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**POLITICS OF EDUCATION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE AGE
OF BOLSONARISMO IN BRAZIL**

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<https://doi.org/10.34737/vwwq9>

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**POLITICS OF EDUCATION AND NATIONAL IDENTITY IN THE AGE OF
BOLSONARISMO IN BRAZIL**

Eduarda Neves Fontes

Submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of
MPhil PhD Politics FT

The University of Westminster

Politics and International Relations, School of Social Sciences

May, 2022

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my supervisors Professor Dibyesh Anand and Dr Nitasha Kaul from the bottom of my heart for all their support every step of the way. They are the most brilliant academics and most wonderful humans I have ever met. They kept me going on no matter how difficult times were (and there were plenty of those) and this work would not have been possible without their everlasting support. They are my biggest inspiration together with the phenomenal author Cynthia Enloe whose book changed my life and dear Aurea Carolina who made me believe in Politics.

I would also like to pay my special regards to Dr Frands Penderson and Dr Wojciech Ostrowski for the opportunity for teaching practice and for sharing their knowledge and skills. I wish to show my deepest gratitude to Mr Michael Trahair and Mr Christopher Inch, valuable members of the University of Westminster staff, without their essential help I would certainly not have reached this final stage of the journey. All of these remarkable souls, reflect the spirit of the University of Westminster to which I am eternally connected and I thank the institution for being so open, so progressive, so embracing, so wonderful. I also wish to acknowledge the aid by The Allan & Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust that provided valuable funds for part of this project.

I could not be more grateful for the support and great love of my family- my mum Cristina and my godfather Maurício, for the direct help with bureaucracies and without whose help I would not have been able to sort out my visa; my godmother Valquíria, for helping me to keep the focus, giving up her celebrations and being by my side making me work through new year's eve to be able to complete my APR 2; my cousin Márcia Cristina, who was a key element at a crucial time when I was feeling hopeless, our talk by the pool filled me with renewed hope; to my UK family: Alison, Luquinha, Helenita, Juancito, Lari, Carolzinha,

Ching, Dila and Tetê for all the nurture, encouragement, coffee making, warmth giving; my psychoanalyst Thiago for guiding me through the difficult process of getting to know and accepting myself, my boyfriend Freddy for being my number one motivator, for standing by me and making sure I completed this journey; my dad, my sister and my brother (the “Team”) who are the absolute pillars of my life and without whom absolutely no step towards this achievement would have been taken and at last, Manuela for being the joy and light of my life.

Thank you all with all my heart.

Abstract

The thesis explores the connection between cultural wars and right-wing populism in Brazil by investigating how debates on education were mobilised around essentialist notions of national identity as a means for Bolsonarismo to secure power under the leadership of Bolsonaro. It investigates how specific discourses around race, gender, sexuality, national identity and education have contributed to, and were central to the rise and successful installation of Bolsonarismo. Bolsonarismo has used a very specific notion of national identity to identify enemies (the progressives) and to present *Bolsonarists* (Bolsonaro supporters) as the “good nationals”, the “good citizens”.

Bolsonarismo used its narrative, the one it has created around the curriculum, the education system and structures as a central pillar for incepting itself in the minds of its followers through fear, through fomenting of cultural wars and fake news. It placed education at the centre of its “fear crusade” as a critical tool for shaping the national and/or political identity of Brazilian society.

Keywords: *National Identity, Brazil, Bolsonarismo, Right-wing Populism, Cultural Wars, Fake News, Education, Policies, Gender, Sexuality, Race.*

Preface

The current political scenario in Brazil has been a constant topic broadcast in international media ever since Jair Bolsonaro was elected as the country's president in 2018, with 55,13%¹ of the votes in the second round against leftist PT² candidate Fernando Haddad. A lot of attention has been given to the country after Brazil joined the group of countries facing the rise of Conservative, Far-Right, Populist ruling trend that counts within itself representatives such as Trump in the US, Erdogan in Turkey, Modi in India, Duterte in the Philippines, Boris Johnson in the UK, Putin in Russia and so on.

Bolsonarismo became popular due to its portrayal by its supporters as the salvation for a country in ruins, a country that had to allegedly recover its “true” identity, which has been increasingly “tainted” in recent years (especially during PT government) with its social and inclusive policies targeted at women as well as minority groups and the efforts in democratising access to education and resources for all. This “true” Brazilian identity sold by *Bolsonarismo* is the “rescue” of the “traditional Brazilian family”, the “moral” values, the “decency”, the valorisation of the “working man”, of the “good wife” and mother that will nurture the next generation that will grow up to be “true Brazilians”. After a period of “degeneration” time, the country was going to be put back on the tracks where it should have never deviated from.

When I formally started my research in 2015, *Bolsonarismo* was not yet a brand. Bolsonaro was not a name you would hear in conjunction with the names of the “relevant” politicians, with a history of significant contributions (right or left oriented) in the Brazilian political scenario. I was looking at the debates in Parliament around the PNE³, which

¹ <https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/eleicoes/2018/noticias/2018/10/28/bolsonaro-eleito-maior-diferenca-oito-anos.htm>

² PT – *Partido dos Trabalhadores* literally means “Worker’s Party”. It can be argued that PT is the Brazilian equivalent to the Labour Party in the UK.

³ PNE – Plano Nacional de Educação (National Education Plan).

culminated with the removal of an important article relating to the role of the education system in fighting structural oppressions and being representative of diverse identities- and I came across Bolsonaro. An irrelevant, “professional” politician (30 years involved in politics and living off politics without any contributions to show for), former military (expelled from it due to indiscipline and malpractice). He stood out initially in my research due to his extreme and radical discourses on gender (which he uses interchangeably with sexuality) and education.

Exploring further, I realised his radical discourse, preaching intolerance, was towards pretty much every identity group that was not encompassed by the dominant historical patriarchal and heteronormative patterns. These seeds planted during debates around the PNE evolved as a populist political strategy that consolidated itself by engaging in cultural wars against any progressive and inclusive educational policy through the spread of fake news and conspiracy theories and successfully established [and maintained] Bolsonaro in power. I witnessed this during my PhD years.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The emergence of a cult of personality around the current Brazilian President Jair Messias Bolsonaro is an example of worldwide phenomenon of right-wing populism and yet the specificities of this Bolsonarismo are often under-researched. Through this thesis, I would contextualise Bolsonarismo as connected with specific strands of Brazilian national identity and its anxieties around gender, race, and sexuality. The primary focus will be on how efforts to garner support, through culture wars and intervention in education, are meant to ‘rally the troops’ around a “*macho*” leader.

The rise of right-wing populism across the globe (Europe, the United States, Asia and South America) has been attributed to increasing concerns about national identity and the consideration of those that do not conform to the identities validated by these regimes to be represented as the “other” (Mudde and Kaltwasser, 2012). The concept of national identity is, however, complex, a national identity can exist despite the existence of religious and linguistic diversity (Mottier, 2000) which suggests that a country where people speak different languages and have different religions can still have a national identity. Brazil, a nation-state whose citizens are widely racially diverse, continues to grapple with its identity. This historical struggle around Brazilian identity, allowed room for Bolsonarismo to seed and take root, meaning that the contestation surrounding the idea of national identity played a significant role in the election of Jair Bolsonaro as the president of Brazil in 2018 national elections. The electoral dispute of 2018 has clearly shown that matters relating to social identities continue to shape political leanings and relations within the South American country object of this study (Da Silva and Larkins, 2019). Specific socio-cultural factors such as identities of gender, sexuality, and race influence [and are influenced by] cultural and educational environment in Brazil, shaping ideas of nationality, legitimacy and belonging,

and they serve as a basis for the interpretation of national identity appropriated and broadcast by Bolsonarismo. Bolsonarismo is understood here as a populist political strategy to gain and retain power through weaponising enrooted prejudices and instrumentalising fear.

Populism has been historically and broadly understood as quest for political power. The concept of populism has been explored under different lights throughout the years and although it is now widely used as a pejorative term, that was not always the case. Drawing back to the 19th century, populism was regarded as a positive phenomenon in which common rural people came together to address the rural/ urban division and reclaim agency. This was the case of the People's party in the United States⁴, the Narodnik⁵ case in Russia and the Boulangism⁶ in France.

What is now termed as *Classic Populism* emerged in the nineteen forties and fifties Latin America and has its roots on the Great Depression of 1930 when countries across the region experienced tremendous economic hardship, rural/urban migration started to peak and demands for expansions of political and social citizenship were rapidly increasing. Such a scenario was fertile for radical ideas to strengthen and allowed for largely heterogeneous [which would not have happened otherwise] class alliances to be formed.

Although Latin American Classic Populism became the main reference when people broadly refer to populism, it is in no way the only way it manifests so looking at populism only through traditional lenses is not useful to explain and analyse current manifestations of right-wing populism across the globe. The most relevant and timely approach to study the topic, looks at populism as a political strategy and is the one adopted for the research. This

⁴ The People's Party (also known as the Populist Party) was a populist left-wing agrarian political party in the late 19th century United States of America.

⁵ The Party of Narodnik Communists was a political party formed by a section Left Socialist-Revolutionaries who wished to cooperate with the Bolsheviks in early 20th century Russia.

⁶ Boulangism was the movement that failed to put in power the charismatic but empty-headed French general Georges-Ernest-Jean-Marie Boulanger (1837–1891).

approach was defined by Kurt Weyland (2001 and 2017) and according to it: political strategies are seen as the ability of political leaders to sustain themselves politically. In the case of the political strategy called populism, an individual leader relies on broad support by many people that are unorganised and noninstitutionalised, rather than on the support from organised factions. Barr (2019) rightly points out, ‘Defining populism as a political strategy has a number of advantages’ (para. 24), the most important one being its analytical utility, ‘a concept is good only to the extent that it helps us make sense of the world’ (para. 28).

Another relevant advantage is that this way of understanding populism ‘has a line of historical continuity with earlier, foundational understandings of the phenomenon’ (para. 24). The author also highlights that ‘this definition effectively captures the distinctive nature of the phenomenon as it builds from observation of cases and the evolution of the concept over time, ‘it can thus identify what the real-world examples are, and do so in a way that facilitates the study’ (para. 5) in this sense, opting for a political strategic definition of populism facilitates the analysis of causes and consequences related to populist phenomena.

Brazilians have historically associated discrimination to class (uniquely) rather than to race as the basis for national identity. Skidmore (1992) explains how Brazilian *pardos*⁷ or *mestiços*⁸ (people that are not white but do not identify as Black) and Blacks are on the very bottom of the economy and living standards in Brazil and that most Brazilians understand this disparity as derived mainly (or exclusively) from class issues, not racial ones. Skidmore goes further in the analysis, saying that in the minds of most Brazilians, non-whites are not subject to racial discrimination per se, that the sort of struggle that lies upon them is related to their ‘disadvantaged poor socioeconomic background’ (p. 8), a concept largely advocated for by Bolsonaro and followers since the commencement of his regime. This dynamic comes

⁷ *Pardos* would translate as brown even though Brazilians have a different word for the colour brown (*marrom*).

⁸ *Mestiços* (mixed race) is the general term that children born to interracial parents were given. In Brazil initially *mestiços* were divided into 3 categories: 1) *Mulatos(as)* = black and white parents, 2) *Caboclos(as)* or *Mamelucos(as)* = indigenous and white parents and 3) *Cafuzos(as)* = black and indigenous parents.

down to European colonisation in Latin America, to the “legacy of slavery” and to the intense flow of immigrants coming from Europe that after the abolition of slavery has flooded the country. According to Paula Drumond (n.d), the victory of Bolsonaro in Brazil was a contributory factor towards seclusion and related discriminatory practices in the country, thus: ‘Bolsonaro’s victory has strengthened so-called “anti-globalist” forces, which consider “gender ideology”, “racialism” and “climatism” as a three-pronged Marxist plot aiming at overthrowing national and Christian values in Brazil’ (p. 1). Racial identity in Brazil is often made “plastic” and “elastic” meaning the class status often directly influences one’s skin colour definition as confirmed by Araujo (2015) ‘in Brazil race categories became deeply connected to class’, what makes it harder to have people from Brazil recognising when issues are connected to race. Hutn (2004) wrote that according to the racial democracy theory, the fact that black Brazilians are considerably poorer than white Brazilians and that they are not significantly present among intellectual, corporate, governing and so on elites derive from the legacy of slavery, from the lack of postcolonial legal means of segregation, from the wide amalgamation and the lack of identification by the majority of the population with clearly defined extreme racial categories. Through education people experience, absorb, build and shape their understanding of identities, nationality and belonging.

Bolsonarismo, therefore, used its narrative, the one it has created around the curriculum, the education system and structures as a central pillar for incepting itself in the minds of its followers through fear, through fomenting of cultural wars and fake news. It placed education at the centre of its *fear crusade* as a critical tool for shaping the national and/or political identity of Brazilian society.

Education shapes national identity. Notions of national identity, by their turn, are also of great influence on education policies and processes in a country. According to Khader (2012), education policy can be used to reinforce a national agenda and identity. The

government can design education policy to promote specific values and beliefs concerning identity elements such as gender, sexuality, and race. The use of the education system to create a national identity can be problematic, especially when it promotes an “us versus them” narrative, a critical pillar of right-wing populism (Arar and Ibrahim, 2016) which becomes clear in the case of Bolsonarismo. On an additional note, the education system should prepare students for life in a globalised world, a factor that may contradict a populist political agenda. Globalisation has led to a world where having an open and global mindset is likely to result in career success due to ever-growing interlinks between international institutions and organisations. Furthermore, rising cross-border migration has made it necessary to learn how to operate in multicultural settings. The focus on the construction of an essentialist national identity through the education system can thus limit the ability of citizens to attain career success and social integration in a globalised world (O'Connor and Faas, 2012). Using the curriculum to construct exclusionary national identities can also amplify social tensions within a country and sustain the oppression of those viewed as the “other” (Durrani and Dunne, 2010).

The present study aims to understand how particular notions of gender, sexuality and race inform the discourses around education in Brazil and how Bolsonarismo used a particular discourse around education as a populist political strategy to get to [and remain so far in] office. The study also examines how the curriculum, educational teaching and learning practices can shape national identity and therefore were a very useful populist tool in the hands of Bolsonarismo in Brazil. So, power is directly linked to knowledge and the production and reproduction of discourse within the structures or systems of education. This power and knowledge nexus is significant in the context of national identity, especially to the role of education policies and curriculum in nation-building. Educational structures and processes fundamentally serve as a powerful force for creating and reproducing ideals of

national identity and, either reinforcing inequalities and injustices or promoting inclusion. However, knowledge is very often used as a means for exclusion as it will be discussed in the current study context through a thorough investigation of the evolution of the system of education within the Brazilian nation and how such policies or laws have directly impacted Bolsonarismo which has adversely impacted the country's social, cultural, political, and economic heritage.

The study explores the ways in which the Bolsonarismo project has used the education system in the country to reinforce the current administration's ideologies and promote its agenda. Populism has a direct connection with national identity. Concepts of national identity have historically been used by populist leaders and movements as a foundational aspect of populist projects. The research also analyses the socio-cultural factors that explain how national identity is ingrained in educational processes and how the current education system is being effectively used to strengthen Bolsonarismo's project.

In order to identify and unpack these notions and myths, the thesis looks at two sites of interest that have been used as a battleground between conservative and progressive forces for creating and sustaining discourses: 1) The Brazilian Congress (focusing on the debates around the Brazilian National Education Plan) and 2) The environment surrounding the "classroom".

1.2 Problem Statement

The education system remains a vital means through which governments can inculcate notions of national identity. While ideas of national identity can promote positive norms and values, it can also be limiting when it is constructed around exclusion (Khader, 2012). The consideration of people that do not conform to a specific national identity as the 'other' can lead to discrimination based on race, gender, and sexuality (Da Silva and Larkins, 2019). A government's political ideology and its influence on the construction of national

identity can shape the education system and practices to reinforce a particular national identity while promoting its political agenda. There is a need to examine the construction of the Brazilian national identity in Bolsonaro's populist strategy in the field of the country's education system as it is a vital piece for its maintenance in power.

1.3 Aims of the Study

The main aim of the current study is to identify the evolution of the educational structures, laws, and policies in Brazil and how the policies have contributed to, or were used in, supporting the emergence of Bolsonaro. It is imperative to look at education as a tool for creating and strengthening cultural wars as a populist strategy to establish Bolsonaro as a regime. In particular, the study seeks to ascertain the overall implication of education as a key source of debate and a strong pillar for Bolsonaro that relied on its claims that the education system had been corrupted during the PT rule and to ascertain the potential need for a rescued and revitalised national and political identity so that the “true Brazilian identity” could thrive, and the country prosper. That is, the study investigates the correlation between discourses around educational policies or laws and its influence on the emergence of Bolsonaro in Brazil through a critical analysis of the aspects of intersectionality theory, including race, gender, and sexual-based bias by the *elite do atraso*⁹ towards the minority groups within the society in Brazil, as supported by Bolsonaro. The study objectives and questions for research are outlined below:

- To evaluate the impact of the evolution of the educational laws and policies on the national identity of the Federal Republic of Brazil;
- To explore the connection between right-wing populism and education in Brazil;

⁹ *Elite do atraso* is a term [and book title] coined by the Brazilian sociologist Jessé José Freire de Souza which has been translated to English as ‘*Backwards Elite*’. The book that introduces the term is a theorisation of the specificities of the *Brazilian middle class* with its backwards beliefs and prejudices. See Souza (2019).

- To determine how the rise of Bolsonarismo is directly linked to the cultural wars waged on progressive educational policies or laws meant to contribute to non-discriminatory practices affecting the citizen in Brazil.

1.4 Research Questions

The primary Research question this thesis aims to answer is- What are the elements of Brazilian national identity in education policies that were championed by Bolsonarists in order to build political support to win during the 2018 elections and to remain in power since then? In order to answer this research question, the following sub-questions are identified:

- What are the ways in which education connects to national identity and populism?
- How and why did Bolsonarismo engage in cultural wars against the PNE?
- What is the evolution of the policies of education under the national planning agenda in Brazil and its impact on the issues of racism, gender, and sexual-based discrimination in the country?
- How have the educational policies or laws been used by Bolsonarismo in the Brazilian state?
- How do the historical adjustments to the systems and processes of education, as well as the laws or policies in Brazil affect equal treatment between the “elite do atraso” and the minority factions within the country under Bolsonarismo?
- Whether the rapid changes in the processes or systems of education, including the projects of laws or policies guiding education, have contributed to the greater degree of the adverse implications of Bolsonarismo such as discriminatory practices, racism, and exclusion in the contemporary Brazilian society?

1.5 Justifications for the Study

In Brazil, it is possible to observe, in very broad terms, two approaches to national identity and they will be elaborated further in the literature review chapter. One sees it through exclusionary lenses, that do not allow for various possibilities of equally legitimate identities to coexist; and the second one which advocates for the numerous possibilities of Brazilian national identities that are equally valid and should be contemplated by various structures including, and very importantly, all of the structures and processes that relate to education.

The first approach is the one that Bolsonarismo claims ownership and authorship of and is one of the pillars that sustain Bolsonarismo, but it is not a new approach. Under the current study, it will be demonstrated that these basal ideas of national identity proposed by Bolsonarismo are a constant feature throughout Brazilian history, being especially mobilised by authoritarian and populist regimes. Yuval-Davis (1997) suggests that the inherited, fundamental Brazilian identity is one of a Christian nation, that puts the traditional family as the core of the nation. This ultimately means that misogyny, homophobia and whiteness supremacy are taken as if they were the normality, the only possible way for true *Brasilidade* (“Brazilian-ness” or “Brazilianity”). The idea of *Brasilidade* has been explored by important Brazilianists such as Freyre (1956), Holanda (2012) and Júnior (2011), and it will be analysed in more detail in chapter three.

The second approach understands the multiple dimensions of identity and recognises as possible and equally valid all the alternate ideas of Brazilian identity. Under this approach is Renan (2013) who writes on the need for a nation-state such as Brazil to trace its identity through a consideration of multiple elements that define the identity of a country. The arguments by Renan (2013) are evident in the explanation concerning the absence of citizens of France that can say for certain whether he or she is an Alan, Visigoth or Burgundian.

In the current study context, it is demonstrated that education is an essential part of national identity, so it becomes a very important site for contestation and ideological clash. Education has been a key source of debate and a strong pillar for Bolsonarismo that relied on its claims that the education system had been corrupted during the PT rule and that needed to be rescued and revitalised so that the true Brazilian identity could thrive, and the country prosper. It is not possible to study national identity building and not look at education. The opposite is also true. Education and national identity are co-dependent, and feed into/ are reflected by each other. As previously mentioned, Bolsonarismo mobilised education and the debates around it as a very effective populist tool that brought about the successful win in 2018 elections and Bolsonaro's maintenance in office.

1.6 Research Methodology

Through a mixed-methods approach to discourse analysis, this thesis uses critical analysis of discourses around education in Brazil as a case study to explore the development of the populist political strategy called Bolsonarismo and its engagement in cultural wars to get [and remain] in power successfully.

According to Matthews and Ross (2010), the Social sciences is a set of academic fields concerned with society and social interactions. It traverses diverse academic disciplines, but it is mainly rooted in philosophy. Research in Social Sciences is mainly focused on establishing authentic and valid approaches to the study of humanity with prominent contributors, including Descartes, Comte, Durkheim, Kant, Schutz, and Weber (Babalola and Nwanzu, 2021).

The analysis in this thesis is carried out as a *case study* through *qualitative research* through a *Critical Discourse Analysis*. Qualitative research is research that focuses on methods other than number-related ones. Discourse analysis is concerned with words, narratives, meanings, and interpretations. A case study is in-depth research that aims at

understanding a particular scenario (groups of people in a territory, for instance), in their real-life context. It is mainly used to understand complex, multi-layered phenomena. According to Bhattacharjee (2012) a case study, also known as case research is an ‘in-depth investigation of a problem in one or more real-life settings (case sites) over an extended period of time (...) The strength of this research method is its ability to discover a wide variety of social, cultural, and political factors potentially related to the phenomenon of interest that may not be known in advance. Analysis tends to be qualitative in nature, but heavily contextualized and nuanced’ (p. 40).

The study uses both primary and secondary data to examine the research topic and apply theory to the case study in question. Secondary data is appropriate when information concerning a research topic is already available. According to Whiteside, Mills and McCalman (2012), secondary data is also appropriate for examining complex social issues. An extended literature review was used to explore secondary sources of data to gain in-depth insights into the notion of national identity in Brazil and how this notion has influenced the Brazilian education system and practices. Information for the study was obtained from online sources, including newspaper articles, policy documents published by the Brazilian government, reports published by non-governmental organisations dealing with issues relating to education, and peer-reviewed journal articles. Moreover, the study relied on parliamentary debates for primary data. Therefore, the primary and secondary sources were appropriate for collecting data because they offered a wide range of information sources from different stakeholders, in the process lending a voice to all the parties impacted by the Brazilian education system and national identity constructions.

1.6.1. Discourse analysis

The current study relied on the critical discourse analysis technique as the applicable tool in the overall investigation of the effects of education policy in the construction of

national identity in Brazil and how Bolsonarismo engaged in cultural wars against progressive educational policies as a political strategy to get elected in 2018.

Erica Resende (2011) asserted the utility of discourse-based methodologies in studies that tackle aspects that are integral to decisions of policymakers in diverse areas of an economy as the method permits for the effective construction of '*discursive bridge between policy and identity that ensures their mutual coherence*' (p. 11, emphasis mine). The perspective offered by Resende (2011) is relevant to the discussion concerning how educational policies impact Bolsonarismo through national identity emphasis. Moreover, according to Wodak et al. (2009), 'Discourse is socially constructive as well as socially conditioned; it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people' (p. 37), in this sense, 'discourse analysis is meant to provide a higher awareness of the hidden motivations in others and ourselves and, therefore, enable us to solve concrete problems, not by providing unequivocal answers, but by making us ask ontological and epistemological questions' (Olson, 2007, p. 29). Discourse analysis has been adopted as a research design for the study as the technique serves as a research tool that prioritises the investigation of language (may it be signs, spoken, written or any form of communication or semiotic phenomenon) as a means to unravel meanings and understandings relating to a particular topic. Coulthard (2014) stated that discourse analysis entails the analysis of verbal or written interactions or discourse. According to Johnstone (2017), discourse analysis is useful for gaining insights into social issues because language shapes the world. According to Santos (2015), the technique is essential in the analysis of language use as it allows the researcher to investigate a larger volume of data or information by frequency evaluation. Consequently, the current study focused on the trends, regularities, patterns, and similarities in the analysed data sources which will be referred to as "codes".

The process of data gathering relied on both primary and secondary sources of information with relevant details concerning the implications of education policy in constructing national identity in Brazil as the basis for critical analysis of the language used in furtherance of the national agenda within the country. Data concerning the evolving scope of national identity within Brazil as impacted by the education policy was collected from databases such as JSTOR, SciELO, Taylor & Francis, ScienceDirect, SAGE Journals, ERIC, IBGE (Brazilian census bureau) and Brazilian Congress databases.

The main difference between discourse analysis and linguistics is that the latter is mostly interested in exploring text structures, whereas the first concerns itself with the social, cultural and psychological meanings embedded in particular discourses. Discourse analysis has been used in political studies when the objects of analysis are political discourses such as debates, speeches and so on. From a critical perspective, any policy analysis has to rely on critical discourse analysis in order to be effective and useful. Critical discourse analysis aims to examine how particular discourses transform or reproduce meaning and power (Mottier, 2000). According to Lester, Lochmiller and Gabriel (2016), discourse analysis can be used to explore the underlying problems of social inequality, power, dominance (re)production and identities formation within legislative texts or policy talk concerning the education system and practices. Discourse analysis offers insights into policy issues and concerns at the state and local levels and policy issues relating to implementers and actors. The present study conducted critical analyses of discourse practices such as the debates around and the product itself of the National Education Plan (PNE) education policies (Appendix 1) and regulations in connection to the social, cultural, and historical practices that are reflected by them and that they simultaneously help to construct. Mottier (2000) claims that historical accounts and policy texts are both examples of narrative portrayal and national identity performance.

Discourse analysis can, therefore, offer an understanding of the performance of national identity and the factors that influence this performance.

1.6.2 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis was adopted for the study to understand the effects of the cultural wars against progressive education policies and its connection to the construction of national identity in Brazil as a means for a populist leader such as Bolsonaro to become Brazil's president and retain power. According to Taylor (1997), little attention has been directed towards research methodology in literature focusing on educational policy. Mogashoa (2014) wrote that 'Critical discourse analysis deals with long term analysis of fundamental causes and consequences of issues. Therefore, it requires a detailed account of relationships between text, talk, society and culture. Teaching and learning policies can be better understood by looking at the social issues of the community as well as the language and type of texts used.' (p. 105). 'Critical discourse analysis is primarily positioned in the environment of language and its successes can be measured with a measuring rod of the study of languages. Language can be used to represent speakers' beliefs, positions and ideas in terms of spoken texts like conversations. Written or oral messages convey meanings if we analyse the underlying meaning of the words. Analysis of underlying meanings can assist in interpreting issues, conditions and events in which the educators find themselves. Using words can direct/ assist those in control of the education system' (ibid).

When studying politics, it is imperative to apply discourse analysis in a critical way. The need for a critical stand stems from the fact that more traditional applications of the method of discourse analysis do not regard the ways in which discourse shapes and is shaped by politics. According to Kendall and Wickham (1999), political power is deemed to be acquired by those in power due to the assumption of them being more knowledgeable and therefore, more legitimate in exercising control over others in both blatant and invisible ways.

There is an essential link between knowledge and power as proposed by Foucault according to which, one should not only analyse discourse considering the related social, cultural and psychological aspects but also and very importantly, one should always bear in mind the dynamics and relations of power that are in operation for that discourse to take place and be considered either valid or invalid, accepted or not. Threadgold (1986) states that ‘a text of the dominant discourse (that is a socially valorised text) by inscribing certain preferred discursive positions from which its discourse appears “natural”, “transparent” in relation to the “real”, does privilege or prefer a certain reading’ (p. 23). In line with Foucault’s understanding, discourse and power relations are inevitably and inherently interconnected and should be analysed in light of temporal and spatial contexts. It is important to analyse the ways in which society and all dimensions of “the social” are influenced by dominant discourses. Discourse can be used by the dominant as a means of domination and oppression but also by the oppressed or oppression-aware as resistance to dominance. Mottier (2000) explained the need to take a Foucauldian, critical stand when analysing discourses around national identity. In the author’s words ‘identity is not only constructed in the context of relations of meaning but also within institutionalised relations of power. Discourses around national identity, sexuality, gender or race are not autonomous systems but operate in the context of the institutional supports and practices that they rely upon’ (Mottier, 2000, p. 4). A critical analysis approach is, therefore, vital for understanding the institutional factors and practices that influence national identity constructions.

There are masculine, heteronormative and racist ideas of nation and in many ways, they play in defining and sustaining structures of domination and oppression. This plays a role in how women, non-heterosexuals and non-whites are supposed to be incorporated within that [ideal] idea of nation, never as the norm. These dominant discourses encompass a set of ‘specific narratives of the nation are construed as important component parts of broader

discourses of national identity. Historical accounts, myths, and metaphors are examples of different narrative forms that contribute to discourses of national identity' (Mottier, 2000, p. 3). Norman Fairclough was an important name in the envisioning of the discourse analysis method as a critical practice. Just as discourse analysis emerged from text linguistics, critical discourse analysis is intimately connected to critical linguistics. The framework proposed by the author has been applied to political studies around educational policies and practices, such as when Francis et al. (2019) detailed study of gender and sexual diversity in education systems in Southern Africa.

According to Francis et al. (2019), they used Fairclough's (2013) framework by carrying out an analysis of discourse practices such text generation and dissemination, language texts and socio-cultural practices that occurred in specific discursive phenomena or events. The approach made it possible to gain in-depth understandings of present education practices and policies regarding sexuality and gender diversity within education systems in several southern African countries. The main aim of the research was to determine the ways in which societal power relations are formed and afterward reinforced in texts and language (Francis et al., 2019). The study examined the ways in which discourse reproduces inequality, political and social injustice, and power abuse in specific socio-political contexts. The study outcomes demonstrate the importance of the argument advanced by Taylor (1997) concerning the importance of critical analysis in studies focusing on educational policies and their impacts. Rogers et al. (2016) also noted the importance of critical discourse analysis in educational research. The research design is important for determining how language, ideology, and power shape educational policies. The current study sought to determine how educational policy in Brazil had influenced national identity constructions. A critical discourse analysis enables the gain of in-depth insights into how politics, national identity, and educational policy intersect in Brazil and how these interrelationships have impacted on

national identity constructions and how it all allowed for cultural wars to be engaged as a populist political strategy to win election.

1.6.2.1 Critical discourse analysis and national identity

Discourse is the vehicle for the construction, maintenance, reconstruction and deconstruction of National Identity. Nationalist attitudes and stereotypes articulated in discourse inform and shape political decision-making. This study understands the processes of building national identities as discursive social practices, in the words of Qazi and Shah (2019) ‘conceptualising national identity construction as a discursive social practice, the study is informed by the postcolonial theoretical framework and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis’ (p. 1). For the nation-building process, as described by Anderson (2006), to be most effective, it seems reasonable to assume that the national elites have at their disposal a political apparatus and key institutions which allow the transmission and consolidation of national myths, traditions, etc. In other words, the nation-state, with its overt symbols and common education, offers the best opportunity to imbue a given population with a sense of shared consciousness.

National identity could be seen in terms of imagery, which are both created by and reflected in dominant discourse. People’s actions and everyday performances feed into the consolidation, dissemination, incorporation of sets of symbols into practices and imagination and offer community constructs around culture, aspects of citizenship entailing civil, legal and socio-economic rights, defines and sets forth boundaries for potential enemies of the state and also envisages consolidation of national education and media interplays. The naturalisation of the dominant discourse reflects on how identity markers are constructed and regarded. According to Mottier (2000), the naturalisation is a key mechanism of the discursive identity construction, obscuring the discursive practices that produce meanings within the context of sexuality, national identity, gender or race.

A major issue with regard to most studies of national identity lies in the fact that while popular culture and its connection to the creation of national identity are a subject matter for extensive and intensive research studies, the intimate link between policy and national identity is much more narrowly explored. Policy is more often than not, seen as a pure reflection of national identity rather than the very genesis of it. Mottier (2000), in their study of the theory of discourse and narratives of identity (in which they analysed the Swiss case), aligns with the understanding that policy and identity are co-productive and there is the need for this link to be further explored. Identity markers are formed, reshaped and altered through institutional practices such as government policies and everyday interactions. In this sense, Schuster (2017) writes on the connection between macro politics and the day-to-day oppressive experiences of women by stating that the experiences of women with regard to discrimination within their professional, personal or private lives, such as unequal division of house chores with a male partner or spouse or disrespect at their places of work, are essentially political challenges because they originate from structural disadvantages that women face in societies that are largely patriarchal.

National identity is also constructed by appealing to certain needs and desires of citizens. According to Edensor (2002), in his book 'Popular Culture, Everyday Life and the Matrix of National Identity', the nation persists as a pre-eminent constituent of individuals' identity. Moreover, Smith (1991) postulated the centrality of a nation state in shaping its political identity through discourses surrounding the role of processes and structures such as education in enhancing the power structure in the society. Under this aspect, populist rhetoric mobilises this in its favour to instigate a sense of national collectivity in order to acquire and maintain power over national space, forging and endorsing particular representations around

culture and social processes. Discourses, which are made up of narratives¹⁰, are significant because both identity and the idea of a nation are to an extent, the way in which people imagine themselves, both as individuals and individuals who are part of a collectivity. For example, Smith (1992) contended that the discussion concerning the development of nationalism and national identity hinges on critical societal rubrics such as gender, sexuality, racism, as well as the role of additional drivers of powers and political control such as education in shaping the perspectives of the ruling elites and the governed populace within a societal context, as evident in the Brazilian scenario within the current study situation. Another aspect that drives national identity is the frontier of international relations which is understood as a continuous process that is integral in the construction of national identity, as emphasised by Resende (2020). Therefore, based on the discourse elaborated by Smith (1991), Edensor (2002), and Smith (1992), it is important to ask the question of what does it mean to belong to a specific collectivity, a specific identity, how these theoretical definitions are sedimented in people's real-life experiences and how they shape day-to-day actions.

Popular culture is more widely studied as a means of contouring national identity but policies are also a means through which discourses of national identity are created, legitimated and reproduced. Debates around policies can walk hand in hand with cultural wars, allowing for populism to establish as an alternative of 'salvation' of the nation which becomes clear in the case of Bolsonarismo.

Having that in mind, the research aims at expanding the literature on how right-wing populist leaders use cultural wars to expand its reach beyond its core niche to get into office, and how education policy can be a powerful tool in their strategy.

¹⁰ About the conceptualisation of narratives, I follow Mottier's understanding that 'Discourses are reproduced (as well as transformed) by specific individual and collective narratives. narratives are possible forms of discourse, while discourses include (but are not reduced to) narratives' (1999, p. 3)

Bolsonarismo is a very clear example of this. It got in office by engaging in purely rhetorical wars against the ‘illegitimate forms of manifestations of Brazilian identity’, against “the establishment” and “old politics” through hate speech, fake news, conspiracy theory and social media brainwashing manipulation strategies. How does this work? What is at the core of all this? The rationale behind this strategy is the creation of the *Us vs. Them* narrative as posed by Schmitt (1996). It is the same narrative that achieved the support of masses in Nazi Germany. This polarisation allows for the war-like dynamic to take root. The two sides instead of seeing each other as political adversaries (in an agonistic way – see Mouffe 2013) they see each other [in an antagonistic manner] as enemies to be shattered and eliminated, which puts war inevitably as the ontological condition for politics.

Nagel (1998) wrote on the boundaries that exist inside borders; according to them, within national borders, there are ethnic boundaries, gender boundaries, and sexual boundaries. Inside a national border, it is possible to encounter categorisations and hierarchisations that produce gendered, racialised and sexualised national identities. In the author’s words, the nation ‘not only is built on the back of ethnicity, it also represents a particular gendered, sexualised vision of social and political reality’ (ibid, n.p.). The racial and ethnic nature of the boundaries of the nation has been extensively discussed in the literature on national identity. In contrast, the gendered basis of national identity has, to date, been less researched (Yuval-Davis, 1997). This is even truer when we consider the sexual boundaries of the nation.

To a larger extent, the perception of policy as a critical tool or construct shaping national identity remains unaddressed among different theoretical positions. For instance, constructivists perceive nation as a critical idea constructed primarily through national interest, and national identity is constructed through the very performances of everyday life, including policy performances, which are normally regarded as only reflective of the ideas

around national identity. In contrast, the current research refutes the perspective presented under constructivism through the contention that the policies do not necessarily reflect the will of the populace and may be adversely influenced to lead to a discriminatory outcome among people of different race, sexuality or gender, as evident in the scenario of Bolsonarismo in Brazil.

1.6.3 Stages of the process

The first step was to elaborate the research question which evolved throughout the development of the research. The initial question being: *How does education policy shape gendered, sexualised and racialised Brazilian identity?*, The aim was to understand the process of construction of Brazilian national identity and the role of education in the process. The initial step was to look at the debates Congress around the National Education Plan (PNE) and quickly realised that there has been clash of narratives culminating with a particular narrative of Brazilian identity winning over the other and as a result eliminating progressive language and traces from the text of the plan. Then the available transcripts from the congressional sessions relating to matters of the PNE were read and the recordings of those sessions were watched and all of them reviewed. In this process, the first thing to notice was what each congressperson voted for. This is the first potential indication of which narrative they were buying into. A progressive one or a conservative one. So the discourses were split into two groups: 1) Votes FOR the removal of the progressive article from the plan and, 2) Votes AGAINST the removal.

This gave me the first set of generic separation of the broad category of narratives that these discourses were following. Then within both major groups, the search for words/ codes relating to progressive or regressive ideas of gender, sexuality and race begun and how each particular congressperson framed the narratives around identity and more specifically national identity was analysed.

The next step was to gather in the scholarly literature the suitable materials to aid in answering posed research question and establish the context for the research and the findings obtained by analysing the speeches. When researching each material, information regarding the author, time and place of publication and the target audience which the message of that piece was aimed at were all observed for a deeper insight into the message they were conveying.

Then the next step was coding the theoretical material, which is an important stance in the process of analysing qualitative data as it structures the conduction of the research process and provides a tool for organising the observations and interpretations. An open coding approach was taken which means that grounded theory was my method of analysing my data. Also, a combination of both deductive and inductive coding were used when reading through the materials but mostly performing inductive coding at the beginning of the process. When the readings started, there were no preconceived notions of what the codes should be exactly. It was mainly exploratory research at the start. On the second round of coding, a more Axial approach was taken and the connections between the codes established during the first round started to be drawn. After grouping the codes, through selective coding, the central category which linked up all the codes of the study together and summarised the substance of the thesis was reached.

After coding, the main argument of the thesis was reached, which evolved to be *the appropriation of education as a populist political strategy to build national identity narratives to establish [and maintain] Bolsonarismo in power*. Following the identification of the macro traces of the text, the analyses of the fragments of the particular discourses were made while trying to relate them to their underlying meanings and their cultural contexts. While doing this, linguistic and rhetoric mechanisms present in the discourses at the spoken and written languages level were considered. The last step was to interpret all the information

in order to consistently answer the research questions and present the findings through evidence found.

1.7 Ethical/professional issues and study limitations

The ethical or professional concerns emerging from the current research scenario included issues of citation, fabrication of information, honesty, and plagiarism in depicting the information obtained from the secondary and primary sources of data selected for the study, as captured by Agnes (2009). In particular, at the core of the concerns of the thesis was the urgency to address the citation and plagiarism concerns. Consequently, a diverse number of databases were used to overcome database bias during citation as well as through the correct citation of the sources while acknowledging the contribution of the scholars. Besides, as suggested by Taylor (2014), this limitation was overcome through the accurate and honest citation of the sources hence upholding professionalism and ethical conduct during the research.

The study limitations included the problem of restricted access to some of the identified databases for primary and secondary sources of data for the current study context, thereby preventing the timely completion of the research process. Specifically, the requirement for permission to access some databases from the administrators delayed search procedure for the information sources, thereby acting as a limitation in the current study. Moreover, it is essential to bear in mind that such a study that has a focus of research in another country will analyse a lot of documents, both official and by the media, in a different language, Portuguese in this case. The research required many translations of both written and spoken texts (videos of sessions in Congress, campaign videos and so on) and all the translations were made by me. Additionally, it is essential to clarify that non-binary gender categories will not be approached by the study due to the fact that these are not raised as possible alternatives in public debate. In Brazil, public debates completely disregard fluidity.

Gender binaries and hetero/ homosexuality are already entangled enough in the minds of most Brazilians that gender fluidity matters do not even reach the public debate.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

Populism is a contested concept that has been widely discussed in the literature throughout the years. Katsambekis (2016) understands populism as ‘a specific type of discourse, and thus as a way -among others- of doing politics and appealing to groups of people’ (p. 1). Filsinger et al. (2021) wrote on the relationship between conceptions of nationhood and populist attitudes. Roberts (1995 and 2006) writes on forms of populism in Latin America and discusses new developments in populism as a political phenomenon and the emergence of new populist political figures.

This thesis adopts Kurt Weyland’s (2001 and 2017) approach to populism and sees it as a political strategy to retain and maintain personalist leaders in power. Brown and Mondon (2021) share a similar understanding: ‘building on poststructuralist discourse theory, we see populism as a discursive strategy through which “the people” is constructed against an elite’ (p. 280). In the words of Weyland, ‘to understand populist movements and their impact on party systems, it is therefore more useful to employ a political-strategic definition, which conceives of populism as revolving around personalistic, usually charismatic leadership that is sustained by direct, uninstitutionalized connections to a heterogeneous, amorphous, and largely unorganized mass of followers’ (Weyland, 2021, p. 44).

Bolsonarismo is a populist movement that promotes cultural wars, dissemination of conspiracy theories and fake news as political strategies to get support from a wide range of different groups based on “selling” the premise that it is “an alternative” to traditionally corrupt politics. Bolsonarismo is not a white supremacy project *per se*, in the strict sense of the term, it is not a neoliberal project, it is not even a nationalist project in the traditional sense of the concept. Bolsonarismo is not based on a clear political project for the country. It

does not offer alternative policies or any platform for development. It is not concerned with showing “how” it will change the establishment. It is purely based on the empty claim that it will change it. The strategy of Bolsonarismo is to promote cultural wars to gather support across varied political parties and groups of people with divergent ideologies based uniquely on the premise of combating an “enemy” which is the *progressive forces* “villain”, represented by the PT. This *Modus Operandi* bears significant similarities to Trump’s campaign and government in the US. It’s primary aim is simply to *remain in power*.

The current study also employed intersectionality as a theoretical framework for understanding the impacts of national identity constructs in Brazil. Specifically, the theory of intersectionality and its association with critical aspects of the society, such as racism and identity politics that adversely affect factions of the minority groups within the society, is traceable to the original postulates as presented by Crenshaw (1991). As emphasised by Yuval-Davis (1997), the various minority factions within Brazilian society, such as women and black people, have continually undergone discriminatory practices based on gender, race and sexuality emerging from the identity politics under Bolsonarismo. The shared experiences and the demanding life scenarios of the marginalised groups have stimulated the inherent need for the various individuals to recognise the fast-changing political landscape within the country in which a larger percentage of the citizens remain isolated while the voice of the few individuals who subscribe to the exclusionary political movement triumphs. According to Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda, and Abdulrahim (2012), the process of politicisation of the society has contributed to the debate concerning how the way citizens identify with the various political groups promote issues such as violence and discriminatory practices based on gender or race, as the basis for the explanation on the theory of intersectionality within the Brazilian state. Therefore, the theory of intersectionality postulates that various aspects of an individual’s political and social identities can combine to result in privilege or discrimination

(Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda, and Abdulrahim, 2012). The theoretical framework identifies the disadvantages experienced by certain groups due to several factors. The scope of the present intersectional study is limited to gender, sexuality and racial dimensions of national identity because these are the core social identity elements that influence discrimination or privilege, as argued by Walby, Armstrong and Strid (2012). Gender, sexuality and race dimensions are inseparably interconnected historically in Brazil and that is not to say that other dimensions of national identity such as class and body ability are not important.

McCall (2005) explored the relationship between complexity and intersectionality in her article “The Complexity of Intersectionality” in which she describes three methodological approaches scholars of intersectionality use when making sense of analytic categories (in this study gender, sexuality and race); each approach treats the complexity of such categories differently. While *anticategorical* analyses deconstruct categorical boundaries by exposing their socially constructed nature, *intercategorical* complexity strategically assumes the reality of such categories in an effort to document social inequalities between different categorical groups. The third approach, *intracategorical* complexity, adopts analytic features of anti- and intercategorical complexity by deconstructing categories while strategically accepting their existence in an effort to document social inequalities within a master category. The perspective by McCall (2005) is central to the understanding of the emergence of Bolsonarismo in the Brazilian context as it explains how national or political identity shapes the social structures in society, including the educational system, which is directly applicable to Brazil. The author pointed to the work of Crenshaw (1991) and other feminists of colour as working within this intracategorical register of analysis. The main site where intersectionality emerges as a concept was in Critical Race Theory (CRT) and the term was coined by the academic Kimberlé Crenshaw. She defined intersectionality as ways of capturing the consequences of the interaction between two or more forms of subordination: sexism, racism,

patriarchalism. In this way, intersectionality seeks to study not only the fact that one is a woman - at the same time studying the fact that someone is black, being LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transvestite, transsexual, transgender and queer) (Crenshaw, 1991). In fact, according to her, often being a racialised woman is necessarily related to class and gender. There is a need to study other factors of discrimination altogether (Crenshaw, 1989). In short, she claims that intersectional theory's fundamental truth is that individuals have individual identities that intersect in ways that impact how they are viewed, understood, and treated. Accordingly, the postulate by Crenshaw (1991) recognised the evolution of behavioural tendencies in the contemporary society, such as the instances of violence and the emergence of classes or caste system that is directly attributable to the political identity under Bolsonaro. Under this discussion, Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda, and Abdulrahim (2012) supported the centrality of political identity in the formulation of ideas concerning how the dominant groups affect the minority, such as women and the implications of racial discrimination in perpetuating the ideas of white supremacy within the Brazilian state. The theory of intersectionality is also critical in providing vital explanation on the social as well as systemic aspects of the evolution of the society through the use of identity politics as the relevant tool for discrimination or segregation in the contemporary social, economic and cultural domain. For example, according to Crenshaw (1989), identity-based political practices are attributable to the isolation or discriminatory conduct against individuals based on their race, sexuality or gender, as is evident in the scenario within Brazil.

The discussion concerning the application of the theory of intersectionality, as postulated by Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda, and Abdulrahim (2012), to the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil finds relevance in the sense that the political aspects of the state closely relate to the identity of individuals based on gender or race. In particular, the use of identity politics has led to challenges in the attainment of social justice within the country

with the emergence of different political ideals such as the liberals who advocate against gender or racial based bias or domination by the majority white supremacists. On the other hand, the theory of intersectionality offers an avenue to further discourse concerning the strengths as well as the shortcomings in the adoption of Bolsonarismo as the core of the national identity in the Brazilian state through a discovery of the adverse frameworks that are associated with the political power within the social niche. For instance, according to Crenshaw (1989), the emergence of the feminist movement, as well as racial liberation groups, demonstrates the utility of social power in promoting domination within contemporary society, as explained in the intersectionality theoretical perspective. Therefore, the current study embraced the theory of intersectionality to facilitate the investigation concerning whether Bolsonarismo helps in the process of social reconstruction and the empowerment of citizens in the political domain of Brazil. Besides, the intersectionality theory emerged as the most suitable theory for the current theoretical framework as the postulate embodies broader aspects of the social and political space of the society such as issues of violence, discrimination based on race or gender, as well as concerns on political identity and white privilege which are characteristic of Bolsonarismo.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study explores how right-wing populists use cultural wars to create particular narratives of national identity as political strategy in order to establish themselves in power and how discussions around education are a key element of this strategy. It is a significant and original study since it demonstrates in practice through the case study of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, how matters of education can be used as a populist tool, as a means to an end by populist leaders.

