of a change of political mandates, can use their expertise to keep them in operation. "[The film commission] remains with me … because … I am the only 'concursada'[3] here," explains the Secretary of Commerce and Tourism of Antônio Prado, Patricia Schenkel, "Public policies work depending on the parties and people [in power]."

As previously mentioned, film commissions start sensitizing relevant public bodies very early. They explain to these stakeholders the specific dynamics of film production and convince them of the role and importance of film commissions in their cities. Due to political discontinuity, however, this becomes a task that runs in parallel with film commissions' daily operations – a "constant sensitization," as the coordinator of the Belo Horizonte Film Commission, Thaylane Cristina, argues, which "has to be done every year, multiple times," as Vinicius de Luca Filho emphasizes. What we observe, however, is that this sensitization – which often starts as an individual effort by film commission representatives at the local level – can become a more structured and collective strategy based on the creation of networks among different stakeholders and at different governance levels. Given the importance placed by respondents on networking as a strategy, we will discuss it in more detail in the next section.

Networking: An Emerging Collective Strategy

Most film commissions included in this research network with other municipal government bodies to issue filming permits and assist with the logistics of audiovisual production. While creating such networks is one of the main tasks of film commissions (Cucco and Richeri, 2021), we observe that, in Brazil, these networks can be more, or less, formally constructed. Whereas more developed film commissions have digital systems and formal procedures in place to enable the necessary communication between stakeholders, less developed film commissions rely on ad hoc contacts and mutual help among different policymakers when facilitating an audiovisual project.

Beyond the public administration, some film commissions also network with the local tourism and audiovisual trades. They partner with trade unions and Convention and Visitor Bureaus that can offer audiovisual and hospitality services to film crews. Some have catalogs listing film-friendly local hotels

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[3] This means a public official who has been approved by a standardized test to act on behalf of the public administration.

and restaurants that are willing to host and negotiate discounts with film crews, and media professionals available to work in incoming productions. Having such networks also makes a location more appealing to filmmakers, contributing to film commissions' attraction policy. However, what emerged as a more robust and important approach is the formation of networks among film commissions themselves – at state, country and even international levels.

Film commissions within the same state network with each other in both formal and informal ways. The film commissions of Petrópolis and Nova Friburgo, for example, have a spontaneous type of collaboration – they recommend each other to film producers and share promotional spaces at sector events. São Paulo, on the other hand, has been providing consultancy to the new Ilhabela Film Commission, exemplifying an official networking practice. In the state of Rio Grande do Sul, we observe a formal network of municipal film commissions, whose representatives meet regularly to discuss their ideas and joint development strategies.

Intra-state networks allow for film commissions to share tasks and requests related to film locations and production logistics that they would not be able to deal with individually, as the manager of the Garibaldi Film Commission, Melina Casagrande, illustrates: "[With] Bento Gonçalves, … sometimes we [negotiate]: 'look, I won't be able to get 20 accommodations here'. Since [the filmmakers] will shoot there as well, 'ah, I can get 10 in Bento, 10 in Garibaldi.' … The municipalities share [requests] for it to happen in our region." As this quote indicates, intra-state networks are deemed to strengthen regional competitiveness, especially for film commissions outside the Rio - São Paulo axis, which has historically concentrated the country's creative industries and investment. This exemplifies how, in Brazil, networking is used as an alternative to the extreme centralization of professionals and resources (Powell, 1990). As Joana Braga elaborates: "If we compete amongst ourselves, we will continue … working for pennies, trying to steal projects from one another … It will continue centralized, because we don't have the same budget as Rio, as São Paulo, for audiovisual production. So we've been working towards a policy of amplifying our competitiveness as a block, [the competitiveness] of the state." Ultimately, respondents believe these networks show the weight and importance of regional film commissions and make for a stronger case when they want to plead with state governments for more resources and stronger legislation.

Film commissions in different states also network in varying degrees of formalization. More official arrangements include consultancies and training. For example, the established São Paulo Film Commission was finalizing a consultancy to the recently created Belo Horizonte Film Commission at the time of the interview. Another way in which inter-state film commissions interact is through formal networks, such as the Brazilian Film Commission Association (ABRAFIC) and the Brazilian Film Commission Network (REBRAFIC) – entities created in 2007 and 2015, respectively, but reported as currently inactive by interviewees. In a more ad hoc manner, film commissions exchange experiences and expertise when sharing round tables at sector meetings and events.

Formal and informal inter-state networks are seen as a strategy for film commissions to learn from their peers and discuss shared concerns and challenges. More importantly, though, respondents consider such networking crucial to strengthen the representation of film commissions in the country and enable important policy outcomes regarding legislation and funding. This is why film commissions across Brazil are currently lobbying for the structuring of a national film commission, as the Executive Secretary of the Petrópolis Film Commission, Leonardo Cerqueira, explains: "[When] the federal government establishes this as a … public policy and not an electioneering agenda item, we will have the repercussion of this to the municipalities. … [T]hen we start to have an institutionalized action, … [with] the allocation of specific resources … [and] joint educational, training and prospection actions."

Beyond national boundaries, some film commissions, especially more developed ones like Rio de Janeiro's and São Paulo's, are also venturing outside of Brazil and networking internationally. They do so by becoming members of the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) and attending international events. Beyond exchanging good practices and experiences, international networking is also an important institutionalization strategy. Film commissioners understand that being part of a Latin American network, for example, would assert their relevance with local politicians in Brazil. As some interviewees mentioned, talks are underway to establish such a transnational entity.

Preliminary Conclusions: Networking as a strategy in practice

As this study reveals, film commissions in Brazil operate in a scenario of regulatory, structural and relational voids, e.g., an absence of rules for filmmaking, staff and funding shortage and political discontinuity. To solve these challenges, local bureaucrats adopt bottom-up strategies such as creating standard procedures and securing permanent staff in their offices. Although these strategies often start as individualized, autonomous responses to immediate challenges, they can develop into a more collective type of action, namely network formation. Autonomous or collective, these strategies remain limited to the scope of action of local bureaucrats, who often do not have the political power to impact regulation-making and structural changes in broader cultural policy frameworks (Homsy et al., 2018). They will then use their social capital to develop film commissions and create solid relationships, which, in their perception, contributes to strengthening the Brazilian audiovisual sector at large.

This study, thus, adds to previous research that noted a propensity to network formation (Bothello et al., 2019) and reliance on social capital (Luo and Chung, 2005; Peng et al., 2009; Puffer et al., 2010; Xin and Pearce, 1996) in the absence of clear guidance and policy. Although policy challenges often require broad institutional solutions, we observe that local agents devise solutions to the extent that is possible, such as engaging in autonomous strategies, reaching agreements and potentially enacting changes at a more structural level. This demonstrates how public agents in challenging institutional landscapes may undertake parochial solutions for institutional problems. Although strategies are often seen as concerted agreements between many parties toward an envisioned future, the case of Brazilian film commissions also demonstrates that loosely coupled, intrinsically motivated agents with a relatively common goal can generate bottom-up institutional change.

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