Besides, the current study findings on the role of Bolsonarismo in shaping discourses on national identity in Brazil relate to the research question in the sense that the outcome

could prove relevant for usage by politicians, experts and professionals to ignite public debates directed towards attaining better governance that enhances the socio-cultural and socio-economic wellbeing of the citizens of Brazil.

The research findings can be used to make a case for better education policies that promote equality and inclusivity besides effective learning in a globalised world. Education activists and politicians can influence the government to abandon an education system that moulds students to have a narrow view of the world and instead work towards creating education policy that aids students to become socially aware and successful in terms of career and social relations in a globalised world. The findings of the study can also be used to campaign against political interference by the proponents of Bolsonarismo as a form of identity politics that is critical in the process of development of education policies in the Brazilian state. Therefore, through a broader analysis and comprehension of the role of Bolsonarismo in the formulation of social, economic, cultural, and political identity among citizens in Brazil, better laws can be developed to ensure that the formulation of education policies is left to independent and professional bodies as opposed to politicians, thereby upholding equality and fairness in the country.

1.10 Thesis Structure

This first chapter assesses the variables of national or political identity and education within the Brazilian context. Specifically, the chapter discusses the study background, the problem statement, research aims and objectives, the research question(s), the significance of the study, theoretical framework and the research methodology.

The second chapter reviews the literature on populism and national identity and provides contextualisation for Brazil. It explores what is national identity, how did it come to be, and why is it a problematic and contested topic. It analyses the academic literature around

populism, national identity and its connection to gender, sexuality and race in the Brazilian context.

The third chapter introduces the context of the Brazilian political system and a historical retrospect of education policies in the country. The chapter also provides a background to the politics of education policy in the country as a basis for understanding the debates in parliament and in society. This background is important for the research as in order to discuss the PNE (which is the major education policy in the country) we have to understand the historical conditions around the education sector. It additionally paints the picture of the Brazilian decision-making process in Congress in order to highlight how structures and processes contribute to the reinforcement of the dominant discourse.

The fourth chapter focuses on parliamentary discourses around education. In this chapter, a discourse analysis of speeches from politicians is made, together with the discussion around how the imaginary of the “traditional family” and the “nation-family” shapes parliamentary discussions on education in Brazil.

The fifth chapter focuses on the “classroom”, similarly to the congress, as another locus of contestation and creation and of national identity and the huge role matters around it played in fostering Bolsonarismo and electing Bolsonaro. It discusses how and why education was at the heart of the electoral campaign, exploring the movements in society and the myths that allowed for the seeds of Bolsonarismo to be planted.

Lastly, chapter six contains the conclusions of the study providing comprehensive details that summarise the research by relating the outcomes to the research questions formulated. Moreover, the chapter contains suggestions for implementation as the basis for the attainment of the educational and political aspirations of Brazil's citizens and the suggestions recommendations for further studies on the topical issues explored in the current study.

Chapter Two: National Identity: A Contested Concept

2.1 Introduction

This chapter undertakes a comprehensive review of the literature sources by scholars concerning the construction of national identity through particular notions of gender, sexuality, and race and the connection to right-wing populism. It defines national identity, analyses how aspects of identity such as sexuality, gender and race shape understandings of national identity which are mobilised by populist leaders as tools for getting into power.

The chapter will firstly draw on general concepts of “nation” and “identity”, separately, emphasising the complexity of such notions. The further sections will then investigate how, when these two words are brought together; they form a powerful figure that, even though is an artificial, a mythical one- has very real impacts on people’s daily lives and their respective perception of worldly systems and processes. Moreover, the chapter will then analyse gender, sexuality and race as fundamental aspects through which national identity has been perceived and represented in the literature to date. It will then discuss populism and cultural wars as a political strategy, the connection to national identity and how all this can be viewed in the context of Brazil.

2.2 Nation, Identity and National Identity

According to Renan (2013), the definition of the term nation has changed over the years. Countries such as Russia, Germany, England, and France are examples of individual historical units referred to as nations. Such a definition of nations is something of modernity, relatively new in history as the ancient world was not familiar with this particular concept of nations. A similar explanation concerning national and political identity of states is presented by Yuval-Davis (1993), who postulated that based on past interpretation of antiquity, countries such as ancient Chaldea as well as Egypt and China were conventionally not categorised as nations because of the salient definitional difficulties associated with the term

“nation” by anthropologists, historians and political scientists. Arguably, the citizens of these territories did not also consider themselves as belonging to a particular nation. While the ancient world had empires and republics, they could hardly be defined as nations in the contemporary understanding of the term (Yuval-Davis, 1993). Barrington (1997) argued that there are inherent difficulties associated with the distinction between a nation and related territories based on the perceptions of the citizens. For instance, the author claimed that ancient locations or places that include Tyre, Sparta, and Athens were originally territories with a highly patriotic populace, but they were just cities with partly restricted territories, thereby showing the absence of clarity on the understanding of nation. The postulates presented by Barrington (1997), Yuval-Davis (1993), and Renan (2013) are critical to the current research in the sense that they provide historical information on the background of nationality and identity politics, which is central to Bolsonarismo. The sources used help to understand the evolution of the concept of “nation” as the basis for understanding the national identity discourse in Brazil, the connection to education and their centrality to Bolsonarismo.

Webster (1998) contended that there are commonalities that the citizens of a nation possess that make them be identified as citizens of a particular nation. As earlier explained by Yuval-Davis (1993), in the current definition of the word “nation”, the study confirmed the existence of different people from a common origin who occupy a geographical area and are further considered as citizens of a given country or territory by law. For instance, a person whose nationality is Brazilian is an individual that is legally regarded as a citizen of Brazil. Immigrants and their descendants can also acquire the status of a citizen with their nationality being regarded as the country in which they are legally considered to be citizens. People constituting a nation can, therefore, have different ethnicities. Renan (2013) that there is no citizen of a nation that can trace his or her origins exactly. For instance, there is no citizen of

France that can say for certain whether he or she is an Alan, Visigoth or Burgundian. For example, there are several historical happenings that are relevant to the origin of a nation but which citizens no longer remember because they occurred a long time ago. The author also contended that only a limited number of citizens within the jurisdiction of France are informed concerning the Midi massacres, which occurred in the thirteenth century as a central aspect of the development of the idea of a nation-state among countries. As further supported by Andreouli and Howarth (2013), there is a fundamental disconnect in the relationship between nation and citizens, with very few individuals in families across France capable of proving their French descent. Consequently, the modern definition of a nation is the result of several historical factors that have converged (Barrington, 1997). There are instances where a nation was formed due to the existence of a dynasty that effected unity, as seen in the formation of France and Brazil. In some instances, nations have been formed by the willingness of provinces to unite, as was seen in the cases of Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland. Erica Resende (2011) provided an illuminative perspective by exploring how the idea of national identity may evolve following civilization clash as was evident in the US following the 9/11 attacks and Cold War. The author demonstrated a strong correlation between social order, discourse, and hegemony in the formation of national ideology and the necessity of post-structural thinking in shaping discussion on how a state may shift into an entirely new national identity that is inclusive to all citizens. Moreover, Renan (2013) and Andreouli and Howarth (2013) postulated that different nations such as the Brazilian nation-state emerged from the historical occurrences of other countries such as the defeat of feudalism in Italy and Germany.

Essentialist vs. Non-essentialist understandings of identity

According to Berg-Sørensen, Holtug, and Lippert-Rasmussen (2010), the term “identity” is as highly contentious as the word “nation” as discussed by Andreouli and Howarth (2013), Renan (2013), Barrington (1997), Yuval-Davis (1993) and Webster (1998) in the preceding paragraphs. The word “identity” derives from the Latin word *idem* (subsequently *identitas*) that originally meant something along the lines of “state of being the same”. Webster (1998) contended that identity is best captured through an explanation of the role of social identity in showing the association among various groups in the society, hence showing the crucial nature of social representation in the appreciation of the subject of national or political identity. Identities are contextual, meaning that they can change over time or from one place to another. Identities, whether individual or collective, are mandatorily situated in social and cultural contexts, in an overlapping manner (Webster, 1998). Andreouli and Howarth (2013) captured the variation in the understanding of the perspectives used in explaining identity as a national phenomenon. For instance, identity is defined and expressed according to or in opposition to the already existing cultural labels, contexts, and concepts that are floating around all of us. Relations between different groups are also influenced by contextual factors, as captured by Andreouli and Howarth (2013). Additionally, the manner in which social representations become dominant, normative or salient can only be properly understood with contextual references. Therefore, the definition of identity is thus subjective and contested (Andreouli and Howarth, 2013).

To essentialist understandings of identity, it is as if the self is somewhat unrelated to the narratives and contexts that it is exposed to and surrounded by. For instance, philosopher Naomi Zack (2003) notes that the present-day concept of human races is grounded in ‘speculative theories of the hierarchy of human races, based on philosophical essentialism’ (pp. 44-45). Such a view of race considers each race to have a distinct or discrete racial essence. In other words, black people have certain natural features that make them different

from white people, an indication that there are fundamental differences between races (Zack, 2003). Berg-Sørensen et al. (2010) postulated that the belief in the existence of a hierarchy of human races suggests that races considered to be lower in the hierarchy can be discriminated against or mistreated because they are regarded as less human than other races higher up in the hierarchy. The negative effects of racism have mainly been caused by this view of racial hierarchy. Zack (2003) argued that the conception that there exists a race hierarchy is false and unfounded and a problematic social construction. Naomi Scheman (1997) takes a similar approach towards the essentialist definition of identity. Scheman noted in a text critical of the essentialist view of identity that instead of asking her:

‘What is it to be a Woman (or a Jew)? – as though there were something there, in me that needed to be discovered’, one should ask: ‘How did I get to be one? How was I claimed or assigned? How was I chosen – by whom and for what?’ (Scheman, 1997, p. 146).

The argument advanced by Scheman (1997) reinforces the notion that identities are social constructs without a definite biological underpinning. Bastian and Haslam (2006) supported the position presented by Scheman (1997) by arguing against the essentialist view of identity. Essentialist conceptions of identity are lay beliefs that there are underlying natures that create and differentiate social categories. Williams and Eberhardt (2008) claim that essentialist views towards identities have reinforced inequalities in society and contributed to negative outcomes such as racism, homophobia and misogyny. Support for biological essentialism is especially higher among people that identify with dominant groups because such beliefs sustain their position of privilege. Essentialist oriented scholars writing on identity, vouch for a fixed *truthful* reality that is both/ either connected to and/or derived from biological facts and/or to a shared past (Woodward, 2003). This view of identity bears a huge similarity to primordialist thinking around the nation. In contrast, scholars that

subscribe to a non-essentialist, more constructionist approach see identity as fluid and constantly mutable, a product of all the exposures one has been subject to in their life. This distinction between essentialist/ non-essentialist notions of the term identity tends to be represented in the literature also in terms of academic and everyday use. Suny (2001) talked about the existence of a paramount divergence between ordinary and academic speech relating to the term *identity*, for the author- to a higher or a lesser extent, in academia, identity is recognised to be a (slightly in some cases, e.g., primordialism) more complex idea. In his words:

‘The analytical use of the term involves a recognition of the fragmented and contested process that goes into self or group identification, whereas the more common, everyday use of the term in normal “identity-talk” usually defaults to an essentialist, often primordialist, naturalised language about a stable core, an actual unity and internal harmony’ (Suny, 2001, p. 865).

The process of essentialisation is not only based on naturalism because it also occurs through entitativity. Entitativity focuses on the evaluation of social groups based on the closeness and similarity of the group members. The conception of identity through entitativity supports the idea that people that belong to the same social group or have the same identity share a common destiny (Leite et al., 2018). Entitativity is more linked to the concept of “nation” than the naturalist view of identity. People who identify themselves as belonging to the same nation believe that they share a common destiny that differentiates them from others (Yalcinkaya et al., 2017). However, there is a need to note that both naturalism and entitativity lead to the belief that members of a specific group share similar characteristics. Individual characteristics can, therefore, be generalised to the whole group as happens in the development of national identity.

Essentialist and non-essentialist views of identity both demonstrate that identity is performed. The differences between social groups, such as values and meaning-making, are performances. When it comes to looking at identity through a performative lens, the interest would be more focused on the relationships between the subjects and discursive practices, rather than on the “pure nature” of the subject. In this sense, identity does not require a theory of the subject per se, in essential terms- but rather a theory of discursive practice (Foucault, 1970). In a similar sense, Hall (2000) wrote that identity operates ‘in the interval between reversal and emergence, an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all’ (p. 16). The author also adds that the irreducible character of identity is connected to both ideas of agency and politics. One’s true self is not a fixed, pre-existent thing. One’s self is a daily construction that cannot be predefined prior to birth; in that sense, it is not possible for a person to inherit a certain spirit of any kind, including a “nation” one, that makes them nationals of the same nation-state as it will be shown below. The repetition of discourses on national identity is, therefore, used as a means of creating individual identities. These creations follow certain patterns; they happen through a combination of many means of communication, symbols, language and so on. All so that a particular identity can be easily conveyed through communication (of any sort) and subsequently reproduced repeatedly over time.

Nation and national identity have been understood by different authors both in essentialist and non-essentialist terms. Authors subscribing to *Primordialist* conceptions, look at the idea of nationality as being a natural thing, innate, an integral part of one’s being, even before oneself is born. As Ozkirimli (2010) writes, for primordialists, nationality is seen as being ‘as natural as speech, sight or smell, and that nations existed from time immemorial’ (p. 49). There are different nuances in the approaches amongst the proponents of primordialism. These approaches, however, share a common underlying understanding

around the nation. This understanding that ties primordialists together, under a common overarching category, is that they all stand for the *naturality* and ‘antiquity of nations’ (ibid, p. 50). According to Herder (cited in van Benthem van den Bergh, 2018), each nation possesses a spirit that reveals itself in cultural manifestations such as music and dance and myths. A few of the important names that advocate(d) for this viewpoint are Edward Shils (1981, 1982) who wrote extensively on tradition and civility; Clifford Geertz (1973) in his works on national culturalism and Adrian Hastings (1997) in his writings on ethnicity, religion and nationalism. Primordialists are deeply criticised for having a limited, reductionist account of national identity and for their assumption that NI is that natural, given feature. Sharp (1996) writes on the danger of naturalising national identity as a factual figure rather than a created one, for her, ‘its creation is hidden so that it becomes an *unquestioned facet of everyday life*’ (p. 98, emphasis mine). She believes that there are no universal national identities that precede every existence and that the relations of power in place within societies have to be considered when looking at claims of what national identity means and for whom.

Anna Triandafyllidou (1998) associates the nature of national identity to an appeal to the idea of belonging: she explains the ‘nature of national identity as a “feeling of belonging” developed within a group of people’ (p. 607). However, she does not tie this sense of belonging to a pre-determined condition of the self. Primordialist thinkers, on the other hand, associate the feeling of belonging attached to nationhood to this inherent predicament of the self, one that does not derive from civic bonds between members of that certain community. For them, the interlinks between members surpass civil organisation; they exist prior to that, they are ethnic and intrinsic. The commonalities amongst a society are based on ethnic and symbolic grounds rather than civic ones. Andreouli and Howarth (2013) state that if the national grouping is essentialised, it becomes both impermeable and discrete. The implication of this is that even if one becomes a citizen of a nation through naturalisation, he or she will

still be regarded as an outsider because national identity is considered a natural occurrence that is impermeable. Governments have often developed several policies aimed at assimilating foreigners into the national culture to ensure that they act and think like a “national”, an indication that the conception of a “national” is distinct (Kostakopoulou, 2003). The assimilation of foreigners is also designed to ensure the survival of the national culture.

In order to counter the naturalistic and universalistic views of national identity and nationalism preached by primordialism, *modernism* surfaced. Even though each modernist author has their own specific way of approaching the topic, it is also possible to establish commonalities that interlink their work on nationalism. To modernists, nationalism is directly connected to the creation of the modern states, to their processes of industrialisation, modernisation and capitalist economy emergence and to the state-controlled uniformisation of the education system. To them, these are key in the construction of the sense of national identity in eighteenth-century Europe. The common denominator between thinkers that follow this trend is their critique of primordialism and their belief that nations and nationalism are a product of modernity rather than timeless phenomena. According to Uzelac and Ichijo (2005), for modernists, nations and nationalism are ‘epiphenomena, or even unintended consequences of processes of modernisation and industrialisation’ (p. 9), they are a by-product of these processes and not their genesis. Sharing the view of the nation as a composition, Sharp (1996) argues that ‘the nation is created not through an originary moment or culturally distinct essence but through the repetition of symbols that come to represent the nation’s origin and its uniqueness’ (p. 98). This repetition of symbols to which peoples are exposed throughout their lives since early childhood is, in fact, what constitutes this *national spirit*, this *collective identity* rather than it being a pre-existent circumstance, an integral part of one’s soul. Benedict Anderson is a paramount name amongst modernist scholars. His work

on imagined communities was a milestone in the understanding of nationalism and how the ideas surrounding nations came to be. Anderson (2006) makes an interesting parallel between the importance and significance that religion places on death and immortality and the way that primordialists see the nation as being this entity that transcends time and space - perpetual, immortal, inherent. The author explains the reason for the denomination chosen by him (imagined communities):

‘In an anthropological spirit, then, I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community - and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (...) it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings’

(Anderson, 2006, pp. 49-50).

Anderson’s conception of imagined communities resonates with Edward Said’s (1978) idea of imagined geographies. Said explains that geographies are imagined to the extent that they are perceptions of spaces, fabricated through particular imagery, texts, and discourses. Other important names when thinking of modernism are Tom Nairn (1997) and his work on uneven development, Michael Hechter (1995), who introduced the concept of internal colonialism, John Breuilly (1993) and his studies on nationalism as a form of politics and English historian Eric Hobsbawm (1990) with his detailed account on the “creation” of tradition. Anthony D. Smith is another important name across the literature on national identity. Smith is one of the most cited authors in the scholarly work around conceptualising

the nation. To the author, a nation is ‘a named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members’ (Smith, 1991, p. 14). He theorised nation and national identity through what he called *ethnosymbolism*, which was a critique of some aspects of both primordialism and modernism. According to ethnosymbolism, in a nation, the population possess a common *collective cultural identity* that encompasses all individuals within it in a somewhat essentialist manner. The difference between ethnosymbolism and modernism is that the first emphasises the ethnic bases of many modern nations while privileging the cultural and symbolic dimensions of ethnic communities and nations, whereas for modernists the connection between ethnicity and nation-states was fully developed in the eighteenth century. Smith’s ethnosymbolism seeks to turn its gaze internally to the members of a community in terms of cultural elements of that world: myth, memory, value, tradition, and symbol (Smith, 1991). One of the critiques of Smith’s ethnosymbolic approach to the topic is that it pays no attention to the political side of the subject, implying the direct and indissoluble connection between nation and state (Guibernau, 2004). Public discourses and political factors influence the construction and performance of national identity. According to Andreouli and Howarth (2013), overlooking the effect of policymaking and practice risks depoliticising the process of identity construction and rests on a limited context analysis. Haste (2004) argues that there is a need to examine the concept of citizenship from the view of citizens to understand how citizens perceive their national identity and perform such identities which places identity on the core of politics making it a very useful tool for populism.

2.3 Intersectionality and the Construction of National Identity

When studying identity, it is of utmost importance to think of it in intersectional terms (Crenshaw, 1991). The construction of identity occurs within a range of constraints such as

discursive, symbolic and material ones that exist and shape the nature of self-presentation and subjectivity in a more social context. However, the categories of the identity cannot be explored in isolation from each other as without one, the other cannot be defined or understood. The justification for this position is evident in the reason for that is that the categories are not mutually exclusive (Berger and Lorenz, 2008).

Intersectionality is a sociological concept that studies the interactions in the lives of minorities, among diverse structures of power. Similar to the position presented by Berger and Lorenz (2008), Angela Gilliam and Onik'a Gilliam (1999) put it: 'to create a theory that is more than the construction of "the Other", race, gender, class, and the reflexive inquiry of self/ selves must intersect' (p. 62). The concept of citizenship is multi-layered and this makes it necessary to examine notions of national identity through the lens of intersectionality. According to Yuval-Davis (2007), there are racialised, sexualised, and gendered notions of citizenship that also impact on the construction of national identity and the performance of this identity.

According to Mara Viveros Vigoya (2006), most studies related to racial, gender and sexual identities belong to particular trends within the feminist perspective as these trends seek to study power relations through gender and race. In fact, to understand feminism, one must study the concepts of intersectionality that are part of the history of feminism. In this field of work, comparisons can be made between gender domination, heteronormativity and racism. For example, according to Henrietta Moore (1994), racial difference is gender-related, there is the need to study class and race in relation to gender and sexuality. She argues that racism divides gender identity and experience, and gender and race shape social class divisions. In a more concrete example, Maria Lugones used the intersectionality of race, class, gender and sexuality to study violence against women of colour. In this sense, intersectionality comes down to the study of the stigmatised *other* in a multi-layered

perspective, thereby serving as a foundation for the discussion concerning how the cultural war waged on the PNE was a pillar on which the right-wing populist movement Bolsonarismo was built upon. For instance, understanding the theoretical foundations of Bolsonarismo is vital to the appreciation of the ideas of national identity and citizenship which are historically associated with hegemonic assumptions around gender (having masculinity as the reference and norm); sexuality (heterosexuality being the norm) and race (the west and whiteness as the reference). Based on the discussions by scholars, the current research demonstrates the connection between the theory of intersectionality and its impact on the notion of citizenship and identity in a republic. The discussion on the correlation between the variables is essential in explaining Bolsonarismo as it has become common to create a distinction between essentialist and constructivist views of group identities such as sexuality, race, and gender.

Intersectionality is the idea that people experience discrimination differently depending on their overlapping identities and are the consequence of different forms of domination and/or discrimination (Yuval-Davis, 2007). Hughes (2013) wrote that ‘feminism has developed a strong awareness of multiple identity positions and how they operate in relation to one another and that intersectionality is ‘feminism’s most important theoretical contribution’ (p. viii). Crenshaw (1991) also argued that it would be most helpful for everyone if identity-related oppressions were considered in connection to each other, that the efforts of those studying and challenging sexism and racism should be done, instead of in a top-down, competing way (which oppression should be looked at), in an intersectional way. According to her, there is a ‘tendency to treat race and gender as mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis’ (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 1034), whereas they should be looked at holistically as individuals embody these and other identities at the same time.

[the efforts of scholars concerned 'with oppressions should initially be focused in] addressing the needs and problems of those who are most disadvantaged and *with restructuring and remaking the world* where necessary, *then others who are singularly disadvantaged would also benefit*. In addition, it seems that placing those who currently are marginalised in the center is the most effective way to resist efforts to compartmentalise experiences and undermine potential collective action. *It is not necessary to believe that a political consensus to focus on the lives of the most disadvantaged will happen tomorrow in order to recenter discrimination discourse at the intersection*. It is enough, for now, that such an effort would encourage us to look beneath the prevailing conceptions of discrimination and to challenge the complacency that accompanies belief in the effectiveness of this framework. By so doing, we may develop language which is critical of the dominant view and which provides some basis for unifying activity. The goal of this activity should be to facilitate the inclusion of marginalised groups for whom it can be said: "When they enter, we all enter' (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 167, emphasis mine).

Applied to the concept of national identity in the Brazilian context during Bolsonarismo, the discourse by Crenshaw (1989) is essential as it permits an examination of race, gender, and sexuality simultaneously, offers insights into how the multi-layered notions of citizenship contribute to identity formation within a nation. Race, gender, class, and sexuality all influence identity formation. However, they do not occur in isolation from each other and thus intersect. Adriana Piscitelli (2008) emphasised that it is important to study class, gender and race simultaneously. Avtar Brah and Ann Phoenix (2004) add that it is important to study the different factors in combination because of the relationship that each one establishes with the other. They cannot be treated as "independent variables" because the oppression of each is inscribed within the other - it is constituted by the other and is

constituted by it. In the words of Hutn (2003), ‘individuals suffer discrimination and social exclusion on the basis of their gender and race. Both identities have been marked as inferior to the dominant position assumed by white men’ (p. 20). In Latin America, studies on racism and sexism have existed mainly since the 1980s¹¹. Maria Lugones (2014) points out that during the 20th century, feminist studies did not always relate to race and that in the development of the phenomena of the twentieth century, the connections between gender, class and heterosexuality as racialised were not made explicit. The race was little studied in relation to gender and sexuality. Therefore, in relation to the application of the postulate by Lugones (2014) to the Brazilian society under Bolsonarismo, the theory of intersectionality offers a useful and relevant theoretical framework for examining the different notions of citizenship and the performance of race, gender, and sexuality within the context of national identity.

2.3.1 Gender and national identity

When taking an intersectional stand, it becomes very important to understand the connection between idea[ls] of nationality and gender. These concepts are intertwined in a complex matrix of identity categories together with sexuality, race, religion, class and so on. All these predetermined (social or collective) categories will connect in order to create one’s subjectivity and identity (Berger and Lorenz, 2008). Gender is a key way in which national identity has been understood and represented in the literature. Judith Butler wrote that ‘in the place of an original identification which serves as a determining cause, gender identity might be preconceived as a personal/cultural history of received meanings subject to a set of imitative practices which refer laterally to other imitations and which, jointly, construct the illusion of a primary and interior gendered self or parody the mechanism of that construction’ (Butler cited in Klein, 1999, p. 244). It is possible to observe a resonance between Butler’s

¹¹ Before the 1980s, these topics were normally studied in complete disassociation from one another.

(2010) principle of performativity in gender theories aforementioned and the non-essentialist concepts of national identity, the ones that do not privilege static understandings, precedent to each individual's birth. In the words of Joanne Sharp:

'Like national identity, gendered identity takes on its apparently 'natural' presence through the repeated performance of gender norms. In the performance of identity in everyday life, the two identifications converge. The symbols of nationalism are not gender neutral but in enforcing a national norm, they implicitly or explicitly construct a set of gendered norms' (Sharp, 1996, p. 98).

Gender categories have not only been created by men, but they have also been historically assigned different values to each of them (Berger and Lorenz, 2008). These categories have given birth to discourses, terms, analogies, and metaphors such as "Mother Earth", "motherland", "fatherland" and so on. These are normally based on the premise that women are physically weak, more emotional, with a natural nurturing sense, instinctive caretakers, and so forth, while men are physically strong and tough, more rational and primarily providers, not innate caregivers. These ideas are so largely entrenched in the history of humankind that according to Mottier (2000), it is not even possible to calculate the exact effect of such notions on the supposedly fixed national identities and part of the contemporary world, considering how huge is the impact of these imaginary figures.

Gender and national identity intersect. The idea of one as being a male or a female, and whichever standardised and naturalised patterns and behaviours that are seen to derive from that *given* fact, is subject to national and cultural ideologies. According to Tienari et al. (2005), national identity influences gender performances. Language as a cultural element in a country is used as a conveyer of the social practices of gender performance through which particular world-views, identities and social relations are established. The authors argue that gender relations may differ from one country to another due to the influence of national

identity on gender performance (Tienari et al., 2005). Moghadam (1994) made a similar argument concerning national identity and gender issues by stating that national identity influences how women are perceived within a country. The author focused on the relationship between women and politics in countries that are dominantly Muslim. In most of these countries, women are considered an inferior gender, a factor that influences their rejection as leaders because the male gender is considered powerful and thus deserving of positions of leadership and control. Moghadam (1994) further claims that patriarchal societies generally view women to be below men in the gender hierarchy. Such conceptions are, by their turn, shaped by several social and historical factors, which include: political regimes, religion, cultural traditions and so on. Such expectations that come with gender definitions affect relations cross and across genders and their relative positions within local, national and international contexts. According to Mayer (2012), men and women are both symbolic and cultural, as well as biological “producers” of the nations, in different, contrasting, ways. The author has also described how the roles, duties, and rights of men and women are distinctively structured within the nation-states.

Based on the essentialist understanding of national identity, it can be argued to be much easier to justify discourses such as one has to sacrifice for their nation, one has to be patriotic, has to defend their homeland at any cost with strength and pride and so on. And this agency, this duty of defence and protection is essentially associated with men and masculinity, cross-culturally. On the other hand, women occupy a much more passive position in relation to their nation, they are mostly portrayed as the mothers of the nation, in the words of McClintock (1993) ‘women are typically construed as the symbolic bearers of the nation, but are denied any direct relation to national agency’ (p. 62). Sharp shares the approach; she believes that agency is assigned to men and masculinity, whereas women and femininity are left with a much more passive, marginal role. In her words: ‘in the present

construction of gendered relations within the nation-state, we can see a privileging of masculinity. Quite simply, the position of men in national rhetoric grants them significantly more agency' (Sharp, 1996, p. 105). Nationalist projects and national identity through an essentialist perspective are the most appealing elements towards the collective narrative of what, whom and how is a nation and its national memories. Such narratives are often seen to have differentiated the roles of man and a woman in society. The concept of private and public spheres comes to the spotlight as a central aspect of this discussion. Common identification of men is linked with the public sphere or the civilisation and of the women is linked with the private sphere or to an essential "caring nature" (Mottier, 2000). Connected to this ideological dimension is the formal allocation of citizenship rights and duties. Gender differentiation emerges across different national and institutional contexts (e.g., political, civil and social), and reflects the relationship of the individual to their gender and state. Again, this relationship is likely to be influenced by both national ideologies and the individual's particular location (identities) within these structures (Mayer, 2012).

Anne McClintock (1995) wrote on intersectional oppressions as derived from imperialist and colonial practices, starts her book by presenting a copy of a map found in Henry Rider Haggard's novel- *King Solomon's Mines*. The map supposedly represents a region in colonial southern Africa and it is literally drawn in the shape of a female body. Each part of the geography (body) is loaded with a range of identity (gendered, sexualised, racial, national) meanings connected to them. The dangerous, exotic, deceiving river it's located at the female's head representing the twisted nature of femininity (in this case, intersectionally, black femininity); the diamond treasure area is the female genitalia, whereas the road leading up to it, that the white European men would bravely cross to reach and be rewarded by the treasure is shaped as the phallic male genitalia. There are so many layers of meaning associated with this "geographic" representation, and the gender dimensions of

nationality are shockingly explicit. Imperial states are portrayed as brave, rational, consistent, civilised, righteous, strong and so on and so forth- so are the European men. Conversely, the colonised nations are exotic, deceiving, bad-natured, backward, irrational, savage, dangerous, something to be taken possession of, to be tamed and so forth, so are colonised women. The connections once made become so visually evident, especially when looking at such a graphic map. Therefore, notions of gender identity are consistently associated with sexuality. Many times, those are even used interchangeably, which is a misconception. Notions of sexuality have also played their role in the construction of national identities historically and at present, across borders.

2.3.2 Sexuality and national identity

National identity, as a collective identity, publicly performed, is inherently heteronormative. Ideals of what the national citizen and the national family look like are historically heteronormative. The possibility of other sexual identities is not even raised when it comes to most national discourses, in a collective sense. Even in geographies where LGBTQIA+ are more widely accepted and included, this is more often than not related to the private sphere and this plays the role of structurally maintaining heteronormative privileges. Don Mitchell (1995) remarked the importance of public spaces for social groups:

[public spaces are] ‘very importantly, spaces for representation. That is, public space is a place within which a political movement can stake out the space that allows it to be seen. In public space, political organisations can represent themselves to a larger population. By claiming space in public, by creating public spaces, social groups themselves become public’ (Mitchell, 1995, p. 115).

‘The state may also act to construct the nation as heterosexual’ (Richardson, 1998, p. 92). Heteronormativity is the rule, within and across nation-states. ‘Like gender, sexuality is often regulated by the binary distinction between public and private. It is usually assumed

that sexuality is (and should be) confined to private spaces. This is based on the naturalisation of heterosexual norms' (Duncan, 1996, p. 137). Richardson (1998) asks the following question: 'to what extent does a person's sexual status restrict access to citizenship in terms of social, political and other rights' (p. 84)? According to the author, ownership of full citizenship in the West is necessarily linked to the institutionalisation of heteronormativity. She explains that 'citizenship has been traditionally defined in terms of citizenship as national identity: citizenship as a set of practices which define social membership in a particular society or nation-state' (p. 85). This naturalisation of heterosexuality is directly connected to the normalisation of gender norms, according to Valentine (1996) 'lesbians and gay men have historically been assumed to have 'twisted' gender identities, so that gay men are labelled as effeminate and lesbians as butch just as effeminate men and masculine women are perceived to be gay' (p. 146). Government policies, therefore, play an integral role in creating a national identity that prescribes certain norms and values concerning sexuality (Mole, 2011). Individuals with sexual orientations that do not conform to this national identity are considered the 'other' and are often ranked lower in terms of social standing compared to those with acceptable sexual orientations. The intersection between national identity and sexuality shows that people within a country can be discriminated against based on their sexual orientation especially when such orientation does not conform to elements of national identity which is clear in Bolsonarismo and in right-wing populism more broadly speaking.

The connection between sexuality and national identity is such that one of the pioneers and most significant LGBTQIA+ organisations from the 90s was named *Queer Nation*. In the words of Judith Butler:

'The institution of a compulsory and naturalised heterosexuality requires and regulates gender as a binary relation in which the masculine term is differentiated from a feminine term, and this differentiation is accomplished through the practices of

heterosexual desire. The act of differentiating the two oppositional moments of the binary results in a consolidation of each term, the respective internal coherence of sex, gender and desire.’ (Butler, 1990, p. 22).

Puar (2013) developed the theory of ‘homonationalism’ in order to understand the intricacies related to LGBTQIA+ individuals can be a thermometer through which the ‘right and capacity for national sovereignty is evaluated (...) the nation is heteronormative and the queer is inherently an outlaw to the nation-state’ (p. 336). Sexuality is often used to promote nationalism and/ or interventionism. In this sense, what came to be known as pinkwashing is constantly used as a cover story of promoting democratic values of imperialist nations, which transforms it into ‘only one more justification for imperial/racial/national violence (...) the gay and lesbian human rights industry continues to proliferate Euro-American constructs of identity (not to mention the notion of sexual identity itself)’ (ibid, p. 338). In this sense, the author claims that identity politics, regulations, public projection and so on became thermometers for development and social progress. Yet, we do not find a linear connection between development, use of development and attitude toward sexuality, and in case of right-wing populism like Bolsonarismo, homonationalism is a sign of the decline of moral values in the society; only heterosexual families are acceptable.

A discussion on the correlation between sexuality and national identity in the current section is important in the understanding of the Brazilian nation under Bolsonarismo and its impact on educational policies. Additionally, the perspectives further the discussion concerning how the national identity and commonality of purpose among citizens under Bolsonarismo contributes to the discrimination of the minority based on sexuality as well as how the political identity of the Brazilian nation under Bolsonarismo directly impacts the educational policies of the country. Consonantly, race is another key way in which national identity has been understood and represented.

2.3.3 Race and national identity

It has been extensively discussed in the literature the direct connection between nationalism and racism and the ways in which constructions of national identities were/are largely based on discrimination and racial oppression. Etienne Balibar argues that racism is an expression characterised by nationalism, the former is strongly tied to the concept of the latter. Just like racism, nationalism also needs to involve inclusion as well as exclusion. They do not only complement each other but also have the characteristics to presuppose each other. According to the author, racism is, historically, rather indispensable for the construction of nationalism (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991, p. 54). In the same sense, Wade (2001) argues that when reaching a certain height, nationalism is converted into racism. Nationalism necessarily constructs and follow exclusionary patterns of perception of others.

Racism often shapes itself into super nationalism in which the notions of national heritage are reset, and the culture is converted into more wish for power. Racism can be, and more often than not is, integrated with nationalism in order to oppress minorities existing within the nation. Ernest House (1999) wrote that there is a clear link between racism and American national identity formation: ‘I have come to *believe racism is deeply embedded within the national identity itself, built into the American character by history and experience*’ (n.p., emphasis mine). Ang and Stratton (1998) wrote that racism and nationalism interpenetrate each other, which means that instead of being mutually exclusive, there actually is a lot common between them. Hunt (1988), writing on the hierarchy of race, explains the ways in which western social constructions of race have influenced geographies and processes across time and space. Stereotypes of the non-west were created and used according to western interests and to justify western actions. The dynamic has not changed much in the 21st century.

Historically, there have been two ‘paths’ to tackle miscegenation, both of which presuppose the idea of white supremacy. On one side, there is *whitening*, on the other side there is *eugenics*. In some colonised nations [such as Brazil], whitening was the approach to “include” marginalised groups. It was believed that racial blending (always leaning ever more towards whitening) was the solution for unifying the nation and “including” everyone. Yuval-Davis explains the inclusion/exclusion brought about by racist nationalist movements and how, in many colonised societies, the ‘solution’ for exclusion based on race was the *whitening* ‘when nationalist and racist ideologies are very closely interwoven, this might be the only way to join the collectivity, and those who do not comply are excluded. The only way “outsiders” can conceivably join the national collectivity in such cases might be by intermarriage’ (Yuval-Davis, 1996, p. 17). This is very clearly identifiable in Brazilian’s history, as it is discussed ahead.

Historically in other places, both colonisers and some colonised societies [such as the US], there was always present the fear of pollution, contamination of one’s race or bloodline. There would be the avoidance of any ‘contamination’ that could lead to race impurity or loss of purity in specific moments in history. In the 1920s through the 1930s the pseudo-science *eugenics* and social movement, concerned itself with the ‘improvement of the “race” – focused attention on reproduction as the key to overcoming the alleged “backwardness” and “degeneration” of the nation’ (Besse, 1996, p. 3), the process of infertile coloured population were common amongst the medical community so they would not pass on their “damaged” genetics forward. European nations in the nineteenth and twentieth century tried and succeeded in using anti-Semitism as a scapegoat for the economic failure they were facing. The classic example is post WWI Germany that channelled nationalism into invoking and setting forth fascism. These two ideas are fundamentally connected. In the US, contrary to Brazilian’s whitening efforts, interracial marriage was frowned upon rather than

celebrated. The belief was that black people would contaminate white blood rather than mixing black and white would better national identity (seen it would eventually “whitenise” the whole population – *whitening* mentality). House (1999) wrote on the widespread belief on the inferiority of black people that have been historically structural elements in the construction of the American national identity. In the author’s words, ‘these beliefs attribute presumed character traits to African Americans and other minorities, who are thought of as different in character and ability’ (np). According to Moran (2011), government policies can shape the construction of national identity in a way that supports multiculturalism. At the same time, such policies can stoke racial tensions due to a national identity grounded on racism. National identity can, therefore, establish a foundation for discrimination based on race.

2.4 Gender, Sexuality and Race in Brazilian National Identity

A colonial past marked by miscegenation, a history of patriarchalism and the interconnection with Catholicism has historically played a huge part in the construction of myths relating to the Brazilian national identity and this is trendier than ever leading up to and after Bolsonaro’s election in 2018 as it will be addressed in chapter four and five. According to Aguilar et al. (2015), intellectual and political elites have constructed Brazil’s national identity in a way that excludes several social groups within the country. Such construction of the country’s national identity underestimates the long and complex history of Brazil, especially with regard to race. This section contextualises the national identity of Brazil in terms of gender, sexuality, and race.

One aspect that has to be touched upon in order to explore the identitarian oppressions relating to gender, sexuality and race in Brazil is the historical role played by religion. Religion significantly influences culture and identity in Brazil. According to Mariano and Oro (2011), the reciprocal instrumentalisation of politics and religion in Brazil implies that

political leaders extensively rely on the support of religious leaders and congregations to ascend to political offices and accumulate and solidify power. At the same time, religious leaders shape public policies because of their political influence. Due to the relationship between religion and politics in Brazil, government policies designed to shape national identity are often influenced by religion. Mariano and Oro (2011) claim that gender identity politics in the country is extensively influenced by religion. Gender equality agenda in Brazil tends to centre its discussions on cis men vs. cis women opportunities. Santos and de Hilal (2018) state that in spite of Brazil demonstrating an idealised national ethos designed to promote gender equality, gender identity constructions and gender relations in the country are still very much grounded in traditions. These traditions are largely influenced by religion in a historical way. Dengah (2014) also claims that societal values and norms in Brazil are shaped by religion. Fortunato and Iorio Dias (2018) note that gender inequality persists in the country because men and women are culturally viewed as not equal. In public discussions, gender is almost uniquely seen in terms of cis/binary notions. And even when we only consider these pointers, masculinity wins every time. If (cis)gender equality is already a huge issue, transgender and non-binary identities are even more sensitive and invisibilised matters in Brazil. In Brazil, predominantly, persists the view that a man is born as a man and to be a man, and a woman is born as a woman and to be a woman. There were Adam and Eve, Adam was a cisman, Eve a ciswoman. They only related romantically with one another and this is how it is supposed to be. Anything else is a deviation. Gender and sexuality are used interchangeably as it will become clearer in chapters four and five. Anything other than someone who carries the chromosomes XX and grows up identifying as a woman who relates romantically to another someone (XY carrier) who always identified as a man- is considered unnatural.

Religiosity has contributed to the emergence of Brazil as a shockingly transphobic nation. According to the European non-governmental organisation *Transgender Europe*, Brazil was top of the list in the ranking of registered and internationally broadcast murders of transvestites and transsexuals between the period of 2008-2014. The number of transgender people killed in that period was over 600 and the second on the list was Mexico, with less than 200 killed in the same period (Transgender Europe, 2015). The perspective of gender (as well as other identities) as being performative (Butler, 2005 and 2010) is still limited to a very small group that excludes and reinforces marginalisation and non or underrepresentation. Grin, Gherman and Caraciki (2019) claim that religiosity in Brazil has contributed to the formation of gender identity and views regarding sexuality in the country. Transphobia has been reinforced by the notion that gender identity is limited to cis-male and cis-female. Transgender identities are shunned because they do not conform to religious values and beliefs among Catholics and Protestants in the country. Grin, Gherman and Caraciki (2019) further argue that religion has shaped public attitudes towards issues relating to gender and sexuality, such as same-sex marriage. Costa et al. (2015) suggested that in spite of the government formulating laws to protect the LGBTQIA+ community, violence towards this community has persisted, an indication that gender identity constructions and views towards sexuality in Brazil are still grounded in the traditional [and religious] views of gender and sexuality.

Religion highly influences what is viewed as a conventional family in Brazil. What is considered a family for most Brazilians is based on the holy family. This implies a few things. A 'real' Brazilian family is cis-identified, heterosexual and with well and traditionally defined gender roles. The mould to be followed is Mary and Joseph. Mary, the virtuous wife. Joseph the decent, hardworking, resigned, with strong morals- husband. This has been the reference for the construction of the ideal of the traditional Brazilian family. Susan K. Besse

(1996) studied patriarchalism in Brazil in the first half of the 20th century and wrote on the position of women within Brazilian society in the 1920s, and how the ruling notions of family clashed with the emancipation of women. In her words, ‘Many considered the “woman question” and its correlate, the “crisis” of the family’ (p. 2). She argues that in order to counter women’s emancipation and subversion of gender roles, the search for modernisation, industrialisation and projection in the international scenario was associated by the Brazilian state (endorsed by intellectuals of the time) with the need to restore the Brazilian family, which in such discourses was claimed to be the ‘primary and essential social institution (...) in justification of the state’s increasing efforts to control intimate interpersonal relationships, professionals and political authorities echoed (...) that the family was the basis of society and polity: that the state of the nation directly reflected the state of individual families’ (pp. 3-4). Besse brings to our attention the speech made by Baptista de Mello, a state official during the Getulio Vargas’ populist ruling. This speech remains absolutely relevant in times of Bolsonarismo and its right-wing neo-populist agenda. It is so interesting that nearly 100 years later, the exact same slogan was used by Bolsonarists and it was the centrepiece of Bolsonaro’s campaign. On the role and importance of the ‘Brazilian family’, Baptista de Mello wrote

‘[T]he family is the foundation, the elemental and organic base of the state (...) the perfection and civilisation of the State depends fundamentally on the moral and legal conditions of each of the families which constitute it (...) we consider the reconstitution of the family in these times of dissolution of customs and infiltration of subversive theories, to be one of the most serious problems of public order, deserving the triple protection of the State (...) if Brazilians did not help the State to redeem the family they would be responsible for the death of the *fatherland* and the extinction of our [Brazilian] *race*.’ (Besse, 1996, p. 4, emphasis mine).

Satire papers of that time would depict masculinised women and feminised men in a ridiculed way, as a source of joke and mockery. This very same thing was used in Bolsonaro's campaign and throughout his first years in office. The notion of the Brazilian family oppresses women, non-binary identities and LGBTQIA+ identities altogether. Notions of gender and gender roles are still deeply connected to religion and patriarchy for a huge part of the population in Brazil, and indeed the construction of an ideal *Brazilian*- prime representative of the *Identidade Brasileira* (Brazilian Identity) - is immensely contoured by these. There is an intimate relation between Christian representations of the Virgin Mary and the construction of the Brazilian ideal, family-oriented woman as previously mentioned. Baldwin and DeSouza (2001) explain that 'the ideology of womanhood in Brazil is tied intricately to the image to the image of the Virgin Mary' (p. 11). Mary symbolises chastity, nurturance, subservience and represents what the author calls *Marianismo* (Mary's model). Baldwin and DeSouza argue that *Marianismo* has to be studied together with *Machismo*, which would translate into sexism even though that word also exists in Portuguese and the translation would not be that accurate since *Machismo* is the actual celebration of Masculinity and male superiority. For some authors, *Marianismo* is the counterpart of the male-centric perspective [*Machismo*] that dominates discourses and practises in Brazil- but it arguably is not. The first *reinforces* the latter. *Machismo* 'glorifies hyper-masculinity (...) and both describe a behavioural and social hierarchy of men over women and provides an ideological justification for that hierarchy by articulating males as superior to females in performing certain social tasks' (p. 11). The constructions around Mary of Nazareth are of a pure, virgin woman, the perfect motherhood model, the self-scarifying, homemaker, merciful, forgiving of each and every mistake made by men, always there to welcome and look after and so forth are the foundation for the societal constructions of the ideal of Brazilian womanhood and all these notions were set forth and reinforced by a slave-based patriarchal system. There is a

sexual and racial dimension to it. Maria is the basis for the figure of the Brazilian ‘mother of family’, the bearer of the Brazilian nation that will breed and raise the future of a clean”, “good”, “productive”, “virtuous” Brazilian nation. This figure is *quasi* sexless. Just as Mary, it presupposes heterosexuality but it deems everything that could be considered as a demonstration of feminine sexuality vulgar, undignified. On the other hand, there is another figure that contrasts with Mary, which is equally important for the construction of the Brazilian identity. It is the figure of the gendered, sexualised and racialised *mulata* as previously explored.

The intersectional nature of gender, sexuality and race in Brazil enabled the creation and maintenance of what I will call the myth of the *mulata*. This myth, conversely to the myth of the Virgin Mary, contrasts with the family-oriented Brazilian ideal of the Brazilian white woman, the heart of the Brazilian family. This figure is equally important as construction that reinforces notions of male/heterosexual/white supremacy. The exotic representation of Brazilian [coloured] femininity serves purposes of attracting sexual tourism, ideas of Brazil as an ever-lasting carnival with its beautiful and rough diamonds of bea(it)ches and landscapes. In the very words of Freyre (1944): ‘White woman for marriage, mulatto woman for f..., Negro woman for work’ (p. 13). The *Mulata* is not black per se. She is the Brazilian version of blackness. In terms of the analysis, the current research postulates that *Mulata* is the product of rape by the white European men. She is on the path to whiteness. She is to be celebrated to the extent that she fulfils the exact role that was assigned to her. This role is to please the eyes, bring joy, samba away for the white men. She is not the bearer of the nation. Her future generations might even get there (as in to become bearers of the nation) at some point after a lot of crossbreeding with white men (that helplessly fell for their spell). They are easy, uncomplicated, available, willing to please. This is Brazil. Open arms for the white European. Similarly, Heilborn (2006) argues that both nationally and

internationally, Brazilian sexuality feeds into the construction of, and is viewed in the same way as, Brazilian culture, namely that both are seen as ‘very open sexually, expansive and hot’ (pp. 43-44). Brazil is known for its sexuality, and knows itself through its sexuality; the national identity is eroticised and feeds Brazilians’ understandings of themselves (Parker, 1991, pp. 7-8). Gilliam and Gilliam (1999) explore the mysticism surrounding the *Mulata* and the *Mulato* identities in Brazil and she argues that ‘the concept of *Mulato/a* is gendered. In Brazil especially, the paradigm of the “uppity” and “tragic” mulatto is male (...) within the patriarchal plantation economy, the fear of astute mixed-race men is primarily the preoccupation of white male elites’ (p. 63). The Brazilian *Mulata* and *Mulato* myths, just as every other myth surrounding Brazilian identity, speak directly to the Brazilian racial democracy myth. The racial democracy myth is perhaps the most significant and widely entrenched myth, and it informs, to a greater or lesser extent, all the other myths.

The notion of race and national identity in Brazil relates to how race has been understood in Brazil and is so broadly spread that it is hard to think of Brazil without taking constructions derived from it into account. It is arguably the main pillar on which *Brasilianness* has been constructed, a factor that makes it central for the understanding of all the other myths. It has enabled the maintenance of most structural oppressions Brazil face. According to Aguilar et al. (2015), racial inequality and injustice are prevalent in Brazil, even in contemporary society. However, the country has always, to a greater extent, been portrayed as “Racial Democracy”: a true, harmonic, “race blending” paradise. The advocates of the Brazilian Racial Democracy concept claim that Brazilian people do not see themselves as belonging to a particular race based on skin colour; Brazilians are the product of a long-term miscegenation process that resulted in a mixed (colour, blood and culture- wise) population country. This theory became fashionable at the beginning of the last century, and many Brazilian philosophers and politicians subscribed to it though making use of it to justify

different courses of action. Silvio Romero's (1988) name stands out as one of the first authors to touch upon the idea of a unified, unison, racially blended and harmonic society in Brazil at the end of the 19th century. His work was dedicated to study Brazil systematically using a nationalist and modernist discourse seen as the key to "achieving an equal and just Brazilian society" (Schneider, 2011). In the words of Romero (1988), every Brazilian is a *mestiço* (Portuguese term that originally meant a person of non-pure blood, mixed-race as previously explained) when not in their blood, in their ideas. Silva (1998) highlights in her article some of the premises that the concept of racial democracy was built upon. She claims that the construction of this *Brazilian narrative* was built upon three basic pillars: the *Brazilian civilisation as being a unique expression of a European (Portuguese) culture* ('spirit') in the tropics' (p. 17); the *Brazilian indigenous population allegedly in most part annihilated* at that point, added to the claim that the *phenotypical characteristics of the black population was on the way to disappear from Brazilian people because of the European immigration and the racial mingle* and because the Portuguese people were very different from the English colonisers in the sense that they allegedly lacked racial prejudices and mixed with indigenous and African individuals bringing as result the constitution of the 'original', 'true' Brazilian individual, sometimes referred to as *mestiço*, 'a racial type well-suited to the task of building a tropical civilisation' (ibid, p. 217).

The picture of a Brazilian society in which racial differences do not sustain inequalities finds ground later on in the works of authors such as the late Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre who believed in what he called *Brasilerismo*. The term would mean a Brazilian spirit, and that Brazil was a western *AND mestiço* country that led in many ways for him to be criticised considering the contradictory nature of his claims. He was also an avid militant against the German immigration, anchoring his arguments on the suggestion that the German immigrants did not get the Brazilian spirit and would jeopardise this harmonic

mestiço way by isolating themselves in their colonies and not really integrating and engaging with non-German originated individuals. Freyre also openly ‘argued that because of widespread miscegenation, Brazil was a true racial democracy, in which whites and blacks [not only] lived together under conditions of genuine harmony’ (Lovell, 2000, p. 6) but also that there really wasn’t a clear line defining who was who. In his famous work *The Masters and the Slaves*, the author suggests the existence of a social democracy in Brazil (which would be more effective than mere political democracy), he wrote:

‘By virtue of this cultural dynamism, which does not shut off European culture from other influences; by valuing in men, to the greatest extent possible, authentic qualities independent of color, social position, economic success; through equality – as much as possible – of social opportunities and of culture for men of different origins, regions molded by the Portuguese – molded by miscegenation – constitute today an anticipation of, or, more accurately, an approximation to, that social democracy from which currently more advanced peoples find themselves distant in their practice of that often inefficient, unjust, and anti-human political, merely political, democracy.’ (Freyre, 1944, p. 18).

Freyre later differentiates democracy strict sense (political democracy) to what he understands by the same term, but when referring to race, he talks about the Brazilian context emphasising that to his view, Brazil has an ‘atmosphere sweeter than any other’ (1944, p. 30) and that is due to the ‘ethnic democracy’ that is inseparable from the ‘social democracy’ and ‘without social democracy, without ethnic democracy, without economic democracy, without socio-psychological democracy – the democracy whose types combine freely in new expressions, accepted, favoured and stimulated by the organisation of society and creation – what can mere political democracy be, if not a hoax? (p. 30). What all the authors supporting the aforementioned notion had in common was the implicitly or explicitly defence of the idea

of European, white superiority. And who is this ‘European’? It is a white, European, heterosexual man.

Based on Freyre’s work, Guimarães (2006) investigates the origin of the use of the term racial democracy in the literature on race in Brazil and the reasons for the use of a ‘political metaphor’ in order to talk about social relations between people of different skin colours. Freyre was determined to describe and spread his impressions of the dynamic of racial relations in Brazil. He often criticised black activists (in a Brazilian context), calling them ‘afroacist’ and understood that ‘Brazil’s specificity derives from the unique Portuguese ability to mingle with other races, to assimilate without losing an essentially European character’ (Silva, 1998, p. 219) placing the European West as the compass. In the words of Silva (1998) that ‘became the main instance of racial construction in the Brazilian text, much like the sociological texts from which Freyre drew, still presupposed blacks “racial inferiority”’ (p. 221). Skidmore (1992) suggests that the construction of the Brazilian society was marked by the idea of white superiority rather than white supremacy. In sum, he did not expressively and consciously (though implicitly he treats European values as the key to development) engage in the *whitening* trend that aimed at ever more ‘europeanising’ Brazilian population, nor in the *negritude* (“blackness”) movement that aimed at recognising and fighting racism against blacks in Brazil:

‘What affinity with these Afroacists, who are crudely hostile to the most precious democratic value that has been developed by people of Brazil – racial democracy – can Brazil have? Such diplomats, politicians and journalists, by proceeding in this way, are either being confused about Afroacism, dressed up as a democratic movement with a liberal cause, or they are confusing other Brazilians. We Brazilians cannot be, as Brazilians, anything other than a people that is anti-segregationist par excellence:

whether segregationism follows the mystique of “whiteness” or the myth of “negritude” or even “yellowness” (Freyre, 1962).

This widely broadcast view contributed and reinforced the fact that Brazilians normally associate discrimination to class (uniquely) rather than to race. Skidmore (1992) explains how Brazilians see this process and states that the Brazilian *pardos* or *mestiços* (people that are not white but don't identify as Black) and Black people are on the very bottom of the economy and living standards in Brazil and that most Brazilians understand this disparity as derived mainly (or exclusively) from class issues, not race. He goes further in his analysis, saying that for most Brazilians, non-whites are not subject to racial discrimination per se, that the sort of struggle that lies upon them is related to their 'disadvantaged poor socioeconomic background' (p. 8) and this all comes down to the 'legacy of slavery' and the intense flow of immigrants coming from Europe that after the abolition of slavery have flooded the country. It also means that the class status directly influences one's skin colour definition: 'in Brazil race categories became deeply connected to class' (Araujo, 2015) what makes it harder to have people from Brazil recognising when issues are connected to race. Hutn (2004) wrote that according to the racial democracy theory, the fact that black Brazilians are considerably poorer than white Brazilians and that they are not significantly present among intellectual, corporate, governing and so on elites derive from the legacy of slavery, from the lack of postcolonial legal means of segregation, widely amalgamation and the identification of the most population with clearly defined extreme racial categories (Hutn, 2004).

The myth of a Brazilian racial haven, as it was formulated, creates the belief and engenders the thought that the Brazilian society would be a utopian racial democracy, without being a political democracy, let alone a social democracy. Of course, this expression conceals a sophisticated form of patriarchal, patrimonial racism, elaborated from the porch of

the *casa grande* (big house, which is the Brazilian term for the house of the masters in opposition to the house of the slaves). More than that, it can be a cruel mystification of inequality, intolerance, prejudice, racism mortaring the prevailing social order. The Racial Democracy thought was deeply criticised and had famous Brazilian sociologist Florestan Fernandes as one of the first and most prominent voices doing so. The author began to refer to it as the ‘myth of racial democracy’, he believed that the referred supposed harmonic system in place was a camouflage of the ‘defence of aristocratic attitudes, behaviour and ideas of the “dominant race”’ and to him, in order for the Brazilian racial democracy to be real, there should have taken place the ‘democratisation of wealth, culture and power’ (Fernandes, 1965, p. 205). Guimarães (2006) stresses the engagement of Fernandes with Freyre’s work in order to criticise it and asserts that the military government that took office in Brazil in 1964 made use of Freyre’s “Racial Democracy” theory, in order to justify the decay of the ‘false’ political democracy and the establishment of the military in power, he suggested that the term democracy was in vogue and that it had been related to different things so there would be: political democracy, economic democracy, social democracy, racial and ethnic democracy etc. And in order to attack the political democracy so that a military government could be instated, the racial democracy was the chosen one to be emphasised and praised (Guimarães, 2006, p. 13). According to Skidmore (1992), even with all the critique and counter-argument proposed by Fernandes and peers, it is ‘Gilberto Freyre, not Florestan Fernandes, who still dominates enlightened Brazilian public discussion’ (p. 15). There are those who have historically understood Brazil as a racist democracy but have used strategies to tackle structural racism based on American framework that does not contemplate how Brazilian racism was developed due to structural differences. In the US, race has historically

been seen in terms of “hypodescent”¹² whereas in Brazil ‘phenotype mediates biological heritage or presumed genotype’ (Gilliam and Gilliam, 1999, p. 62).

In Brazil, applying the American framework has not been as effective as in the US because racism in Brazil has manifested in very different terms, which is far from arguing that there isn’t any- it is just different, concealed behind the veil of miscegenation. *‘Racial status, manipulated by whites, prevents blacks from becoming aware of the hoax that in Brazil is known as racial democracy, democracy of colour.’* (Nascimento, 1968, p. 22, emphasis mine).

The most prominent stream that takes on the role of challenging of the ‘racial democracy’ or ‘racial paradise’ myth, claims that that theory was always a fallacy, rather than the reality amongst Brazilian society, tackles racism utilising a framework based on the black power movements in the United States. This set of works flags that Brazilian society is marked by a clear cut between blacks and whites, that the whole idea of racial harmony is, in fact, a cover story, that blacks and “whites” are clearly identifiable as relevant racial identities. Silva (1998) refers to the supposedly Brazilian sociological phenomenon (for some) as the ‘perfect example of racial assimilation’ (p. 203). The main points used as an argument to place Brazil in the position of being free from racial issues were the lack of clear skin colour definition, the somewhat free miscegenation amongst white Portuguese (and other Europeans that landed in the country), the indigenous native populations, the black population brought from Africa, the Arabs (mainly Lebanese) and Asian (mainly Japanese) individuals that migrated to Brazil throughout the centuries added to the lack of legal colour segregation after the abolishment of the slave-based system, meaning that Brazil did not formally adopt legal means to discriminate and insulate blacks and indigenous, it was all

¹² The “one-drop” rule. Initially used by whites as a thermometer for white “purity” and later ressignified by the black power movement. It determines that an African-American is an individual that has at least one ancestor from Africa.

much more veiled there. According to Lovell, ‘these unique characteristics helped foster the myth that in Brazil skin colour did not determine one's social position’ (Lovell, 2000, p. 4).

According to black activists, racism continues in the XXI century and is a subject very little discussed and given proper attention by Brazilian population in general. They argue that prejudice persists in most veiled terms and that the prejudice against blacks and their descendants is strongly anchored in Brazil's recent history, especially because of the three centuries of slavery. They believe that today it continues as it can be observed by the scarce participation of these subjects (blacks) in the social, economic and political protagonism of the country and the scarce policies of insertion of these subjects into society. The Abolition of Slavery in 1888 did not induce significant changes in the scenario at the time. Since the sixteenth century, when blacks from various parts of Africa began to land in Portuguese America and were forced to work on sugar cane plantations and gold mines, a long period of appropriation of their freedom began, generating serious consequences for their social status.

The performance of race in Brazil clearly demonstrates the existence of racial hierarchy in the country. Caldwell (2004) studied racial dynamics by analysing the ‘significance of hair’ in Brazilian culture and her findings are striking when she concludes that in the Brazilian culture the ‘gradation’ of hair quality decreases according to the “degree of blackness” one has. She writes that in a world dominated by whiteness and white oriented values and perspectives, ‘race is only designated by those who signify racial identification’ (p. 22); she goes beyond and affirms that ‘a clue to that identification is the notion of being “coloured”. Not being coloured means being white, and, as a consequence, being race-less, whereas being coloured signifies being a race’ (ibid). What does that mean? To Caldwell, it means that the human race term was built as to normalise whiteness and that whichever bodies escaped that encompassing definition would be a ‘subspecies of humanity’ so ‘In

effect, then, in the anti-black world there is but, one race, and that race is black. Thus, to be racialised is to be pushed “down” toward blackness, and to be deracialised is to be pushed “up” toward whiteness.’ (p. 22). She reached the conclusion that this common categorisation of “bad hair” is normally seen as more important to define women rather than men: ‘of all the physical characteristics, it is particularly hair that marks “race” for women (...) it is in the issue of hair that one sees a distinction between men and women and the differential social coding of race and ethnicity. Thus “race” is gendered.’ (p. 21) and the politics of the hair is a good indicator of race’s gender-ness in Brazil. She believes that by ‘examining the racialised and gendered significance of hair provides key insights into the ways in which Black women's bodies are marked by larger political and social forces.’ (p. 18). The intersection of gender and race means that black women in Brazil face extensive discrimination. Aguilar et al. (2015) stated that while such racial inequality and injustice persist in Brazil, the political and intellectual elites have sought to craft a national identity that does not match the racial makeup of the country. There has been a deliberate attempt to portray Brazil as a racial democracy that does not experience issues relating to racism or discrimination based on race.

The black movement that ‘enjoyed a flurry of publicity in the late 1970s and early 1980s’ (Skidmore, 1992, p. 14) was largely criticised by the devotees of the Racial Democracy idea who ‘termed them “un-Brazilian,” “racist,” and mindless imitators of the U.S. civil rights activists’ (ibid). The same author suggests that the following are the kind of questions that should be asked when talking about race consciousness in Brazil: do ‘Afro-Brazilians come to see their life situation as being determined to a significant degree by racial discrimination? If so, will they translate this consciousness into collective action?’ (p. 19). The raising up of the voices and the pressure from black activists triggered a set of discussions that led to the implementation by some federal universities of a racial ‘quota’ system for the admission of students. The very first law that introduced racial quotas in

Brazilian universities 'was enacted in November 2001 by the state legislature of Rio de Janeiro – 40% of all places in state-owned universities for *negros* or *pardos*. It was decided that there were no objective criteria for defining a person's race. The method, therefore, would be self-classification.' (Fry, 2009, p. 261). In UnB (University of Brasilia), in order to avoid 'self-classification fraud' (ibid), they implemented a committee that would judge whether people claiming to belong to the Black category were really entitled to claim their place. The committee was formed by a student, a sociologist, an anthropologist and three representatives of Brazil's Black Movement and the foundation of their decisions would be a photograph of the candidate taken when they signed up for the exam. Though Black activists tend to defend that the cut is clear between Blacks and Whites by importing an American framework to treat race, there are a lot of differences between the US and Brazil when it comes to the topic. Even the very way of referring to races is opposing in the two places. Historically in Brazil to call a dark-skinned individual respectfully, you should use the word 'negro' what would be unacceptable and racist in the US and to call someone black (*preto* – the black colour in Portuguese) would be impolite. Also, in the US the definition of black was not only clear but expressively stated in the law that comprised ancestry, but in Brazil, differently from what happened in the US, racial labels are based almost exclusively on physical appearance rather than descent (Hutn, 2004). The legal system in Brazil did not establish legal segregation after the abolishment of slavery, contrary to the US. 'Brazil didn't have legal provisions enforcing racial endogamy and segregation' (Skidmore, 1992, p. 5) and 'because there was no legal segregation, there were no parallel non-white institutions' (ibid, p. 13) which in turn contributed to the non-construction of a strong exclusively black movement in earlier times. It can be observed that black and *mestiço* people play a socially and professionally defined role in today's Brazilian society. It is also observed a discourse of denial of reality, mainly when it is affirmed that Brazil is *mestiço* and that therefore the

prejudice does not exist. However, according to black activists, the miscegenation did not exclude from the country the differentiated treatments for people of colour and the harsh reality is that to be black in Brazil is to live with the mark of the past in which the *negro* was seen as a symbol of backwardness.

The third trend does not fall into the trap of painting Brazil as the example of a perfectly blended, discrimination-free zone, but also acknowledges the fact that something escapes the perspective of most of the work on the ‘deconstruction’ of the ‘racial democracy myth’, being that something the lack of clear indicators of ‘race consciousness’ in order to sustain the second point of view. Silva (1998) explains that the supporters of the second perspective ‘denounce Brazil’s racial democracy as a fallacy by pointing to the wide social, political, and economic gap separating blacks and whites in Brazil, but still stumble in the absence of obvious indicators of race consciousness among black and white Brazilians, and the rather insignificant political importance of race in Brazil’ (p. 203). Her study draws on the comparative analysis between race dynamics in the US and in Brazil, and identifies as the key point of incongruence the very aspect of the well outlined racial differentiation characteristic of the former and the blurry bordered distinction of the latter. In her research, where she interviewed syndicate leaderships in Brazil, Reichmann (1997) came to a conclusion that ‘the pattern of no pattern remained consistent — there was no clear relationship linking awareness of racial discrimination to the endorsement of racial quotas. However, among those who did recognise both forms of discrimination, there was a trend toward less support for the race than for gender quotas’ (p. 34). Polonia (2009) in her critique to the work of Stanley R. Bailey: *Legacies of Race: Identities, Attitudes, and Politics in Brazil* points out that the author completely dismisses the differentiation of society construction dynamics between the US and Brazil:

‘According to the main assumptions of social scientists and other field scholars, individuals identify with their own racial group, racial groups always compete according to their own racial interests, and dominant groups develop ideologies to justify and legitimate their hegemony. This book begs to differ by presenting evidence that in Brazil, race does not determine strong racial boundaries, racial groupness, or group conflict. So, Bailey attempts here to demystify any pretension of universal application of racial identity theories (...) it totally forgets the historical definition and evolution of the racial composition of Brazilian society, which would explain most of the ambiguities and weaknesses of group boundaries, racial identity, and racial groupness in present-day Brazilian society. Even when analyzing “race making in black and white” (...), it is the U.S. evolution of race categorisation that stands out, rather than the Brazilian one’ (Polonia, 2009, p. 2).

The same author suggests that race in Brazil should be studied considering Brazil’s diverse regions ‘A geographical differentiation of the analytical scope would be needed in order to answer a key question: how do the historical background of racial construction and racial/social hierarchy interfere with identities, attitudes, and politics in Brazil?’ (p. 2).

The one thing that the writings on race have in common (identifiable even in the ones that do not openly acknowledge it) is the intersectional character of the study of race and gender, as Silva (1998) puts it: ‘an analysis of writings on Brazilian subjectivity suggests that the texts which write blackness do so by deploying various modern categories of ‘being’ (race, nation, gender, and class) both in the narratives which have produced blacks as subordinate subjects in modernity and in the texts which aim to foster black emancipation’ (p. 201). According to Caldwell (2004), ‘the social identities of black, *mulata* and white women demonstrate how physical differences are linked to gendered notions of racial superiority’ (p. 21). Such as any association with femininity brings about the notion of inferiority, so does the

association with blackness: ‘what is dirty is associated with black, with colour, and with black men and women. Gestural, oral, and written language institutionalise the deprecating meaning of blackness’ (Caldwell, 2004, p. 20), as well as the association of femininity with a certain set of features, institutionalise the deprecation of feminisation. The notion of the other, being that other feminised or racialised draws this “other” as opposed to the “original” the “primary” the “number one”. “Otherness” is constructed on bodies. Racism ‘uses the physicality of bodies to punish, to expunge and isolate certain bodies and construct them as outsiders’ (Eisenstein cited in Caldwell, 2004, p. 18). Caldwell (2004) also observes how much the day to day practices reinforce notions of race, even in popular jokes and anecdotes: ‘The popular acceptance of racist humour indicates that joking provides a culturally sanctioned means of articulating beliefs, which reproduce dominant notions of white superiority and black inferiority in Brazil’ (p. 19) and the dangers of these repeatedly reproduced practices of banalising practices of racism, sexism and homo/transphobia. Within this confusing and often contradictory way that Brazilians have of understanding race and racial categories, there has been a tendency to talk about a race made of Brazilians rather than primarily focused on skin colour. There is an attempt to more officially construct a “Brazilian race” as people that identify themselves as mixed, they normally think as Brazilian race, translating and addressing this unsolved inner conflict that even the most openly adepts of racialised divisions have, even if deep down. According to Ifekwunigwe, ‘there is a collapsing of the constructs of ‘race’, nationality, ethnicity and culture’ (Ifekwunigwe, 2004, p. 2). In this sense, some Brazilians subconsciously sign up to some of the ideas brought by the “Out of Africa” theory which has changed that perspective [that race represented deep biological divisions between the peoples of the world – for it has been shown we are indeed all Africans under the skin, and that our differentiation is a mere surface detail.

Why is the nature of “race” so often contested? The nature of race, according to Twine, is: ‘Differentially informed by structural factors such as gender, generation, social class, locality, colour and sexuality, these social hierarchies create, explain, justify and maintain social inequalities and injustices, and perpetuate differential access to privilege, prestige and power’ (Twine cited in Ifekwunigwe, 2004, p. 7). When enquired about their race, especially when being outside the country, mixed race Brazilians will commonly reply similarly to: ‘in Brazil I am considered white’. Brazilians reproduce this doubtful and insecure relation to their raciality without really interrogating themselves questions such as: considered by whom? Why am I white in *Brazil*, whereas perhaps not so sure in other parts of the globe? How do I interpret what it means to be white and why is this interpretation process potentially different in other places other than Brazil? How are people’s belongings to specific identities, race specifically constructed? What impacts does it have in the political sphere?

Some of the big questions that were kept in mind throughout the research process are: how do people begin to identify as belonging to a particular race? How does someone that does not fit in binary categories of gender are contemplated politically? What are the incentives connected to this belonging (racial, gender and sexual belonging)? Why in Brazil there are only very few people identifying themselves as black and such the great majority as mixed (or the infinity of terms that are associated with mixed race)? Which perceived advantages- individual or institutional – can be identified when the choice of the majority of Brazilians to being seen as mixed race rather than being seen as purely black? Is it politically a stronger position or does it bring more personal opportunities to people in Brazil? If the population feels that that is a “better” category to belong to, could it also be because of institutional mechanisms and procedures of the censuses where people have limited choices of identities?

In this context of the imagery of an ideal Brazilian as being whitened, straight and masculinised, whatever identity escapes this is seen as a threat that should be fought against and education is a key realm when it comes to changing [or in the case of Bolsonarismo: reinforcing] this scenario.

2.5 Right-Wing Populism and Cultural Wars

Many countries have been experiencing over the past decade a phenomenon that has had great impact to the maintenance of democracy, in the words of Kaul (2021)

‘Contemporary democracy in multiple countries has been under assault from what has been variously called right-wing populism, authoritarian populism, cultural majoritarianism, new nativism, new nationalism, quasifascism, and neo-fascism’ (p. 1619). To Carroggio (2018): ‘Parliaments in the last 20 years, around the world but especially in Western democracies, are experimenting with a profound shift of paradigm (a cultural war, to use the author’s bellicose metaphor) regarding issues such as abortion, euthanasia, artificial fecundation, and the nature of marriage’ (p. 177).

Populism is a contested term that has been at the centre of media coverage on politics for the good part of the past couple of decades. According to Brown and Mondon (2021) the term has become so ubiquitous that *The Cambridge Dictionary* made it ‘word of the year’ in 2017, since it represented ‘a phenomenon that’s both truly local and truly global, as populations and their leaders across the world wrestle with issues of immigration and trade, resurgent nationalism, and economic discontent’ (p. 279). To Hellström (2013), ‘Populism as style refers to a certain way of *doing* politics (...) [it] relies on the charismatic leader to bypass established ways of doing politics via e.g. party politics (...) the populist politician *mobilizes* voters along feelings of resentment, aiming to represent the common sense of the ordinary people vis-à-vis the political institutions’ (p. 9).

A commonly heard definition of populism casts it as a matter of ideas and discourse that extol a pure, virtuous people whose righteous will is the only legitimate one and that will “save” the nation from illegitimate ones. Mudde (2007) provides a definition for the most widely spread notion of populism, the author conceptualises populism as a ‘thin-centred ideology that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite,’ and which argues that politics should be an expression of the *volonté générale* (general will) of the people’ (p. 23).

Leaman (2004) reflects on the relationship between populism and democracy. According to the author, populism is viewed in terms of either advancing or threatening democracy. Filsinger et al. (2021) wrote on the connection between national identity and populism by separating national identity in two forms: civic notions of national identity and ethnic conceptions of nationhood. According to the authors, populism can also be divided into two broad types: *inclusionary populism*- which usually combines populist conceptions of society with some forms of socialism, and *exclusionary populism*, often also labelled radical right populism—combines populism with authoritarian and nativist sentiments.

‘We expect a *civic conception of nationhood to be negatively related to populism*.

Since it is based on a *shared political culture and devoid of all linkages to blood and birth, it draws a decisively less sharp distinction between in- and out-groups than an ethnic conception of nationhood (...)* If national membership is founded on an explicitly political culture and membership is in principle open to everyone complying with these political norms and values, this should result in more diversity relating to traditions, customs and belief systems outside the political sphere than is tolerable by those holding a populist notion of one general will by the people. Overall, *civic conceptions of nationhood contradict most characteristics of a populist ideology*’ (Filsinger et al., 2021, n.p., emphasis mine).

The term “populism” became so trivialised that it is common to see it applied to a multiple and diverse types of movements ranging from the left to the right, and even in contexts outside of politics. Brown and Mondon (2021) warn about the danger of the banalisation and the uncritical use of such term (or using it as an euphemism for authoritative, far-right movements) and the effects that it has on how we perceive the far right, in their words: ‘if anything and everything can be populist, why should we worry about the far right? Alternatively, if the far right and populism are interchangeable and populism is everywhere, then so is the far right’ (ibid, p. 286).

That is one of the reasons why the thesis adopts the concept of populism elaborated by Kurt Weyland’s. According to Weyland (2001), populism is better understood in political terms (rather than through other optics such as economics and so on). It should be understood as a political strategy which main characteristics are: 1) individual leader¹³ (Bolsonaro, the “legend”, the whole campaign was based on his personal figure, very few people even knew the name of the vice-president¹⁴ candidate- the only known fact about him was the the he was general for the military); 2) a large number of followers, support from unorganised masses (means of campaigning based mainly on fake news or short “impact statements” spread mainly on WhatsApp so the spreader feels like part of the net boosting the feeling of [false] agency); 3) emerges in crisis (general crises were brewing in Brazil, especially after Dilma’s impeachment); 4) promise of protection from a powerful and evil enemy (the whole idea of Bolsonarismo was based on the fight against the vague idea of “*all that is in place*” and combatting the PT party- the enemy. The basis was the *antipetismo*¹⁵ that has successfully

¹³ ‘Mass support can have different levels of organization and Since under populism the ruler is an individual, that is, a personalistic leader, the connection between leader and followers is based mostly on direct, quasi-personal contact, not on organization’ (Weyland, 2001, p. 13).

¹⁴ The vice-president candidate for Bolsonaro was Antônio Hamilton Martins Mourão, a general for the Brazilian military, affiliated with the *Brazilian Labor Renewal Party* (PRTB) known mainly as *General Mourão*.

¹⁵ *Antipetismo* (anti-PT party) is the term that emerged to refer to the phenomenon of ‘dread of the PT party’, who has systematically been blamed by all the issues faced by Brazilian society.

been systematically spread across the layers of Brazilian society as the villain and source of all the various issues that the country has faced in the past few years. According to Weyland considering it as a political strategy is the most useful lens since ‘political strategy focuses on the methods and instruments of winning and exercising power. Political strategies are characterized by the principal “power capability” that a prospective or actual ruler deploys’ (2001, p. 12). In the author’s words:

‘A *political definition* of populism is therefore preferable. It conceptualizes populism^[1] as a *specific way of competing for and exercising political power*. It situates *populism in the sphere of domination, not distribution (...) opportunism of populist leaders and their weak commitment to substantive policies, ideas, and ideologies*. In espousing antielite rhetoric and *challenging the status quo*, populism rests on the distinction of *friend versus foe* that constitutes politics. Historically, it arises from a leader's *promise to protect the people from a pernicious enemy*’ (Weyland, 2001, p. 11, emphasis mine).

The notion of national identity is a crucial socio-cultural and political issue. Political relations and ideologies within a territory are extensively shaped by social identities (Masella, 2013). In this sense, identity Politics¹⁶ is extremely relevant to understanding today’s world and society. Right-wing populism has consistently engaged in cultural wars against identity politics as its political strategy to acquire power. Bolsonarismo engaged in cultural wars against the PNE for very specific purposes. As education appeals for the “concerns for the youth”, “the next generation” and so on, it is a field that touches the core of people’s sensitivity and irrationality [rather to the objective, rational side of things] making it an easier target and fertile ground for right-wing ideas of national identity to take root. This

¹⁶ The recognition that all politics is based on identity and that the traditional view of politics (high politics) is actually based on very specific identities rather than being identity-free.

phenomenon of populist right-wingers mobilising key matters as a terrain for cultural wars to gain support across layers of society is not exclusive to Bolsonarismo. As Kaul (2021) suggests, right-wing populist ‘leaders/projects are not exceptional to any country/geography/religion, and further how they strategically operationalize misogyny in their political projects (including, but not only, during elections) in a similar manner’ (p. 1622).

According to Carroggio (2018): ‘the twentieth century was the one of the world wars and the twenty-first century is the one of the global cultural battles’ (p. 182). The term *Cultural War* was coined by American sociologist James Hunter (1991). It can be broadly understood as the conflict between values considered traditional and/ or conservative and the ones considered progressive and/ or liberal. To foment cultural wars has become a very effective mechanism for right-wing populists to polarise society and attain power. In contemporary times, the term is used expansively in various countries, often by the rightwing forces to attack the liberal/ mainstream approach toward identity, education, and public discourse as against the ‘sensible’ and ‘silent majority’. The proponents of the culture wars in a populist context like today’s Brazil claim to represent the “sensible majority” against the “liberal Establishment” that is allegedly diluting heteronormative patriarchal family structure.

2.6 The Evolution of National Identity and Application to Bolsonarismo

The term ‘national identity’ brings together those two complex and very contested concepts: *nation* and *identity*, originating an imagined composition that impacts in effect, the relationships and dynamics of people in their daily lives. Hogan (2009, 2010) wisely explores the topic. In her words:

‘Nations are more than just geo-political entities, more than people and institutions located within sovereign spaces (...) that is, they are constituted in part by the *discourses that define nation-ness*, what we might call discourses of national identity.

These are the stories that all nations tell themselves: stories about the nation's origins, its struggles, its triumphs, its character, its values, its past, and even its future' (Hogan, 2010, p. 63, emphasis mine).

National identity is understood here through a non-essentialist, constructionist view. The rationale for the choice of a non-essentialist approach is consistent with the choice for a feminist intersectional perspective applied to the study of discourse and policymaking. The non-essentialist perspective towards difference adopted here anchors itself on the belief that the artificial process of naturalisation of gender, sexuality and ethnic-racial differences is directly connected to the constraints imposed upon black people, indigenous communities, women, LGBTQIA+ and all minority groups with regards to full access to citizenship. Suny (1999 and 2000) explores the idea that most accounts of national identity are, in fact, a snapshot or a frozen image of a certain collectivity that would be a permanent and unchangeable product. He, however, argues for the mutating character of national identity, national identity would be in his words 'a provisional stabilisation of a sense of self or group that is formed in actual historical time and space (...) a continuous search for some solidity in a constantly shifting world—but (...) without forever (...) essentialising the provisional identities arrived at' (p. 144). The international character of national identity is identified through local and international interactions among nations or citizens. For example, under this aspect on the correlation between international relations and how it shapes the elements of national identity such as sociological aspects of the society and linguistic considerations, Resende (2020) observed that 'many scholars have focused their attention towards issues of identity and processes of identity formation – in terms of states having national identities and or being the bearer of identity, and how national identities affect interstate relations' (p. 236).

The main issue regarding essentialist narratives of national identity is related to the absence of a perception related to the processual aspect of it- the perception that people's

identifications are related to exposure and that they might shift over time. As previously mentioned, Andreouli and Howarth (2013) argued that identities are contextual and, therefore, change from time to time. One's sense of bond is deeply connected to the narratives and experiences one has been exposed to. All this exposure shapes one's comprehension of reality. That is to say, there is an important component that cannot be ignored, which is the *experimental* aspect of identity. Under this aspect, Resende (n.d) explained the evolution of national ideology in shaping the overall image of a nation (national identity) through the example of the evolution of the American puritan ideology. For example, the creation of the national ideology under the American puritan ideology relied on complex mythology, narratives, and symbolism with connotations such as the creation of the; "*exceptional America*", "*predestination*", "*beacon of the world*", "*benign empire*" – as opposed to the "*Evil Empire*" (p. 11). Therefore, based on this argument presented by Resende (n.d), identity must not be seen and studied as an abstraction but rather associated with lived, embodied experiences.

Essentialist notions of national identity normally vouch for a nation's image, which is built by the state through its policies and propaganda through which people's actions are shaped and end up by consolidating and disseminating. Right-wing populism appropriates particular images and symbols to broadcast an essentialist notion of national identity [which is always exclusionary] as a political strategy to establish itself in power. This imagery of the national encompasses a set of symbols and offers the community cultural constructs embedded in the notion of citizenship. This patchwork formed by the combination of those images, symbols and myths defines what the "national" is. The "national citizen", the "national spirit", the "national *modus operandi*" and so on. The way in which these are constructed widely impacts people's lives, every aspect of them. Ranging from being the foundation for setting forth boundaries for potential enemies of the state, envisaging the

consolidation of national education systems, defining media interplays, establishing and maintaining traditions, popular culture and so forth. Which creates a fertile ground for the fomenting of cultural wars with the sole purpose of getting a populist leader in power.

Due to the contextual nature of identity and the performance of identities, state policies influence the construction and performance of national identity as well as broader influence on critical educational policies, as evident in Brazil. Contrary to essentialism, I endorse that the ideas of nation and national identity are constructed through the very performances of everyday life, which include policies and politics in general, which are normally regarded as only reflective of them (nation/ national identity). I argue against the idea that policies are simply the culmination of the will of the people. Instead, I believe that *policies not only reflect the will of people but they are at the same time one of the bases for creating it*. Contrary to popular culture, policies are generally seen in more neutral terms. But we often forget that they might be a by-product of cultural wars for very specific purposes, which was the case of the PNE as will be demonstrated. Popular culture is more easily associated with the idea that its representations send messages and produce, reinforce or dismiss forms of subjectivities and collectivities. Popular culture is more widely studied as a means of contouring national identity but policies as such remain still little explored in this sense. As Kaul (2007) rightly explains, in opposition to essentialist views, identities do not precede Politics, they are products of it.

Drawing from the main constructions provided by the works on nationalism around national identity, the most important features of national identity, as I see it, are that it is an *imaginary* notion and has both an *exclusionary* and a *mutating* character. National identity is an *imaginary* notion to the extent which it is something fabricated by the human mind. It is constructed around particular sets of principles and possesses an iconic normative ideal at the centre of it, mainly around who represents the ideal of the Nation. This *ideal* was created,

which makes discourses around the national identity of value-based nature. National identity is *exclusionary* because, in order for it to exist, there has to be something outside its realm. Otherwise, this differentiation would not have its reason for being. In this sense, the figure of the *constitutive other*¹⁷ gains force. This is a fundamental aspect of racial ideology: the stigmatised, openly or veiled, is seen as strange, exotic, alien alienated from the “we”, a threat to the current order of things. And this oppressive dynamic is very similar (albeit often less clear) to gender and sexuality where you see masculinity and heteronormative as the norms. The oppressed often need to develop their critical self-awareness, taking into account the stigma, the stigmatising process and the intolerance and subalternity which they are subjected to. Anna Triandafyllidou (1998) writes on the role that the differentiation between “us” and “them”, “inside” and “outside” plays in nationalism: ‘the notion of the other is inherent in the nationalist doctrine itself. For nationalists (or simply for those individuals who recognise themselves as members of a national community), the existence of their own nation presupposes the existence of other nations too’ (p. 594). Belonging to the “other” category is a psychosocial and cultural elaboration that is transfigured into “stigma”, which is by its turn; expressed in a stereotype, with which it is marked, demarcated, described, qualified, disqualified, delimited or subordinated. The “other” can be individual or collective, a specific someone or a “whole group” category that the oppressor believes that that individual belongs to. Additionally, national identity is *mutating* in the sense that what it means to be identifiable as a member of a certain nation shifts over time and according to circumstances and interests in place. At specific points, the focus on national identity is intensified and the specific construction of national identity is greater. Particular notions of ‘the nation’ is accessed and more significantly used by the state in certain key moments of a country’s

¹⁷ According to Gunnarsson (2016) the constitutive other is essential for the existence of the figure of the “dominant” and that it is a ‘contradictory relation whereby the powerful and ‘independent’ existence of the one [dominant] is premised on that which is other [constitutive other] to it’ (p. 1).

history; be it in order to marginalise “threatening” communities or to divert the population’s attention from another important issue that might be against their interest; shifting the focus to it and placing heavier weight on it. It is very important to recognise the contingent nature of how gender, sexuality and race have been historically understood and perpetuated in order to analyse the transformative feature of national identity.

In order to establish, maintain and reset (according to interests throughout time) a specific notion of national identity, movements were formed. These movements, through which specific notions of the nation are invoked, praised and reproduced, are called *nationalism*. Understandings around national identity are constructed through the relations between nation and nationalism and academics have studied this dynamic through different angles. It is interesting to observe that nationalism is a product of the XVIII century. Before the so called “modern nations” were formed, people “belonged” to a certain territory or other, according to their allegiance to a particular ruler rather than to any “national spirit” reflective of a common identity. The number one commonality amongst all nationalist movements is the placement of the figure of the nation at the core of politics and recognising it as the central locus for politics and governance.

2.7 Chapter Summary

The present chapter touched upon notions of national identity, how gender, sexuality and race are key ways through which national identity has been understood and represented. The chapter also examined how the construction of national identity influences gender identities and perceptions towards race and sexuality. The analysis shows that national identity shapes gender norms and relations within a nation. How men and women relate depends on the construction of national identity. The analysis also shows that national identity can be understood through essentialist or constructivist lenses. Essentialism connects identity to the subject in a displaced manner meaning it looks at the “self” as being somewhat

unrelated to the narratives and contexts that it is exposed to and surrounded by. The constructivist view on identity, on the other hand, treats identity as something that is contextual and which changes from one context to another. The chapter shows that Brazil is not a racial democracy in practice and the minorities in the country experience racial injustice and inequality and that the construction of national identity in Brazil is significantly influenced by religion and this impacts how race, gender and sexuality are performed in the country. The analysis further establishes that right-wing populist movements resort to cultural wars in order to create and/ or reinforce an idea of national identity which is exclusionary, privileging certain identities and demonising other ones within a territory.

Chapter Three: Educational Policies and Structures in Brazil

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a background for the education system and its history in Brazil with to ascertain how the architecture of the educational policies have influenced or contributed to Bolsonarismo and the politics of change within the country. Upon a critical appraisal of the existing educational policies in Brazil in the current chapter, it becomes clear the amount of influence that inherited notions of gender, sexuality and race had in how education policies historically unfolded and how these historical processes have continually impacted the construction of the education policies in place. This historically created and reinforced scenario aids in explaining the commotion surrounding the national education plan (PNE) law formulated by the PT government while in office in Brazil. It brings context to the absence of gender and sexuality matters in the education plans in most Brazilian cities and to how the widespread idea of Brazil as a racial democracy contributes to the absence of effective measures to tackle male, heterosexual and white supremacy in schools, impacting communities and reinforcing the marginalisation of some gender, sexual and racial identities, as elaborately discussed in the sections below. Intersectionality, as previously remarked, is an approach that was initially adopted by critical sociology studies that have been increasingly applied to other fields. It provides the best framework and it is the most useful way to examine and understand Brazilian national identity constructions.

3.2 National Identity and Education

Knowledge and Power Nexus

According to the research by Michel Foucault (1972, 1980) it is virtually impossible to elutriate knowledge from the relations of power in which it takes part and that which contour it. Under this argument, Foucault explored the correlation between the idea of education in contemporary society and the processes involved in the acquisition of knowledge, which shows the strong association of education as a vital tool of power and

polity control within a territory. The traditional view of power considered it as a “thing”, something to be exercised upon others, usually through repression and by macro structures.

Foucault, in contrast, viewed power as a relation and believed that power is not only repressive but also productive and not only present in state actions but also in every single relation, at different levels of society. Foucault criticised conventional notions of power and posed his own relational theory of power, in which he identifies the significant relationship between “power” and “domination”, seeing potential as ‘the capacity to act on others’ (Foucault cited in Dore, 2010, p. 739). In the author’s words:

‘The state is superstructural about a whole series of power networks that invest the body, sexuality, the family, kinship, knowledge, technology, and so forth. True, these networks stand in a conditioning-conditioned relationship to a kind of “meta power” which is structured primarily around a certain number of great prohibition functions; but *this meta power with its prohibitions can only take hold and secure its footing where it is rooted in a whole series of multiple and indefinite power relations that supply the necessary basis for the tremendous negative forms of power*’ (Foucault in Rabinow, 1984, p. 64, emphasis mine).

According to the research conducted by Dore (2010), power is a huge and diffuse system. Furthermore, Foucault (1980) interrogated the various dynamics of power research from a macro perspective, and then explored the nature, possibilities and activities of power from a micro perspective. In Foucault’s understanding, wisdom is deployed for power. Whoever has the power (including over education), gets to determine what should be defined as knowledge and, consequently, which kind of individuals are expected to be formed through the “acquisition of that knowledge” by way of the formal education process (Foucault, 1972).

According to Malet and Majhanovich (2015), there is a close nexus between the elements of knowledge as disseminated to the learners in the system or structures of education within a territory and the corresponding political aspects of control by way of power. Specifically, the power-knowledge interlink is one of the core ideas in Foucault's work. A similar position to Malet and Majhanovich (2015) emerged from an earlier study by Dore (2010), who explained the inseparable nature of knowledge or education on the one hand, and power or political control based on national or political identity of a country on the other. Under this discussion, it emerged that power and knowledge are inseparable and simultaneously promote each other. Power controls the creation of knowledge, which in turn stimulates the power to strengthen social control. Therefore, there is no impartial knowledge, and knowledge is completely subject to power. The so-called "truth" is indeed the result of power (Malet and Majhanovich, 2015). Moreover, in the view offered by Dore (2010), mechanisms of power produce different types of knowledge that collate information on people's activities, existence and knowledge production. 'Because power is operational between agents, something that is in constant activity, chances are that such operations will give rise to *asymmetrical and non-egalitarian relations*' (Dore, 2010, pp. 740-741, emphasis mine).

According to Foucault's approach, power and knowledge are linked not only in the sense that knowledge is and brings power, but also that whoever has power gets to dictate what counts as knowledge. The scholar further established that power is repressive and creates its resistance and can be enacted through a variety of manners. In his words: 'what makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse' (Foucault in Rabinow, 1984, p. 61). So, power is directly linked to knowledge and the production and reproduction of discourse within the

structures or system of education as enunciated by Foucault (1980), Malet and Majhanovich (2015) and Dore (2010). The discussions provided by the scholars is directly relevant to the discourse concerning how the discussions around educational policies and laws in the Brazilian nation have been hijacked and weaponised by the Bolsonarismo populist project and the cultural wars it has waged in order to get to office, adversely impacting the country's social, cultural, political, and economic heritage.

In terms of the analysis, keeping in mind Foucault's framework (Foucault, 1972), why are education policy and curriculum so relevant when talking about the construction of national identity and why their formulation and implementation are such a conflicted process? The aspect of education and the knowledge disseminated to the learners within a particular country is directly connected to the power and knowledge dynamic. This power and knowledge nexus is significant in the context of national identity, especially to the role of education policies and curriculum in nation-building. The discussions affirm the centrality of knowledge as a critical power tool through the service of the power structure and the interplay of responsibilities within a nation, as argued by Foucault (1984), Malet and Majhanovich (2015) and Dore (2010). Be it whether to create a male, patriarchal, heteronormative, white national identity or a gender-aware, inclusive, multi-ethnic national identity. Malet and Majhanovich (2015) also claim that 'education is a powerful force for building democracy' (p. 1), which is indeed true. It can be a very useful tool for social inclusion. Therefore, as elaborately captured by the scholars, knowledge disseminated through the educational structures and processes fundamentally serve as a powerful force for creating and reinforcing inequalities and injustices. That is to say, knowledge can be and more often than not is used both as a means for exclusion as it will be discussed in the current study context through a thorough interrogation of the evolution of the system of education

within the Brazilian nation and how discussions around such matters have directly impacted Bolsonarismo.

This power and knowledge nexus is very useful to look at the politics of the curriculum and its contested nature. According to Foucault (1984), ‘we constitute ourselves as subjects of knowledge (p. 352), meaning that one’s self is constructed around the knowledge available to them. Education is an important piece of equipment for the construction of the “self”. The holders of power are the ones who decide over what counts as knowledge, what should feature in the curriculum and what should be suppressed or silenced. It is important to understand that the definitions of terms and concepts are according to the dominant discourses and not a supra-discourse truth. Apple et al. (1993) asserted that: ‘we need to see what race [and/or other markers arguably] means and does in those institutions [such as the educational ones] that play so large a part in defining what counts as official knowledge and in helping to form identities around those definitions’ (p. viii). According to the research by Msila (2007) in most cases, there is a hidden curriculum connected to the education agenda of oppressive systems. The hidden curriculum encompasses the values and beliefs which are necessarily implied by and attached to the official curriculum but not overtly expressed and transmitted to students. It is a tool for control: ‘the hidden curriculum in this system was to create learners who did not question authority. Learners were also not supposed to change the status quo’ (Msila, 2007, p. 152). Historical privileges have been assigned to particular identities and groups of people, and they did impact on and are reflected by education systems. Masculinity, heterosexuality and whiteness are some of these privileged, unmarked categories of identities. The discussions by Apple et al. (1993) and Msila (2007) are relevant to the current study scenario as they offer the background information concerning how the policies or laws adopted in a system of education in a nation

such as within the Brazilian nation potentially impact political power, as readily evident in the rise and establishment of Bolsonarismo in power.

According to the research by Gillborn (2005), it is important to look beyond the superficial rhetoric of policies and practices, in order to focus on the material and ideological work that is done to legitimate and extend race [and other forms of] inequity' (p. 492) and the urgent need to ask questions such as: 'who or what is driving education policy? Second, the question of beneficiaries: who wins and who loses as a result of education policy priorities? And finally, the question of outcomes: what are the effects of policy?' (ibid). The discussion by Gillborn (2005) is similar to the sources by Apple et al. (1993) and Msila (2007), which contended that the entire procedure of the association between knowledge or education and political control or power in a country show a close link. For instance, the whole process links to the aim of the creation of a certain kind of individual, a specific type of citizen that will be contributing to the building of the nation in a very particular way (determined by the powerful – the unmarked categories of identities). The powerful get to establish what is the "truth", and to Foucault (1984), 'truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only under multiple forms of constraint. It induces the regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the *types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as accurate*' (ibid, p. 72, emphasis mine).

Another critical aspect pointed by Foucault (1972) is that power often relies on the ignorance of its agents and subjects and this is crucial to right-wing populism use of education as a weapon to get to office. Often times, especially when under the populist "spell" there is unawareness from individuals of the power operating upon them, which is to say that power often works in hegemonic terms (Gramscian perspective) as opposed to always taking the shape of clear dominance. Similarly, Apple et al. (1993) contended that there is a close relationship between the type of governance arising from the knowledge

imparted in the system or structures of education in a country and the corresponding exercise of power as the basis for the national identity, as shown under the scenario of Bolsonarismo. Hegemony frequently takes the form of legitimated leadership, which means that agents of power often act against the best interest of whom they are supposed to represent, but these accept it because they are unaware that they are being abused or oppressed, they believe the agent's act is legitimate and in their best interest. Dominance is the authoritarian way of inflicting power, usually through coercion and force. Individuals know when there is dominance operating upon them in contrast to hegemony, which seems invisible to whom is subject to it, it's a level of political domination that surpasses the dynamic control used by the state, as argued by Apple et al. (1993) and Foucault (1984). The discourse of neutrality, often used by mainstream pedagogy, of the school as a place that is and should be politics-free, is, in fact, a means to perpetuate the dynamics of power already in place, the ongoing dominant politics. In the words of McLaughlin and Whatman (2010): 'every dimension of schooling and education is politically contested space, those who believe they are keeping politics out of the classroom and "being neutral" in the teaching and learning spaces are maintaining the dominant politics' (p. 57). The discussions provided by McLaughlin and Whatman (2010), Apple et al. (1993) and Foucault (1984) under this paragraph are essential in the discourse concerning the potential role of the educational policies or laws in Brazil in shaping the national or political identity in which power is exercised through Bolsonarismo.

To challenge mainstream pedagogy, critical pedagogy emerged. Giroux (2010) is a leading scholar within the niche of critical pedagogy, and his research confirmed a strong correlation between knowledge obtained within the educational structures or processes within a country and the establishment of institutions of governance through which power is exercised under political identity. It emerged that education is necessary for building democracy, although its approach has to be inclusive and non-hegemonic. One of the most

prominent figures of such method, perhaps the most significant one, was the Brazilian educator and intellectual Paulo Freire (Francis et al., 2019). Through Freire's perspective, as offered by Francis et al. (2019), education should not be a top-down exercise of the teacher 'passing on' a set of academic contents to the students, it should be instead 'a political and moral practice that provides the knowledge, skills and social relations that enable the students to explore for themselves the possibilities of what it means to be engaged citizens while expanding and deepening their participation in the *promise* of substantive democracy' (Giroux, 2010, p. 5, emphasis mine). In relation to the matter, Francis et al. wrote:

'Critical theory provides researchers with a framework to understand how structures in education regulate and police non-normative gender and sexualities. It offers a way to think about gender and sexuality and how these invoke discourses of power, difference, assimilation, inclusion in schools (...) heterosexuality is privileged and made compulsory in schools' (Francis et al., 2019, p. 21).

In the same sense of showing how the various approaches to education affect national or political identity, such as the scenario of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, another study conducted by Anastasia Liasidou (2012) wrote on 'the emancipatory and transformative roles of schools, as sites of power interplays at the interstices of disability, race, socioeconomic background and gender' (p. 168) therefore, the aim of education should be for students to 'develop a consciousness of freedom, recognise authoritarian tendencies, empower the imagination, *connect knowledge and truth to power* and learn to read the word and the world as part of a broader struggle for the agency, justice and democracy' (Giroux, 2010, p. 1, emphasis mine). Additionally, understanding the intersections of systems of oppression and challenging the multiplicity of factors that disable certain groups of students entails critiquing dominant ideologies, educational policies and institutional arrangements that maintain and perpetuate social and educational injustice (Liasidou, 2012, p. 170). Therefore, based on the

analyses of the past postulates by the scholars, the current research proceeds that education or knowledge imparted in the system of learning affect power or political control in a country, as evident in the current debates on inclusive education. Moreover, the postulate presented by Liasidou (2012) and Giroux (2010) has shown the need for the current research to draw on the notion of intersectionality in which the idea of sexuality is conceptualised in conjunction with issues of race, socioeconomic background and gender, thereby providing alternative analytical lenses to challenge reductionist and neoliberal discourses of inclusive education. Accordingly, this study concludes that the educational processes derived from right-wing populist discourses create and perpetuate inequality.

As previously considered in the discussions by McLaughlin and Whatman (2010), Apple et al. (1993) and Foucault (1984), education is directly connected to power and knowledge. Having this in mind, it becomes essential to study education policies and systems, raising questions about the gendered aspect of them in order to establish if they are inclusive or simply reproducing historical oppressions. It is not an accident that throughout time and space, education has developed following specific standards and serving particular purposes according to the structure of society and to the dominant groups. However, as aforementioned in the studies by Msila (2007) and Ames (2005), education is a weapon that can be used to either reinforce or fight oppression. And even when intentionally used as a tool of inclusion, this attempt can happen in different ways, be the efforts to include groups and identities as foundational parts of the process or, as McLaughlin and Whatman (2010) call, an ‘an add-on’- meaning some initiatives are intended to include but not in the same level of the dominant group, include groups but the inequality in perception and treatment of the different factions is readily evident. Similarly, the research by Morojele (2013) pointed out that these patriarchal ideologies of gender are endorsed in the schooling system where boys find themselves under tremendous pressure to proclaim and display their masculinity or

succumb to being humiliated for not upholding this societal expectation. (Francis et al., 2019, p. 25). Therefore, the studies by McLaughlin and Whatman (2010), Apple et al. (1993), Foucault (1984), Msila (2007), Ames (2005), and Morojele (2013) are integral in furthering the discourse concerning the recognition of the connection between education and knowledge and how it develops are about the struggle of power between different divisions of national identity within the Brazilian context. Moreover, the studies served to show the gap in the explanation that some divisions are inclusive and aimed at tackling historical and embedded privileges and some are exclusive divisions, aimed at maintaining power relations as they are, without addressing historical inequalities and pretending they did not exist or that they lived in the past, but now everything is sorted and just and every single one of us has the same possibilities and opportunities. Therefore, the current study tackles the gaps shown in the postulates by the scholars by exploring the causal relationship between rhetoric around gender, sexuality, race and education and the rise of right-wing populism in Brazil.

Unterhalter's (2005b) research investigates how educational policies or laws create structures or knowledge imparting processes that contribute to the rise of national or political identity, as evident in the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil. There are efforts being made to both include gender structurally and energetically, but also some attempts are mere *pro forma* initiatives. In the words of Unterhalter (2005b), true equality is one that 'entails the removal of deeply embedded obstacles and structures of power and exclusion, such as discriminatory laws, customs, practices, and institutional processes, all of which undermine opportunities and outcomes in education' (p. xx). Similarly, the research conducted by Ames (2005) supported Unterhalter (2005b), arguing that there are seemingly inclusive but unequal efforts across the globe to address and fight historically asymmetric gender relations through education. Peru, throughout the last couple of decades, followed the international flow of attempts to include women and widen their participation in the country's education system.

Although these initiatives did improve women's access to education and increased women's enrolment rates, they did little to tackle the dominant masculinised national identity. Patricia Ames (2005), in her study of Peruvian education and its gendered side, she was careful to work with the attention turned to analysing whether this "improvement" in women's access to education was actually working in order to make them equal throughout the education process and afterwards when they leave the system and move on to enter the job market. It came to her attention through the research that initially, in Peruvian children's lives, in the early stages of their development, chores and activities were divided a bit more equally amongst boys and girls. This changed as they got older, though: 'they were differentiated according to gender as they grew older until they resembled the expected roles assigned to men and women in their society. Girls tended to assume most of the domestic work, with some agricultural work, while boys increased their participation in agricultural activities' (Ames, 2005, p. 153). For the study, Ames 'carried out classroom observation at schools, focusing on trying to determine whether the school could be possibly promoting exclusion' (ibid, p. 152). She concluded that 'despite relatively high levels of enrolment, some segments of the female population still suffer from educational exclusion' (ibid, p. 149). It is all connected to how education and knowledge are sides of the same coin and how they are all about the struggle of power between different divisions of national identity, thereby contributing to inclusive divisions and elite divisions. In Peru, as she remarks, 'neither the school nor the community is a gender-neutral institution or agent. They both produce and reproduce through their practice a structure of opportunities marked by gender inequalities' (ibid, p. 161).

Another study by Raynor (2005) showed the connection between gender-based discriminatory practices in a political or national identity and the curriculum within the structures or processes established in the laws or policies on education. Baldwin and Baldwin

(1992) contended that there is a strong correlation between knowledge, power and national identity as a form of political control that governs discrimination based on race, gender, sexuality, or political class within the contemporary society. What is defined as education system at a given place involves the curriculum, the available material (textbooks and other resources) and the body of “educators” or agents engaged in the formal educational process, which is all directly or indirectly regulated by education policies. Many of the issues of concern to these activist teachers and researchers, such as gender bias in the curriculum, co-educational or single-sex schools, the formation of femininities (and later masculinities) in schools, approaches to sex education, levels of sexual harassment at school and university, and the intersections of race and gender discrimination, were issues that arose out of practice (Unterhalter, 2005, p. 24).

3.3 Education in Brazil - Historical Outline

It is useful to draw a historical outline of the development of formal education in Brazil in order to show the relationship between its features and the political stages the country was facing throughout Brazilian history. Besides, the evaluation of the evolution of educational policies or laws within the country is integral to the understanding of how the idea of *Brasilidade* (Brazilian identity) has been signified and ressignified over the years and which notions of it remained constant affecting and being used by the current political scenario in the country. First, it is instructive to observe that the question of education and the various policies or laws that govern the sector was dealt with differently in different stages of Brazilian history and the degree of importance assigned to it varied throughout time. The current research considered the significant shifts in the educational dynamics and their connection to the respective political moment the country was facing in the analysis phase and according to them, the study categorised Brazilian history into at least 10 periods: 1) Colonisation (1500 – 1808), 2) Empire (1808 – 1822), 3) Independence (1822 – 1834), 4)

First Republic (1834 – 1920s), 5) Progressive Period (1920s – 1937), 6) Dictatorship (1937 – 1945), 7) Brief Democracy (1945 – 1964), 8) Military Dictatorial Regime (1964 – 1985), 9) Redemocratisation (1985-2017) and 10) The PNE and the Rise of Bolsonarismo (discussed under Appendix 3). In the analysis, it became clear the sort of cyclical nature of Brazilian nationalist movements had in time and their reflections in education. After very conservative oriented periods, there came glimpses of progressive ones leading up once more to the comeback of traditional values. Therefore, the current study focused on the tenth phase that deals with the PNE and the Rise of Bolsonarismo to ascertain the correlation between the policies and structures of education in the country and the emerging movement of Bolsonarismo.

Up until the 1920s, Brazilian national identity was not something that was largely explored and discussed in the country. The Portuguese settlers and their descendants were quite happy by being a sort of appendix to Portugal. Even Brazilian independence was an odd process since it was led by the heir to the Portuguese throne himself. It wasn't a bottom up process and it did not involve the lower layers of society. There was no sense of a unified *Brasilidade*. Brazil's "face" was the face of the Portuguese settlers that maintained some of the Portuguese ways but inevitably relativised others. The music, the lifestyle, the popular culture and so on was imported from Europe and zero to no attention was given to cultural manifestations of the native populations (the ones that managed to survive) nor to the largest parcel of the population made up of African immigrants turned into slaves- as legitimate manifestations of *Brasilidade*. These manifestations were repressed, invisibilised and condemned. The Brazilian first-class citizen was a descendant of European settlers, catholic and family-oriented, that would try their best to mirror the European lifestyle.

Marxist historian Caio Prado Junior wrote on the notion of *Brazilian people* and the ways in which the particularities of the way that coloniality in Brazil developed had long-

lasting impact in societal dynamics (Junior, 2011). The way in which Brazil inserted itself in the international division of labour contrasts to other countries as the Brazilian colonial economy was exclusively built upon production and commercialisation of primary goods (minerals and agriculture). The social-economic structure was formed based on the “large rural property” and the enslaved labourers work. Junior contrasts to Freyre in the sense that for him- the specificities of Brazilian case were not an accidental product of the “tropical climate”, the “blending of races” and so forth, to this author, coloniality in Brazil should be looked at considering the purpose of colonisation, people should make sense of the country’s situation according to the meaning of its colonisation.

Junior (2011), however, subscribes to some extent, to Freyre’s (1956) racial democracy myth. According to Junior, the *mestiçagem* (blending of races) was, yes, the signal over which the Brazilian nation has formed and its most profound and remarkable trait, it was the strategy that Portuguese colonisation used and it became a true solution. However, contrary to Freyre, Junior did not attribute this blending to the lack of prejudice of the Europeans that came to Brazil- but in fact to the particularities of the Brazilian socio-economic colonial context.

To Holanda (2012) the formation of contemporary Brazil was *directly connected* to the origins of Brazilian society, it was intrinsically linked to the cultural, political and institutional legacies of the colonial past. The Iberian tradition would be the roots of the political tradition in the country and as consequence modernisation is compromised. The absorption of the Iberian tradition is incompatible with the ideal of democratic and modernised development. In the words of Monteiro (2020), Holanda’s work is:

‘a deep study of a political subject who would come to occupy a new space in society after the establishment of the Brazilian Republic, and whose *characteristics were disputed by a range of political and cultural forces*. Not by chance, the 1930s also

marked the beginning of a number of *significant national myths: the “happy” Brazilian; the discretely irresponsible citizen; the master of carnival, samba, and football*. Consciously or not, Sérgio Buarque de Holanda *confronts these myths* as he questions the Portuguese colonial enterprise and, simultaneously, the civilization it built on oftentimes loose social cement and without the due funneling of individual energies towards collective construction. Could civilization be born of happiness and looseness? It is a question that pulses, silently, throughout *Roots of Brazil* (para. 6).

In the 1920s there was a significant shift in this. As independence was an “imperial” move, nothing (with concern to national identity) had changed significantly until the twenties. Progressive intellectuals, influenced by modernist ideals, led a campaign to establish and bring to the mainstream, an idea of *Brasilidade* as being the *mestiço* “hotpot” culture, highlighting aspects of African and Native Brazilian culture that have been, up until then, ignored and subjugated by the dominant discourses on national identity. These aspects were accessed as an attempt to differentiate Brazil from Portugal in this sort of emancipatory, liberation between coloniser and colonised- that did not happen after “independence”. Even though it was progressive in some aspects, this largely reinforced the myth of the Brazilian racial democracy and it was an elitist movement.

Then, once more there was backlash, which led to a succession of events that would put “traditional ways” back on the table and as the solution and legitimate ways of being and experiencing *Brasilidade* until military regime was officially over and redemocratisation was set forth by the constitution of 1988. This progression towards democratic politics led up to the election of PT’s candidate, Lula, in 2002. Once more, traditional values based on “Christianity” and “morale” were accessed and mobilised by Bolsonarismo, which has been trying to establish itself as the new (old) face of Brazilian identity. The specific periods from the colonial days are discussed in turn within the sections below.

1) *Colonisation – Jesuit Hegemony* (From the arrival of the first Portuguese ships until the arrival of the Portuguese Royal Court – 1500 to 1808)

Brazil's colonial past has played a significant role in informing the development of the education system in the country. In 1549 (49 years after the “discovery” of Brazil by the Portuguese ships commanded by Pedro Alvarez Cabral), the first Jesuit priests arrived on Brazilian soil. This arrival would deeply impact native populations and shape education in early Brazil. The Jesuits were driven by an intense religious feeling of propagating Christianity and became the main “educating” actors in colonial Brazil for over 200 years. Their main “job” was to “educate” (convert) native Brazilian communities so that they could be progressively integrated into the “new society”. Bittar and Ferreira (2016) wrote on the History of Education in Brazil and according to them ‘the predominant religious component in the History of Education originated from the long period of Jesuit hegemony in Brazilian education (1549-1759), a period during which the Jesuits established the first schools in colonial Brazil’ (p. 65). The Jesuits founded many primary schools, but their focus was on secondary schools, many of which are still known. The Jesuit ways shaped the Education scenario as enrooted in religion from early stages:

‘In carrying out their activities, to some extent these priests played the role of the State in education. This was because Portugal, which was the stronghold of European Catholicism, entrusted the Company of Jesus with the task of evangelizing the indigenous people and setting up the first schools in the colony, which were regarded as essential for the creation of a Catholic nation’ (Bittar and Ferreira, 2016, p. 65-66).

As evident in perspective offered by Bittar and Ferreira (2016), the Jesuits were key to Portugal's plan of constructing a catholic, whitened society and the spread of the “European values” to the native and later African population. Under this analysis, the study proceeded that the process of construction of Brazilian society with Portuguese values, as

presented by Bittar and Ferreira (2016) in the excerpt above, set the foundational basis for the national identity and Bolsonarismo.

2) *Empire* (From the arrival of the Royal Court until Independence 1808 to 1822)

The decision of the Kingdom of Portugal to banish the Jesuits from the country and from its colonies deeply impacted the education setting of Brazil as the country struggled with deeply-rooted traditions and Portuguese cultural values within its societal ranks. The decision to banish the Jesuits came about in 1759 and left the education scene slightly frozen in time until the Portuguese royal family decided to move the headquarter of the Kingdom of Portugal to Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), in 1808¹⁸. The royal family moving to colonial Brazil boosted the education and cultural scenario. In this period, some cultural and scientific institutions were created both of technical schools and the first higher education courses as well as additional changes that directly impacted the education system of the country through policies or laws that served to shape the political or national identity of Brazil, as readily evident in the impacts of Bolsonarismo as argued by Bittar and Ferreira (2016).

For instance, although that was a start, the educational policies of Don Joao the sixth¹⁹ era did not really concern themselves with genuine advancements for the Brazilian population in general. They were nearly entirely aimed at the immediate needs of the Portuguese court and shaping the political or national identity of the country. This feature would have a huge influence on the evolution of the higher education system in Brazil and maintain the marginalisation of primary education. The scenario of education then was elitist, completely directed to the needs of the royal elite and exclusionary for the majority of the population, thereby creating an avenue for discriminatory practices based on race and gender

¹⁸ To escape Napoleonic expansion in Europe, following the continental blockage, the Portuguese Court was transferred to Brazil to avoid a conflict with England.

¹⁹ King of the Kingdom of Portugal, reigned from 1792 to 1826.

as the basis for upholding the theory of intersectionality as postulated in Bolsonarismo that adversely affects the minority factions within Brazil.

3) *The Independence* (From Independence until the Constitutional Act of 34 – 1822 to 1834)

The proclamation of independence in 1822 brought about a few social, political and economic changes, including for the education sphere. For the first time, in the constitutive assembly of 1823, politicians related universal suffrage to popular education, being one the basis for the other. Resulting from this new way of thinking, emerged the commitment of the Empire, reflected in the constitution of 1824, to assure ‘free primary instruction to all citizens’ (Brazil, 1824, translation mine). This commitment was later attempted to be confirmed by the 15 October 1827 Law that determined the creation of schools of ‘first letters’ (first years of primary school) in all cities and villages, involving the three instances of public power (Brasil, 1827). Education in Brazil after independence was decentralised. ‘The constitution of 1924 put states in charge of providing publicly funded elementary education, with some transfers coming from the central government’ (Chaudhary et al., 2012, p. 228). However, this law did not enter into force (progressive, inclusive laws seem to be thought of and even proposed but not actually implemented or enacted right afterwards in the country, seems to be a consistent feature throughout its history as we will see moving forward).

This period was marked by an attempt to implement progressive measures towards education by trying to universalise access to it, especially concerning primary education, but it was a spark of progress that did not go much further at the next stage as the law was not implemented, hence setting the foundation for the flaws in the educational policies that adversely shaped the national identity of Brazil as evident in Bolsonarismo within the country.

4) *First Republic*²⁰ (From Constitutional Act of 1834 until the 1920s)

An important political fact that interfered in the pathways of education was that there was the promulgation of the Constitutional Act of 1834, it delegated to the provinces the prerogative to legislate on primary education, allowing the central government to distance itself from its responsibility of assuring public elementary education to everyone. The decentralisation process concerning primary education had the effect of delaying the universalisation of education. The central government did not bring to its hands the strategic role of elaborating and coordinating the universalisation of education, in contrast to what was happening in European nations, the United States of America and Japan at that time (Santos, 2011). As a result, the gap between national elites and popular layers of society widened even more and the poorest regions of the country suffered more intensively. In the words of Bittar and Ferreira (2016): ‘schools were destined for the children of the white elite and landed estates and even after the end of slavery (1888) and the proclamation of the Republic (1889), the problem of educational exclusion did not alter very much in Brazil’ (p. 66). Therefore, it is also important to regard that until 1878, all public schools included Catholicism as a core part of the curriculum. This would be later dropped as Brazil became a secular state, although it made a comeback in 2017 as the core aspect of Bolsonarismo, as it is discussed in the sections that follow.

5) *Progressive Period* (From the 1920s to 1937)

The beginning of the 20th century was marked by the search for a purely Brazilian identity. This course became known as *the second discovery of Brazil*. In the words of

²⁰ The First Republic, also known as The Old Republic is divided in 2 moments: The first is the *Republic of the Sword* (1889/94) in which two military officials ruled and the second: the *Republic of the Oligarchies* in which farmers and leaders of the agricultural elites ruled. Fact is that the republic in Brazil was born with the acceptance of the elite and by the hands of the military what conferred, from the very beginning, an authoritarian and exclusionary character to the Brazilian State and this guaranteed privileges for the dominant class and denial of rights to the exploited classes, implicating in disastrous consequences such as the structural corruption.

Philippou (2005), this movement ‘aimed to couple independence with cultural emancipation, and demanded the invention of an authentic Brazilian tradition to serve as the basis of an autonomous modern Brazilian art’ (p. 425). In many ways, this progressive wave was still carrying forward the myth of racial democracy as it was led by an intellectual elite that appropriated symbols and rituals in the attempt to resignify Brazilian national and political identity.

‘In the 1930s, *mestiço nationalism replaced earlier nationalist ideologies centring on the supremacy of white colonial culture*. By the end of the Old Republic and the beginning of the authoritarian Vargas regime (1930/1945), all Brazil recognised the emblems of its national identity. Samba de morro or favela samba became the symbol (...) A series of national icons became firmly established: carnival (...) especially that of Rio de Janeiro, acquired the status of national celebration par excellence; the black bean feijoada of the black slaves, which Tarsila do Amaral had offered her Parisian guests in the 1920s, was adopted as the national dish; guaraná, black coffee and Parati cachaça (sugar-cane liquor) became the national drinks, and guava paste and cheese the national dessert; previously illegal capoeira was pronounced by Vargas the national sport in 1937; and candomblé was decriminalised in 1938. The *mestiço* Nossa Senhora da Conceição Aparecida was chosen as the patron saint of Brazil, and the architect and sculptor Aleijadinho (i.e., ‘little cripple’, born Antonio Francisco Lisboa, 1730/1814), the natural son of a Portuguese master builder and a black slave, was consecrated as the paradigmatic Brazilian artist/the national artistic genius, the noble ancestor of all Brazilian artists. The Modernist pilgrims to Minas had greatly admired the work of the prolific mulatto artist, especially his magnificent soapstone sculptures of the twelve lesser prophets (1800/ 1805) in front of the Santuário de Bom

Jesus de Matosinhos (1775/1790) in Congonhas do Campo, Minas Gerais' (Philippou, 2005, p. 253, emphasis mine).

In the 1920s, the economic and cultural setting outlined by the First World War brought about many discussions regarding education and, in 1932, a group of educators and philosophers published a manifesto entitled: *Manifesto dos Pioneiros* (Pioneer's Manifesto). This document synthesised the main points of the movement and proposed a redefinition of the role of the state with regards to education, opting for a more progressive and inclusive approach. The *Pioneiros* (*pioneers*) aimed at intensifying the dialogue between the 3 levels of government (federal, state and city) and constructing a national unity for education, while respecting local multiplicities and specificities, this goal would only be fully fulfilled in 2001, with the first PNE.

It is pertinent to notice that this was when the idea of *Brasilidade* was forged. Although, as previously mentioned, even though this idea appropriated cultural aspects that were lived and experienced by the bodies of the underprivileged layers, it was conducted by the elite, they aimed at external differentiation from Portugal, but internally in the country none of this reached the marginalised Brazilians. The following moment concerning education policies in Brazil was instructed by the Constitution promulgated in 1934, right after the 30s revolution²¹. According to Florestan Fernandes (an important Brazilian sociologist - see chapter one), since 1930 Brazilian state has begun to be strengthened in a process which he described as a bourgeoisie revolution of an authoritarian character. Barbara Freitag (2005), in her study of Fernandes' work, wrote that to Fernandes,

'The "educational dilemma" also expresses — in Fernandes' first phase reflections — an ambiguity of the Brazilian societarian system that officially describes itself as

²¹ The revolution of 1930 was an armed movement that removed from power the oligarch elites and through a military coup that put Getulio Vargas in office, for information on the revolution of 1930 see Bethel (2008, pp. 4-11).

democratic and postulates education as a social ascension and inclusion mechanism.

However, it is actually very selective and little attractive to the underprivileged ones (blacks, poor, women and other minorities)' (Freitag, 2005, n.p.).

This Constitution consolidated significant advancements for education, incorporating results from the debates around the theme that took place in the previous years although the bourgeoisie was the main actor and beneficiary of these changes. This constitution was only in place for 3 years and was followed by the *Polaca* (Polish) Constitution²².

'In 1932, in response to the fact that *primary schools excluded most children (in particular blacks and poor whites)*, 26 intellectuals, inspired by the pedagogical theories of John Dewey, launched a Manifesto which claimed that the following principles should be enshrined in a unified school system: schools for every child from the age of seven to fifteen, State responsibility for full-time education, secular schooling, compulsory attendance and co-educational school (...) *By placing education at the forefront of national problems, the liberals of 1932 believed that education was an essential feature in constructing the nation.* The movement they began, which was known as *the New School*, was the most important and influential in the history of education in Brazil in the 20th century and was a rival to the doctrines of the Catholic Church (which was fearful of losing its hegemony in Brazilian education) (...) These principles had begun to be disseminated in Brazil through the Brazilian Association of Education which was set up in 1924 and became a theoretical and political landmark; this led to *a series of debates and exciting ideas, culminating in the publication of the Manifesto in 1932. In fact, the 1920s were as*

²² The Polaca (Polish) Constitution was the fourth Constitution in Brazilian history, it became known as *Polaca* because it was inspired by the Polish Fascist, authoritarian Constitution of the time. It marked the beginning of *Estado Novo* and its main points were: the shutdown of the legislative power in the three levels (National Congress, State Assemblies and City Councils); The judiciary power as subordinate to the executive; freedom of action for the *Special Police*; government propaganda in the media; suppression of the right of strike; reintroduction of death penalty and the state governors would now be pointed by the president.

outstanding and forward-looking in the history of Brazil as later, the 1980s would be' (Bittar and Ferreira, 2016, p. 66-67, emphasis mine).

Even though the *Manifesto* greatly impacted the intellectual education sphere, with regards to actual changes in the policies toward establishing a planned, inclusive system, it did not influence significantly. For example, the policy served to perpetuate the discriminatory and exclusionary measures in Brazilian society with Portuguese values as presented by Bittar and Ferreira (2016) hence setting the foundational basis for the national identity and Bolsonarismo.

6) *Estado Novo* (From 1937 to 1945)

However, in 1937, President Getulio Vargas instated in Brazil the regime that came to be known as *The New State (Estado Novo)*²³. This government bestowed an authoritarian Constitution – the *Polaca* – that led to setbacks for education. This regime “interrupted” the progressive debate regarding education that was initiated in the 1920s. According to Selcher (1989), governmental ‘centralising tendencies reached one height under the “Estado Novo”’ (p. 167).

Jens Hentschke (2006) well analyses how Vargas’ government used the patriotic sense of nation that was emerging more strongly in Brazil to develop a general sense of unity and cultural homogeneity in the country in order to facilitate the establishment of his centralised government. This ‘uniform’ ‘Brazilian culture’ is often referred to as *Brasilidade* and links back to the idea of racial democracy approached in chapter one.

‘Vargas himself and his protégés were concerned with molding not only institutions but also people’s minds. They knew that the adoption and adjustment of an alternative

²³ The *Estado Novo* is the name that was given to period that Getulio Vargas, a populist leader that is often compared to Italian Benito Mussolini, governed the country (1937-1945). This period was marked by Varga’s dictatorial regime. During this regime there was industrial modernisation, foreign investments and modernisation of infrastructure. Moreover, the labour laws were improved and rights granted to workers. However, in the political sphere it represented a setback, lack of democracy, censorship and populism.

political model at national level depended decisively on gaining cultural hegemony.

The search for modernity and a new national identity, the meaning of *brasilidade* (often painted in regional colors), had gathered momentum in the early 1920s and was strongly manipulated during the Estado Novo' (Hentschke, 2006, p. 19).

According to Cleary (1999), a curious fact relating to Brazilian race theorists from the early XX century is that the majority of them were acting politicians rather than scholars, and were directly politically involved in elaborating national ideologies (p. 6). Oliveira Vianna was one of these early century's 'theorist-politicians' (such as Gilberto Freyre and others described in chapter one). Vianna was in accordance with the idea of the hierarchy of races and his famous book *The Southern Populations of Brazil* (translation mine) was one of the key works to defend the *Embranquecimento* (whitening) movement in Brazil. In the referred book, the author argued that due to a drop in African fertility, together with the growing European immigration (especially in the south of Brazil), were contributing to whitening and evolving the *Brazilian race*. In this context, Vianna was pointed to the Minister of Education by Vargas and 'presided over the design of the first national history syllabus for secondary schools' (Cleary, 1999, p. 6).

'State ideology embraced Modernism, and Modernist artists embraced the state project of cultural nationalism, although not its totalitarian principles. The aestheticisation of the popular was followed by the popularisation of the aesthetic under the auspices of the dictatorial Estado Novo (1937/1945). The Ministry of Education and Public Health was responsible for the creation of a national consciousness and for cultural *renovação* (renovation)' (Philippou, 2005, p. 255).

At this point in history, Plinio Salgado²⁴ founded the AIB which, even though was intended to mirror Italian fascism, had much more similarities with the Iberian version as it was deeply rooted in *catholic belief* but differently to its Iberian counterparts, it did not see intermarriage as a negative but rather as a ‘positive, unifying force in Brazilian colonial history, reserving his hostility to for industrial capitalism, which he saw as disrupting the agrarian harmony of pre-industrial Brazil and forcing the industrial proletariat towards communism’ (Cleary, 1999, p. 7). The crusade against industrial capitalism at that time in Brazil was very much similar to Fascism in the sense that there was present pretence to be socialist, invest in welfare and so forth. They were against industrial capitalism, hostile towards it, but they have a paradoxical relationship with it.

The hierarchy of race was very much real, though, but in the sense that the way to improve the *Brazilian race* was to ever more mix blacks and indigenous with whites. In Brazil racism is denied by the denial of the race itself. It is not biologically based, but the fact that it is a perception-based notion that really matters in terms of the structures. The movement has always been towards dissolving blackness. Therefore, the policies reflected a Brazilian society with its foundational basis for the national identity and Bolsonarismo through racist and discriminatory practices that adversely affect the minority factions based on the entrenched culture of white supremacy within the country.

7) *Brief Democracy* (From 1945 to 1964)

New changes took place in 1945 when the *New State* regime fell. The ideals that were left behind were resumed and consolidated in the Law Project of Guidelines and Bases for National Education (LDB) that was forwarded to Congress for approval in 1948. The Law project had a troubled trajectory (as aforementioned, the progressive and inclusive policies in

²⁴ Plinio Salgado was a politician and journalist founder of the *Acao Integralista Brasileira* - **AIB** (Brazilian Integralist Action – translation mine). AIB was a far-right party openly described by Salgado as having been inspired by ideas of Italian fascist Benito Mussolini.

education seem to always follow this path in Brazil), was finally approved in 1961, resulting in the Law 4.024/1961. The approval of the LDB was preceded by a number of social movements in favour of a public, universal and free education for all. The Brazilian education system went through significant changes, in 1951 the CAPES (Coordination for Personal and Higher Education Development) foundation was created, the Federal Council of Education was constituted (in 1961) and many campaigns were made such as the one for the literacy of adults led by Paulo Freire as seen in chapter two.

8) *Military Dictatorial Regime* (From 1964 to 1985)

The military coup in 1964 interrupted this progressive tendency. In the years 1969 and 1971, the laws 5.540 and 5.692 were approved. They introduced changes in the structure of primary²⁵, secondary and higher education, which effects are still being fought over until the present day. In this period, the schools were seen as a means to convey the ideology imposed by the government in office, a military, ideological apparatus. In order to challenge this and fight the dictatorship, the education intellectuals against it resorted to Marxist theories. These people saw schools as a ‘space for social change’ (Bittar and Ferreira, 2016, p. 75). As Yamamoto and Neto (1999, n.p.) write: ‘in the mid seventies, a peculiar set of studies related to the struggle against the military dictatorship in Brazil began to be produced. The remarkable characteristic of these studies was their theoretical framework, strongly based on Marxist ideas (...); the main context was the struggle against the military dictatorship and in favour of the democratisation of society, conditioning both educational

²⁵ Level designation according to age in Brazil:

| Level | Age |
|---|------------------|
| <i>Creche</i> | 0-3 |
| <i>Pre-Escola</i> or <i>Educação Infantil</i> | 4-5 |
| <i>Ensino Fundamental</i> | 6-14 |
| <i>Ensino Médio</i> | 15-17 |
| <i>Ensino Superior</i> | Higher Education |

literature and educators' organisation'. According to Brown (2002), during military rule -as there was no concern about increasing political support- the government lowered significantly the amount of capital directed to the Ministry of Education (that used to be joint with the Ministry of Culture). He also remarks that 'during the most repressive years, the military shifted a growing proportion of the education budget towards university education in an attempt to solidify support from the elite and middle-classes' (pp. 139-140). The military also restricted access to federal universities in order to benefit the private sector, thereby sowing the seeds for the national identity and Bolsonarismo within the modern society in Brazil from the weaknesses inherent in the laws and policy directions in the educational sector.

9) *Redemocratisation* (1985 onwards)

The redemocratisation moment in Brazil was marked by the shifts brought by the *Citizen Constitution* of 1988, which marked the start of the redemocratisation of Brazil; in the words of Afonso and Mello (2002), the Citizen Constitution is 'considered a benchmark in Brazilian federalism' (p.1). Accordingly, Brown (2002) analysed the impact of democratisation in education policy in Brazil. He concludes that considering the Brazilian case study, democratic institutions propel the allocation of more resources to education and more debate around its structure and development; in his words: 'In a more competitive political setting, the current administration has enacted a programme that establishes a minimum investment per student in primary education' (p. 140). The constitution of 1988 aimed at universalising the *Ensino Fundamental* and the eradication of illiteracy. As a consequence of the new Constitution, in 1996, the new LDB (Guidelines and Bases for National Education) was approved. It implemented a new structure for education in Brazil, it defined that Basic education encompasses: a) *Creche* for children from 0 to 3 years old and

Pre-Escola for children from 4 to 6 years old; b) *Ensino Fundamental* of 8 years for kids from 7 years old and c) *Ensino Medio* of 3 years of duration.

The LDB was consequence of a shift in thought stirred up by names as Paulo Freire and consolidated in the law proposed by Darcy Ribeiro who was serving as Senator and will be discussed on chapter five. These two names are of the utmost important for progressive efforts in education in Brazil, as Roseli Figaro (2018) described, Paulo Freire and Darcy Ribeiro were both humanists that had in common the belief in the Brazilian people, the advocacy for the freedom and for Brazilian development against the subalternity towards the rich countries, they both believed in the renewing force of education, an empowering and emancipatory education however, an education capable of forming critical beings that are able to critically think for themselves.

To assure the continuity of the changes initialised with the LDB, the National Education Plan -PNE (Appendix 3) was approved and regulated by the Law 10.172/2001 from 09 January 2001 and had as its main goals: ‘the elevation of the degree of schooling of the population, the improvement of the quality of teaching at all levels of education, the reduction of social inequalities concerning access and permanence in public schools and the democratisation of the administration of public education in the official establishments, following the principles of participation of the professionals in education in the elaboration of the pedagogic project of the schools and the participation of the local school communities in school councils or equivalents’ (PNE, 2001, article 2 translation mine). In addition to the plan, a set of 52 actions was presented by the Ministry of Education (MEC) in April 2007, the Education Development Plan (PDE).’ With the end of the military regime, there was also a significant expansion of the national postgraduate system and the transition to democratic rule was ‘a moment in time that triggered the revitalisation of educators in scientific communities, unions and other similar associations, together with a review of the

administrative apparatus that had arisen from national policies during the dictatorship’ (Gondra et al., 2014, p. 827).

During the years that PT was in office, first Luis Inácio Lula da Silva (2003-2011) followed by Dilma Rousseff (2011-2016), the investment in the education sector rose significantly in Brazil, both in lower and higher education. The CNPQ grants were expanded, programs such as the *Ciência Sem Fronteiras* (Science Without Borders) were created and funds were injected into federal public universities unpretendingly. It is relevant to observe that the then minister of education was Fernando Haddad, the upper runner candidate in the 2018 elections being defeated by Bolsonaro’s contrasting project of governance.

Therefore, by looking at this very brief outline, what we realise is that the colonisation history is deeply connected to the way in which the education sector unfolded throughout time in Brazil. We also recognise strong connections between political stages that the country went through and the space that education occupied in political discussions and the character of education policies. It is also possible to infer that throughout Brazil’s education history, the gap between the elites and popular layers was a constant feature and that progressive laws have been part of the agenda, but most of the times, they are just thought of and do not really enter into force (even in present times, as we will see ahead in the case of the PNE). Consequently, this study argued that all the progress approach taken by the PT-led government, all the progressive educational laws that were in the oven by then backlashed with Bolsonarismo and its pledge to the return to “traditional values” and morale within the Brazilian territory.

The National Education Plan (PNE) 2014-2024

In terms of the analysis, the previous sections of this chapter have shown that under article 214 of the Brazilian Constitution, the law permits for the formulation of a plan for education. The provision further determines the elaboration of a national plan for education

in the country every 10 years. However, this research proceeds that to ensure equality or fairness in Brazil, the plan under PNE should ‘articulate the national education system and define guidelines, objectives, goals and strategies of implementation to secure the maintenance and development of the teaching process, through integrated actions of the different federative spheres, for the period of 10 years’ (Brazil, 1988, translation mine). For example, the discussion demonstrated that the PNE text (Appendix 4) was put together by the executive power²⁶, more specifically the Ministry of Education (MEC), following guidelines resulting from the deliberations made in the various social events on education being the main ones: the National Conference for Basic Education (CONEB 2008) and the National Conferences for Education (CONAE 2010 and 2014). The inputs provided by the conferences, together with contributions from the National Council for Education (CNE), which is an organ of MEC added to the evaluation reports on the previous PNE (2001-2010), were carefully stitched together in order to create a plan that reflected the issues and wishes raised and discussed at the referred events. Therefore, this analysis justifies that the original PNE plan came about as a result of a combination of the topics raised by both civil society, intellectuals and policymakers at the aforementioned conferences; the improvements suggested by MEC considering the evaluation reports on the previous PNE and contributions from members of the CNE.

Therefore, in order to understand the discussions around the PNE and the discourse analysis that will be presented in chapter four it is important to have in mind the way in which policies are elaborated and the structures involved in their approval and implementation. At different levels the plan is being put in place in a good way or in a harmful way, as the general guidelines from the Federal government were kept open and

²⁶ See Nobre (1989) for the structure of the 3 powers in Brazil: Executive, Legislative and Judiciary under the constitution of 1988.

general without clearly referring to the inclusion of gender, sexual orientation and racial minorities.

3.4 Structure of Policymaking in Brazil

As mentioned in the preceding sections, in order to understand the discussion surrounding the PNE it is important to map the structure of policymaking in Brazil which is superficially presented to set the foundation for the discourse that is elaborately presented under chapter four, as shown below.

| Power / Level | Federal | State | City |
|----------------------|---|--|---|
| Legislative | <i>Congresso Nacional</i> (National Congress): - <i>Câmara dos Deputados</i> (Federal House of Representatives, Lower House) + - <i>Senado Federal</i> (Federal Senate, Upper House) | - <i>Assembléia Legislativa</i> (State House of Representatives) | <i>Câmara Municipal dos Vereadores</i> (City Councillors) |
| Executive | <i>Presidente da República</i> (President of the Republic) + <i>Vice Presidente</i> (Vice President) + <i>Ministérios</i> (Ministries, including MEC – Ministry of Education) | <i>Governador do Estado</i> (State Governor) + <i>Vice Governador do Estado</i> (Vice Governor) + <i>Secretarias de Estado</i> (Secretariats, including state Secretariat for Education) | <i>Prefeito Municipal</i> (Mayor) + <i>Vice Prefeito Municipal</i> (Vice Mayor) + <i>Secretarias Municipais</i> (City Secretariats, including city Secretariat for Education) |
| Judiciary | <i>Supremo Tribunal Federal</i> (Supreme Court) + <i>Superior Tribunal de Justiça</i> (Superior Court of Justice) + | <i>Tribunais e Juízes</i> (Courts and Judges) | Does not exist |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | <i>Tribunais e Juízes Federais</i> (Federal Courts and Judges) | | |
|--|--|--|--|

Brazil is a Federative Republic constituted of 26 states plus the Federal District and has its education system organised in collaboration regime between the Federal Union, the States (including the Federal District) and the Municipalities. According to Afonso and Melo (2000):

‘Brazil is a highly decentralised federation. The 27 states (including the Federal District) and 5559 municipalities together account for over one-thirds of total government spending and revenue collection (...) each subnational jurisdiction has its own directly-elected legislature and executive branches, as well as an independent judiciary. The federal government has limited control over subnational tax administration, budget formulation, execution, and oversight; and wage and investment policies’ (Afonso and Melo, 2000, p. 1).

Chaudhary et al. (2012) studied the BRICs comparatively in relation to their elementary education system and stressed the importance of political decentralisation for the development and foment of primary education. They also remarked that ‘factors such as endowments, colonialism, serfdom, and, especially, the characteristics of the political and economic elite help explain the low achievement levels of these four countries *and* the incredible amount of heterogeneity within each of them’ (p. 221). Public policies in education in Brazil are represented by the laws, planning, financing and educational programmes that indicate a movement or action by the State. The Federal Government is represented by the Ministry of Education and Sport (MEC) and is who organises and finances the federal education system. Additionally, it provides technical and financial assistance to the states, Federal District and cities to the development of their regional education systems and to the

complying with the priority compulsory schooling that corresponds to the 8 years of the *Ensino Fundamental*.

The Federal system is formed by the universities, by the isolated institutions of education, the federal centres of technical *Ensino Medio* and a net of agricultural and industrial technical *Ensino Medio* schools. Besides it being directly responsible for the higher education network, the Federal Government is also responsible for the national programme for support of postgraduate courses. On the other hand, the state education system is constituted by *Creches* (daycare centres – 0-2 years old), *Pre-Escolas or Educação Infantil* (Preschools – 3-5 years old), *Ensino Fundamental* (6-14 years old) and *Ensino Medio* (high schools - 15-17 years old); and in some states, state universities. There is a tendency that the *Ensino Medio* becomes more and more of responsibility of the States and that *Creches* and *Pre-escolas* more to the Municipalities. The Municipalities act primarily in the *Creches*, *Pre-escola* and *Ensino Fundamental* regulation (especially the ones located in the rural area) and in some cities, as well as within the *Ensino Medio*.

The system at each level is regulated by an executive normative body and managed by a central executive organ. At a federal level, the norms for functioning are established by the National Council in Education and the political decisions regarding planning and administrative execution are responsibility of the Ministry of State and the many Secretariats, organs and services that constitute the Ministry of Education (MEC). Similarly, at the State and Federal District level, the normative functions are responsibility of the correspondent executive organ: The State Council of Education (CEE), and the administrative and monitoring functions of private education in the *Ensino Fundamental* and *Ensino Medio* are exercised by the State Secretariats of Education (SEE). At the city level, the City Council for Education and the education secretariats and departments that exercise, respectively, the normative and administrative functions. Each system (federal, state and city) possess

autonomy when it comes to hiring personnel (teachers and staff) and managing their resources.

According to the Brazilian senate's official website (Senado Federal, 2017), the Brazilian Congress is the highest level of the Legislative Power in Brazil and 'shares with the Executive (government) and the Judiciary (courts) the task to conduct the country. Its main function is to elaborate, debate, perfection and approve laws. It is formed by the Senate (Upper House) and the House of Representatives (Lower House). A law project that is initiated and approved at the Lower House is always revised in the Senate. Likewise, a proposal presented and approved by the Senate needs to be voted at the Lower House before it is sent to the Presidency of the Republic for sanction in order to become law.

One important fact to bear in mind is that Brazil is historically deficient in women representation in Congress and this situation has not changed after the last elections. According to data from the Inter-Parliamentary Union organisation (IPU, 2017), in 2017, at the time that this chapter was written, Brazil ranked as the 153rd country when it comes to women representation in congress. Out of 513 seats in the lower house (Lower House), only 55 are occupied by women, which means 10,7% and out of 81 seats in the upper house (Senate) only 12 are occupied by women representatives, meaning 14,8% (IPU, 2017). The current composition of the executive ministerial positions chosen by the president in office is also extremely masculinised, 'the reshuffling has cut the number of cabinet posts from 31 to 22, and unseated four female cabinet ministers, one of whom was the only Afro-Brazilian minister in the government' (Koren, 2016, n.p.). In the words of Sérgio Praça, a political scientist at Fundação Getulio Vargas²⁷: 'It's embarrassing that most of Temer's cabinet choices are old, white men' (Romero, 2016, n.p.).

²⁷ Elite Brazilian university mainly focused on Economics.

The current Brazilian Federal Constitution is dated 1988 and it became known as the Citizen Constitution²⁸. It established a new *Modus Operandi* for policymaking in Brazil when it conferred political and administrative autonomy to the municipalities. This decentralisation was envisioned in the context of the redemocratisation of the country after the military regime as a means of empowerment for the local communities regarding public policies' decision making in order to consolidate democracy²⁹. The same norms with respect to the electoral system, inviolability, immunities, remuneration, loss of mandate, leave and so on that are provided by the Federal Constitution also apply for them. The executive power is represented by the figure of the Governor of the state, the legislative by the Legislative Assembly as aforementioned and the judiciary, represented by the Court of Justice. Additionally, the state can also allow public participation in the decisions of the government via referendums and plebiscites. Each state has its own state constitution.

The executive power is centralised in the hands of the Governor, who is elected through universal suffrage, direct and secret vote by the population for a 4-year mandate, with the possibility to be re-elected once. Together with the Governor, the Vice Governor is elected and the first names the state secretariats for each area. The legislative power is represented by the Legislative Assembly (*Assembleia Legislativa*). It is a unicameral assembly, constituted by representatives elected by popular vote for a period of 4 years that are entitled State Deputies (*Deputados Estaduais*). The judiciary power performs the function of judging, according to the laws elaborated by the legislative and the Brazilian constitutional laws and the higher instance of it is the State Justice Court.

At a city level (municipalities), the executive power is exercised by the Mayor, who names the city secretariats for the different areas. The Mayor and the Vice Mayor are elected

²⁸ See Zaverucha (1998, p. 105) for contextualisation of the *Citizen Constitution* of 1988

²⁹ See Zaverucha (1998, p. 106 -107) on the transition of the Military rule to democracy in the late 80s.

together for a 4-year mandate. The legislative power is exercised by the chamber of municipal councillors (*Camara dos Vereadores*). The municipal councillors are also elected for a 4-year mandate following the general norms established in both federal and state constitutions. The number of councillors is limited to the city's population according to article 29, IV of the Federal Constitution (Brasil, 1988) and the legislative process at a city level follows the general guidelines established by both the federal and the state spheres, which are duly adapted.

In order to tackle the coordination between levels (National, State and City), the dynamic of National plans and systems was created. The federal union creates the general guidelines for the plans and the states' and cities' governments create their plans based on them, without going against any of the directions from the national plan but with the faculty of adapting the plan to the local reality, narrowing it down (with regards to matters that do not clash with the text of the national one. The Plan (PNE) will be approached in a further section and its discussions will be studied in the next chapter.

This structure of policymaking in Brazil presents the trouble of *not approving* progressive legislation and of actually *not applying* the eventual and sparse progressive legislation that passed luckily which indicates that trying to change the laws top-down, even to progressive ones, would not work in the sense that the agents on the ground would not apply it accordingly as they, themselves would have to go through a "progressivising" process and this becomes clear in chapter five, when I discuss the impact that the slogan of returning to old and traditional values had in Bolsonaro's campaign and consequent election and how it appealed to the population.

The structure of policymaking in Brazil, the composition of congress, historically enables male, heteronormative and white dominance. Who makes education policy? Who are these people? Western philosophy is based on male, heterosexual and white identity. The

structure of education requires coordination between the executive (MEC) and Congress (Legislative), so even if MEC was progressive (at the time of the PNE proposal), congress stopped it. Who is in government can shape what kind of policies get adopted, and the structure of government enables dominant identities to be easily elected.

3.5 Gender and Sexuality in Brazilian Education

Neto and Lopes (2016) wrote about the need to readdress education through a more critical, challenging approach, a Foucauldian one and how this poses a challenge for those accustomed to a salvationist and Promethean of the school and education more broadly, it is this challenging exercise that Brazil has started to put in practice with law 10639/03 and the initial project of the PNE.

‘The importance of tackling homophobia in Brazil is incontestable, given the high incidence of homophobic violence and how it directly impacts on access to basic human rights, such as education. In our assessment of how public policies aimed at tackling homophobia in the school system have been developed and implemented, current debates point to regressive trends in terms of human rights and democratic values such as the respect for plurality. It is necessary, therefore, to understand that given the extent of homophobia in the state school system, restrictions that limit the discussion of the problem will necessarily affect students’ capacity to learn, engage and participate when directly affected by discrimination, stigma and violence on the basis of their sexuality. This negative impact translates into barriers to employment and therefore correlates with low socioeconomic indicators that link poverty with poor levels of education’ (Mountian, 2014, p. 15).

According to the PNE (2011-2021) law project’s foreword, ‘the plan product was the result of a series of conferences, meetings and national forums on education and it was meant to reflect the population’s expectations towards the education system’ (Brazil, 2010,

translation mine). The original text of the plan had defined as one of the most important goals for the policy: the ‘overcoming of educational inequalities, emphasising the promotion of *‘racial, regional, gender and sexual orientation equality’* (Brazil, 2010, article 2, III, translation mine).

The final report from the CONEB (2008) provides that the education system in Brazil must aim at overcoming social, racial, gender, age and sexual orientation inequalities (Brazil, 2008, p. 1), so does the CONAE (2010)’s final report. References to the diversity of identities and the need for them to be addressed in the day to day at school and be an integral part of individuals’ formation are found throughout the whole body of the final report’s text, apart from clear instructions on that regard such as:

‘Insert and implement in policies of valorisation and formation of professionals in education, based on the reorganisation of the national curricula proposal, the gender and sexual diversity discussion in the human rights perspective, breaking the paradigms in place and adopting for the curriculum the courses of formation of teachers, a discourse of overcoming of domination of the masculine over the feminine in order to achieve a nonsexist education’ (Brazil, 2010, p. 143)³⁰.

According to Rambla (2014), the ‘ulterior discussion of the National Education Plan in the National Conference for Education (CONAE) was coherent with’ UNESCO recommendations and other countries’ (p. 423) applications of them. The initial proposal of the PNE aimed at shedding light on the subject of diversity in school, bringing all forms of diversity of identities to the discussions in the classroom instead of turning a blind eye to

³⁰ Original Text: *Inserir e implementar na política de valorização e formação dos/das profissionais da educação, a partir da reorganização da proposta curricular nacional, a discussão de gênero e diversidade sexual, na perspectiva dos direitos humanos, quebrando os paradigmas hoje instituídos e adotando para o currículo de todos os cursos de formação de professores/as um discurso de superação da dominação do masculino sobre o feminino, para que se a forme a constituição de uma educação não sexista.* (Brazil, 2010, p. 143).

these matters. It aimed at disassociating diversity from the anomaly and demystifying that everything that escapes the traditional social discourses of what it means to be a woman or a man should not exist, deconstructing the internalised pattern of thought that the one the is considered citizen, the political subject per excellence, is the white, heterosexual man. All other identities are considered sub-citizens.

3.5.1 Gender and sexuality in education: links to Bolsonarismo

Joan Scott (1999) wisely suggests that gender constructs politics and politics constructs gender, it is not possible to ignore the influence that one has in the production of the other, both ways, as referred to in chapter one. Similarly, theorists such as Laura Bierema have spoken about the curriculum, referred by herself as the *hidden curriculum*, the one which does not reflect an awareness of its own exclusions. She writes that ‘awareness of gendered’ (and we would argue- other types of oppressions) could be ‘developed through a combination of individual and connected learning that challenged the “hidden curriculum’s” content, values, structures and rules. Through this learning, gender consciousness emerged and expanded based on questioning the hidden curriculum, rejecting the status quo, reclaiming voice, and reframing identity’ (Bierema, 2010, p. 6). She also states that ‘there is significant resistance when gendered power relations are challenged and new information for battling resistance would make an important contribution to restructuring gender relations’ (Bierema, 2010, p. 11).

The discussions in the foregoing sections have affirmed that the first project of the PNE 2011-2021 (Brazil, 2010) aimed at challenging the hidden curriculum. According to Vianna and Unbehaun (2004), gender and race matters get very little attention from teachers in Brazil, most of which it can be suggested that they still do not have eyes well enough trained to see gendered and racialised power dimensions on the day to day at school often invisibilised. In Brazil, differences are more than often seen through a negative perspective,

even though the country projects itself as an ultimate symbol of diversity, a symbol of the democratic and harmonic coexistence of differences, as seen in chapter one. Mostly differences come to represent faults always subliminally in relation to a dominant pattern, a parameter of 'normality' (Brazil, 2009, p. 17).

In this context, the initiative called *De Olho nos Planos* (Eyes on the Plans) was created. The initiative is a digital portal put together by Denise Carreira, Claudia Bandeira, Stephanie Kim Abe and Vagner Pereira and it aims at strengthening democratic management of education by expanding and pluralising the public debate about the importance of the participation of all citizens in the construction of the education plans (DOP, 2016). Moreover, according to data published by the referred initiative in January 2016, 22 out of 27 approved and sanctioned state education plans in the country, do not make ANY reference to the word gender and 15 out of the 17 do not explicit the term gender in the principles and directives of the plan in their paragraph on the overcoming of every form of discrimination (DOP, 2016).

At the time of the proposal for the PNE 2011-2021, a formative course for education professionals on gender, sexuality, sexual orientation and ethno-racial relations was put together. It was a joint initiative promoted by the executive organ Special Secretariat for Women's Policies (SPM/PR), the Special Secretariat for Race equality (SEPPIR/PR) and the Ministry of Education (MEC) and realised by the SPM/PR, The Secretariat for Continuous Education, Literacy and Diversity (SECAD/MEC), the Secretariat for Remote Learning (SEED/MEC), the SEPPIR/PR, the British Council and the Latin-American Centre in Sexuality and Human Rights (CLAM/IMS/UERJ).

According to the document-based providing the course programme, discrimination based on gender, ethnic-racial, sexual orientation also homophobic violence are produced and reproduced in all spaces of the Brazilian social life and the school is one of these spaces. It provides that laws only will not be enough if there is no change of mentalities and practices;

therefore, extra importance and attention should be given to the structural role of public actions that promote the discussion of these topics, motivates individual and collective reflection and contribute for the overcoming and elimination of any intolerant behaviour (Brazil, 2009). According to Lucimar Rosa Dias, education, just as other forms of organisation of a people, do not bring into its realm matters that do not reflect the society in which they are inserted in. That is why it is so important to locate historically how the fight against discrimination, racism, xenophobia (Dias, 2015, p. 39) and sexism, penetrate education's terrain.

Therefore, the current study observed that according to the guidelines for the above-mentioned course, the school needs to be always prepared not to present an absolute truth but instead a critical reflection that enables students to comprehend the ethic and political implications regarding the different positions surrounding the theme in question and constitute their own opinion as education should not be confused with indoctrination (Brazil, 2009, p. 14). The big question is how and why did the story change so dramatically when it reached parliament- as I will show on the next chapter- if the national (with their state and municipal stages) conferences that counted with the possibility of active participation of civil society and the MEC together with guidelines provided by MEC and the national executive related to education pointed towards the direction of including such matters in curricula and the day to day at school? The section demonstrated the overall impacts of the educational policies and laws as core aspects of intersectionality theory in the country. The critical details of racism in the educational policies and law and how this contributes to Bolsonarismo are comprehensively discussed in the next section.

3.6 Race in Brazilian Education

Research conducted by Rosemberg (1992) argued 'that the Brazilian educational system must recognise the existence of economic, racial, and sexual discrimination and take

action to change this condition' (p. 33). 'The concept of racial equality having resulted from extensive biological and cultural mixing among African, indigenous, and European ethnic groups is so deeply ingrained for some Brazilians that it prevents them from recognising racism' (Pereira, 2015, p. 60). In chapter one, the unfolding of the notion of a Brazilian race and its shifts in time was approached. This is a very key aspect to bear in mind in order to explore the politics of education. Da Costa (2016) focuses his analysis on the significance of black politics for the present education policy in Brazil. According to him, there is considerable effort put in attempting to reformat education, taking in the inputs provided by critical layers of civil society, but it still is met with a lack of interest in change even if a law is approved, there is little to zero interest in actually implementing it effectively in the day to day at school. The main concern is to challenge the rejection of the existence of racism. Da Costa 2016 remarks that 'Miscegenation, hybridity and racial democracy are deeply implicated in historically dominant identity projects that have sustained racial domination (...) they are shaped by coloniality and anti-blackness' (p. 347).

The Curricular Directives for the Education of Ethno-Racial Relations and for the Teaching of African and Black Brazilian History and Culture (Brazil, 2005) outlined the protocol for the implementation of Law 10639/03. This Law modified Law 9394 from 1996 that established the basis for national education in order to include in the official curriculum the mandatory approach of the thematic: Afro-Brazilian History and Culture. Additionally, the research conducted by Pereira (2015) explained that just as important as equality of opportunities in terms of access to educational institutions, was the inclusion of African (and its diaspora) History in Brazilian Curricula. 'This significant development was primarily the result of efforts of the black movement, which had exposed the existence of racial discrimination' (Pereira, 2015, p. 59) after a long era of Brazilian racial democracy ruling.

‘Post-racial common sense and anti-black racism have been central to the Brazilian social formation and continue to constitute crucial obstacles to fundamentally reshaping the curriculum, educational institutions, educators’ racial literacy, and classroom pedagogies. The article then contends that understanding the politics of race and education in Brazil necessitates acknowledging emergent anti-racist policies and discourses as the product of decades of black political struggle by activists, educators, and community organisations to make racism and racial inequality public issues. In this way, the policy documents and discourses shaping recent educational reforms in Brazil should be understood as political interventions within a particular historical conjuncture and racial formation. Such an analysis reveals contemporary black Brazilian efforts in education as mobilisations that go beyond a ‘politics of identity,’ recognition and apolitical multiculturalism and towards building more transformative anti-racist and decolonial proposals that directly challenge the nature and effects of anti-black racism in society’ (Da Costa, 2016, p. 345).

Guilherme et al. (2012) further disagreed with Da Costa (2016) and the supporters of the claim that Brazil is still very structurally racist by exploring the normative differences between racism as practiced in South Africa and in the US, thereby serving to juxtapose the evolution of the society in Brazil under Bolsonarismo. The discussion concerning how the society and national identity in Brazil have evolved through the use of educational policies that uphold practices such as racism is of utmost relevance as these notions lead to segregation or discriminatory practices which serve as the cornerstone of Bolsonarismo in Brazil. For instance, in the words of Guilherme et al. (2012):

‘Critics may point out that Brazilian society still has acute problems caused by poverty and its related issues. This is something that we do not deny; our claim is rather that, despite these problems, Brazilian society has not and does not suffer from

racial and ethnic problems to the extent faced by other countries. For example, we argue that South Africa was a state founded on I-It relations because the white population, by and large, objectified the black population, and this allowed for the separateness (the original meaning of Apart-heid in Dutch and Afrikaans) between communities, which led to lack of understanding, hostile inter-relational attitudes and, consequently, to racism and prejudice. Another prime example is that of the USA and its segregation laws, which remained in force in many states of the Union until the 1960s. The case of Brazil is an interesting example for countries facing problems in their interracial and interethnic relations, whether these countries subscribe to multiculturalism or to interculturalism. As we have argued, education, both formal and non-formal, seems to be a key factor in the successes achieved by Brazilian society. Dialogue is a key feature of the Brazilian educational system and it has gained a new impetus in the last decade as government policy supports educational ventures to tackle specific issues, from illiteracy to social exclusion and retraining—and these are addressed within the framework of Brazilian-ness, the outer-layer of interculturalism’ (pp. 1035-1036).

It is immensely difficult to reshape understandings of the race where racism is a structural issue and denied its existence. In Brazil, racism is veiled, *racismo velado* is the term Da Costa uses for the Brazilian kind of racism. ‘The difficulty of signifying blackness in an anti-black country, much less an anti-black world, cannot be underestimated’ (Da Costa, 2016, p. 355). Although some progress has been made after the implementation of the referred law, the challenges in order to actually enforce the law and make sure it is not only formally being followed but that teachers and textbooks reflect the proper approach to it are real and immense. ‘It is still possible to find stereotypes about black people in Brazilian textbooks. Until a few years ago, books used by schools in Brazil commonly presented

African descendants as passive slaves, inferior beings, long-suffering victims, and perpetual subordinates' (Pereira, 2015, p. 69).

Another big challenge concerns the education agents that are in charge of applying the directives in a more direct way in the classroom. Are the teachers being properly trained for this new approach? Do they understand and have assimilated it? How do their own identities play a part? According to Da Costa, 'How educators relate to the project of anti-racist and decolonial education proposed by the policy under discussion is a significant aspect of getting them to take up the work of curriculum and pedagogical transformation' (Da Costa, 2016, p. 356) he also explains that this whole movement of re-understanding race relations 'involves disrupting the ways the national post-racial common sense is ideologically and affectively embedded in educators' senses of self as well as their understandings of history, geography, literature and other school subjects' (ibid).

Silva (2014) studied the impacts of the new regulation and the related social changes that should have come with it had on Afro-Brazilians, according to teachers in charge of implementing this new part of curricula in the city of Salvador in the northeast of Brazil. He concludes that there is a deep need 'for education researchers to further examine what antiracism means in terms of pedagogy across different settings' (Silva, 2014, p. 333) and she emphasises the importance of intersectional analysis in every aspect 'moving from a focus on race toward other social identities and forms of oppression, such as gender, sexuality, disability, and the intersection of all of those, offers especially productive areas for investigation' (ibid). Therefore, the current section disclosed the overall impacts of the educational policies and laws on the political identity of Brazil through the consideration of racism-based bias as core aspects of intersectionality theory in the country. Besides, the section revealed the critical details on racism in the educational policies and law and how this contributes to the discriminatory practices as the basis for social change and seclusion and

discriminatory practices experienced by the minority at the behest of the white supremacists and the political elites.

3.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter provided a comprehensive outline concerning the history of education in Brazil interconnectedly with the country's political history. It then moved on to painting the picture of the structure of policymaking in the country, which is rather important to comprehend the complex process that the PNE went through. Subsequently, issues of race, gender and education in Brazil were approached and the National Education Plan (PNE) 2014-2024 was analysed according to the impetus for its proposition as the basis for the discussion regarding how the education policies and laws have contributed to Bolsonarismo. For instance, it emerged that the PNE first law project contained in its article 2, item III the terms gender, race and sexual orientation and its removal and dismissal of related subjects in the plans were discussed in the light of the power of specific layers of society. Therefore, the thesis identified ways in which the final version of the PNE has been influenced by the dominant and (in my view), archaic mentality that seems to be very much in place and to be the rule, rather than the exception, that predominates amongst congress and large portion of Brazilian society, as undergoing in the values and political inclinations that shaped Bolsonarismo in Brazil.

According to the already mentioned Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, education is the *locus* where society transformation can come from³¹. In this sense, the PNE and the cultural wars waged against it, were a setback for the educational system and exposed how much influence religion and inherited notions such as ideal family, gender binaries, white superiority and so on still have on policymaking in Brazil in the midst of the 21st century,

³¹ 'Educação é o locus a partir do qual pode acontecer a transformação da sociedade' (Freire, 2006, n.p.)

these will be studied in the following chapter through the discourse analysis of parliamentarians regarding education policy, paving the way to Bolsonarismo.

The contextual background relating to gender, sexuality and race and their link to national identity and education practices and processes; the historical outline of education development in Brazil, the structure of Powers and policy-making in Brazil approached in this chapter are important for the analysis of the discourses that will be brought under to light over the following chapters.

Chapter Four: Education, PNE and Bolsonarismo in Brazil

4.1 Introduction

The main purpose of the present chapter is to discuss the debates around the National Education Plan (PNE) 2014-2024 that took place in the Brazilian Congress whilst it was being constructed. The purpose of the analysis is to identify the kind of underlying values and deep-seated ideas that motivated the heated parliamentary discussions around the plan. The PNE entered into force 2 years later than it was supposed to because of the nature and length of the debates around it. The rhetoric used by most members of Congress reveals particular conservative ideas of gender, sexuality and race. However, the topic of sexuality was given significant spotlight; therefore, it was the one that revealed these notions in a wide-open manner, being the main focus of the deliberations on the PNE. Matters of race and gender were not as openly explored and discussed, even though it is possible to identify the presupposed sexist, patriarchal and racist notions ingrained in some of the discourses. As previously discussed under chapter one, most parliamentarians use the term gender interchangeably with sexuality when they are actually referring to sexual preferences and orientation. All these inherited ideas were translated into and reflected by the final version of the PNE and I aim to explore how these underlying notions and prejudices are morphed into neutrality as expressed in and conveyed by these discourses. For this purpose, a few speeches were selected and will be further analysed as a means to unravel the biased way of doing politics and policymaking lying within the core of the Brazilian political system. On the relevance of studies of speeches, Kaul (2021) wrote:

‘speech is a systemic act; it is a kind of coding, a marking; misogynist speech shapes the entry of women into nearly all speech situations; it determines “who can speak when, what can be said, what has to be asked, what counts as an answer”; it is an action that normalizes hierarchies, makes social stratifications appear inevitable and

right; “through reductive classification, through highlighting or introducing nasty inferences, and through *fostering unjust social divisions*,” it creates “derogatory networks of inferences, assumptions, and presuppositions” (pp. 1625-1626, emphasis mine).

4.2 Imagining ideologia de gênero³² as a Threat to the Nation-Family: Speeches and Debates around the PNE Concept

As was previously mentioned, according to the European non-governmental organisation Transgender Europe, Brazil was top of the list in the ranking of registered and internationally broadcast murders of travesties and transsexuals between the period of 2008-2014 (Transgender Europe, 2015). Additionally, considering various studies on prejudice and discrimination in schooling institutions, a national survey published in 2009 revealed that the level of intolerant attitudes relating to gender and sexual orientation was alarmingly high (Reis and Eggert, 2017, p. 14) and that the degree of knowledge of intolerant practices suffered by students was 10,9% due to the fact one is a woman and 17,4% if one is a homosexual (ibid). These are a few of the reasons that highlight the importance of the study of the politics of education, considering gender sexuality and race. In terms of the introductory definition of the gist of the current chapter, it is instructive to observe that ‘ideology is always *other*, the voice of the *other*, not the primary voice of the researcher within the current study context. The study of ideology then raises the question of the subject, and of the subject's relations to objects’ (Threadgold et al., 1986, p. 225). This quote is especially relevant when we are discussing the *ideologia de gênero*, which is the umbrella term coined by conservatives in Brazilian congress to refer to progressive understandings of gender and sexuality. It is relevant to the extent that the proponents of the use of the term aimed at establishing that progressive understanding are ‘ideology’ whereas traditional,

³² *Ideologia de Gênero* would be literally translated as “gender ideology”

conservative understandings (their own) are not. The specific details concerning how the national ideology, such as the use of the values and political inclinations of the white supremacists under Bolsonarismo in Brazil impact the national identity and political practice within the country as discussed under the sections below.

4.2.1 The PNE in Brazil

On 20th December 2010, Brazilian president Dilma Rousseff³³ forwarded to Congress the law project that aimed at approving the National Education Plan for the decade 2011-2020. After the formulation by the Executive (MEC), the plan passed to the hands of the legislative power for approval. The lower house of congress was the first one to deliberate on the PNE was the Lower House where the initial version of the plan was approved and no significant questions around article 2 were raised. Once the plan reached the upper house, the Senate, the debate became heated and when the senators voted the plan, they decided to remove from the law project the subsection III of the article 2. The eliminated subsection under the plan provided that one of the main aims for the PNE was the ‘overcoming of educational inequalities, emphasising the promotion of racial, regional, gender and sexual orientation equality’ (Ministry of Education of Brazil, 2010). Additionally, they decided to change the remaining text of article 2 by removing every single feminine article (in the Portuguese language, there are both feminine and masculine forms of articles and pronouns and the previous version of the PNE had been careful enough to include both forms throughout the whole text) leaving only the masculine ones which are also the generic form.

Back at the Lower House, the project (with the proposed changes by the Senate) was voted again and on 25 June 2014, the plan was sanctioned by the presidency with both masculine and feminine gender articles, but without any specification, regarding the kinds of

³³ Dilma Vana Rousseff was the 36th President of Brazil, affiliated with PT and Lula’s successor. She stayed in office from 2011 until her impeachment on 31 August 2016, during her second mandate.

discrimination, it initially had referred to (PNE, 2014). This meant that the referred article 2 was changed from ‘overcoming of educational inequalities, emphasising the promotion of racial, regional, gender and sexual orientation equality’ to: ‘overcoming of educational inequalities with emphasis on the promotion of citizenship and on the eradication of all kinds of discrimination’, the words *racial*, *regional*, *gender* and *sexual orientation* were omitted. Therefore, the current introductory basis for the PNE within Brazil is relevant to establish the foundation for the discussion concerning the utility of the PNE as the core of the educational structures and systems that fundamentally shaped the national identity and political ideology, including the values and political inclinations of the *elite do atraso* under Bolsonarismo in Brazil that contributed to the challenges of discrimination based on gender and racial affiliations of citizens within the country.

Debates/Speeches about the PNE that took place at the Lower House (Lower House of Congress) in 2011

As mentioned in the preceding sections, the first house to vote the PNE was the Lower House of Representatives. Even though the PNE plan that contained the mention to racial, regional, gender and sexual orientation equality had been initially approved by that house, the discussions around it focused mainly on the *sexual orientation* aspect of it (even though they use the term gender to refer to it) and were heated, especially with the aggressive manifestations of what came to be called *bancada evangélica* (evangelic faction) of the Congress, a critical progression towards Bolsonarismo in Brazil, as readily evident in the ideas of racial or gender-oriented discriminations of the minority groups within the country. For instance, a very symptomatic example was the speech of the Deputy -Evangelic Minister- Marco Feliciano³⁴, who came to the limelight in 2013 when he was the chairman of the

³⁴ Marco Antonio Feliciano is a Congressman affiliated with the Party PSC (Social Christian Party) representing the Sao Paulo. He is a permanent member of the following committees in the congress: CIDOSO, CSSF, PEC05811, PEC09911, PL396897, PL406012, PL631405, PL658313, CMO.

Human Rights Committee in the Congress and tried to pass a bill that would make it legal for homosexuality to be treated as an illness (McCormick, 2013):

‘Dear Ms and Mr Parliamentarians, I use this tribune to make an *appeal to the Brazilian Nation*, that, just for the time being still is, *a family-nation or a nation-family*. The complaint I make is serious. It is related to the *LGBT activism*, to who (sic) I take off my hat for the strategy, strength and support that it possesses and for *the backup that it receives against (sic-he means from) the initiatives of the high ideals of human rights*, not to the violence but yes to the citizenship and, because of that became notorious, *privileged space* in relation to the government, to the intellectuals, artists and general media, including the one of this House which I am sure will not publish this speech (...). It is indeed a *conspiracy*, yes, ladies and gentlemen, a conspiracy against what is right, against the family, *against the continuity of the human existence*. *The subject is upsetting, uncomfortable*, but someone has to speak up. I believe that around 80% of the Parliamentarians of this House are against the last decisions of the Supreme Court about the stable union, and later, the civil union between people of the same sex (...) *two months ago the stable partnership was approved*. *Last week, was the civil union*. *Yesterday at the ‘school without homophobia’ seminar, it was asked to be avoided discriminations based on gender and sexual diversity in text books*. The fact is that it will be up to MEC to only accept materials of publishing companies that either do not put the characters of a father, a mother and their kids or that the characters of two women and a child or two men and a child is included (...) *Next week it will be voted in the Social Security Committee, the project that gives right of pension to the homosexual partner*, meanwhile in our country many people face poverty because of problems with social security, like people that live in rural areas, the indigenous (...) *it will teach our*

children that it is normal for it to be (sic) sodomy between man and man (...) the term mother and father will have to disappear from the documents because if it is two men, what will it be? Two fathers? (...) professional capacitation to travesties and transsexuals; sexual and reproductive rights to the LGBT population; control of the television networks with the prohibition of LGBT jokes [these are just a few of the items in his long list of rights that were intended to be given to LGBT community that he was firmly against]. (...) Let us be statesmen, because the statesman, sometimes sacrifices the moment for the future, because they think of the future of the Nation. (...) There are many great men in this country that represent Christianity and the family. No to homophobia but also no to the concession of rights that generate more discrimination and segregation! Seeing this, I conclude my speech making this appeal to [here he lists over 100 names, all of which, men, and most religious leaders- from different faiths (all of which Christian)- reiterating many times, the words ‘man’ and ‘great’]. (...) I start to imagine a meeting with all of these warriors. With vision, determination and leadership, we can rescue the moral directives of this country, show that for the Brazilian family we break the interdenominational barriers. (...) it is still possible to rescue the ethics and the good practices. I am against any kind of discrimination, but we cannot support that people from another level receive special treatment’ (DCD, 2011a, p. 252, emphasis mine).

As evident in the speech excerpt above, Congressman Feliciano used his time in the tribune to attack LGBTQIA+ activism, to condemn non-binary gender notions (which he himself does not appear to comprehend), to oppose LGBTQIA+ already earned rights, to accuse human rights activists of having a LGBTQIA+ agenda disguised into human rights agenda and so on. He invoked the threat to human society if everyone decides to be homosexual, saying that there is an evil trying to enroot itself in society, around the globe,

working towards a goal of destroying society and the human race. He compares LGBTQIA+ activists to the devil itself. This debate aspect concerning LGBTQIA+ showed the commencement point for the rift in the society within Brazil with the gradual emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil as the core of the challenges such as discrimination based on gender and racial affiliations of citizens within the country, as experienced in the speech by Congressman Feliciano on the rights of the LGBTQIA+ as a minority group in the society.

On the other hand, the speech provided by the Deputy Romanna Remor³⁵ is an example of an approach from someone that is not directly connected to a religious institution meaning that religion is not a part of her mandate's platform and that portrays herself as "neutral" in the discussion, thereby showing the entrenched nature of Bolsonarismo movement in Brazil as a major contributory factor to the concerns such as discrimination based on gender and racial affiliations of citizens within the country. Although it is clear that she supports the status quo, she claims that the status quo is neutral. She enquires about the reason why should sexual orientation equality be treated specifically whereas she understands that a much more democratic approach would be taken if equality was addressed in a general sense. She misses the fact that the status quo is biased; it is not neutral. It takes as reference a particular kind of individual (who is male, white, cisgender and heterosexual), making that the norm. Consequently, in order to tackle this exact fact, diversity needs to be presented in equal terms:

'I have been following the debate around the elaboration of the National Education Plan (PNE) (...) but what have caught my attention since I arrived at this House, although the PNE is still under discussion, was another theme: the mobilisation for a school without homophobia (p. 37) *I understand that it is possible and rightful within a*

³⁵ Romanna Remor is a Congresswoman affiliated with the PMDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party) for the state of Santa Catarina.

*democratic state for a person to think, according to their religious conviction and their faith, or according to their conscience (...) that the practice of homosexualismo*³⁶ *(she means homosexuality) is not something natural.* What concerns me, Mr Chairman, is that we, many times, when we criticise the prejudice that exists in relation to homosexuality or to who defends homosexuality we go to the other extreme, where *there is prejudice also in (sic, she means against) the citizen, that, due to their convictions, think that it (homosexuality, addition mine) is not something natural (...)* when we examine, within the PNE context, proposals for the inclusion in the curriculum of content about homophobia, *I ask myself: is it not more effective to think of including in the school curriculum contents that teach respect [in general] (...)* I affirm again that *prejudice has to be treated in a broad sense.* When you teach the child to respect differences, to respect the peers, *the State does not have to interfere,* and perhaps, when trying to help, to wrong (sic) by instilling concepts (...) I also come here to register the *concern relating to any attempt to insert in state public policies the view that one, determined behaviour, individual choice or individual condition are correct, natural or even incorrect.* Everyone has the right to express their position, but it is wrong to try and insert them in state policies' (DCD, 2011b, pp. 38-40, emphasis mine).

Aligned with Feliciano's view, Congressman Roberto de Lucena³⁷ mentions their "fight" against the "gay kit" that, according to him, was a strategy to brainwash kids into becoming homosexuals rather than an educational resource kit to tackle homophobia in schools. He states that he is against prejudice (everyone is "against" prejudice in congress)

³⁶ *Homossexualismo* is a term that was used in the past to refer to homosexuality. It is highly criticised as the suffix *ismo* in Portuguese is often used in the names of infirmities. The correct term is *homossexualidade* but as seen in the speech, people still use the first (mainly who does not see it as something natural).

³⁷ Roberto de Lucena is a Congressman now affiliated with PODEMOS-SP (former PTN – National Labour Party) for the state of Sao Paulo although he was affiliated with the PV (Green Party) at the time of the session.

but tries to change the focus and place more importance on a supposed prejudice against the evangelic church.

‘I want to say, in my condition of President of the Mixed Parliamentary Front for the Combat of Bullying and Other Forms of Violence (...), that our position, Deputy Romanna Remor, aligns with the position that your excellency presents at this moment. *We are against homophobia; we are against prejudice.* In this country, perhaps *very few sectors have been more targeted with prejudice than the evangelic church.* (...) We respect individual liberties and understand that we have to treat all matters and differences (...) with respect. *We fought a battle in this House against what was called, in Brazil, the “gay kit”³⁸, that in fact, had the purpose to be a kit anti-homophobia, but that brought (...), in its core, another proposal, it had another meaning*’ (DCD, 2011b, p. 40).

In the exact same sense, Congressman Jair Bolsonaro³⁹, talks about the educational kit, referring to the project *school without homophobia* as a cover story, that the actual intent was to turn the kids into homosexuals and end with the Brazilian family institution, a progression evident in Bolsonarismo in Brazil as the core of the challenges such as discrimination based on gender and racial affiliations of citizens within the country, thus:

‘This is Christmas gift that Dilma Rousseff is providing for the *poor families in Brazil* [He was referring to the school with no homophobia approach]; meaning, *on the day that the vast majority of the kids at school becomes homosexual, the subject is resolved!* That *cover story* is the school without homophobia. (...) My *comrades concerned with family*, as I know we are the vast majority in this House, lets provoke

³⁸ What came to be known in Brazil as the ‘gay kit’ was a set of guidelines and teaching resources prepared by MEC in order to tackle homophobia in schools. It was composed by some fliers and booklets explaining that people are entitled to be different and one of these differences is related to one’s sexual orientation.

³⁹ Jair Messias Bolsonaro is a Congressman affiliated with the Party PSC (Social Christian Party) representing the State of Rio de Janeiro. He is a permanent member of the following committees in the congress: CREDN, CIPFUNA2, CEXFISC.

the Education Committee, the Parliamentary Education Front, so that *these homosexuals*, and not only them, but the MEC people, especially the Minister, go there to say that this *shameless and immoral plan* is the one they want to impose between the schools. But (sic) *don't let this cowardice go inside the elementary schools!*' (Text free from the original expressions, according to articles 17, V, b, XII and 98, § 6º of this House's regiment). (DCD, 2011a, p.131).

On the contrary, various speeches demonstrated that there were a few (considerably less) congress members that took an opposite stand, such as the Congresswoman Fatima Bezerra⁴⁰, who was one of the organisers of various events in congress that had attempted to raise awareness of the importance of diversity and the need for including minorities' matters in the PNE, as shown in the speech or debate response below:

'Yesterday in this house we carried out a very important seminar about the PNE and the School Without Homophobia project. It was an initiative of the Committee for Education and Culture, which I chair in this house, as well as the Committee for Participatory Legislation. The debates that took place there were of the highest level. Amongst the participants there were specialists in the areas, representatives of MEC, members of the Human Rights Defence Secretariat, of [civil society] entities, ABLGBT for instance and so forth. It was a much-needed debate because this plan [the original] has to reach the schools. Our teachers need to be prepared' (DCD, 2011a, p. 132).

Debates about the PNE that took place in Congress in June 2014

The plenary session of both houses of Congress held in April 2014 was chaotic. Many elected representatives of the Brazilian people made what could be argued to be extremely biased speeches and comments, deprived of any sort of coherence and showing a complete

⁴⁰ Fatima Bezerra is a Congresswoman affiliated with the PT for the state of Rio Grande do Norte.

lack of appropriate knowledge and commitment to the ideals of freedom, human dignity and equality they swore to protect when they took office. The most varied range of expressions and manifestations of hate was used. The speeches or debate points presented by the political leaders demonstrated the diversity inherent in the ethnic or political affiliations within the country, which serve as the root for the discussions on how the system or structures of education have contributed to Bolsonarismo movement in Brazil as the core of the challenges such as discrimination based on gender and racial affiliations of citizens within the country. For instance, although the PNE plenary within the congress sought to eradicate issues such as gender-based bias or discriminatory racial practices among the affiliate groups such as LGBTQIA+ as well as the concerns on homosexuality within the system or education, the divisive nature of the debates or discussions by the Congress leaders such as Congressman Jair Bolsonaro, and Feliciano's view which aligned with the postulates of the Congressman Roberto de Lucena demonstrated the counterintuitive nature of the educational system or structures such as those under the PNE in eradicating political affiliations in the country.

First, the divisive aspect of the debates or speeches by the political leaders under Bolsonarismo movement depicted that in order to fight the *ideologia de gênero* (gender ideology), which is the term used by the opposition to refer to sexual orientation matters within the PNE (they use gender when they actually mean sexuality) as previously remarked, unlikely alliances in parliament were forged. Both catholic and evangelic members of the "religious faction" in Congress joined forces in order to combat this 'ideology' that they saw as a common threat. As Congressman Silas Camara⁴¹ expresses in his speech:

‘unfortunately, people are confusing having a position with radicalism. All of us, Christians, Evangelics and Catholics of this House have a very clear position about

⁴¹ Silas Camara is a Congressman affiliated with the PSD (Social Democratic Party) for the state of Amazonas.

the matter of the “gay kit”⁴² and the concept of homophobia in the radical way that has been treated’ (DCD, 2011a, p. 134).

Consequently, the sort of manifestations that took place in Congress would not have been so unusual if these statements had been made by representatives of fringe far-right political parties; however, they were declarations made by influential political figures in the politics of Brazil, people who actually have power in the public sphere and that were on the rise to more power (hence, Bolsonaro’s election in 2018). The speeches demonstrated the extent of entrenchment of Bolsonarismo within Brazil as depicted by the political leaders within the Congress whose primary mandate was to legislate on the most viable structures or system of education to eliminate unfair political ideologies such as discrimination and the continuation of hateful practices under the curriculum. Moreover, the debates disclosed the challenges inherent in the efforts to overcome the treatment of homosexuality or bisexual individuals under Bolsonarismo within Brazil. For instance, the problems of Bolsonarismo were evident in the speech or debate by another spokesperson, the congressman Erivelton Santana⁴³, who affirmed that the law project first presented aimed at the ‘promotion of twisted moral values through an interdisciplinary, transversal technique’ to spread what, another congressman already mentioned here: Marco Feliciano, called an ‘international conspiracy’ to transform the whole society into a new kind of individuals that would be homosexuals or bisexuals, lacking any sort of moral compass. Erivelton also called it a kind of ‘brainwash that clashes with the right of the parents to have their children receive a moral education that is in accordance with their own convictions’ and, despite Brazil being a secular state where state and religion must not walk hand to hand and every sort of religion should be respected rather than a specific one as being the guideline for decision making, he claimed

⁴² See chapter five

⁴³ Erivelton Lima Santana is a Congressman (lower house) affiliate with the Party PEN (National Ecologic Party) representing the State of Bahia. He is a permanent member of the following committees in the congress: CCTCI, PEC20016, PEC28716, PL177515, PL198315.

that ‘religion is inseparable from moral’ and moral needs to be taken into account when it comes to legislating (Domini, 2014).

The next speech that shows the correlation between the PNE initiatives in Brazil and Bolsonarismo within Brazil is selected from the then-congressman Jair Messias Bolsonaro, who, according to polls, was ranked in February 2017 as the third candidate for the next presidential elections (Estadao, 2017), and was elected president of Brazil in 2018. At a plenary session in Congress in June 2015, Bolsonaro delivered a speech that well illustrated the perspective that predominated in the discussions on the PNE in the congress, and set the foundation for the discussion concerning the influence of the educational structures or system on Bolsonarismo as a political ideology that adversely affects the minority groups through gender or race-based discriminatory concerns within Brazil, as shown below:

‘(...) I will start with the word: *scoundrel!* It is the proposal of PT for the children in elementary schools. The PT wants to transform little 5, 6 and 7 years old little kids in homosexuals and open wide the door for *paedophilia*. I will be very clear, us, here at the chamber and special Committee rejected the “Gender Ideology”. The same thing was done by the senate, rejected! And now the institution connected to MEC (Ministry of Education), the national conference for education wants to orient the almost 100 thousand municipalities of Brazil to include in the municipal education plan, the “Gender Ideology”, that means, teaching the *son* of the poor - that is the one that attends to public schools, the one that receives the Bolsa Familia [family benefit] - that *he*, even though *he* has an appendix, *he* is not a *man* or a *girl*, *he* is something unknown. And more, orients that the *boy* experiments, meaning, give a girl a hug and also give a boy a hug. And same goes to the girl, give a boy a hug and a girl also. This is politics of *scoundrels!* Because this is the word, I can use here but my wish is to say another one. Dilma Rouseff, you have a grandson, put this bullshit to your grandson,

do not put it to the *son* of the poor here. Respect the child. Respect the Brazilian family. This is attitude of a *scoundrel*! This has PT written all over it, this orientation from MEC because it is published on the Official Union Diary, the responsibility is Dilma Rousseff's, a *woman* that does not govern anything, a *woman* that does not have character, that does not have moral. Children is the most sacred in the family (sic). A man and a woman transform themselves when they have a *son*. The *man* does not want to get home and see his *son* playing with dolls because he was oriented at school, school which, Dilma Rousseff and the PT want, and jerkily, transform in a homo-affective brothel. The child does not know what is sex just yet' (Bolsonaro, 2015, emphasis mine).

Based on the speeches or debates by Bolsonaro as a political leader in Brazil, it is possible to note that Bolsonaro uses a highly gendered and homophobic language, most of the time referring only to the male components of the "Brazilian family". He attacks the former president Dilma Rousseff in a gendered way, implies that homophobia is and should be the rule. Although in Brazil, this divide between conservatives and progressives is not openly declared and outlined, Bolsonaro would be classified as a conservative, far-right politician anywhere else in the globe, although surprisingly, the political party he belonged to until 2016 is called PP – Progressive Party! According to Fernando (2016), Bolsonaro is a Brazilian version of Trump, although a worse version, thereby showing the overall influence of the western culture, such as the ideological inclinations of Trump on Bolsonarismo within Brazil. In particular, Bolsonaro is portrayed by Fernando (2016) as follows:

'[T]he politician openly supports torture. He also takes a positive view on the brutal military dictatorship that ruled Brazil for more than two decades. He has frequently made global headlines over disparaging remarks about black people, gay people and women. Like Trump, Bolsonaro is often criticised by the left-wing media, and like

Trump, he takes this criticism with pride. “This idea of oh poor little black person, oh poor little poor person, oh poor little woman, oh poor little indigenous person, everybody’s a poor little something!” he told Vice News. “I don’t try and please everybody.” Also – like Trump – there’s a chance he could very well become the president of his country’ (Fernando, 2016, n.p.).

The ideas presented by the conservative parliamentarians through their speeches or debate excerpts demonstrated the centrality of the PNE as the core of the educational structure or system within Brazil in promoting a national identity that is restrictive and privative to a specific group, the *elite do atraso* which was a key aspect that paved the way for Bolsonarismo to attain power [and remain in power afterwards] in 2018.

On the other end, there were parliamentarians that challenged the conservative discourse in place in the same parliamentary session; one of them was the Congresswoman Margarida Salomão⁴⁴, another woman:

‘Ideologia de Gênero is in fact an extraordinarily unfortunate proposition as it leads us to suppose that in the school there is something else that is not an ideological formation, be it of one profile or another. Historically in Brazil, the profile is machista, racist, patriarchal, antifeminist. Therefore, if there is a movement within society to deconstruct this *ideology* and certainly this movement also has an ideological nature this is absolutely legitimate because after all, at school what effectively takes place is an ideological dispute, and in fact, the attempt to deconstruct the centennial ideology that dominates school discourses is still a minority movement’ (Meico Br, 2015, translation, italics and emphasis mine).

⁴⁴ Maria Margarida Martins Salomao is a Congresswoman (lower house) affiliated with the Party PT representing the State of Minas Gerais. She is a permanent member of the following committees in the congress: CCTCI, CCULT, CELICITA, CEPENSAO, PEC39514, PEC44314, PL161096, PL406012, PL740614, PL742006, CEXBARRA.

In the same sense, Deputy Fatima Bezerra explained that she used the term ‘gender identity’ (DCD, 2014, n.p.), instead of the deceitful term ‘gender ideology’. According to the speech presented by Deputy Fatima Bezerra, the maker claimed that she conveyed a heartfelt speech on the importance of tackling preconceived notions involving prejudice in the day to day at school, including concerns such as discrimination based on gender, sexuality or race as promoted by the existing structures or systems of education in Brazil which effectively contribute to Bolsonarismo, thus:

‘Paulo Freire used to say that education is the point at which we decide whether we love the world enough to take responsibility for it. (...) love does not go with prejudice, no! Love does not go with violence, no! Love goes precisely with solidarity, with respect [applause]. (...) *I speak here not only as a Congresswoman but also as a teacher, which I also am and because I understand that the school is a sacred place. The school, more than anywhere else, can never be a space to welcome, foment, stimulate or omit the prejudice, the violence, the discrimination, whichever the nature of it. (...) It is the same in relation to skin colour. (...) I expect that the fellow Deputies look towards the future, towards a more humane society, approving the text that the Lower House of Representatives approved, previously (before the senate vetoed and it came to plenary, addition mine), promoting the equality of gender, the equality of race and equality from the sexual orientation perspective*’ (Applauses) (DCD, 2014, n.p., emphasis mine).

In a similar sense, Deputy Ivan Valente⁴⁵, who is currently serving as a Congressman within the São Paulo state and acted as the party leader to the designated Deputies’ Chamber of Brazil and as the president of the PSOL’s beginning 2011 to the year 2013, presented ideas

⁴⁵ Ivan Valente is a Congressman affiliated with the PSOL (Liberty and Socialism Party). The PSOL is a dissidence from the PT, it was founded by former *Petistas* (how people that are affiliated with PT are called) that were not satisfied with PT becoming ever more centre-left rather than left wing and relativising some of its main pillars of principles.

concerning how PNE contribute to the evolving political ideology under Bolsonarismo. Moreover, this study emphasises the centrality of Deputy Ivan Valente the debate or speeches in his political leadership niche as demonstrated under the 2011 PNE and the bit where it says that he proposed the 1998 regulation and influenced the discussions towards a political ideology that embraces social equality, as evident in the stance of the leader within the Socialism and Liberty Party of Brazil. In particular, Deputy Ivan Valente spoke:

‘The PSOL understands that this discussion could never, ever, have taken the character of priority that it is aimed at giving it. This is obligation. *When we speak about education, we are talking about rights, we are talking about equality, we are saying that Brazil is a secular state, not a theocratic one. This here is a theocratic state.* Therefore, any prejudice should be considered crime, as the racial crime is. Therefore, every battle we can fight, since childhood against racism, against homophobia, against machismo, for the freedom of choice of sexual orientation, is a battle that advances in society; it is the battle for tolerance; it is the battle to guarantee freedom and rights’ (CDC, 2014, n.p., emphasis mine).

4.3. Critical Analysis of the Speeches/ Debates and Bolsonarismo

In terms of the analysis of the speeches or debates concerning the role of PNEs as a critical aspect of the educational structure of the system within Brazil and its link to Bolsonarismo, the first contrast observed is that two of the Deputies in question are women. As previously mentioned in the chapter, women’s representation in the Brazilian parliament is very small. Accordingly, the proponents of the Feminist Standpoint Theory argued that it is essential to include in every agenda, perspectives from women. Therefore, it is important to increase women’s representation and further expands the understanding of the political ideology that supports equality and fairness in gender treatment or representation in the Brazilian society, which is absent under Bolsonarismo within the jurisdiction. According do

Sandra Harding (2004), the Feminist Standpoint Theory was ‘presented as a way of empowering oppressed groups, of valuing their experience’ (p. 2), meaning the viewpoints of the marginalised reflect access to a reality that dominant identities do not have. Increasing women’s representation brings in to parliament the viewpoints of this group, that even though it is not homogeneous, has commonalities and the fact that the speech of resistance was made by a woman proves that. Congresswoman Margarida Salomão (Meico Br, 2015) further explains that the apparent “neutrality” that reigns in the curriculum is not actually neutrality; it is the supremacy of the male, white, heterosexual dominant dynamic that manoeuvres society in order to seem like that is the rule and the norm. Therefore, the discussions concerning the centrality of the Feminist Standpoint Theory is critical as it serves to establish how the process of marginalisation of the female gender is perpetuated into a political ideology under Bolsonarismo through the use of PNEs or the existing structures of education within Brazil.

As emerging from the various excerpts of the speeches or political debates presented by the political leaders in Brazil under the previous sections, the topic of gender and sexuality was the absolute centre of the discussions surrounding article 2, item III of the initial law project at the deliberation sessions. For instance, the idea under article 2 of the PNE was to align the goals of the structures or system of education in Brazil to correctly shape the political identity of the country while contributing to the aspects of equality and fair treatment of citizens, thereby showing a contrast to Bolsonarismo which promotes discriminatory practices based on sexuality, race and gender. In truth, the core of the discussions was sexuality, but it is important to stress once more that the parliamentarians use the term gender to refer to sexuality. Even though other terms such as *race* and *regional* were removed together with the paragraph, there was no explicit debate around them. In the debate around the PNE and subsequently the states and municipal plans, the term *gender ideology*

was used by people that defend traditional, reactionary and fundamentalist positions in relation to gender roles of men and women (Reis and Eggert, 2017, p. 17). As exposed in chapter one, the idea that racial inequality has been completely overcome and eradicated is sold by Brazilian white supremacists and blindly reproduced by the majority of the population that sees talking about race as a racist act (as explored in chapter one). From the perspective of heteronormative and white supremacism, one sees itself as the norm, which they expect to be reproduced by the majority of the population that believes talking about race as a racist act because they see their own identity as unmarked, as the norm which doesn't need to be reflected upon. This aspect on the divisive nature of the political ideology of Bolsonarismo through the use of PNEs or the existing structures of education within Brazil is further evident through the scope of the theory of intersectionality, which, like the Feminist Standpoint Theory, explained the role of the political identity in Brazil in promoting social injustices and issues of gender, sexuality and racial-based discriminations. For instance, this argument is supported in the current study by the fact that after the PNE was approved and entered into force as the federal law number 13.005/2014, the states of the federation and the municipalities had to vote their own regional education plans and it would be in their hands to decide whether to address or not the matters in them. It emerged that a significant number of political players favoured the idea of preserving the status quo regarding how PNEs affect the political landscape, thereby showing how education has influenced the adoption of Bolsonarismo as a form of political ideology that promotes inequality and discriminatory practices within Brazil.

4.3.1 Appraisal of Gender, Sexuality and Family in PNE and Bolsonarismo

As discussed in chapter two, the binomials power/ knowledge and knowledge/education are, in turn, closely related. In the case presented within the current study context, the fact that the Congress removed the paragraph that explicitly mentioned

race, gender and sexual orientation equality from the PNE, exposes that the white, heterosexual, religious members of Congress (therefore, the powerful) were the ones that dictated what should or should not be taught to Brazilian children within the existing structures of system of education in the jurisdiction. Besides, the political elites emerged as the individuals that decided over what the education system should articulate as gender, race, sexual orientation according to their exclusionary understandings of those. It was the exercise of power by a ruling, dominating layer of society, hence a justification of the role of the theory of intersectionality in explaining how an aspect of gender, sexuality and race-based discriminatory practices are entrenched in the society within Brazil through the system of education as a driver of the current Bolsonarismo movement in the country. The specific details of the correlation between PNEs as a critical aspect of the system or structures of education within Brazil and the influence on the emerging political identity under Bolsonarismo are analysed, in turn, below.

4.3.1.1 Gender, Biological Sex and Sexual Orientation – Notions of Masculinity and Femininity

As confirmed under chapter three in the current study context, gender is not a straightforward concept as the idea interacts with related human attributes such as sexuality and race, which form the core of the discussion concerning how intersectionality leads to social, economic and cultural inequality in Brazil through the support of the existing structures of education such as PNEs. The interrogation of the speeches and debates by various political players who support and opposed Bolsonarismo disclosed that it had become a synonym of sex in common language and even in some of the scholarly literature. The present work shares the concerns and issues raised by post-structuralists and deeply values the attempt to deconstruct terms such as ‘traditional’, ‘natural’ (Enloe, 2004) and so on. These words play the part of bringing a sort of mental comfort to society, meaning that we learned to, whenever

we listen to this kind of term, automatically shut our thinking process down because they do not need analysing as what is ‘natural’ or ‘traditional’ has not been consciously made by humans, it is something that only exists, full stop. This Masculinity vs. Femininity binomial, transcends “Sex” and reinforces other binomials such as: ‘domestic’ vs. ‘international’; ‘centre’ vs. ‘periphery’; ‘developed’ vs. ‘underdeveloped’; ‘domestic’ vs. ‘international’; ‘state territorial space’ vs. ‘anarchic and violent world’ and we would add public vs. private that once we put on feminist lenses we realise that all of them are gendered in their base being one associated with Masculinity and the other with Femininity. The never-ending proliferation of some characteristics as always connected to femininity and others to masculinity links to ignoring and marginalising issues that are deemed feminine. It leads to the association of features such as power, strength, rationality, progress, fearlessness, boldness and so on, with what is deemed to be “male” related and the association of femininity with the “other”, that is backward, weak, irrational and so on, justifying dominance and inequality and leading to exclusion and marginalisation.

Similarly, based on the analysis of the speeches and debates, the outcome of the current study showed that by not considering race, gender and sexuality in education policymaking, the educational system and structures within the Brazilian jurisdiction are in fact, contributing to the maintenance of the notions of *masculinity/femininity*, *heteronormativity/sexual diversity* and *superior/inferior race* that are historically in place and to the privilege of the former ones over the latter ones. In order to make a fair analysis and aim for real equity we need to question male-female categories and what role does the categorisation serve. There is an inner pejorative sense in everything associated with femininity, non-heteronormativity and blackness and, on the other hand, an exaltation of everything associated with masculinity, heteronormativity and whiteness. According to Peterson (2010), positivism, modernism and masculinism are particularly resilient and

adaptive features of prevailing inquiry: due to long histories of stabilisation, they often operate below a conscious level – as ‘common sense’ – and thus elude scrutiny and critical interrogation. In the scholar’s words: ‘it is crucial to note that the epistemological, ontological and axiological assumptions of positivism, modernism and masculinism overlap and reproduce each other in complex ways (...) their interaction typically obstructs critical intersectional analysis. At the same time, they operate differently in different discourses’ (Peterson, 2012, p. 9).

Under this analysis, the understandings that gender is a social construct and is frequently in play through day-to-day performances, and is categorised as a non-binary configuration, which is perfectly possible are supported. According to Jackson (2006), gender is a social divide and a culturally constructed distinction, in the author’s words ‘given meaning and substance in the everyday actions, interactions and subjective interpretations through which it is lived. If gender categories have no natural existence, they cannot pre-exist the division and distinction through which they are constituted’ (p. 106). In contrast to the understanding that prevailed in the discussions around gender when the voting of the PNE, Judith Butler’s understanding of gender poses it as a performance, built through discourse and a series of acts that might or not repeat themselves (Butler, 2010). Butler endorses Simone de Beauvoir and her famous claim that ‘one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman’ (Beauvoir cited in Butler, 2015), meaning being a woman is ‘a historical situation rather than a natural fact’ (Beauvoir cited in Butler, 1988, p. 520). An assertion which Butler extrapolates to gender more generally, no one is born belonging to a particular social category of gender; people are socialised into them. According to her, sex and gender are distinct. On the one hand, biological sex should be regarded as a physiologic feature and gender as being ‘the cultural interpretation or signification of that’ feature (Butler, 1988, p. 522). Butler’s (1988) conclusion is then that gender is performative; it is not a fixed, static

pre-existing condition that triggers a series of acts and behaviours; gender is the actual construction of this identity throughout time, on a personal basis through repetition of acts. In this sense, Butler introduces the concept of ‘Social Temporality’ and claims that gender is instituted through acts which are not continuous; therefore, the ‘appearance of substance is precisely that, a constructed identity, a performative accomplishment’ (Butler, 1988, p. 520).

As discussed in chapter one, Bennington’s definition of national identity shares the same post-structural genealogy as Judith Butler’s description of the social construction of the gendered identity. She argues that gender is constituted not by ‘a founding act [which essentialists believe to be one’s birth] but rather a regulated pattern or repetition’ (Butler, 1990, p. 145). The Imaginary notion of nation resonates with the imaginary notion of preassigned gender. Both possess an iconic normative ideal at the centre of them, who represents the ideal of the Nation, who is a woman who is a man. In the words of Sharp, ‘gender and nationality are significant elements of contemporary subject identity and yet neither gender nor nationality is a priori categories’ (Sharp, 1996, p. 106).

On further analysis, in contrast, to Nardi (2013), ‘gender relations as the result of the social construction processes of the masculine, the feminine that hierarchise the social positions of men and women in a specific society’ (p. 16, translation mine). In the Portuguese language, there are different articles to refer to feminine and masculine words, but Nardi uses in his work the character ‘@’ rather than masculine or feminine articles when referring to neutral. Although ‘@’ is a way of referring to both feminine and masculine genders, it is not normally used to refer to non-binary categories of gender. In Brazilian Portuguese, this reference is commonly made by the use of the letter ‘e’ in the end of words rather than the usual ‘a’ for feminine, or ‘o’ for masculine. He suggests that these relations are ‘directly implicated in the ways they structure themselves, not only the erotic-affective relations, but

also work relations, public policies in health, education, security, justice, assistance, children's education, family, sport, leisure, that is to say, all social relations' (p. 16).

The speech of Brazilian former president Michel Temer⁴⁶ while in office, in the occasion of the International Women's day (08 March 2017) provides an insight on how notions of gender roles are reproduced even by the major political figure in the country at the time: 'Nobody is more capable to pointing out the unbalances in, let's say, supermarket prices than women (...) Nobody is more capable of detecting eventual economic fluctuation than women, since they monitor the increases and decreases of their household budgets (Charner, 2017).

'Obviously not all men want to have to prove themselves part of their national community by aggressively defending national borders, just as there are women who do support this project. The modern nation-state should be viewed instead, I believe, as a discursive practice in the manner that Foucault proposed. In such a practice, power is not entirely concentrated in the hands of a ruling elite but is diffuse. All subjects, ruler and ruled alike, are constrained by their location in the discursive networks underwriting society. In Foucault's own terms, for the State to function in the way that it does, there must be, between male and female (...) quite specific relations of domination which have their own configurations and relative autonomy (...) power is constructed and functions on the basis of particular powers, myriad issues, myriad effects of power' (Sharp, 1996, p. 105).

As depicted immediately above, Temer clearly expressed in his speech the ingrained idea that women have power and are smarter because they know what to shop, they know

⁴⁶ Michel Miguel Elias Temer Lulia was the vice-president in Dilma Rousseff's second mandate (2015) became president of Brazil after she was impeached in 2016. He was affiliated with the party PMDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party), considered a centre-right party in Brazil (although this right/left definition is particular in Brazil and not very strongly delineated).

how to choose, how to save money on household supplies shopping and so on. What this reflects is the stereotypical association of women with the private sphere and with certain limited domains in the public sphere, which reproduces the historic gendered divides. The public sphere of a certain kind, the civic sphere, their women are not seen as significant actors, they are only important within the private domain or the public one only when it connects directly to the private. In the words of Jackson (2006), ‘gender defines the social categories women and men and locates them differentially in virtually all spheres of life’ (p. 107).

Public life is historically linked to masculinity, whereas the private life connected to femininity. Femininity has always been associated with “care-giving” and with the need for protection. Puechguirbal (2010) stresses how much women and femininity, are connected to the idea of them as being innate carers, instinctive caregivers with a maternal spirit (the best “fit” to limit themselves to the private realm) whilst men, on the other hand, are strategists that think and act rationally, therefore a better suit for public life, always acting in behalf of the poor victims, incapable of doing so: the women and the minorities associated with femininity. In the author’s words: ‘*women are not seen as actors in charge of their own life, but are apprehended through their vulnerabilities*, defined as victims, as ‘women-and-children’ *disempowered and dependent* on the male members of the community that will provide for them’ (Puechguirbal in Shepherd, 2010, p. 162, emphasis mine).

Scott (1999) writes on this divide arguing that most interpretations of some specific ways the feminine gender is used limits their ‘concept to family and household experience’ not worrying about ways to ‘connect the concept (or the individual) to other social systems of economy, politics or power’. In order to understand the accountancy for ‘persistent associations of masculinity with power, for the higher value placed on manhood than on womanhood’ it is important to pay attention to ‘how societies represent gender, use it to

articulate the rules of social relationships, or construct the meanings of experience' (Scott, 1999, p. 38).

According to Vianna and Unbenhaun (2004), the concept refers then to the dynamic of social construction and social transformation, to meanings that go beyond bodies and sexes and subside notions, ideas and values within the different areas of social organisation: in symbols, culturally available about masculinity, femininity, hetero and homosexuality; in the normative concepts concerning the rules in the scientific, political and legal fields; in the political conceptions that are implemented in social institutions such as the school; in the subjective and collective identities that resist to the universal and generalised dominant models of masculinity and femininity. Moreover, in chapter one, the idea of the significant other focusing on the inter-states aspect of it was discussed. The same notion is applied to relations within one particular state. As Triandafyllidou explains it, the significant other within a state 'forms part of identity politics within a state. The internal significant other disrupts the cultural and political order of the nation, and thus challenges its sense of unity and authenticity. (Triandafyllidou, 1998, p. 603). She argues that, on the one hand, the significant other 'outside' (a particular state) is seen as a threat to eliminate the nation, the significant other within is perceived as a menace to 'pollute', to 'contaminate' the nation (which is originally pure and homogenous). Therefore, applied to the current study in the case of Brazil, gender binary notions are reinforced and broadcasted by the educational policies approved not only as the 'normal', but also the only possibility of gender manifestations, whereas they should be seen as a way to signify power relations (Scott, 1999) as seen in chapter one and the discussion within the current chapter regarding the utility of PNEs in promoting sexual, gender and racial biases within the country under Bolsonarismo as the primary political ideology that defines Brazil.

4.3.1.2 Analysis of the Brazilian ‘model’ of Family vs. performative gender under PNEs and the emergence of Bolsonarismo

The origin of the word Family comes from the Latin *familia*, which according to Frederick Engels (2010) in his notorious work: *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, in its origins did not even relate to the married couple and their children:

‘The word familia did not originally signify the ideal of our modern Philistine, which is a compound of sentimentality and domestic discord. Among the Romans, in the beginning, it did not even refer to the married couple and their children, but to the slaves alone. Famulus means a household slave and familia signifies the totality of slaves belonging to one individual. Even in the time of Gaius the familia, id est patrimonium (that is, the inheritance) was bequeathed by will. The expression was invented by the Romans to describe a new social organism, the head of which had under him wife and children and a number of slaves, under Roman paternal power, with power of life and death over them all’ (Engels, 2010, p. 67).

In terms of the applicable legal and regulatory framework that governs education structures and the family aspects within Brazil under PNE establishment, the most relevant law in Brazil is the constitution, followed by other ones such as the civil code and the *Child and Adolescent’s Act* under the current system of education. On all of these examples, the ‘family’ (legal term) is understood as that institution formed by the *marriage* of a *man* and a *woman*, with or without children- that would be the concept of the nuclear family. The ‘family’ concept referred to in the Brazilian legislation - the holy family - is ‘matrimonialised, indissoluble, hierarchical and heterosexual’ (Dias cited in Adrião and Becker, 2006, p. 282, translation mine). Therefore, the aforementioned regulations are in line with what came to be known by heteronormativity as a critical aspect of PNE within the educational domain of Brazil that shaped Bolsonarismo in the country. The notion of

heteronormativity is the same that claims that women and men are different; therefore, they are constituted as two poles of social reality, hence an essential discussion point under the theory of intersectionality that explains the emergence of discriminatory practices based on gender, race and sexuality within the contemporary Brazilian society (Adrião and Becker, 2006, p. 278).

There have been recent attempts to change this legal conceptualisation of family in the country and in March 2017 it came as a big surprise the step taken by the upper house of congress, the senate, when it approved a law project that would change the text of the Brazilian Civil Code from ‘stable union between a man and women’ to ‘stable union between two people’. Moreover, the project on the normative differences between the male and female gender was proposed at the promulgation of the Constitution and Justice of the senate by the senator Marta Suplicy⁴⁷, a psychologist and sexologist that has frequently been engaged in reproductive rights and homosexual rights campaigns. However, the project has not been turned into law yet seen that it still needs to be voted at the Lower House of Representatives, the lower house of congress, which is mostly seen as the most conservative house (this is very incoherent in the case of the PNE it was in the senate that the ‘gender ideology matter’ was raised, the chamber has not given it attention in its first voting). Although the potential change is not a reality yet, it represents an attempt. Therefore, the proposed changes fundamentally affect the understanding concerning the male and female gender in the Brazilian society, which serves as a significant contributory aspect concerning the influence on the learners within the PNE educational system in the country, and a factor that promotes the rise of Bolsonarismo.

⁴⁷ Marta Suplicy is a Senator (upper house) currently affiliated with the Party PMDB (Brazilian Democratic Movement Party), although she spent most of her political career affiliated with the PT. She represents the state of São Paulo. She is a permanent member of the following committees in the congress: CAS, CCJ, CDH, CE, CMCF, CMCVM and GPARBCHI.

Jackson (2006) has suggested that ‘gender, sexuality and heterosexuality are constituted intersectionally within and across a number of dimensions of the social’ (p. 108) and these dimensions to him are: 1) structural, 2) meaning, 3) routine and 4) agency. Heteronormativity is directly connected to what he classifies as the structural dimension that would be ‘heterosexuality is institutionalised through such mechanisms as law and the state’ (ibid). Furthermore, the study conducted by Jackson (2006) explained how heteronormativity had been understood: ‘the concept has become widely used as shorthand for the numerous ways in which heterosexual privilege is woven into the fabric of social life, pervasively and insidiously ordering everyday existence. It is, however, often used as if it were synonymous with institutionalised heterosexuality’ (ibid). The study contended that ‘heteronormativity defines not only a normative sexual practice but also a normal way of life’ and ‘reveals the interconnections between sexual and non-sexual aspects of social life’ (ibid).

This imaginary of an ‘ideal’, ‘normal’, ‘good’, ‘natural’ family plays a very important part in how gender roles are understood, not only just within the family but also in the public sphere, including within the system or structures of education, and also in politics. There is a linkage between how the imaginary of the family works as evident in the knowledge imparted to the learners under PNE within the system of education of Brazil, how that leads to the idea of what is public and what is private and who is important in these spheres and that is also reflected than in politics. Where does that image of the ideal family come from? It comes primarily from religion, from a certain understanding of religion. And not a specific religion, not only the catholic one, which seems to be dominant in the case of Brazil, but any orthodox interpretation of religion has this particular imagery of the family in mind, especially within the Brazilian educational and political context. In Christianity, as discussed in chapter one of the current study, the features and roles connected to the virgin Mary are the guidance as to what the gender *woman* should be and how it should act. According to Sartori

(1973) ‘morality and religion are indeed essential ingredients of politics, but as a means to an end: they are instrumental to politics.’ (p. 11). Therefore, based on the current analysis regarding the interplay between gender, sexuality, race, and the role of education in shaping the political ideology under Bolsonarismo, it is noteworthy that power shapes what is considered as being knowledge, what by its turn shapes and broadcasts a certain notion of ideal family, which is heteronormative and patriarchal in its roots and essence. In support of this postulate, it is instructive that patriarchy also draws back to the rule of the father, or father figure, the father of the family, the father nation-state and so on. ‘Nationalistic rhetoric is characteristically heterosexual/heterosexist, most especially in its promotion of the nuclear family.’ (Sharp, 1996, p. 105).

Friedrick Engels (2010) had drawn a parallel between class and gender oppression in his *The Origins of Family, Private Ownership, and State*:

‘In the family, *the husband is bourgeois*, but his *wife is the equivalent of the proletariat*, in the industrial field, only. After all the statutory privileges of the capitalist class are abolished, and the unique equality of the two classes in the legal full equality of rights, the unique nature of the economic oppression of the proletariat will be most clearly revealed: the democratic republic does not eliminate the opposite of the two classes; on the contrary, it provides a place to struggle to resolve this opposition. Similarly, *the unique nature of the husband’s rule over his wife in the modern family and the need to establish true social equality between the two parties*. And methods, only when the two sides are completely equal in law, will they be fully expressed’ (Engels, 2010, p. xx, emphasis mine).

Engels (2010) pointed out the similarities and differences between class and gender oppression, and tried to put women's liberation into class liberation to solve. However, the goal of class liberation is often not only resisted by class oppression, but also obstructed by

gender oppression, as the goal of gender liberation is often not only hindered by gender oppression, but also by the class system. He explained that the original class oppression [slavery] that emerged in history is the same as the individual marriage system and that the initial class oppression coincides with the male enslavement of women. That is to say, class oppression and gender oppression are generated at the same time, and the two are closely related (Engels, 2010). From another point of view by Millett (1970), in reality, the oppressive structures of class and gender are not only interactions that promote and maintain each other, but also friction at the same time. For example, on the one hand, the development of capitalism requires women to become labourers to achieve greater capital proliferation. Consequently, it is arguable that capitalist ideology will appropriately educate women to be independent and self-improving to encourage women to enter the production field. On the other hand, Ames (2005) and Unterhalter (2005b) offered a different point of view, asserting that countless men are dissatisfied with the fact that such women are engaged in social production, and believe that this will lead to the lack of “motherhood” and affect the growth of future generations. Because capitalism is its essence, it is fundamentally, now, and in the future, it is still patriarchal. Therefore, whether as a capitalist economic system or as an individual male, the contradiction between them is essentially a contradiction between the patriarchal system in the public sphere and the patriarchal system in the private sphere. The contradiction between the two is merely a manifestation of the contradiction between the interests of the oppressed class (male) within the family and the interests of the oppressed class (bourgeoisie) in the society, that is, the contradiction between gender oppression and class oppression.

Indeed, due to the mutual benefit of the two oppressive mechanisms, there will be compromises and negotiations between them. For example, the patriarchal system of the public domain avoids the interests of women (encouraging women to enter the production

field, but retaining the traditional patriarchal view that housework and childbirth are women's vocations) can be regarded as private to a certain extent. Maintenance of the patriarchal system in the field. Capitalism in the initial period will encourage women to enter the production field for surplus value, but in economic production all aspects of the field have set various obstacles for women, such as "workplace ceiling" and different pay for equal work. When the economy is sluggish, women are excluded from social production, and even when appropriate, they are induced in various ways. Women return to the family and act as pure consumers. Because the consumer society is the embodiment of the post-capitalist economic development, there need to be more consumption factors that drive the economy, and the family is the group that contributes the most to commercial consumption.

Gender may cross the boundaries of class and race, and the means used is the gender advantage, which is only owned by men. For example, a lower-level black male would claim to be stronger than a white middle-class/bourgeois woman because of his gender advantage, and a bottom-level white male could also consider himself superior to black women in any class status by gender. In a patriarchal society, the role of class or racial depends on the degree of publicity and propaganda of masculinity. On this issue, people seem to be confronted with a paradoxical situation: in the lower layers of society. Men are more likely to claim their authority on their own gender. Kate Millett (1970) wrote in *Sexual Politics*: 'It may be said that women can often transcend the class hierarchy that is usually found in a patriarchal society, because she is permanent regardless of her origin and education. Sexual class associations are less than men' (p. x). This suggests that gender issues have parts that overflow class and race issues.

The main purchase power, and the family will become the best micro-agent in post-capitalist society. As Anne Kingston (2004) wrote in *The Meaning of Wife*: 'The fact that a housewife stays at home can also be used as an economic goal. The person who buys goods

and services for the whole family. Housewives are secret agents of capitalism.’ (p. x). So, we see that even if women are influenced by liberalism and start to rebel against male power, they will find that they have no resources to fight against men because resources are always what the man has mastered. What highlights here is the enormous impact of inequality in the socio-economic field on gender inequality. Which is all reflected by and enforced through unequal, exclusionary education systems.

In terms of the analysis and the application of the scenario in Canada and its relevance to the Brazilian political identity, arguably, from the Canadian point of view, the real dilemma observed by the feminist epistemologies shows that only by rethinking the social chain of gender, sexuality, race and class, the relationship between them can the question of social freedom be more fully considered. Capitalism, patriarchy, heteronormativity and racism are interconnected, intertwined and symbiotic, while at the same time nourishing, promoting and maintaining each other. While swaying one of these systems may affect other institutions such as education ones, there can be no reversal and victory in a single field. Aware of this, we must focus on the broader political arena and have a more stable strategic vision to rethink the issue of women’s liberation. Additionally, the manner in which social representations become dominant, normative or salient can only be properly understood with contextual references. Therefore, the definition of identity is thus subjective and contested based on gender variations in different societies, as explained by Andreouli and Howarth (2013).

The connection between sexuality and education is investigated in order to search for more sustainable and inclusive educational practices that contemplate distinct identities and closely resonate with the evolving scenario of political identity and power control in the Brazilian nation. For instance, according to Francis et al. (2019), education is pivotal in understanding the way in which power or political control enhance practices such as

discrimination based on gender, sexuality, or race, thereby necessitating the urgency for measures to promote gender diversity through the educational laws and policies in Brazil.

Francis et al. (2019) underscores the argument in the following words;

‘Following UNESCO (2016), we understand “gender diversity” to refer to differences in the way in which people have deeply *felt internal experiences of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned to them at birth*. Gender diversity may be expressed through their individual sense of their body, dress, speech, mannerisms, communication styles, societal roles and general behaviour. *Gender diversity includes people who do not subscribe to conventional gender roles and who identify with one, both or neither of the genders*. We understand *the construct of gender to include attributes and relationships that are socially constructed and learned through socialisation*’ (p. 23, emphasis mine).

As previously mentioned, it is possible to observe how education systems and bodies of policies were initially constructed and have developed across the globe by following the dictates and frameworks of the West. Just as gender and sexuality, race is another crucial aspect that has to be interrogated when analysing education policies and systems. Efforts to reshape education to include (structurally) marginalised identities with regards to gender and sexuality, in a similar way, race has also been a target of inclusive efforts to achieve an equal society in parts of the world. For instance, ‘when we acknowledge that we are racial creatures (...) we acknowledge that curriculum is a racial text. In its representations of race, difference and identity. We are multicultural, multi-classed and multi-gendered’ (Pinar, 1993, p. 67).

Similar support is evident from Bonnet (1997), who explained how racism affects the national identity in emerging states such as Brazil. Besides, Eurocentrism (Western centrism) has promoted the ‘universalisation’ of Western culture and ‘exported’ the educational ‘standards’ that should be followed- as they are seen as the maximum peak of development

and progress. According to Bonnet (1997) ‘whiteness has developed, over the past two hundred years, into a taken-for-granted experience structured upon a different set of supremacist assumptions (sometimes cultural, sometimes biological, sometimes moral, sometimes all three)’ (p. 188). What is suggested here is that historically a whole range of artefacts (including pseudo-scientific justifications, creation of myths and stigmas and so forth) have been used to create and sustain whiteness as the norm and base for systems to be built upon and processes implemented. In contrast to the construction of whiteness as the norm and model, the ‘non-white identities, (...) have been denied the privileges of normativity, and are marked within the West as marginal and inferior’ (ibid).

Bonnet (1997) further contended that racism as a critical aspect of political identity has also established a ‘true’ history of teleology from a temporal perspective. In other words, the historical background of the world is the historical background of the West. The West as the center of the world, claims the rights of the main story in history. From the outdated Greek state government, the Roman Empire, the dark age of the Renaissance, the historical background of religious reform to the improvement of industrialism, which began with the history of Western classical culture, the West became the ‘chosen one’. This limited way of looking at history implies an inevitable link between expansionism and hegemonism. The ‘advanced’ nature of the West became somehow unquestioned by its expansionist animus and linked to its supposed irrefutable qualities such as logical reason, protestant morality, industrial development, democratic rule and so on.

On the contrary, Gillborn (2005) offers a different explanation concerning the evolution of racism and the role of national identity in shaping exclusion of the minority under the guise of white supremacy, as experienced in the Brazilian scenario as the core of discussion in the current study. After the recognition by some that the norm and hegemony of systems is heavily Western centred, and projects- as universal- Western particularities,

‘inclusive’ efforts have been made across the globe to challenge this hegemony with regards to the education systems. In some cases, successful initiatives that have genuinely included marginalised groups in the process of constructing education, whereas in others, it sometimes meant reinforcement of marginalisation. Gillborn (2005) analysed education policy in England aiming at identifying the role played by race, concluding that education policy ‘assumes and defends white supremacy’ (p. 498) and that how the agenda of priorities of the systems are set is meant to favour the dominant group reinforcing white supremacy.

‘The assumptions which feed, and are strengthened by, this regime is generally not overtly discriminatory, but their effects are empirically verifiable and materially real in every meaningful sense. *Shaped by long-established cultural, economic and historical structures of racial domination, the continued promotion of policies and practices that are known to be racially divisive* testifies to tacit intentionality in the system. The racist outcomes of contemporary policy may not be coldly calculated, but they are far from accidental’ (ibid, p. 499, emphasis mine).

According to the research undertaken by Gillborn (2005), ‘although race inequity may not be a planned and deliberate goal of education policy neither is it accidental. The patterning of racial advantage and inequity is structured in domination, and its continuation represents a form of *tacit intentionality* on the part of white powerholders and policy-makers’ (Gillborn, 2005, p. 485). On the contrary, Sleeter (1993), in her work on the underrepresentation of African Americans in teaching positions in the United States, argued that addressing racism in education has to move beyond trying to educate white teachers on how to do so. There is a need for representation that cannot be taught. ‘A structural analysis of racism suggests that education will not produce fewer racist institutions [education ones included] as long as white people control them’ (Sleeter, 1993, p. 158). According to Sleeter (1993), “Europeans” is always seen as the standard, the starting point for any analysis and

comparison. She argues that 'teacher race *does* matter, and for reasons that include and extend beyond issues of cultural congruence in the classroom', how 'schools reproduce structures of inequality and oppression' (p. 157) has to be the number one priority. Racism has to undergo a structural analysis that views it 'not as a misconception but as a structural arrangement among racial groups (...) a structural analysis focuses on distribution of power and wealth across groups and on how those of European ancestry attempt to retain supremacy while groups of colour try to challenge it' (ibid, p. 158). In support of Sleeter (1993), the study by Edward Said's (1993) accounted on the politics of knowledge resonates with Gillborn's and Sleeter's take on race in education. He stresses the importance of celebrating blackness instead of concealing its historical inferior status position behind the mask of being 'colour-blind' as an antiracism strategy. Similarly, Levy (2002) argued that the existing system of educational structure in the US fundamentally differ from the scenario in Brazil in the sense that although there are policies within the latter country, the respective policies have been developed resulted not in the inclusion of all citizens but exclusion of the individuals considered as 'different' from the ruling elites. According to Levy (2002), 'state policies – aimed at the formation of a universal, centralised state-sponsored educational system – resulted in the construction of the ethnospace by creating segregated paths and differential educational policies for children designated as 'different' by their social backgrounds and ethnic origins' (Levy, 2002, p. 20).

Therefore, the discussions presented by the various scholars are integral in demonstrating the evolution of the concept of a 'nation' in the US as the basis for understanding the national identity discourse in Brazil and the centrality of Bolsonarismo in shaping the educational policies within the country. Besides, the discussions on the concept of national identity, gender, sexuality and nation within the US facilitated the discussions on the role of educational policies in the rise of Bolsonarismo within Brazil by interrogating the

efficacy of the term ‘nation’ as it is currently defined and created by periods of gender or racial-based violence or discriminatory practices where conquerors of territories imposed certain traditions which then became the core of the nation, to draw an association between the political identity of the Brazilian nation under the existing educational laws or policies and their overall influence on the emergence of Bolsonarismo in the country.

4.3.2 *Analysis of Nationalism, Political Identity, and Education in Brazil*

The concept of *cidadao de bem* (the ‘goodwill citizen’) is the notion of the ideal Brazilian citizen. Nationalist movements in Brazil are built around the idea of the *cidadao de bem*, the one that wants to raise a “proper” and traditional family, work hard and live an “honest” life. In this sense, Sharp (1996) writes on the common way in which heterosexism is entrenched in nationalism through the system of education in a country, including the aspects of educational structures or values embedded in the PNEs. In her words, ‘nationalistic rhetoric is characteristically heterosexual/heterosexist, most especially in its promotion of the nuclear family.’ (p. 105). This ‘family institution’ that most congresspersons (mostly men) refer to is a particular understanding of family (one that derives from a heterosexual union between two cisgender people) rather than the only possibility of family configuration, as we will see ahead on the next subsection. As explained, the views of many Deputies and Senators come from a religious imaginary. Religious leaders manifested about the PNE, for instance, Dom Fernando Arêas Rifan⁴⁸ at the National Conference of the Bishops of Brazil (CNBB) said about “gender ideology” and how the educational system or the PNEs shape the political discourse of Bolsonarismo within Brazil:

‘The expressions “gender” or “sexual orientation” refer to an ideology that wants to cover-up the fact that human beings divide themselves into two sexes. According to this ideological chain of thought, the differences between man and woman, besides

⁴⁸ Dom Rifan is a Bishop from the Personal Apostolic Administration São João Maria Vianney.

the evident anatomic implications, do not correspond to an “x” nature, but are the result of a social construction. To follow the famous aphorism of Simone de Beauvoir: “One is not born a woman; they make her woman (sic)”. In this sense, under the vocable “gender”, a new philosophy of sexuality is presented’ (CNBB, 2015, n.p.).

The main claim brought by those congressmen that wished to remove gender matter from the PNE could only find anchor on the work of the Argentinean lawyer Jorge Scala, who is a professor of bioethics at the Universidad Libre Internacional de las Américas de Uruguay (Scala, 2010), thus:

‘The badly named “theory” – “focus”, “perspective”, etc.- of “gender” is, in fact an ideology. Probably the most radical ideology in history, seen that- if imposed-, would destroy the human being in their most intimate core and, simultaneously would end with society. Additionally, to that, it is the subtlest one, as it doesn’t seek to impose itself by the force of weapons- as for example the Marxism and the Nazism-, but instead utilising propaganda in order to change the minds and hearts of *men*, without apparent bloodshed (sic)’ (Scala, 2010, p. 9, translation and emphasis mine).⁴⁹

Accordingly, Scala (2010) believed that what is commonly called gender theory, focus or perspective is, in fact, an *ideology*. He claims that it probably the most radical “ideology” of all times because if imposed, it would destroy human beings in their most intimate core and it would simultaneously ruin society. He writes that additionally to that, it is a very subtle ideology because it does not attempt to impose itself through force, physical violence, as, for instance, Marxism and Nazism did, but rather utilising propaganda to change

⁴⁹ This is my translation of the original text which is as follows: ‘La mal llamada “teoría” –“enfoco”, “mirada”, etc.– de “género” es, en realidad una ideología. Probablemente la ideología más radical de la historia, puesto que –de imponerse–, destruiría al ser humano en su núcleo más íntimo y, simultáneamente acabaría con la sociedad. Además de ello, es la más sutil, porque no busca imponerse por la fuerza de las armas –como por ejemplo el marxismo y el nazismo–, sino utilizando la propaganda para cambiar las mentes y los corazones de los hombres, sin aparente derramamiento de sangre’. (Scala, 2010, p. 9).

the minds and the hearts of men, without apparent bloodshed. He believes that gender theory is an ideology and it's a destructive ideology and it works in the same way as Marxism and Nazism but more dangerous because it's insidious, not overtly violent such as the latter ones. Scala's views on gender are aligned with the religious originated understandings of family and the normalisation and institutionalisation of them. Similarly, at the plenary, the then-congressman Luiz Fernando Machado⁵⁰ apparently misinterpreted Scala's text and claimed 'This is a Marxist ideological conception that should not be accepted' (Domini, 2014), in the same sense, the Deputy Evangelic Minister Eurico⁵¹ said 'behind this gender ideology, that comes from a Marxist ideology' (CDC, 2014, n.p.). Even Scala asserts that the 'Gender Ideology' differs from Marxism and it can be argued that the referred politician does not fully understand what Marxism is. On the contrary, the same aforementioned congressman affirmed that he does not 'have any sort of prejudice but believes that there is a clear distinction in the essence of the human being that was determined by the creator' (Domini, 2014). All the congressmen in favour of the non-mentioning of gender in the PNE, with no exception, claimed that it would be a huge threat to the family and to the innocence of children. Erivelton Santana, another congressman already above mentioned, added that 'the objective is to systemically destruct the familial structure in the country' (Domini, 2014). Therefore, based on the current analysis regarding the interplay between gender theory, sexuality, race, and the role of education (PNEs in Brazil) in shaping the political ideology under Bolsonarismo in Brazil, it is noteworthy that power shapes what is considered as being knowledge, what by its turn shapes and broadcasts a certain notion of the ideal family, which is heteronormative and patriarchal in its roots and essence.

4.4 Chapter Summary

⁵⁰ Luiz Fernando Machado is a former Congressman (lower house) affiliated with the PSDB party (Party of the Brazilian Social Democracy).

⁵¹ Francisco Eurico da Silva is a Congressman affiliated with the PEN (National Ecologic Party).

The present chapter illustrated the discussions surrounding the educational ideas under the Brazilian PNE and the role that race and gender play in nation-building through education, in the country as well as in the shaping of the political ideology of Bolsonarismo in Brazil. In order to do so, the chapter primarily focused on the fallacy created around the *gender ideology*, a very inappropriate term, designed and used to discredit important discussions and topics raised in the PNE 2011-2021 project, in the various conferences that took place in the country in the past few years and critical and progressive guidelines proposed by the MEC. Finally, the chapter critically evaluated the various dynamics of power in action, illustrating the nexus between knowledge and power proposed by Foucault (1972, 1982, 1984), the links to formal education and its importance and relation to the case in light. Besides, the various subsections cared for discussing gender binaries and their challenges and exposing how the inherited notion of ideal family derived from religion plays an immense role in delineating policies. Consequently, the chapter demonstrated the strong correlation between educational structures or systems of knowledge in Brazil under the PNEs in shaping political power and political identity, as evident under Bolsonarismo in Brazil. It further emerged that the parliamentary discourses around the PNE are a very good thermometer to analyse gender and race and their relation to national identity in Brazil. The specific details concerning the political atmosphere in the educational sector of Brazil and how the interpretations of the laws and policies of education by those in power have contributed to the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil are elaborately discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: The Politics of the Classroom and the Rise of *Bolsonarismo*

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter analyses the ways in which the environment of “the classroom” becomes a disputed site for the construction of the national identity as well as political ideologies among citizens in Brazil. Under this aspect, the chapter discusses the ways in which the politics of the classroom has contributed to the rise of *Bolsonarismo*⁵² and how it has been used as a battleground between Bolsonaro’s nationalism and progressivism. In particular, the main goal of the chapter is to locate, given the unfolding of the PNE (culminating in the current political scene), the classroom as a keyspace where a national identity has been constructed and contested. It will do so by providing a link to the challenges of the PNE and the crusade against the ‘gender ideology’ (addressed in the previous chapter). It will approach some of the myths that were created and incorporated in the society, which have allowed for the rise of *Bolsonarismo* (and its education model) while addressing the corresponding consequences to processes of national identity formation that undermine any alternate idea of Brazil. However, the chapter does not aim at addressing Bolsonaro, individually as a figure, but rather the ideas and movements within society that allowed for the seeds of *Bolsonarismo* to be planted and to grow. Lastly, the chapter will discuss the School Without a Party (EsP) movement and how the myth around it was created to show how the myths form the core of *Bolsonarismo* that influences race, sexuality and gender through its influence of the educational policies and structures in Brazil. The EsP was created to tackle the myth of the threat of the spread of communism (a myth which has widely been used across time and borders), as indicated in Appendix 5. The EsP was sold as being the first

⁵² *Bolsonarismo*, as approached in chapter one, is how the movement pro Bolsonaro became known in Brazil. It has as its main claims: anticorruption, the rescue of ‘Brazilian family values’, the praise for the military and the breaking-free from ‘whatever is in place’ (phrase which Bolsonaro repeated endless times during his campaign).

step to ‘contain’ the threat of communism, to fight the *conspiracy* to implement it in Brazil, as discussed in the sections below.

5.2 Progressive Education and Cultural Wars

As previously addressed, the progressive “*Citizen*” constitution of 1988, brought about innumerable changes and improvements with regards to individual, collective and diffuse rights and the democratic project. In the education front it established various principles that education guidelines should be based upon. Following the new constitution, the LDB (Guidelines and Bases for National Education) were approved in 1996, which came to be known as *Darcy Ribeiro Law*, in reference to Darcy Ribeiro. Darcy had a long history as an anthropologist and educator, he extensively wrote on the effects of colonisation and the legacy of slavery in Brazil, being a former student of Paulo Freire he shared many of his progressive and emancipatory views on education. He also held important political positions having been Minister of Education in 1962 (when Joao Goulart⁵³ was in office), vice-governor of Rio de Janeiro in 1983 when Leonel Brizola⁵⁴ was governor. Darcy was serving as senator at the time he proposed the 1996 LDB. He was the main creator and advocate for the progressive education measures established by the LDB. The LDB amplified access to education system, improved finance for education, introduced mechanisms for evaluating learning and concerned itself with inclusion and combatting of prejudices, biases and discrimination through the introduction of “Transversal Themes” as part of schools curricula. The Themes reflected more progressive policies with regards to topics such as environment, citizenship, consumption, sexuality, diversity and so forth.

⁵³ João Belchior Marques Goulart, commonly known as Jango, was a left-wing reformist president of Brazil (1961–64) until he was deposed by the military coup.

⁵⁴ Leonel de Moura Brizola was a Brazilian politician, former governor of both Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul states and one of the most dominant and divisive leftwing figures in Brazilian politics over the last half century.

The “gay kit” was a term used by Bolsonarists to refer to a set of directives/ instructions to instruct and encourage school teachers to organise activities and promote events to address and prevent homophobia that got weaponised by *Bolsonarismo* as something to be combatted. The “kit” was part of the Transversal Theme on Sexuality and Sexual Education. The creation of the myth of the “gay kit” was nothing more than an strategy by the conservative forces in reaction to the progressive education trend that they believe that had gone beyond the “acceptable” when it comes to the maintenance of their privileges.

5.2.1 Political Myths, Education and Bolsonarismo

This section proceeds to discuss at least two myths in the educational system that came to be known as the “gay kit” and the “penis baby bottles” and the ways in which the narratives created around them were used to design the image of a threat, a plot orchestrated by the left (a *conspiracy*) that had as its goal to transform the whole of the Brazilian society into a society of homosexuals (as approached in chapter four), through the various programs included within the structures and systems of education within the country. It is important to highlight the various tactics or ways the proponents of Bolsonarismo used the fabricated ‘threats’ to instigate fear and create the “need for a solution” that would come in the shape of the *saviour* of the nation, embodied by Bolsonaro himself. For instance, *Bolsonarismo* had the praise for the Military rule era as one of the baselines for its solidification as a movement, anchored on the claims that it was a time when nationalism and patriotism were the pillars of people’s lives, that schools were disciplined and children were taught how to be good and reliable citizens, thereby demonstrating the role of the existing system of education (PNE) within Brazil in shaping the political discourse on Bolsonarismo in the country. For instance, through the use of the two myths, the educational discourse imparts to the learners in Brazil painted that moment in the history of the country as a glorious, peaceful time when people

were happy, safe and prosperous (a *golden age*). Besides, the current study explored how fascist ideas form the core of the myths that influence the emergence of political identity in Brazil through the explanation of how to gain and control power, hence impacting education.

Furthermore, Bolsonarismo also relied upon the illusion of the need for *unity*, in order to free the country from its main maladies. This came into the shape of- we all need to come together (appealing to different groups) and fight the biggest threats of the Brazilian nation such as corruption, security, the threat of communism and the menaces to the traditional Brazilian family. The chapter will discuss all of this in the light of the recent developments prior and after the 2018 Presidential elections, and the significance of such occurrences in shaping the discussion concerning the correlation between the existing structures or systems of education (PNEs) and Bolsonarismo as a major political ideology in Brazil.

Primarily, the previous chapter provided a comprehensive discussion regarding how the Parliament became a battleground for contestation with regards to the formulation of the PNE and how the educational curriculum shaped the perspectives of the citizens concerning critical national areas that related to gender, race, as well as sexuality debate. Similar to the role of the parliament (Congress) in influencing the discourse on Bolsonarismo through policies or laws within Brazil, the study discloses association between the political culture under Bolsonarismo and its adverse impacts on educational laws or policies.

The present chapter discusses the classroom as another important and contested site, which is a battlefield for the construction of the idea of the nation and its ‘model nationals’ (exalted by Bolsonarismo as the norm and the goal). Also, it is through classroom that political identities are constructed and perpetuated, helping to bring the Bolsonarist project into power. In order to approach this analysis on the correlation between the myths in the educational system and its influence in the rising Bolsonarismo movement robustly, it is

important to initially access semiotics⁵⁵ and its main theories around meaning and the constructions of myths. For instance, the discussion provided by Roland Barthes in his seminal book *Mythologies* (1970) explored the dimensions of myth creation and the connection to power through the naturalisation of particular perspectives of the world, such as the link between them myths as a tool in the promotion of ideas in the educational niche and the shaping of political identity, ideology, or nationalism within a country such as within the Brazilian context. In further support of the position presented by Barthes (1970), according to Edelstein ‘Barthes sought to separate nature and history, thereby demystifying (sic) history’ (2003, p. 410) allowing myths to ‘transform history into nature’, in the words of Barthes (1972) himself. Scholars such as Flood (2013) have argued that myths are also directly connected to the creation and maintenance of ideologies. For Flood (2013) political myths are part of and encompassed by ideologies. In the foreword of Flood’s book *Political Myth – a Theoretical Introduction*, Robert A. Segal writes that ‘political myth is to be found in contemporary society and is to be found not only in distinctively religious times and places, but in everyday life’ (p. xi), to him, a political myth is a translation of an ideology into a tale, a narrative. Therefore, in this sense emerging from the discussions by the various scholars on how myths in the educational domain (PNEs structures) promote the emergence of political ideologies such as Bolsonarismo , it will become clear how not only Bolsonarismo translated its ideology into the myths it has created but how it gathered and recycled or ressignified myths to work in favour of its nationalist project through the structures and systems of PNE as the core of the educational policies or laws within the Brazilian jurisdiction.

Currently, Bolsonarismo is mainly founded upon the claim that there are evil ideologies such as Marxism that need to be contained and combated, as propagated through

⁵⁵ Semiotics is broadly the study of the construction of meanings in social systems, *see* Barthes (1972).

the knowledge imparted to the learners within the educational system and promoted by the various laws and policies within the educational sector of Brazil. In this sense, the first Minister of Education of Bolsonaro's mandate (Ricardo Vélez Rodríguez) said in an interview:

‘the “ideologisation” in schools is an abuse, it is an outrage to the patriotic power and an invasion by the militancy [left] into an aspect that does not compete to them. Whoever practice this, will respond to the legislation that exists in this country’ (Castro et al., 2019, p. 3).

From the speech excerpt provided by Ricardo Vélez Rodríguez during the interview as shown immediately above, it is interesting how the then minister utilised the terms ideology and militancy to refer to the left, as if the environment of the classroom, the structures and processes that relate to education systems, policies and practices were ideology-free, and thereby serving as drivers of the agenda of seclusion and discrimination based on gender, sexuality and race under Bolsonarismo. As if the status quo is not an ideology, that has been institutionalised historically through the system of education as evident in the policies or laws on PNEs in Brazil, in itself. In another analysis, the study by Bottici and Challand (2006) argued with regards to political myths that ‘a political myth is best understood as a continual process of work on a common narrative by which the members of a social group can provide significance to their political conditions and experience’ (p. 316). Political myths are something that academics have analysed in different contexts across the globe, increasingly especially in places that are showing similar configurations of power to Brazil, e.g., India.⁵⁶ Under discussion, Kaul (2017), it further emerged that there is a close association between the political myths as imparted to the citizens through the existing

⁵⁶ See Kaul (2017) for examples of this category of myths.

structures or systems of education and the political identity or concept of nationalism within a country.

Furthermore, drawing from semiotics, Raoul Girardet's (1987) work, 'Myths and Political Mythologies' is organised around four great political-mythological groups: *The Conspiracy*, *The Saviour*, *The Golden Age* and *The Unity*. Greatly inspired by the lessons of Gaston Bachelard⁵⁷ and Claude Lévi-Strauss⁵⁸, Girardet offers not only an innovative reading of the ideological history of contemporary France but also a new way of conceiving the historical studies. The use of 'political myths, as an integral part of the political discourse, is an essential instrument in ideologically legitimising political practices, and laying the foundation for various actions' (Stoica, 2017, p. 66). As applicable to the scenario in Brazil, these four categories can be useful for comprehending political and social phenomena, such as those occurring in Brazil, with the election of Jair Bolsonaro as President of the Republic in the elections of October 2018. The analysis of Bolsonaro's populist charged discourse associated with the political myths described by the aforementioned French historian show that the populist rhetoric of the new elected President makes use of the four myths described by Girardet, especially through the structures or systems in the educational niche, as evident under the policies or laws on PNE. In this sense, Stoica (2017) further postulated that 'populism makes use of all four political myths identified by Raoul Girardet' (p. 63) and 'politicians who embrace this rhetoric denounce a secret society that is rigorously organised, the actions which defy morality, using all means to attain political power' (ibid), to Bolsonarismo this "secret society" being the left and progressive forces that are largely influenced through the educational laws and policies within Brazil.

⁵⁷ Gaston Bachelard was a French philosopher who wrote in the field of the philosophy of science and introduced concepts such as *epistemological obstacle* and *epistemological break*.

⁵⁸ Claude Levi-Strauss was a French anthropologist who made significant contributions for Structuralist Theory.

As previously discussed, *Bolsonarismo* channelled the dissatisfaction and fears of a large portion of the Brazilian society into creating and sustaining myths of threats whilst at the same time producing myths of Salvationism, of “contention of threat”, promising to be the answer to the country’s illnesses and to provide an alternative to all the wrongs. This approach, according to Schilbrack (2002) can be one of the primary functions that myths can play, in his words: ‘myths disclose alternative worlds’ (p. 1). For instance, in terms of the analysis of the way the political myths are promoted through the educational system to establish political ideologies and nationalism agenda such as *Bolsonarismo* in Brazil, the myth of conspiracy consists of the idea that a secret group, operating in the shadows, has a well-articulated plan for world domination. This group, upon taking over power, would rule against the will of the majority, as directly applicable in the scenario of the emergence of *Bolsonarismo* in the Brazilian jurisdiction. A group that would take command and exercises authoritarian power, contradicting the demands and desires of the people, as evident in *Bolsonarismo* in which issues of seclusion as well as discrimination of the minority groups based on sexuality, gender and race in the context of white supremacy have emerged in Brazil. Consequently, because it is myths that serve as the main tool of influence of political identity in a country through the educational channels that impart knowledge to the citizens, it is evident that the supposed conspiracy against the people gains contours of secrecy, with the conspirators acting in a well-structured organisation, under the protection of the shadows, without people knowing their real objectives, as evident in the case of *Bolsonarismo* in Brazil. In the words of Stoica (2017), ‘this secret society is rigorously organised, with an absolutely unquestionable hierarchy, and in reaching its goals it will not hesitate to make use of all possible means to defy morality’ (p. 67). Therefore, the ideas presented by Stoica (2017) confirm the conspiracy inherent in the process of adoption of mythical claims under the educational system established by self-serving laws and policies for the elites that propel

the political ideology of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, thereby necessitating the need for vigorous interrogation of how the phenomenon impacts the national identity of a country, in the current case scenario, Brazil.

In the Brazilian case, one of the Conspiracy myths created and propagated by Bolsonarismo was that there were hidden forces ready to overthrow the democracy and implement communism in the country. The logic of Bolsonarismo's fallacy is: if there is a conspiracy to implement communism, there has to be a heavy repression process to contain that threat before it starts to take its toll. Accordingly, this dynamic can easily be identified in Bolsonarismo and translated into Bolsonaro's rhetoric. With a stance as a staunch critic of left-wing parties, especially the PT and with a complete aversion to any public policy that is identified as left-wing, Bolsonaro argues that PT's plan was to implement communism in Brazil and that, in order to achieve this goal, the party would not be alone, it would have the support of a large and articulated organisation: the "Foro de São Paulo". It turned out that, contrary to the myth propagated by Bolsonaro, the "Foro de São Paulo" was never an organisation hidden in the shadows, never had as a member the guerrilla group *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC) and never intended to implement communism in Latin America. The "Foro de São Paulo" exists as a locus of debates and reflections of leftist groups on the problems of South America. It is an intellectual space for discussions on the issues of Latin America that is majorly promoted through the philosophical teachings embedded within the existing structures or system of education within Brazil, hence serving to shape the emergence of Bolsonarismo as a major political ideology within the jurisdiction.

5.3 Myths, Bolsonarismo and the Classroom in Brazil

5.3.1 The Myth of the *Escola sem Partido* (School Without a Party) - Fighting off Communism Implementation through Ideas in the School System

To Bolsonarismo, the first step towards the combat of the orchestrated scheme for the implementation of communism in Brazil would be to install the school without a party programme as the core of the laws and policies that govern PNE within Brazil and aid in shaping the political ideology and discourse on nationalism in the country, as emphasised by Stoica (2017). Specifically, in 2004 it emerged in Brazil, a political movement called *Programa Escola sem Partido* (School Without a Party Programme), which in time consolidated itself as *Escola sem Partido* (EsP), dropping the term ‘programme’. It was officialised, in that year, through the Law Project 7180/2014, authorship of the then Congressman Erivelton Santana, whose speeches on the PNE were addressed in chapter four to show how the educational structures that included the laws and policies of PNE were utilised to radicalise the idea of Bolsonarismo in Brazil.

In terms of how the laws and policies in the educational sector of Brazil supported the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, recourse is had to the law project 867/2015, which was primarily attached to the law project 7180/2014, being in transit at the national congress. In the end of November 2018, the law project advanced in the special committee at the Lower House of Representatives. In the session of the 22nd November, the committee skipped some regimental stages of the process so that the college could care specifically for the proposal. It did not in the lower house, which does not mean it has been archived or forgotten; on the contrary, it will come back in the agenda possibly in 2019. On the other hand, in 2016, projects and justifications of this nature that relate to the relationship between political myths in the curriculum or education as established by the applicable laws and policies and the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil were discussed in many legislative houses (both at

national, state and city levels). The various principles in the system of education under the PNE arrangements would in part feed the political debate on what is the role of schooling in the country, receiving support from movement such the *Vem pra Rua* (come to the streets) that culminated with Dilma's impeachment. Not by chance, in the first days of Michel Temer's presidency, one of the first public acts of his Ministry of Education was to receive empathisers of the EsP that claimed to bring to the new government suggestions aligned with the principles defended by them.

Understandably, the key agent responsible for the wide propagation of the movement was the lawyer Miguel Nagib, as elaborately captured in the ideas concerning the link between educational myths and the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil by Stoica (2017). Together with the defenders of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, they claim to represent parents and students contrary to what they call 'ideological indoctrination' at schools. Since 2015, it gained national repercussion and notoriety when other law projects inspired by the movement started to be presented and debated in a number of the chamber of councillors in many municipalities and state assemblies across the country, as well as in Congress. According to Nagib, the *Escola sem Partido* consists of other things, in fixating posters in schools with a list called by him 'the duties of the teacher', as captured by Flood (2013), and which will be addressed below. The lawyer claimed that, in fact, these duties already exist, but they need to be brought to students' attention so they can defend themselves from eventual abuses practiced by their teachers inside the classroom (Flood, 2013).

In terms of the related nationalism movements that influenced the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, the ideology was influenced by the values and cultural attributes propagated by the proponents of the EsP movement, around 60 law projects were presented across the country at the different legislative instances (Stoica, 2017). Based on an analysis of these proposals, the National Council for Human Rights issued a resolution in which it

repudiated all initiatives related to the EsP. For instance, the high commissioner from the United Nations for Human Rights referred to the law projects promoted by the movement EsP as threats to basic human rights. There were various questionings to many of these projects coming from the Federal Federal Prosecution Office and the General Attorney's Office. Therefore, the discussions concerning other movements such as the EsP movement, which influenced the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil are critical in the current study analysis as such discourses serve to demonstrate how the mythical concepts imparted to the citizens as forms of knowledge lay the foundation for the emergence of political ideas that promote seclusion or discriminatory practices within the contemporary society, as readily understood in the analysis regarding Bolsonarismo in Brazil for the current study scenario.

It is noteworthy to emphasise that after emerging in 2004, the EsP movement remained in obscurity for many years. Ten years later, in 2014, the Congressman for the state of Rio de Janeiro, Flávio Bolsonaro (PP-RJ), the son of the elected president, found on the movement EsP the foundations for a law project that would regulate the limits of what a teacher could and could not say inside the classroom. In the following year, 2015, the Congressman Izalci Lucas Ferreira (PSDB-DF) presented the law project 867/2015, which proposed to include, amongst the basic directives for national education, the programme *Escola sem Partido*. Still, in 2015, the Congressman Rogério Marinho (PSDB-RN) was also inspired by the EsP, elaborate another law project that typified as a crime the *assédio ideológico* (ideological harassment) by teachers in the classroom. His justification was that 'the most effective form of totalitarianism to dominate a Nation is to get inside the heads of its youth and children. The ones who aim at total power, at the assault to democracy, have to indoctrinate within society, establish the political and cultural hegemony, infiltrate in the ideological apparatus and be the voice of the party in every institution' (Marinho, 2015, np).

The discussion of the EsP gained even more notoriety in Brazilian media, recently, by the occasion of the judgment, by the Supreme Court (STF), of an *Ação Direta de Inconstitucionalidade* (Direct Action of Unconstitutionality), proposed by the CONTEE – National Confederation of the Workers from Learning Institutions – that questions the state law 7.800/2016 in the state of Alagoas, denominated the Law of the Free School. This state law is inspired by the EsP and it has the following as its core principles: the law writes that the education system in Alagoas should be guided by principles such as political, ideological and religious neutrality and that the student is the weakest end at the learning process. It affirms that it is the parents' right that their children receive moral education free from political, ideological or religious indoctrination. The project forbids that the teacher abuses the inexperience of the students in order to make propaganda of his own political, ideological or religious preferences. It demands that when addressing political, socio-cultural and economic matters, the teacher has to address in-depth the diverse theories about the topic and it vetoes the use in the classroom of any content related to gender and sexual orientation, equally to the project in motion in Congress.

It is noteworthy to emphasise that under the current educational laws and policies in Brazil, the punishment that the law project establishes includes the fact that teachers that disrespect the new rules are subject to the sanctions and penalties established by the state law, which is advertence and being fired. Furthermore, the decision by the Supreme Court on the matter has been mobilising opinions and debates, since its result could define the course of the matter in the whole country. The STF postponed, for no fixed date, the trial of the ADI, leaving the topic suspended. Also, considering the 2018 elections, the topic gained massive electoral contours, having occupied important spaces in debates, mainly due to the support of the then Congressman now turned president elect- Jair Bolsonaro. There were recent declarations by the new Minister of Education for Bolsonaro's cabinet claiming his support

for the projects connected to the EsP movement and placing the assumptions of the movement as the baseline for the Education policies in his government (Castro et al., 2019, p. 5). Between 2016 and 2018, similar laws entered into force in other states and municipalities, having been suspended until the STF trials the matter of the state of Alagoas. This aspect is especially pronounced with regards to the recent declarations of the current Minister of Education for Bolsonaro's cabinet by claiming his support for such project and placing its assumptions as the baseline for the Education policies in his government (Castro et al., 2019, p. 5). Therefore, the discussions concerning other movements such as the EsP movement, which influenced the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, are critical in the current study analysis as such discourses serve to demonstrate how the mythical concepts imparted to the citizens as forms of knowledge lay the foundation for the emergence of political ideas that promote seclusion or discriminatory practices within the contemporary society, as readily understood in the analysis regarding Bolsonarismo in Brazil for the current study scenario.

When surfing the website of the EsP (EsP, 2019), it is possible to verify, clearly and unequivocally, the bases of the orientation the proponents of Bolsonarismo in Brazil intend to propagate, using terms such as 'to catch', 'to plan', 'to report'. Because this matter is of so much importance and it is so alarming that these ideas are the ones that have been sold to parents and children, long quotes directly from the website were included, which is important to stress that is very straight forward and of very easy access to both parents and children within the current study context. On the right web-site of the homepage, the recommended actions are clearly stated, such as:

- *'For a law against the abuse of the freedom of teaching'* (see Figure 1);
- *'Model (template) of an extrajudicial subpoena'* (see Figure 1);
- *'Posters containing the duties of the teacher'* (see Figure 1).

Primarily, education has been so very central to how Brazilians understand themselves and Bolsonaro's rise is deeply tied to challenging a certain kind of "education-making". The classroom and education policies' discussions and the myths created around them were tools used by a deeply nationalist politician such as Bolsonaro to set forth *Bolsonarismo*. The *Escola sem Partido* is a myth to the extent that it is, in fact, a school with one party, one ideology that is religious-based, exclusive, intolerant and anti-critical. Since the election of Bolsonaro, there has been this widespread movement that came to be known as the 'snitch on a teacher'. The president to be is encouraging students to record their teachers to denounce any kind of 'inappropriate' behaviour, such as mentioning gender or sexuality. The origin and anchor of this is the EsP, which justified the heavy borrowing of such ideas by the proponents of *Bolsonarismo* in Brazil.

The analyses of this information make clear that the main objective of the EsP (as further borrowed by the proponents of *Bolsonarismo* in Brazil) is the judicialisation of the legal aspects connected to the topic, through the filing of judicial process by parents and students as an instance of control over decisions regarding educational policies, educational content, academic staff behaviour and so on. The paradigm of the EsP would be of rethinking the very school environment as a space of battle between the 'victims' and the 'indoctrinators', therefore, as a space to be ruled by a judicial ideal, which premise, at least in theory, would be of the neutrality and impartiality. All this sounds even more hypocritical when the appointed Minister of Justice of Bolsonaro's cabinet is no one less than Sergio Moro, the judge that ruled the imprisonment of Lula. The massive procedural inconsistencies and irregularities regarding the due course of Lula's process raise questions of bias and favouritism. The goal of the organisation EsP is very clear: its objective is to decontaminate the school environment through the intromission of an external and supposedly impartial agent (the judiciary). The term decontamination is present throughout the whole website and

on the goals and missions of the organisation. As applied to the current study regarding Bolsonarismo in Brazil, the inconsistencies in the mythical aspects in the system of education of Brazil can only be interpreted to promote certain extraneous political ideologies and the agenda of the political elite such as seclusion and discriminatory practices based on gender, sexuality and race, as readily evident in Bolsonarismo in Brazil.

5.3.2 The Myth of the “Gay Kit”

Fighting off Homosexuality as The New Norm and Defending the Brazilian “Families”. The “gay kit” is the denomination that was given, in a derogatory and pejorative tone, for the set of material put together by the MEC directed at targeting homophobia and heteronormativity in the schools. This aspect of homosexuality discussion related myth is perceived as the genesis of ideological positions in the system of education in Brazil that set the foundation for the emergence of Bolsonarismo, which supports seclusion based on gender and sexuality within the country. Besides, in May 2004 the federal government launched the programme *Brasil sem Homofobia – Programa de Combate à Violência e à Discriminação contra LGBT e Promoção da Cidadania Homossexual* (Brazil Without Homophobia – Programme for the Combat of the Violence and Discrimination against LGBT and promotion of Homosexual Citizenship). This programme was elaborated with close articulation with grassroots social movements and other civil societal, political forces. The programme is considered a hallmark in the fight of LGBTs being seen at the time, by social movements, as a much-needed advancement in the amplification and strengthening of the exercise of citizenship due to having as its goal the consolidation of political, social and legal rights so laboriously conquered by Brazilian social movements towards the battle against homophobia.

The implementation plan proposed in the *Brasil sem Homofobia* programme, recommended in its article number V - “Direito à Educação: promovendo valores de respeito à paz e à não discriminação por orientação sexual” (Right to Education: promoting values of

respect to the peace and non-discrimination based on sexual orientation) – ‘the foment and support to courses of basic and continuous formation of teachers on the sexuality topic; formation of multidisciplinary teams to evaluate the textbooks in order to eliminate discriminatory aspects relating to sexual orientation and overcoming of homophobia; incentive to the production of educational materials such as films, videos and publications about sexual orientation and overcoming of homophobia; support and broadcast of the production of specific materials for the formation of teachers and spread of scientific information around human sexuality’ (Appendix 1).

It became evident that the then Brazilian government (Lula’s rule) understood the school as one of the main agents in charge of the production, reproduction and naturalisation of homophobia, not only with reference to the disciplinary content, but also the day-to-day interactions that happen within its environment that are extensive, also, to the domestic sphere. In this aspect, homophobia reflects the same violent logic of other forms of inferiorisation, such as racism and sexism, in which the goal is always to dehumanise the other. However, when it comes to homophobia, in Brazil, there is a fundamental distinction: while the victim of racism is comforted and nurtured by their family, the victim of homophobia, save very few exceptions, do not encounter in their own home the comprehension and support necessary for them. Drawing from that, there is the need for a truthful *citizen* school to perform its role of denaturalising homophobia, beyond its walls.

On the other hand, in 2011, the project *Escola sem Homofobia*, was financed by the MEC via funds approved by the Parliamentary amendment from the committee for participative legislation, it was a collaborative action of national reach, idealised and implemented by civil society organisations (*ABGLT* – Brazilian Association for Gays, Lesbians, Travesties and Transsexuals; *Pathfinder of brazil*; *ECOS* – Communication in sexuality and *Reprolatina* - Innovative Solutions in Sexual and Reproductive Health),

counting on the technical guidance from the Secretary of Continuous Education – SECAD – part of the MEC. In particular, the project aimed at contributing to the implementation and effectiveness of actions that promoted political and social ambiances favourable to the guaranteeing of the Human Rights and the respect for sexual orientation and gender identity in the Brazilian schooling realm. This contribution would be translated into subsidies for the incorporation and institutionalisation of programmes for the fight against homophobia in the school, that the MEC intended it to be a part of the political-pedagogic projects of the educational institutions in the country. The *Escola sem Homofobia* would come to add to the legitimate efforts from the then government in prioritising, for the first time in Brazil's history, the necessity to tackle homophobia in schools.

These cooperation initiatives between MEC and civil society were the fruit of insights taken from a series of events such as the plans for the action of the International Conference for Population and Development (Cairo, 1994) and the World Conference for Women (Beijing, 1995), for the recognition of sexual and reproductive rights as Human Rights. The II Brazilian National Plan for Policies for Women (2008); the I Brazilian National Conference for Policies for the LGBT Population (2008), the Brazilian National Programme for Human Rights 3 (2009); The Brazilian National Plan for Promotion of LGBT Citizenship and Human Rights (2009) and the creation of the LGBT National Council (2010), were evidence of the commitment from the Brazilian government with equality and social justice to all people.

The project comprised an educational pamphlet and tool kit. This material formed the theoretical foundation upon which it was intended to take the first step towards the promotion and assurance of a school without homophobia. The material would be implemented through a programme of medium or long term, as well as a thematic workshop. The guiding principles were respect for equality and diversity; equity; secularity of the state, universality

of policies and social justice. Its main contribution was to the recognition of the diversity of moral, social and cultural values present in Brazilian society, which is heterogeneous and should be committed to Human Rights and of a citizenship formation which includes *de facto* the Rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals. On the elaboration of the school without homophobia, Fernando Haddad said in an interview to Carvalho:

‘(...) sensation, of perception of one’s own limitations front a situation that indicates a bad prognostic, I had in 2011, whilst in the Ministry of Education, during the crisis of the so nicknamed the ‘gay kit’. The whole story, starting from the *prejudiced expression*, is an example of *how a false information can be created (and deliberately maintained) with nefarious political intents – and social consequences that reverberate to this day*. The Human Rights Committee of the Lower House of Representatives, coherently, approved a law amendment to the budget, assigning resources to a programme for the *combat of homophobia in schools*. The Prosecution Office questioned MEC about the release of the amendment. Just at this point the Prosecution Office came to play, requiring a specialised NGO to manufacture the material. At the exact moment that the material was delivered for evaluation, the crisis of the ‘gay kit’ exploded’ (Haddad in interview for Carvalho, 2017, emphasis mine).

The pamphlet highlighted: *Communicating is necessary*, clarifying that informing is different from communicating and acquiring knowledge. Taking a Foucauldian stand, according to the programme, in order to transform information into communication and knowledge, it is needed that the information is related to the daily life, to the cultural practices, the lifestyle, the reality and the worldview of the receiving individuals, it needs to make sense, bring up feelings and give the security to structure, organise, reorganise, construct or reconstruct their perception of reality, according to the culture of who is in the margins of the communication networks. It also noticed that the information we receive – from our place, with our cultural practices – we filter it and either discard or comprehend,

possibly acquiring some useful knowledge. It is not enough for people from any age range to just obtain information regarding sexual diversity and how to end homophobia, lesbophobia and transphobia to immediately drop homophobic, lesbophobic and transphobic patterns of behaviour.

The project *Escola sem Homofobia* (see Appendix 1) established as objectives:

- ‘Alter didactic, pedagogic and curricular conceptions, school routines and forms of social coexisting that function to maintain pedagogic gendered and sexuality related devices that encourage homophobia’;
- ‘Promote reflection, interpretation, analysis and critiques of particular notions that exist in school environment as if they were ‘natural’ or that get so naturalised that become imperceptive, not only with regards to the disciplinary content but also to the day-to-day interactions that take place in school’;
- ‘Develop the youth’s critical thinking relating to postures and actions that hurt the article V of the *Child and Adolescent’s Act* (ECA, 1990), according to which: ‘No child or adolescent will be target of any form of neglect, discrimination, exploration, violence, cruelty and oppression, punished in the form of the law any attempt, through action or omission, to their fundamental rights’;
- ‘Broadcast and motivate the respect for Human Rights and the legislation against discrimination in all its forms’.

In order to achieve these goals, the programme presented the following methodology: it aimed at uncovering the order of things that places heterosexuality as the natural, normal and only possibility for individuals to live their sexualities, through work dynamics intended at subside pedagogic practices that favour reflection and encourage changes. Furthermore, in 2011, the National Plan for Citizenship and Human Rights of LGBT promotion (PNPCDH-LGBT) – a set of guidelines elaborated by the Human Rights Secretary in partnership with non-

governmental entities – provided that the thematic of families comprised by gays, bisexuals, travesties and transsexuals should be included in the textbooks and general actions within basic education (Mello et al., 2012). In this context that the kit was elaborated and the pilot project was being analysed by MEC in an initial plan to distribute 6 thousand kits for the public schools of the country in 2011. However, since the initial plan of action was announced, a series of reactions against the project took place.

Moving forward on this mythical idea and its impact on the educational system of Brazil as well as its influence on the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, how did the denomination “*Kit Gay*” (Gay Kit) come about? One of the initial strong manifestations against the kit came from the Congressman Jair Bolsonaro, the now Brazil’s president elect (October 2018), affiliated then with the PP from Rio de Janeiro – *Partido Progressista* (Progressive Party, ironically). In leaflets distributed at schools in Rio de Janeiro in May 2011, Bolsonaro claimed that MEC and LGBTQIA+ groups were encouraging homosexuality and intentionally aiming at turning Brazilians children into prey for paedophiles. In the leaflet, Bolsonaro criticised MEC and used the term “gay kit” to refer to the set of material. The derogatory nickname for the set of material was spread by the man who would receive 57.797.847 votes (55%) and be elected president of Brazil in October 2018. His main opponent in the elections (2nd place with 47.040.906 - 45%) of the votes in the second round) was no one less than the former Minister of Education (in charge of MEC in 2011, by the time the *Escola sem Homofobia* was envisioned and launched), Fernando Haddad. This fact was heavily used by Bolsonaro’s campaign accusing Haddad personally, of being the creator of the “gay kit”.

When the former Education Minister Fernando Haddad was interviewed by the journalist Joaquim de Carvalho in an article for the Piauí newspaper (2017) he addressed the topic of how the myth of the “gay kit” was created:

‘From the very start, whoever read the news imagined that it was an exclusive initiative of the executive, whereas the demand came from the Prosecution Office and the legislative. It was also suggested that the material was ready and being distributed, when it had not even been inspected at that point. I explained everything to the evangelic and the catholic factions in Congress and the misunderstanding seemed resolve. I travelled to receive a title of Citizen from the state of Ceará in Fortaleza and then, while I was away, a set of material from another ministry (Health) was presented as being the famous “gay kit” from MEC for the schools. This other material was dedicated to the prevention of STDs/Aids and had as target public: *truck drivers* and *sex workers* in motorways across the country – therefore using a direct and straight-forward language (...) It became evident, that it was clearly *a set-up, a staged agitation*, that was explained numerous times to the press, but the confusion and commotion was already done. *The polemic of the “gay kit” – that “was” without having never really “been”* – extended then, for months. In June, just before the Marcha das Famílias [March for the families], called up by religious groups in Brasília, I received in my office the Senator Magno Malta (PRE-ES) to talk about the matter. At some point he raised the tone and started to threaten me. He said that the march would stop in front of MEC, that they would embarrass me. I kept the calm tone that I always adopt: ‘But, Senator, you know the story, you know that none of that is true’, it did not work. *I then realised that the whole thing was not a matter of arguments, but a power game*’ (Haddad in interview for Carvalho, 2017, emphasis mine).

It was indeed a power game and that would become evident a few years later, during Brazil’s presidential election in 2018. On one side, the front runner Jair Bolsonaro (now going by Jair Messias Bolsonaro): the leading voice in broadcasting and propagating the concern about the ‘gay kit’, the combatant of the “gay kit” and the “gender ideology”, the “defendant of the traditional Brazilian families and moral”, and on the other side, the Minister of Education in office by the time of the attempted release of the school without homophobia programme, the “idealiser”, “creator” of the “gay

kit”, Fernando Haddad, the second runner in the elections. It becomes clear that what was at stake here was the struggle between two competing ideological projects; it was, yes, a contest between two competing figures (the one who launched a progressive programme and the one who came to power on the strength of problematic critiques of it) but it was much larger than that. It is about how the political imaginary is deeply interlinked with these personalities, with competing notions of what a Brazilian citizen should be.

‘I came back to this episode, relatively dated, because it seems to me that it expresses very well the phenomenon that transcends it. In an article for the New Yorker magazine *Dissent*, the American philosopher Nancy Fraser discussed Donald Trump’s election and what she called the ‘defeat of the progressive Neoliberalism’. In the text, Fraser shows how it constituted in the US the dispute between two models of Right wing: the progressive neoliberalism from Clinton and Obama’s administration and the protofascism of Trump, with its protectionist discourse for economy and its regressive conservatism in relation to customs and civil rights (...) the great advantage of the American neoliberalism, which was the dialogue with minorities – LGBT, women, black community and immigrants – got lost. What we saw in Brazil from past years was something slightly different: these *two categories of Right merged themselves, in way that even our neoliberal right started to cultivate intolerance*. The socio-economic victory of PT’s project until 2013 was so striking – growth with wealth distribution and amplification of public services – that there was very little left for the civilised version of the *Tucana Right*⁵⁹. It could no longer afford to be neo-liberal and progressive. To face the new reality, the tucanos started to incorporate in their discourse, elements of the worst kind of conservatism. (...) *when they radicalised their conservative discourse, the party revolved the political field where it flourished the extreme right in Brazil*.

⁵⁹ Tucano is a Brazilian bird that is the symbol of the PSDB party, the most important Brazilian rightist party historically.

The ones who opened the Pandora box from where the presidential candidate Jair Bolsonaro emerged, were the tucanos. Similar movement occurred in the press (...) [that] legitimised, made it palatable and gave serious facets to a very regressive agenda' (ibid, emphasis mine).

This rising of the far-right has been argued to be part of a global pattern, amongst which we can find movements such as *Dutertism* in the Philippines, *Trumpism* in America, *Modism* in India and so on. Brazil has proven to be part of the same trend, although there are specificities about Brazilian's case compared to other right-wing governed places, as highlighted by Haddad in his interview. In Brazil, even the neoliberal right does not have to pretend to be even to the slightest, tolerant. As opposed to other places, in Brazil, the neoliberal right has been showing signs of complete disregard, even for appearances, as opposed to other places where the neoliberal right, for various reasons, especially around the economy, tends to wish to be seen as not socially regressive. In Brazil, the two categories of right, conservative and neoliberal right, merged themselves in a way that it makes it possible for the neoliberal one to take socially regressive and ultraconservative stands. Even though the *Escola sem Homofobia* material received a varied set of critiques, the whole set had been approved by the LGBTQIA+ community and the UNESCO at that time showed support for its distribution: 'the material from the *Escola sem Homofobia* are adequate to the age and affective-cognitive development range to which it is destined at' (INESC, 2011), informed a report signed by Vincenti Defourny, representative of the entity in Brazil. Similarly, after the protests that took place in May 25th 2011, the then-president Dilma Rousseff, who was already facing issues of cohesion in her mandate, gave in to the pressure and suspended the distribution of the *Escola sem Homofobia* material. Therefore, the discussions concerning the project of the mythical idea of the denomination "Gay Kit" and its impact on the educational system of Brazil, as well as its influence on the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, are critical in the current study analysis as such discourses serve to demonstrate how the mythical concepts imparted to the citizens as forms of knowledge lay the foundation for the emergence of political ideas that promote seclusion

or discriminatory practices within the contemporary society, as readily understood in the analysis regarding Bolsonarismo in Brazil for the current study scenario.

5.3.3 The Myth of the “Penis Baby Bottles”

Another widespread *fake news* during the building up to Bolsonaro’s election was that the PT would distribute at nurseries baby milk bottles with tiny penis-shaped rubber nozzles. There were many videos and alleged “real photos”, in fact, fabricated (see below) that went viral during Bolsonaro’s campaign, and a considerable portion of the population really believed this fabricated lie that was fed them during the run for elections. Most of the videos were shut down after the decision of the electoral court, which I will mention soon, however, I was able to find one as an example of the kind of propaganda that was broadcast. The extract below is from one of the videos of the sort, the *Modus Operandi* was, homemade videos, badly edited, badly filmed, giving an impression of authenticity, a regular citizen concerned with the wellbeing of his family as if he had gotten access to the bottle at his child’s nursery. The person who recorded this is a man, he uses deeply gendered language, with religious-like expressions such as ‘preach’ and links the attempt of addressing and tackling homophobia in the school environment to the encouragement of degenerate practices and an alleged brainwashing intent to transform children in homosexuals and somehow encourage pedophilia, which forms the basis for the political ideology of Bolsonarismo in Brazil.



Source: (Editorial Pragmatismo Político, 2018).

‘Look here, you guys that vote for PT, this here is the baby bottle that is distributed at nurseries, look at the mark here. Distributed at the nursery for your son, *using the excuse of combating homophobia* [opens the bottle and the bottle beak is a rubber

penis] look at the beak how it is, look! The PT and Haddad *preach* this for your *son*, look! Your 5 or 6-year-old *son* will drink his bottle at the nursery with this here, to combat homophobia. Got to vote (sic) for Bolsonaro, man! *Bolsonaro that will make our children man and woman*. The PT and Haddad, Lula, Dilma only want this here for our children [shows the penis top of the bottle]. *This is part of the 'gay kit', look! Haddad's invention'* (Salva, 2017, emphasis mine).

Other than the above excerpt by Salva (2017) concerning the role of political myths within the education system in shaping the national political ideology such as the rise of Bolsonarismo in Brazil that tend to promote certain extraneous political ideologies and the agenda of the political elite such as seclusion and discriminatory practices based on gender, sexuality and race, it emerged that the bombarding of videos, memes, images and texts involving this false allegation was so widespread and played such a big part in the campaign that it got to the point that the superior electoral court had to step in and say that it was fake news (Editorial Pragmatismo Político, 2018). This aspect of the use of myths in education to promote the commencement of Bolsonarismo might sound extremely ludicrous and silly and hard to believe. However, Flood (2013) reminds us of 'the role of propaganda and even delusion in political myth but refuses to reduce political myth to either mere brainwashing or sheer emotion. He shows how, even if political myths seem blatantly false or preposterous to others, they are plausible to adherents' (Flood, 2013, p. xi, xii). Therefore, as applied to the current study regarding Bolsonarismo in Brazil, the inconsistencies in the mythical aspects in the system of education of Brazil can only be interpreted to promote certain extraneous political ideologies and the agenda of the political elite such as seclusion and discriminatory practices based on gender, sexuality and race, as readily evident in Bolsonarismo in Brazil.

5.3.4 *The Myth of the Saviour*

According to Weyland (2001) the [self]coronation of the populist leader as a saviour figure is one of the main features of populism. It is a key aspect of it, the populist leader present himself as this hero that will rescue the *common man*, they ‘act’ like the common man (see Bolsonaro’s outfits- football jerseys, tracksuit bottoms and so on, for official engagements; his videos eating “bread and butter” and drinking coffee in a *copo americano*- a particular glass that is present in most working class Brazilian households) and so many other examples. In the words of the author:

‘They seek frequent *face-to-face contacts with the masses*, now often through television, *act in ways that embody and live out the dreams of the common man*, *promise to include the long neglected populace in the mainstream of development and protect it from sinister forces*, and instill in their followers a *sense of mission to transform the status quo and transcend the confines of the established institutional framework in order to find redemption under their savior’s guidance*’ (Weyland, 2001, p. 14, emphasis mine).

To deal with conspirators who plot against the people in the dead of night, secretly, nothing better than a mythological figure who brings light to the people: the figure of the saviour such as the actions of Bolsonarismo in serving as an alternative to the traditional conceptions such as Communism and Marxist ideologies. Giradert considered that the myth of the saviour is characterised by a strong collective dimension related to the hero, in either time of peace or war. He is the providential figure, a prophet even, a messiah. The irony here is that Jair Bolsonaro’s middle name is Messiah (*Messias*) and this fact was widely explored in his campaign as well. He did not use to go by his middle name before contemplating presidential candidacy, but since he decided to run for office, he started ever more to highlight it in his public appearances, at one opportunity saying that even though ‘his mother

named him Messiah, he was not going to be the homeland saviour, that would be all of us [Brazilian nation]' (Soares et al., 2019). In his official profile as a Deputy (Congress official website), for years, the name shown was 'Jair Bolsonaro' (CD, 2019). Now, as the president, he keeps on emphasising this; in his official profile as president, he goes by 'Jair Messias Bolsonaro' instead (PR, 2019). The construction of this myth takes place from the capitalisation of popular dissatisfaction and disillusionment with political representation as primarily facilitated the laws and policies in the system of education that promote seclusion and discrimination of the minority groups based on gender, race, and sexuality. This was evident in the context of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, thereby showing the role of the educational structures under PNE in promoting the political, cultural, social, and economic differences that are supported under the seclusion as the basis for national identity and political ideology under Bolsonarismo in Brazil.

In the words of Stoica (2017):

'The void generated by the lack of ideological substance is filled with stories rooted in political mythology, depicting characters with memorable and strongly opposed features ("good" versus "bad", "us" versus "them" etc.) as a means of simplifying the messages and of reaching out to all of those dissatisfied with the political process or simply uninterested in understanding the complexity of it. Reductionism is a strategy frequently used by populists, who over-simplify the political discourse' (Stoica, 2017, p. 73).

In times of *Lava a Jato* operation and the fight against corruption, with the prestige of politicians at worryingly low levels, the emergence of mythical figures, saviours of the homeland, occurs with ease. In this context, Bolsonaro emerges as the 'voice of the people' bringing about the binary division of: *us*, the saviours and honest, against *them*, the corrupt, who only act in defence of their own interests and not according to the wishes of the

Brazilian people. The myth of the saviour takes shape in through the image of the politician who does not appear in the accusations of *Lava Jato*, the hero who has been carried by the people in the cities he travels under the cries of the crowd of *BolsoMito* (BolsoMyth). Even though he assumed that he also received money from the JBS company, one of the main enterprises involved in the *Lava Jato* scandal. In the "Consultation of Donors and Suppliers of Candidate Campaigns" in the Superior Electoral Court, data showed that Congressman Jair Bolsonaro (PSC-RJ) received R\$ 200,000 from the JBS group during his 2014 campaign. The data also show that the deputy would have referred to the money as a donation to his party, which at the time was the PP. The deputy explained what had happened and that the money was not returned to Friboi / JBS, but to his party. He also admitted that the PP received, indeed, a bribe from JBS, but tried to ponder: 'the party received bribe, but which party does not receive bribes?', naturalising the fact and using that 'receives bribes but brings results'-like type of discourse. Moreover, Flávio Bolsonaro, as the leader of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, is involved in corruption scandals that allegedly might link up to Marielle Franco's assassination (Phillips and Kaiser, 2019 and Greenwald, 2019).

In terms of analysis, the myth of the conspiracy, addressed in a previous section directly connects to the creation of the myth of the Saviour. The idea of a supposed threat that there was an 'international conspiracy' to turn the whole of the Brazilian society, through the education of the children, into homosexuals as seen in chapter four and of transforming Brazil into a communist country is shared by Bolsonaro family, since his sons also have political careers. Eduardo Bolsonaro, 34, became Brazil's most voted Congressman with 1.8 million votes. Flávio Bolsonaro, 37, who was a State Congressman four times in Rio de Janeiro, won the first seat for the Senate in the state, with 32% of the valid votes (more than 4.2 million votes). Bolsonaro's two sons support the same ideas as their father, with a tendency towards the far right. Flavio has defended Brazilian's military dictatorship and was

accused of homophobia, while Eduardo also opposes gay marriage, communism and the *política de coat's* - 'quota policy' (affirmative action). Another son of Bolsonaro also works in politics (Carlos Bolsonaro, 35) but did not run for any office last elections in 2018. He had currently served a term in the City Council of Rio de Janeiro since 2000 when he was elected at age 17 and became the youngest City Councillor in Brazilian history.

'only the hero's enthusiasm and knowledge can restructure life in such a manner that it resembles the former social and political structure, towards which the members of the community long to return' (Giradet, cited in Stoica, 2017).

Therefore, as applied to the current study regarding Bolsonarismo in Brazil, the inconsistencies in the mythical aspects in the system of education of Brazil can only be interpreted to promote certain extraneous political ideologies and the agenda of the political elite such as seclusion and discriminatory practices based on gender, sexuality and race, as readily evident in Bolsonarismo in Brazil.

5.3.5 The Myth of the Golden Age and the Myth of the Unity

The myth of the golden age is related to the symbolic representation of childhood, in which there is the feeling of innocence and happiness on one side, and, on the other, the security of patriarchal authority. This security comes from a closed and protected social group, with a well-defined hierarchical structure, assuring all members of the community order, discipline and respect. This myth is directly linked to patriarchy and seclusion within the society in the context explained in the theory of intersectionality as pointed by Stoica (2017) 'The [seemingly] harmonically substantiated convergence between innocence and happiness on one side and the safety of the patriarchal authority on the other, represents the strongest trait of this specific myth' (p. 68). There was also great repercussion when he voted, as a Congressman, in the impeachment process of President Dilma Rousseff, when he honoured the Armed Forces and a colonel (commander Ulstra) recognised as a torturer by the

‘Truth Committee’. In the words of Stoica (2017) ‘the myth of the golden age is used to vividly create the ultimate aim of this movement, which in the populist imaginary engages all, or at least the majority of, the discontented with the status quo’ (p. 72).

On the interpretation of the myth of the golden age in Brazilian political and educational environment, the Minister of Education in Bolsonaro’s government said in an interview that the students have to learn what it means to be Brazilian, that we have to rescue “heroes” from the past that the PT tried to kill, for instance, Dom João VI (the Portuguese emperor that came to Brazil-Colony running away from Napoleon’s expansionism as discussed in chapter three). He paints Dom João VI as a ‘great statist, a great hero’ (Castro et al., 2019, p. 6) rather than the ‘lazy chicken eater’ that the ‘PT tried to paint him as’ (ibid). This trend of recycling figures, turning them into myths and heroes is a strategy widely used in politics and is not something new. When studying the Balkans and its ‘renewal of the past’, Ivan Colovic (2000) wrote that ‘in several instances, a connection to the ideological past has been explicitly sought from within the horizon of the present. This renewal of ancient myths is politically motivated by the desire to construct a putative continuity between certain ideas and goals’ (p. 1).

On the contrary, the Myth of the Unity represents the last of the four political myths which passes the image of a group of people who struggle for the same ideals and live in harmony. As emphasised by Stoica (2017) regarding the association of the myth of the unity as embraced in the educational domain of Brazil and the corresponding influence on the emergence of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, the scholar noted:

‘Unity ultimately represents the quintessential condition for the political salvation of any community that dares to hope or to dream for a better common future (or for the same matter, for a return of the lost glorious times). Unity is portrayed to be the best answer to the variety of crises that shake civilisation’ (Stoica, 2017, p. 68).

The idea of shared community is limited in populist rhetoric, thereby showing the implications of the myth of unity in shaping the discourse surrounding seclusion and discriminatory practices based on sexuality, gender and race under Bolsonarismo in Brazil. For instance, the definition of people, for the populists, is restricted only to those considered rightful, and may be a more or less symbolic exclusion, ‘populists portray the world as a space of uncertainty, where one can never be too careful when relating to others – especially to some specific “others”, most frequently minorities – ethnic, sexual, racial, etc.’ (Stoica, 2017, p. 71). Under this argument by Stoica (2017), the ideals of Bolsonarismo in Brazil emerge as the postulate leads to Bolsonaro's extreme behaviour in matters of gender, homophobia, social classes, and so on. Although he denies that he is homophobic, Bolsonaro has already defended physical aggression by parents who suspect that their son is homosexual, in addition to claiming that he prefers a dead son to a gay heir. According to Stoica (2017), ‘political myths are even more noticeable in the discourse of political movements that do not have a solid ideological foundation, such as populism’ (p. 70), which is clearly the case of *Bolsonarismo*.

Brazil’s president elect has been called many things by the international press, ‘The Trump of the Tropics’ (Phillips, 2018), ‘Trump clone’ (Birkenbuel, 2019), ‘Duterte’s Brazilian Brother’, ‘Trump’s “brother in arms”’ and so on. However, in Brazil, he has had for years the nickname *mito* which even though literally translates as a *myth*, it would be most accurately interpreted in the English language as *legend*. but when the nickname came about, it had a more of a caricaturesque kind of meaning, as in he was so full of nonsense that he could not even be real. He was made up. It is hard to pinpoint exactly when Brazilians started to refer to him as a myth as in legend. The name has not changed, but it came to mean something different. Moreover, suddenly statements made by Bolsonaro, such as: ‘What debt of slavery? I never enslaved anyone in my life’ (Biler, 2018), ‘Look, if you really look at

history, the Portuguese didn't even step foot in Africa. The blacks themselves turned over the slaves' (ibid), 'I can't say that I'll end quotas, because it depends on Congress. At least decrease the percentage' (ibid), 'I will not fight nor discriminate, but if I see two men kissing in the street, I'll hit them' (Tsjeng, 2018), 'When I was young, talking about percentages, there were few [gay people]. Over time, due to liberal habits, drugs, with women also working, the number of homosexuals has really increased' (ibid) and an infinity of others stopped being absurd and mythical in a negative sense. They became legendary, a bit "rough around the edges" but honest statements to be admired for their courage and authenticity. Bolsonaro got to the point of getting away with an apology to rape: '[De Rosario] doesn't deserve to be raped, because she's very ugly. She's not my type. I would never rape her. I'm not a rapist, but if I were, I wouldn't rape her because she doesn't deserve it' (Tsjeng, 2018) and 'He's also referred to the Afro-Brazilians who live in *quilombos* as "parasites" who "weren't even fit for breeding," and has hinted at plans to curb the country's federal affirmative action laws that benefit black Brazilians and poor people in universities' (Griffin, 2018). While denying that he is a racist, Bolsonaro referred to *quilombolas* black minorities as: 'the lightest Afro descendant there weighed seven arrobas [arroba is a measure used to weigh cattle, each one equals 15 kg]. They don't do a thing. I don't even think that he would be useful not even as a procreator anymore' (Veja, 2017).

Consequently, as applied to the scenario in Brazil and the emergence of Bolsonarismo, the identification of Captain Jair Bolsonaro with the myth of the golden age is instantaneous: his cult of the military dictatorship, a period considered by him as a period of peace and progress. Hence its campaign slogan to the Presidency: Brazil above all! (The same slogan used in Nazi Germany: *Germany above all*). In terms of similarity to other myths in the educational niche of Brazil earlier discussed under this chapter as well as the correlation of the myth to the political ideology of Bolsonarismo in Brazil, the myth of the

golden age clearly relates to the “gay kit” widespread fear in society, that would harm the peaceful and pure times of childhood by harming children’s untainted minds.

5.4 Chapter Summary

The present chapter aimed at showing the different ways in which specific narratives of education and national identity were deployed by Bolsonarismo and its followers to demonise the opponents as “*weak*” *Other* and represent themselves as the “*strong*” *Self*. It argued that the waging of culture wars against progressive and inclusive education is a political strategy that results in people being misinformed, denied access to knowledge, fed specific kinds of propaganda and lies, hugely impacting macro-politics. As much as the Parliament, the classroom is the unacknowledged battleground between those who are portrayed as the “corruptors” of society (distributors of “gay kits”, promoters of “gender ideologies”, part of the “international conspiracy”, “destroyers” of the nation) and the ones who “*have to keep tradition*”, *keep values, morale and respect of the nation*. Moreover, the chapter delved into analyses regarding how entrenched notions allow for the construction of myths, an exclusionary national identity and political-ideological positions such as the aspects of discrimination and seclusion of the minority groups based on sexuality, gender, and race, as evident in Bolsonarismo.

The current chapter mounted crucial discussions concerning movements such as the EsP and the various myths these kinds of movements are built upon, all which have lay the foundation for the emergence of political ideas that promote seclusion or discriminatory practices and strengthened Bolsonarismo. It is noteworthy to emphasise that under Bolsonarismo the education project is to extinguish critical, progressive and emancipatory forms of education by instigating a state of fear, and the cultural wars it has engaged in have played an enormous role in allowing for that.

Chapter Six: Conclusions

The current chapter contains the conclusions emanating from the arguments presented within the previous chapters and suggestions for further the research area. Precisely, the chapter captures the centrality of cultural wars on progressive educational policies and structures as a populist political strategy for right-wing movements such as Bolsonarismo. Education is central in promoting or resisting the racialised, sexualised and gendered narratives expressed by stakeholders in shaping the national identity of the country but it can also be hijacked by right-wing candidates/ government as the fuel for cultural wars.

The methodology embraced in the current study scenario involved a critical analysis of primary and secondary data to investigate the stipulated topic for the research while responding to the formulated research questions. Specifically, the methodology entailed using relevant data from databases as mentioned in chapter one, which included JSTOR, SciELO, Taylor & Francis, ScienceDirect, SAGE Journals, ERIC, IBGE (Brazilian census bureau) and Brazilian Congress databases. Moreover, the information utilised within the current study context emerged from a range of online and print sources, such as the reports obtained from various governmental and non-governmental agencies that tackle the gender, sexuality and race aspects of national identity; articles from newspaper sources addressing the targeted topics, policy documents which highlight the laws on education, reports on speeches (primary data) and debates in congress as well as peer-reviewed journal articles on the subject of education as core topic for the evolution of national identity and the use of cultural wars as a populist political tool for right-wing governments. Critical discourse analysis was the technique adopted to analyse the obtained primary and secondary data sources and as the tool to interrogate the implications of cultural wars against the PNE in shaping the national identity and strengthening Bolsonarismo within the Brazilian state.

6.1 National Identity, Education and Bolsonarismo

One main research question and six research sub-questions were formulated for the current study scenario. The main research question stipulated as follows: *What are the elements of Brazilian national identity in education policies that were championed by Bolsonarists in order to build political support for the 2018 elections and to remain in power?*

In providing a comprehensive response to the first research question, the findings of the analysis within the current study demonstrated a strong correlation or a co-dependent relationship between national identity and education through an explanation concerning how and why the two variables in the research walk hand in hand and feed into each other. The findings of the current study primarily demonstrated the centrality of education in shaping how the citizens of Brazil understand their cultural or political values and the aspect that the emergence of Bolsonarismo connects deeply to the role of education in the creation of the political or national identity of the country. Moreover, the study confirmed that the strong correlation between Brazil's national identity and the existing educational policies or structures are the direct consequence of the mythology that serve as tools for the furtherance of the agenda of politicians such as Bolsonaro thereby contributing to the rise and maintenance of Bolsonarismo. The results further disclosed the contested nature of the national or political identity in Brazil, which is justified by the Bolsonaro election and the rise of the counter movement such as the 'snitch on a teacher' within the country. Additionally, the analysis of the data sources obtained for the current study disclosed the strong correlation between national or political identity and the educational structures or policies in Brazil under the PNE arrangements, as evident in the continuous word of Bolsonaro as the president instructs students to adopt a culture that discourages discussions on sexuality, gender and race within schools.

In providing further responses to the main research question, the outcome of the analyses of the primary and secondary information that included the various speeches or debates within the political domain demonstrated the role of the policies in education in revolutionising national identity within the Brazilian state. Under this aspect, the findings disclosed a close connection between educational structures and systems perceived as the primary tool for seclusion or disenfranchising minority groups under the theory of intersectionality. The seclusion aspects are evident in the discriminatory practices promoted by the *elite do atraso*, especially based on sexuality, gender, and race as the core pillars of Bolsonarismo. Other areas for judicial involvement include the conduct of the teaching staff. In the analysis of the findings, the current study ascertained the scope of EsP as an emerging paradigm, which helps in the initiatives towards rethinking the educational setting of Brazil. Specifically, the outcomes demonstrated that the environment for education in the country is perceived as the battlefield for those involved in the ‘indoctrination of learners,’ as evident under Bolsonarismo, and the ‘victims,’ thereby enabling the judiciary to emerge as the impartial and neutral player in the disputes that shape the national identity of Brazil. Therefore, in response to the first research question, the current study provided a justification regarding the overall role of educational structures or policies in shaping the discourse surrounding the rise of the political or national ideology of Bolsonarismo in creating a national identity for the country.

Education policies often reflects power relations rather than liberates and empowers oppressed groups. Whilst power remains in the hands of specific groups and shaping processes and policies according to the group’s specific identities, the education system reflects this. When power shifts to a mixed group, the education system is used to attempt to create a new national identity, which is multiracial, multicultural and multi-ethnic, as illustrated by Msila (2007). Racism uses education as a tool. Antiracism uses education as a

tool. For opposing purposes. Education is therefore a tool to create a national identity, either to resolve issues of multiracialism, injustices and so on or to reinforce a particular gender/sexual/racial group's dominance which is clearly the case in right-wing populism. All the analysed sources of information demonstrated that knowledge is about power as entrenched within the educational structures and processes created by the policies or laws in Brazil. Therefore, the struggle of power between those who want to exclude and those who wish to include is evident under Bolsonarismo in Brazil, a right-wing populist strategy to get to power and stay in office.

The first research sub-question formulated was: ***What are the ways in which education connects to national identity and populism?***

6.2 Cultural Wars, Education and Bolsonarismo

The second research sub-question was: ***How and why did Bolsonarismo engage in cultural wars against the PNE?***

The outcome of the analysis in the current study in response to the fourth research question formulated for the current study demonstrated the centrality of education through the laws, policies, systems and structures such as PNE in shaping the political ideology or nationalist perspectives within Brazil. For example, the findings of the analyses of the primary and sources of information obtained for the current research demonstrated that the educational policies and related PNE structures are currently utilised to support the Bolsonarismo project. The outcome confirmed the centrality of the educational policies in Brazil in shaping the perspectives of different people in society, including children, and the involvement of other educational stakeholders in imparting knowledge and power. Moreover, the current study showed the correlation between familial bonding and the criticality of family aspects in impacting the national ideology. The study depicted the adverse implications of the exposure of young people to educational structures that promote seclusion

or discriminatory practices as a direct consequence of laws or policies which promote bias based on sexuality, race, and gender, hence contributing to marginalisation in the Brazilian state.

The current study outcome showed the process of construction of a national identity or political ideology of Bolsonarismo through the analysis of the educational policies, laws, and structures under PNE. In particular, the researcher affirmed the falsification of the national identity in Brazil, which is constructed based on a singular group of people (white supremacy) even though the state contains other people from different ethnic formations, which include the Asians, Africans, native cultures and the Europeans.

The findings demonstrated the centrality of the various myths in the educational system which inspire discriminatory practices and seclusion under Bolsonarismo, hence serving as an affront to democratic practice and equity in contemporary Brazilian society. However, the outcome of the current study demonstrated that the issues of inequality and injustices based on race, gender, and sexuality are escalating under Bolsonaro, thereby necessitating the inherent need for a reconstruction of the national or political identity of the country, and further captured in the recommendations, as discussed further on.

The third research sub-question was: ***What is the evolution of the policies of education under the national planning agenda in Brazil and its impact on the issues of racism, gender, and sexual-based discrimination in the country?***

The research sought to ascertain how the historical adjustments evident within the structures or policies embraced in the educational domain impact the discourse on equal treatment of the minority groups and the *elite do atraso* in the country under the current regime of Bolsonarismo. Specifically, the idea of how national identity is shaped in Brazil with the findings showing the heterogeneous nature of the populace in Brazil was interrogated, which inspires the discourse on national unity and the degree of the hegemonic

idea of the Brazilian state. Under this aspect, the study disclosed a considerable level of commonality among the citizens that inspire the overall identification of the population as nationhood, as the basis for promoting political or national ideologies such as Bolsonarismo. The study showed the role of the educational structures or policies under PNE in perpetuating the discussion on the hegemonic state with the results disclosing significant seclusion or discriminatory practices that hinder the attainment of the objective of commonality among citizens in Brazil. Besides, the outcome of the current study addressed the third research question by confirming the existence of different people from a common origin who inhabit the territory of Brazil as the core of national identity. Through Bolsonarismo, the current study demonstrated a fundamental disconnect between citizens and the nation through the emergence of Bolsonarismo. The *elite do atraso* exclude the minority within the republic. It further emerged that there is significant inconsistency in the definition of “nation,” which contributes to the shortcoming in the discourse on national identity in Brazil by various players in the political and educational domain, thereby leading to the rise of the Bolsonarismo project within the country. Therefore, the outcome of the analysis in the current study context demonstrated how the challenges evident in the educational sector, including the aspects of PNE (after and before the election of Bolsonaro), show the centrality of education in reinforcing ideas of Brazilian national identity that furthers the agenda of the ruling elites.

The fourth research sub-question was: ***How have the educational policies or laws been used by Bolsonarismo in the Brazilian state?***

Under this aspect of the research question, the study investigated the aspect regarding how the national identity is contested when it comes to gender, sexuality, and race. As confirmed under chapter three in the current study context, the findings of the current study demonstrated that gender, as a critical aspect of the theory of intersectionality, is a contested

ideal with the ideas or discussions surrounding the concept relating to the elements of race or sexuality. The findings of the current study disclosed the correlation between the theory of intersectionality and the aspects of cultural, economic, or social inequalities that form the core of gender, race, or sexuality discourses within the educational structures or policies (PNEs) in the Brazilian state. The outcome drew a strong correlation between the measures created in the existing policies or laws within the educational sector of Brazil and the essential elements of Bolsonarismo, such as discrimination and seclusion of the minority groups based on gender, sexuality, and race. Consequently, through the interrogation of the primary sources of data such as the speeches as well as the debates provided in the political and educational contexts of Brazil by the proponents and the activists against Bolsonarismo, it emerged that the educational policies or the PNE structures impart knowledge that discourages constructive discussions on sexuality. For example, the current research confirmed the detrimental nature of discussions which promote the usage of words or phrases that encourage seclusion based on sexuality, gender or race, as such utterances negatively impact the national unity in Brazil, hence showing how educational policies and PNE structures affect inclusion and equality that have led to the emergence of Bolsonarismo in the Brazilian state.

The outcome of the analysis in the current study insofar as a contestation of national identity on the sexuality, gender, and race frontier is concerned disclosed that the continuous inclusion of utterances or discourses that are related to feminism in the political landscape of Brazil promote marginalisation of the minority factions by the elite. For instance, the seclusion of individuals through gender, sexuality, and racial connotations as the core elements of Bolsonarismo in the Brazilian state create avenues for comparison between the male and female gender. For instance, through imparting knowledge in the educational structures that depict the male as rational, healthy, robust, bold, or fearless as compared to the

contrasting depiction of the female gender as irrational or weak, the educational system of Brazil promotes bias that contributes to the inequality or dominance of the male gender, thereby contributing to the seclusion or marginalisation as the core of Bolsonarismo. Under this finding, the current study promoted the appreciation of gender in terms of its social construct dimension and the fact that the concept continually evolves within contemporary society. For example, the exclusion of individuals based on gender was shown through the inconsistencies in the procedure mounted and the various irregularities inherent in the process of Lula, which depicted high levels of favouritism or bias in the policies or structures of education, hence promoting seclusion and discriminatory practices based on sexuality, race or gender within the Brazilian state. Consequently, as applied to the current research scenario, the findings of the analysis in the current study disclose the various inconsistencies as evident in the myths that are inherent in the structures of education (PNE) within Brazil, which are interpreted to support the extraneous national ideology of Bolsonarismo through discrimination and seclusion based on sexuality, race or gender, hence the urgent need for reforms.

Similarly, based on the analysis of the debates and the speeches in the political and educational domain, the outcome of the current study showed that by ignoring the aspects of sexuality, gender, and race as the core credentials which should guide the formulation of laws or policies under PNE or the educational system, the stakeholders in the Brazilian jurisdiction form part of the seclusion or discriminatory practices that historically adversely affect the minority in the society. Under the current study, it was demonstrated that for the attainment of equity in the society within Brazil, there is a need for further interrogation of the correlation between the male and female gender to alleviate the latter from exclusion under Bolsonarismo. Therefore, as adequately captured under chapter one in the current study scenario, the current understanding of national or political identity in Brazil majorly supports

a gendered approach towards existence in society. For example, national identity is perceived in terms of biases relating to sexuality, gender, or race as the basis for Bolsonarismo hence the necessity for an overhaul of the educational system in ways that improve the quality of the knowledge disseminated to the citizens under the PNE or educational structures or Brazil.

6.3 Brazil's Education History and Bolsonarismo

The fifth research sub-question was: *How do the historical adjustments to the systems and processes of education, as well as the laws or policies in Brazil affect equal treatment between the “elite do atraso”⁶⁰ and the minority factions within the country under Bolsonarismo?*

The current study context sought to ascertain whether the rapid evolution in the existing structures of education, that bring together aspects of the policies, laws, and PNE, serve as contributory factors to the adverse impacts of Bolsonarismo, including issues of discriminatory practices, racism, and exclusion in the contemporary society in the Brazilian state. Under this question, the outcome of the analysis in the current study confirmed the way educational structures or systems under PNE affect the national ideology hence leading to a contestation debate on the concept of a ‘nation’ that impacts the aspect of national identity.

The outcome emanating from the political project under Bolsonarismo and the implications of the educational structures or policies on the national ideology that shape the rise of Bolsonarismo served to justify a strong correlation between the study variables of education and the political-ideological perspectives in the Brazilian jurisdiction. Further interrogation of the literature sources analysed in the current study scenario confirmed the concept of national identity and its correlation with educational structures (PNEs), and the policies in Brazil could be appreciated through constructivism or essentialism. For instance,

⁶⁰ *Elite do atraso* is a term [and title of his book] coined by the Brazilian sociologist Jessé José Freire de Souza which has been translated to English as ‘*Backwards Elite*’. The book that introduces the term is a theorisation of the specificities of the *Brazilian middle class* with its backwards beliefs and prejudices. See Souza (2019).

under the findings of the current study, it emerged that the ideological position under the essentialists' perspective offers a close connection in the narratives concerning how national identity is displaced in Brazil. On the contrary, the constructivist perspective furthered the discussion on the perception of the concept of national identity as an evolving aspect that varies based on the political landscape of a country. Consequently, the analysis of the current study disclosed that national identity in the Brazilian state is widely disputed under the rise of the dual viewpoints that incorporate both the exclusionary and inclusionary ideologies. For instance, the exclusionary ideology was evident under the PNE politics as the structures and policies in the educational sector were used in furtherance of the interests of Bolsonarismo on behalf of the *elite do atraso*.

The sixth research sub-question *was: **Whether the rapid changes in the processes or systems of education, including the laws or policies guiding the education, have contributed to the greater degree of the adverse implications of Bolsonarismo such as discriminatory practices, racism, and exclusion in the contemporary Brazilian society?***

Under this question, the outcome of the analysis in the current study confirmed the way educational structures or systems under PNE affect the national ideology hence leading to a contestation debate on the concept of a 'nation' that impacts the aspect of national identity. The outcome emanating from the political project under Bolsonarismo and the implications of the educational structures or policies on the national ideology that shape the rise of Bolsonarismo served to justify a strong correlation between the study variables of education and the political-ideological perspectives in the Brazilian jurisdiction. Further interrogation of the literature sources analysed in the current study scenario confirmed the concept of national identity and its correlation with educational structures (PNEs), and the policies in Brazil could be appreciated through constructivism or essentialism. For instance, under the findings of the current study, it emerged that the ideological position under the

essentialists' perspective offers a close connection in the narratives concerning how national identity is displaced in Brazilian. On the contrary, the constructivist perspective furthered the discussion on the perception of the concept of national identity as an evolving aspect that varies based on the political landscape of a country. Consequently, the analysis of the current study disclosed that national identity in the Brazilian state is widely disputed under the rise of the dual viewpoints that incorporate both the exclusionary and inclusionary ideologies. For instance, the exclusionary ideology was evident under the PNE politics as the structures and policies in the educational sector were used in furtherance of the extraneous agenda Bolsonarismo.

6.4 Final Remarks

The research aimed at expanding the literature on how right-wing populist leaders use cultural wars to expand its reach beyond its core niche to get into office, and how education policy can be a powerful tool in their strategy. The cultural wars on progressive education policies [policies aimed at tackling oppressions (such as gender inequality, homophobia, racism and misogyny, and at including marginalised identities)] is a political strategy that contemporary right-wing populist movements use to gain and retain power. Studying the dynamics of these wars waged by right-wing populists can provide means so we can tackle the electoral legitimization of them. As Kaul (2020) so rightly concludes: ‘while misogyny in all its variations may be with us for a while, yet *understanding and analysing the dynamics of its use by right-wing authoritarians in contemporary democracies can at least assist us in undermining its electoral legitimization* (Kaul, 2021, p. 1639, emphasis mine).

What this thesis has argued is that the electoral phenomenon that is Bolsonarismo cannot be understood fully without being seen as a full-fledged political movement that draws upon, and further reinforces, specific exclusivist readings of Brazilian national identity. This movement highlights the centrality of gender, race and sexuality in the

construction of a national identity. Education is not a neutral subject of public life but a site of contestation for the creation of exclusivist populist-national identity of the kind Bolsonarismo aim for as well as inclusivist national identity that is mindful of plurality.

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Appendices

Appendix I - Plano Nacional de Educação

Plano Nacional de Educação 2014-2024: Lei nº 13.005, de 25 de junho de 2014

LEI Nº 13.005/2014 - Aprova o Plano Nacional de Educação - PNE e dá outras providências.

Aprova o Plano Nacional de Educação - PNE e dá outras providências.

A PRESIDENTA DA REPÚBLICA Faço saber que o Congresso Nacional decreta e eu sanciono a seguinte Lei:

Art. 1º É aprovado o Plano Nacional de Educação - PNE, com vigência por 10 (dez) anos, a contar da publicação desta Lei, na forma do Anexo, com vistas ao cumprimento do disposto no art. 214 da Constituição Federal.

Art. 2º São diretrizes do PNE:

- I - erradicação do analfabetismo;
- II - universalização do atendimento escolar;
- III - superação das desigualdades educacionais, com ênfase na promoção da cidadania e na erradicação de todas as formas de discriminação;
- IV - melhoria da qualidade da educação;
- V - formação para o trabalho e para a cidadania, com ênfase nos valores morais e éticos em que se fundamenta a sociedade;
- VI - promoção do princípio da gestão democrática da educação pública;
- VII - promoção humanística, científica, cultural e tecnológica do País;
- VIII - estabelecimento de meta de aplicação de recursos públicos em educação como proporção do Produto Interno Bruto - PIB, que assegure atendimento às necessidades de expansão, com padrão de qualidade e equidade;
- IX - valorização dos (as) profissionais da educação;

X - promoção dos princípios do respeito aos direitos humanos, à diversidade e à sustentabilidade socioambiental.

Art. 3º As metas previstas no Anexo desta Lei serão cumpridas no prazo de vigência deste PNE, desde que não haja prazo inferior definido para metas e estratégias específicas.

Art. 4º As metas previstas no Anexo desta Lei deverão ter como referência a Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios - PNAD, o censo demográfico e os censos nacionais da educação básica e superior mais atualizados, disponíveis na data da publicação desta Lei.

Parágrafo único. O poder público buscará ampliar o escopo das pesquisas com fins estatísticos de forma a incluir informação detalhada sobre o perfil das populações de 4 (quatro) a 17 (dezesete) anos com deficiência.

Art. 5º A execução do PNE e o cumprimento de suas metas serão objeto de monitoramento contínuo e de avaliações periódicas, realizados pelas seguintes instâncias:

I - Ministério da Educação - MEC;

II - Comissão de Educação da Câmara dos Deputados e Comissão de Educação, Cultura e Esporte do Senado Federal;

III - Conselho Nacional de Educação - CNE;

IV - Fórum Nacional de Educação.

§ 1º Compete, ainda, às instâncias referidas no caput:

I - divulgar os resultados do monitoramento e das avaliações nos respectivos sítios institucionais da internet;

II - analisar e propor políticas públicas para assegurar a implementação das estratégias e o cumprimento das metas;

III - analisar e propor a revisão do percentual de investimento público em educação.

§ 2º A cada 2 (dois) anos, ao longo do período de vigência deste PNE, o Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira - INEP publicará estudos para

aferir a evolução no cumprimento das metas estabelecidas no Anexo desta Lei, com informações organizadas por ente federado e consolidadas em âmbito nacional, tendo como referência os estudos e as pesquisas de que trata o art. 4º, sem prejuízo de outras fontes e informações relevantes.

§ 3º A meta progressiva do investimento público em educação será avaliada no quarto ano de vigência do PNE e poderá ser ampliada por meio de lei para atender às necessidades financeiras do cumprimento das demais metas.

§ 4º O investimento público em educação a que se referem o inciso VI do art. 214 da Constituição Federal e a meta 20 do Anexo desta Lei engloba os recursos aplicados na forma do art. 212 da Constituição Federal e do art. 60 do Ato das Disposições Constitucionais Transitórias, bem como os recursos aplicados nos programas de expansão da educação profissional e superior, inclusive na forma de incentivo e isenção fiscal, as bolsas de estudos concedidas no Brasil e no exterior, os subsídios concedidos em programas de financiamento estudantil e o financiamento de creches, pré-escolas e de educação especial na forma do art. 213 da Constituição Federal.

§ 5º Será destinada à manutenção e ao desenvolvimento do ensino, em acréscimo aos recursos vinculados nos termos do art. 212 da Constituição Federal, além de outros recursos previstos em lei, a parcela da participação no resultado ou da compensação financeira pela exploração de petróleo e de gás natural, na forma de lei específica, com a finalidade de assegurar o cumprimento da meta prevista no inciso VI do art. 214 da Constituição Federal.

Art. 6º A União promoverá a realização de pelo menos 2 (duas) conferências nacionais de educação até o final do decênio, precedidas de conferências distrital, municipais e estaduais, articuladas e coordenadas pelo Fórum Nacional de Educação, instituído nesta Lei, no âmbito do Ministério da Educação.

§ 1º O Fórum Nacional de Educação, além da atribuição referida no caput:

I - acompanhará a execução do PNE e o cumprimento de suas metas;

II - promoverá a articulação das conferências nacionais de educação com as conferências regionais, estaduais e municipais que as precederem.

§ 2º As conferências nacionais de educação realizar-se-ão com intervalo de até 4 (quatro) anos entre elas, com o objetivo de avaliar a execução deste PNE e subsidiar a elaboração do plano nacional de educação para o decênio subsequente.

Art. 7º A União, os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios atuarão em regime de colaboração, visando ao alcance das metas e à implementação das estratégias objeto deste Plano.

§ 1º Caberá aos gestores federais, estaduais, municipais e do Distrito Federal a adoção das medidas governamentais necessárias ao alcance das metas previstas neste PNE.

§ 2º As estratégias definidas no Anexo desta Lei não elidem a adoção de medidas adicionais em âmbito local ou de instrumentos jurídicos que formalizem a cooperação entre os entes federados, podendo ser complementadas por mecanismos nacionais e locais de coordenação e colaboração recíproca.

§ 3º Os sistemas de ensino dos Estados, do Distrito Federal e dos Municípios criarão mecanismos para o acompanhamento local da consecução das metas deste PNE e dos planos previstos no art. 8º.

§ 4º Haverá regime de colaboração específico para a implementação de modalidades de educação escolar que necessitem considerar territórios étnico-educacionais e a utilização de estratégias que levem em conta as identidades e especificidades socioculturais e linguísticas de cada comunidade envolvida, assegurada a consulta prévia e informada a essa comunidade.

§ 5º Será criada uma instância permanente de negociação e cooperação entre a União, os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios.

§ 6º O fortalecimento do regime de colaboração entre os Estados e respectivos Municípios incluirá a instituição de instâncias permanentes de negociação, cooperação e pactuação em cada Estado.

§ 7º O fortalecimento do regime de colaboração entre os Municípios dar-se-á, inclusive, mediante a adoção de arranjos de desenvolvimento da educação.

Art. 8º Os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios deverão elaborar seus correspondentes planos de educação, ou adequar os planos já aprovados em lei, em consonância com as diretrizes, metas e estratégias previstas neste PNE, no prazo de 1 (um) ano contado da publicação desta Lei.

§ 1º Os entes federados estabelecerão nos respectivos planos de educação estratégias que:

I - assegurem a articulação das políticas educacionais com as demais políticas sociais, particularmente as culturais;

II - considerem as necessidades específicas das populações do campo e das comunidades indígenas e quilombolas, asseguradas a equidade educacional e a diversidade cultural;

III - garantam o atendimento das necessidades específicas na educação especial, assegurado o sistema educacional inclusivo em todos os níveis, etapas e modalidades;

IV - promovam a articulação interfederativa na implementação das políticas educacionais.

§ 2º Os processos de elaboração e adequação dos planos de educação dos Estados, do Distrito Federal e dos Municípios, de que trata o caput deste artigo, serão realizados com ampla participação de representantes da comunidade educacional e da sociedade civil.

Art. 9º Os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios deverão aprovar leis específicas para os seus sistemas de ensino, disciplinando a gestão democrática da educação pública nos

respectivos âmbitos de atuação, no prazo de 2 (dois) anos contado da publicação desta Lei, adequando, quando for o caso, a legislação local já adotada com essa finalidade.

Art. 10. O plano plurianual, as diretrizes orçamentárias e os orçamentos anuais da União, dos Estados, do Distrito Federal e dos Municípios serão formulados de maneira a assegurar a consignação de dotações orçamentárias compatíveis com as diretrizes, metas e estratégias deste PNE e com os respectivos planos de educação, a fim de viabilizar sua plena execução.

Art. 11. O Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Básica, coordenado pela União, em colaboração com os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios, constituirá fonte de informação para a avaliação da qualidade da educação básica e para a orientação das políticas públicas desse nível de ensino.

§ 1º O sistema de avaliação a que se refere o caput produzirá, no máximo a cada 2 (dois) anos:

I - indicadores de rendimento escolar, referentes ao desempenho dos (as) estudantes apurado em exames nacionais de avaliação, com participação de pelo menos 80% (oitenta por cento) dos (as) alunos (as) de cada ano escolar periodicamente avaliado em cada escola, e aos dados pertinentes apurados pelo censo escolar da educação básica;

II - indicadores de avaliação institucional, relativos a características como o perfil do alunado e do corpo dos (as) profissionais da educação, as relações entre dimensão do corpo docente, do corpo técnico e do corpo discente, a infraestrutura das escolas, os recursos pedagógicos disponíveis e os processos da gestão, entre outras relevantes.

§ 2º A elaboração e a divulgação de índices para avaliação da qualidade, como o Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica - IDEB, que agreguem os indicadores mencionados no inciso I do § 1º não elidem a obrigatoriedade de divulgação, em separado, de cada um deles.

§ 3º Os indicadores mencionados no § 1º serão estimados por etapa, estabelecimento de ensino, rede escolar, unidade da Federação e em nível agregado nacional, sendo amplamente divulgados, ressalvada a publicação de resultados individuais e indicadores por turma, que fica admitida exclusivamente para a comunidade do respectivo estabelecimento e para o órgão gestor da respectiva rede.

§ 4º Cabem ao Inep a elaboração e o cálculo do Ideb e dos indicadores referidos no § 1º.

§ 5º A avaliação de desempenho dos (as) estudantes em exames, referida no inciso I do § 1º, poderá ser diretamente realizada pela União ou, mediante acordo de cooperação, pelos Estados e pelo Distrito Federal, nos respectivos sistemas de ensino e de seus Municípios, caso mantenham sistemas próprios de avaliação do rendimento escolar, assegurada a compatibilidade metodológica entre esses sistemas e o nacional, especialmente no que se refere às escalas de proficiência e ao calendário de aplicação.

Art. 12. Até o final do primeiro semestre do nono ano de vigência deste PNE, o Poder Executivo encaminhará ao Congresso Nacional, sem prejuízo das prerrogativas deste Poder, o projeto de lei referente ao Plano Nacional de Educação a vigorar no período subsequente, que incluirá diagnóstico, diretrizes, metas e estratégias para o próximo decênio.

Art. 13. O poder público deverá instituir, em lei específica, contados 2 (dois) anos da publicação desta Lei, o Sistema Nacional de Educação, responsável pela articulação entre os sistemas de ensino, em regime de colaboração, para efetivação das diretrizes, metas e estratégias do Plano Nacional de Educação.

Art. 14. Esta Lei entra em vigor na data de sua publicação.

Brasília, 25 de junho de 2014; 193º da Independência e 126º da República.

DILMA ROUSSEFF

Guido Mantega

José Henrique Paim Fernandes

Miriam Belchior

Este texto não substitui o publicado no DOU de 26.6.2014 - Edição extra

Appendix 2 - Law project of the Plano Nacional de Educacao 2011-2021

Projeto de Lei nº 8035/2010.



CÂMARA DOS DEPUTADOS

*PROJETO DE LEI N.º 8.035-C, DE 2010 (Do Poder Executivo)

Ofício no 2.816/2013-SF

SUBSTITUTIVO DO SENADO FEDERAL AO PROJETO DE LEI Nº 8.035-B, DE 2010, que "Aprova o Plano Nacional de Educação (PNE) e dá outras providências".

DESPACHO:

À COMISSÃO ESPECIAL DESTINADA A PROFERIR PARECER AO PROJETO DE LEI Nº 8035, DE 2010, DO PODER EXECUTIVO, QUE "APROVA O PLANO NACIONAL DE EDUCAÇÃO PARA O DECÊNIO 2011-2020 E DÁ OUTRAS PROVIDÊNCIAS".

POR OPORTUNO, EM RAZÃO DE SUA COMPETÊNCIA, DETERMINO QUE A CCTCI TAMBÉM COMPONHA A REFERIDA COMISSÃO ESPECIAL QUE APRECIARÁ A MATÉRIA.

APRECIÇÃO:

Proposição Sujeita à Apreciação do Plenário

S U M Á R I O

I - Autógrafos do PL 8.035-B/10, aprovado na Câmara dos Deputados em 16/10/2012

II – Substitutivo do Senado Federal

*Atualizado em 19/02/2014 para troca de tabelas nas páginas 15 e 16 do substitutivo do Senado Federal

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AUTÓGRAFOS DO PL 8.035-B/10, APROVADO NA CÂMARA DOS DEPUTADOS EM 16/10/2012

O CONGRESSO NACIONAL decreta:

Art. 1º Fica aprovado o Plano Nacional de Educação - PNE, com vigência por 10 (dez) anos, a contar da aprovação desta Lei, na forma do Anexo, com vistas no cumprimento do disposto no art. 214 da Constituição Federal.

Art. 2º São diretrizes do PNE:

I - erradicação do analfabetismo;

II - universalização do atendimento escolar;

III - superação das desigualdades educacionais, com ênfase na promoção da igualdade racial, regional, de gênero e de orientação sexual;

IV - melhoria da qualidade da educação;

V - formação para o trabalho e para a cidadania;

VI - promoção do princípio da gestão democrática da educação pública;

VII - promoção humanística, científica, cultural e tecnológica do País;

VIII - estabelecimento de meta de aplicação de recursos públicos em educação como proporção do produto interno bruto, que assegure atendimento às necessidades de expansão, com padrão de qualidade e equidade;

IX - valorização dos(as) profissionais da educação;

X - promoção dos princípios do respeito aos direitos humanos, à diversidade e à sustentabilidade socioambiental.

Art. 3º As metas previstas no Anexo desta Lei deverão ser cumpridas no prazo de vigência deste PNE, desde que não haja prazo inferior definido para metas e estratégias específicas.

Art. 4º As metas previstas no Anexo desta Lei deverão ter como referência a Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios - PNAD, o censo demográfico e os censos nacionais

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da educação básica e superior mais atualizados, disponíveis na data da publicação desta Lei.

Parágrafo único. O poder público buscará ampliar o escopo das pesquisas com fins estatísticos de forma a incluir informação detalhada sobre o perfil das populações de 4 (quatro) a 17 (dezessete) anos com deficiência.

Art. 5º A execução do PNE e o cumprimento de suas metas serão objeto de monitoramento contínuo e de avaliações periódicas, realizados pelas seguintes instâncias:

I – Ministério da Educação – MEC;

II - Comissões de Educação e Cultura da Câmara dos Deputados e de Educação, Cultura e Esporte do Senado Federal;

III – Conselho Nacional de Educação - CNE. § 1º Compete, ainda, às instâncias referidas no caput: avaliações nos respectivos sítios institucionais da internet;

II – analisar e propor políticas públicas para assegurar a implementação das estratégias e o cumprimento das metas;

III - analisar e propor a revisão do percentual de investimento público em educação.

§ 2º A cada 2 (dois) anos, ao longo do período de vigência do PNE, o Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira - INEP divulgará estudos voltados para o aferimento do cumprimento das metas.

§ 3º A meta progressiva do investimento público em educação será avaliada no 4º (quarto) ano de vigência do PNE e poderá ser ampliada por meio de lei, para atender às necessidades financeiras do cumprimento das demais metas.

§ 4º Serão utilizados 50% (cinquenta por cento) dos recursos do pré-sal, incluídos os royalties, diretamente em educação para que, ao final de 10 (dez) anos de vigência do PNE, seja atingido o percentual de 10% (dez por cento) do Produto Interno Bruto para o investimento em educação pública.

Art. 6º A União deverá promover a realização de pelo menos 2 (duas) conferências nacionais de educação até o final do decênio, precedidas de conferências municipais e estaduais,

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I – divulgar os resultados do monitoramento e das

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4

articuladas e coordenadas pelo Fórum Nacional de Educação, instituído nesta Lei, no âmbito do Ministério da Educação.

§ 1º O Fórum Nacional de Educação, além da atribuição referida no caput:

I – acompanhará a execução do PNE e o cumprimento de suas metas;

II – promoverá a articulação das Conferências Nacionais com as conferências regionais, estaduais e municipais que as precederem.

§ 2º As conferências nacionais de educação realizar-se-ão com intervalo de até 4 (quatro) anos entre elas, com o objetivo de avaliar a execução do PNE e subsidiar a elaboração do plano nacional de educação para o decênio subsequente.

Art. 7º A consecução das metas deste PNE e a implementação das estratégias deverão ser realizadas em regime de colaboração entre a União, os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios.

§ 1º Caberá aos gestores federais, estaduais, municipais e do Distrito Federal a adoção das medidas governamentais necessárias ao atingimento das metas previstas neste Plano Nacional de Educação.

§ 2º As estratégias definidas no Anexo desta Lei não elidem a adoção de medidas adicionais em âmbito local ou de instrumentos jurídicos que formalizem a cooperação entre os entes federados, podendo ser complementadas por mecanismos nacionais e locais de coordenação e colaboração recíproca.

§ 3º Os sistemas de ensino dos Estados, do Distrito Federal e dos Municípios deverão prever mecanismos para o acompanhamento local da consecução das metas deste PNE e dos planos previstos no art. 8º.

§ 4º Haverá regime de colaboração específico para a implementação de modalidades de educação escolar que necessitem considerar territórios étnico-educacionais e a utilização de

estratégias que levem em conta as identidades e especificidades socioculturais e linguísticas de cada comunidade envolvida, assegurada a consulta prévia e informada a essa comunidade.

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§ 5o Será criada uma instância permanente de negociação e cooperação entre a União, os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios.

§ 6o O fortalecimento do regime de colaboração entre os Municípios dar-se-á inclusive mediante a adoção de arranjos de desenvolvimento da educação.

Art. 8o Os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios deverão elaborar seus correspondentes planos de educação, ou adequar os planos já aprovados em lei, em consonância com as diretrizes, metas e estratégias previstas neste PNE, no prazo de 1 (um) ano contado da publicação desta Lei.

§ 1o Os entes federados deverão estabelecer nos respectivos planos de educação estratégias que:

I – assegurem a articulação das políticas educacionais com as demais políticas sociais, particularmente as culturais;

II - considerem as necessidades específicas das populações do campo e das comunidades indígenas e quilombolas, asseguradas a equidade educacional e a diversidade cultural; educacional modalidades.

§ 2o Os processos de elaboração e adequação dos planos de educação dos Estados, do

Distrito Federal e dos Municípios, de que trata o caput deste artigo, serão realizados com a ampla participação da sociedade, assegurando-se o envolvimento das comunidades escolares, trabalhadores(as) da educação, estudantes, pesquisadores(as), gestores(as) e organizações da sociedade civil.

Art. 9º Os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios deverão aprovar leis específicas para os seus sistemas de ensino, disciplinando a gestão democrática da educação pública nos respectivos âmbitos de atuação no prazo de 1 (um) ano contado da publicação desta Lei.

Art. 10. O plano plurianual, as diretrizes orçamentárias e os orçamentos anuais da União, dos Estados, do Distrito Federal e dos Municípios deverão ser formulados de

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III - garantam específicas na educação

o atendimento das necessidades especial, assegurado o sistema inclusivo em todos os níveis, etapas e

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maneira a assegurar a consignação de dotações orçamentárias compatíveis com as diretrizes, metas e estratégias deste PNE e com os respectivos planos de educação, a fim de viabilizar sua plena execução.

Art. 11. O Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Básica, coordenado pela União, em colaboração com os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios, constituirá fonte básica de

informação para a avaliação da qualidade da educação básica e para orientação das políticas públicas necessárias.

§ 1o O sistema de avaliação a que se refere o caput produzirá, no máximo a cada 2 (dois) anos:

I - indicadores de rendimento escolar, referentes ao desempenho dos(as) estudantes apurado em exames nacionais de avaliação, com participação de pelo menos 80% (oitenta por cento) dos(as) alunos(as) de cada ano escolar periodicamente avaliado em cada escola, e aos dados pertinentes apurados pelo censo escolar da educação básica;

II - indicadores de avaliação institucional, relativos a características como o perfil do alunado e do corpo dos(as) profissionais da educação, as relações entre dimensão do corpo docente, do corpo técnico e do corpo discente, a infraestrutura das escolas, os recursos pedagógicos disponíveis e os processos da gestão, entre outras relevantes.

§ 2o A elaboração e a divulgação de índices para avaliação da qualidade, como o Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica – IDEB, que agreguem os indicadores mencionados no inciso I do § 1o, não elidem a obrigatoriedade de divulgação, em separado, de cada um deles.

§ 3o Os indicadores mencionados no § 1o serão estimados por etapa, unidade escolar, rede escolar, unidade da Federação e em nível agregado nacional, sendo que:

I - a divulgação dos resultados individuais dos(as) alunos(as) e dos indicadores calculados para cada turma de alunos(as) ficará restrita à comunidade da respectiva unidade escolar e à gestão da rede escolar;

II - os resultados referentes aos demais níveis de agregação serão públicos e receberão ampla divulgação, com as necessárias informações que permitam sua correta interpretação pelos segmentos diretamente interessados e pela sociedade.

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§ 4o Cabem ao Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira – INEP a elaboração e o cálculo dos indicadores referidos no § 1o e do Ideb.

§ 5o A avaliação de desempenho dos(as) estudantes em exames, referida no inciso I do § 1o, poderá ser diretamente realizada pela União ou, mediante acordo de cooperação, pelos Estados e pelo Distrito Federal, nos respectivos sistemas de ensino e de seus Municípios, caso mantenham sistemas próprios de avaliação do rendimento escolar, assegurada a compatibilidade metodológica entre esses sistemas e o nacional, especialmente no que se refere às escalas de proficiência e calendário de aplicação.

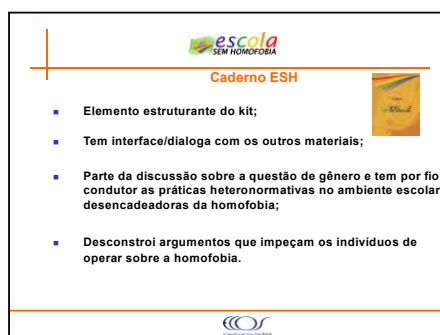
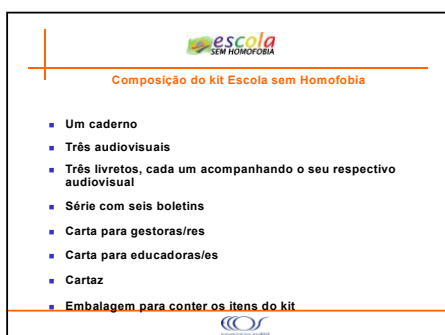
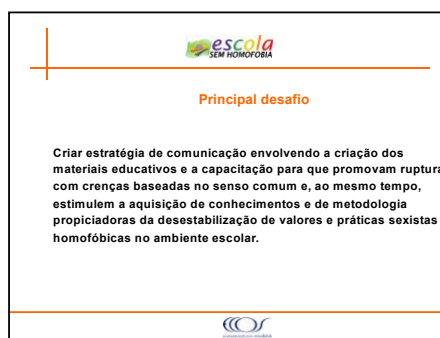
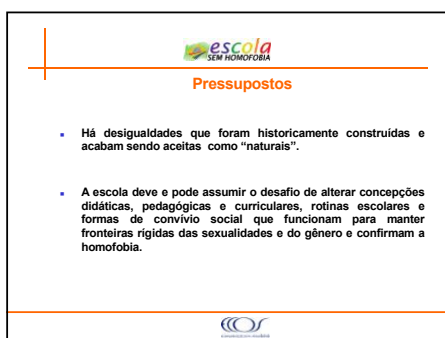
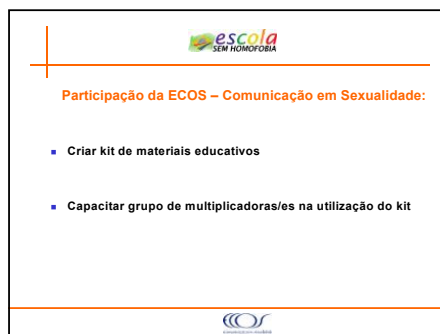
Art. 12. Até o final do primeiro semestre do 9o (nono) ano de vigência deste Plano Nacional de Educação, o Poder Executivo encaminhará ao Congresso Nacional, sem prejuízo das prerrogativas deste Poder, projeto de lei referente ao Plano Nacional de Educação, a vigorar no período subsequente ao final da vigência deste PNE, que incluirá diagnóstico, diretrizes, metas e estratégias para o decênio subsequente.



Art. 13. O poder público deverá instituir, em lei específica, contados 2 (dois) anos da publicação desta Lei, o Sistema Nacional de Educação, responsável pela articulação entre os sistemas de ensino, em regime de colaboração, para efetivação das diretrizes, metas e estratégias do Plano Nacional de Educação.

Art. 14. Esta Lei entra em vigor na data de sua publicação.

Câmara dos Deputados, em _____

Appendix 3 - Caderno Escola Sem Homofobia (School Without Homophobia Pamphlet)




 **Caderno ESH** 



Aspectos gerais

Textos objetivos; linguagem dinâmica e acessível; prioriza discussões/problematizações de situações que tenham ancoragem na escola.


Formato/estrutura para cada sub-tema dos capítulos


- Inicia um lead disparador que remete a uma cena de escola;
- Traz, na sequência, texto de apoio com conceitos, informações e dados de pesquisas;
- Traz dinâmica que contextualiza;
- Fecha a dinâmica com a apropriação dos conceitos.




 **Conteúdo do Caderno ESH** 

- Apresentação
- Introdução
- Capítulo 1 – Desfazendo a confusão
 - Gênero: as desigualdades entre mulheres e homens
 - Diversidade sexual
 - Mudanças na história; a luta pela cidadania
 - Enfrentando as discriminações




 **Capítulo 2 – Retratos da homofobia na escola**


Preconceitos e estereótipos
A homofobia na escola: o que dizem algumas pesquisas
Desvelando a homofobia no currículo escolar
O currículo e a transversalidade: a inclusão dos temas sociais na escola




Capítulo 3 – Caminhos para uma escola sem homofobia


Projeto político pedagógico e diversidade sexual na escola
Plano de ação: uma escola sem homofobia







 **Considerações finais**

- Referências bibliográficas
- Anexo 1 – Como trabalhar com os boletins
- Anexo 2 – Como trabalhar com audiovisuais







 **Boletins (Bolesh)**

- Série ilustrada com seis unidades, com quatro páginas cada


Estrutura


- Composto de seções que abordam o tema através de:
 - Texto principal
 - Textos menores
 - Atividades interativas
 - Sugestões de filmes, letras de música, poemas
 - Respostas das atividades
 - Glossário
 - Cartoons

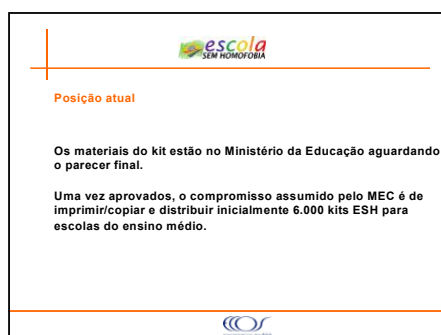
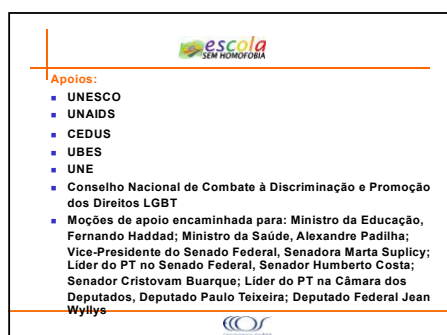
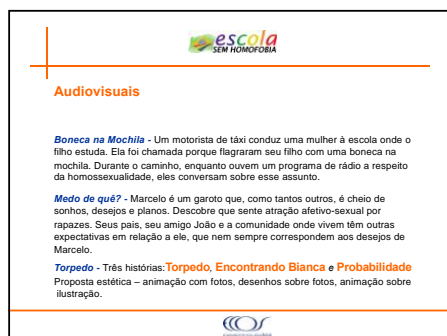
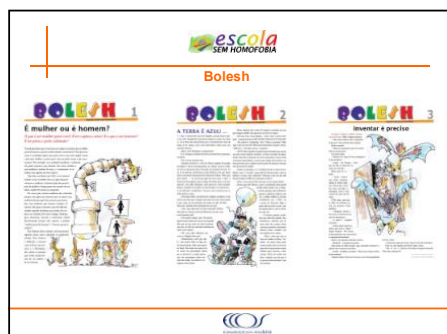


 **Temas**

- Bolesh 1 - Gênero
- Bolesh 2 - Diversidade sexual
- Bolesh 3 - Orientação sexual
- Bolesh 4 - Homofobia
- Bolesh 5 - Direitos das pessoas LGBT
- Bolesh 6 - Outros tipos de arranjos familiares










Coordenação da criação do kit ESH e da capacitação:

- Maria Helena Franco (Lena)
- Vera Simonetti Racy

ECOS – Comunicação em Sexualidade

Rua Araújo, 124 - 2º andar - Vila Buarque - 01220-020 - São Paulo/SP - Brasil
Telefax: 65 - 11-3255-1238 ecos@ecos.org.br www.ecos.org.br



*Appendix 4 - Projeto de Lei Escola Sem Partido***PROJETO DE LEI Nº 867, DE 2015**

(Do Sr. Izalci)

Inclui, entre as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional, o "Programa Escola sem Partido".

O Congresso Nacional decreta:

Art.1º. Esta lei dispõe sobre a inclusão entre as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional do "Programa Escola sem Partido".

Art. 2º. A educação nacional atenderá aos seguintes princípios:

I - neutralidade política, ideológica e religiosa do Estado;

II - pluralismo de ideias no ambiente acadêmico;

III - liberdade de aprender, como projeção específica, no campo da educação, da liberdade de consciência;

IV - liberdade de crença;

V - reconhecimento da vulnerabilidade do educando como parte mais fraca na relação de aprendizado;

VI - educação e informação do estudante quanto aos direitos compreendidos em sua liberdade de consciência e de crença;

VII - direito dos pais a que seus filhos recebam a educação moral que esteja de acordo com suas próprias convicções.

Art. 3º. São vedadas, em sala de aula, a prática de doutrinação política e ideológica bem como a veiculação de conteúdos ou a realização de atividades que possam estar em conflito com as convicções religiosas ou morais dos pais ou responsáveis pelos estudantes.

§ 1º. As escolas confessionais e as particulares cujas práticas educativas sejam orientadas por concepções, princípios e valores morais, religiosos ou ideológicos, deverão obter dos pais ou responsáveis pelos estudantes, no ato da matrícula, autorização expressa para a veiculação de conteúdos identificados com os referidos princípios, valores e concepções.

§ 2º. Para os fins do disposto no § 1º deste artigo, as escolas deverão apresentar e entregar aos pais ou responsáveis pelos estudantes material informativo que possibilite o conhecimento dos temas ministrados e dos enfoques adotados.

Art. 4º. No exercício de suas funções, o professor:

I - não se aproveitará da audiência cativa dos alunos, com o objetivo de cooptá-los para esta ou aquela corrente política, ideológica ou partidária;

II - não favorecerá nem prejudicará os alunos em razão de suas convicções políticas, ideológicas, morais ou religiosas, ou da falta delas;

III - não fará propaganda político-partidária em sala de aula nem incitará seus alunos a participar de manifestações, atos públicos e passeatas;

IV - ao tratar de questões políticas, sócio-culturais e econômicas, apresentará aos alunos, de forma justa, as principais versões, teorias, opiniões e perspectivas concorrentes a respeito;

V - respeitará o direito dos pais a que seus filhos recebam a educação moral que esteja de acordo com suas próprias convicções;

VI - não permitirá que os direitos assegurados nos itens anteriores sejam violados pela ação de terceiros, dentro da sala de aula.

Art. 5º. Os alunos matriculados no ensino fundamental e no ensino médio serão informados e educados sobre os direitos que decorrem da liberdade de consciência e de crença assegurada pela Constituição Federal, especialmente sobre o disposto no art. 4º desta Lei.

§ 1º. Para o fim do disposto no caput deste artigo, as escolas afixarão nas salas de aula, nas salas dos professores e em locais onde possam ser lidos por estudantes e professores, cartazes com o conteúdo previsto no Anexo desta Lei, com, no mínimo, 70 centímetros de altura por 50 centímetros de largura, e fonte com tamanho compatível com as dimensões adotadas.

§ 2º. Nas instituições de educação infantil, os cartazes referidos no § 1º deste artigo serão afixados somente nas salas dos professores.

Art. 6º. Professores, estudantes e pais ou responsáveis serão informados e educados sobre os limites éticos e jurídicos da atividade docente, especialmente no que tange aos princípios referidos no art. 1º desta Lei.

Art. 7º. As secretarias de educação contarão com um canal de comunicação destinado ao recebimento de reclamações relacionadas ao descumprimento desta Lei, assegurado o anonimato.

Parágrafo único. As reclamações referidas no caput deste artigo deverão ser encaminhadas ao órgão do Ministério Público incumbido da defesa dos interesses da criança e do adolescente, sob pena de responsabilidade.

Art. 8º. O disposto nesta Lei aplica-se, no que couber:

I - aos livros didáticos e paradidáticos;

II - às avaliações para o ingresso no ensino superior;

III - às provas de concurso para o ingresso na carreira docente;

IV - às instituições de ensino superior, respeitado o disposto no art. 207 da Constituição Federal.

Art. 9º. Esta Lei entrará em vigor na data de sua publicação.

ANEXO

DEVERES DO PROFESSOR

I - O Professor não se aproveitará da audiência cativa dos alunos, com o objetivo de cooptá-los para esta ou aquela corrente política, ideológica ou partidária.

II - O Professor não favorecerá nem prejudicará os alunos em razão de suas convicções políticas, ideológicas, morais ou religiosas, ou da falta delas.

III - O Professor não fará propaganda político-partidária em sala de aula nem incitará seus alunos a participar de manifestações, atos públicos e passeatas.

IV - Ao tratar de questões políticas, sócio-culturais e econômicas, o professor apresentará aos alunos, de forma justa – isto é, com a mesma profundidade e seriedade –, as principais versões, teorias, opiniões e perspectivas concorrentes a respeito.

V - O Professor respeitará o direito dos pais a que seus filhos recebam a educação moral que esteja de acordo com suas próprias convicções.

VI - O Professor não permitirá que os direitos assegurados nos itens anteriores sejam violados pela ação de terceiros, dentro da sala de aula.

JUSTIFICAÇÃO

Esta proposição se espelha em anteprojeto de lei elaborado pelo movimento **Escola sem Partido** (www.escolasempartido.org) – “uma iniciativa conjunta de estudantes e pais preocupados com o grau de contaminação político-ideológica das escolas brasileiras, em todos os níveis: do ensino básico ao superior” –, cuja robusta justificativa subscrevemos:⁶¹

“É fato notório que professores e autores de livros didáticos vêm-se utilizando de suas aulas e de suas obras para tentar obter a adesão dos estudantes a determinadas correntes políticas e ideológicas; e para fazer com que eles adotem padrões de julgamento e de conduta moral – especialmente moral sexual – incompatíveis com os que lhes são ensinados por seus pais ou responsáveis.

Diante dessa realidade – conhecida por experiência direta de todos os que passaram pelo sistema de ensino nos últimos 20 ou 30 anos –, entendemos que é necessário e urgente adotar medidas eficazes para prevenir a prática da doutrinação política e ideológica nas escolas, e a usurpação do direito dos pais a que seus filhos recebam a educação moral que esteja de acordo com suas próprias convicções.

Trata-se, afinal, de práticas ilícitas, violadoras de direitos e liberdades fundamentais dos estudantes e de seus pais ou responsáveis, como se passa a demonstrar:

1 - A liberdade de aprender – assegurada pelo art. 206 da Constituição Federal – compreende o direito do estudante a que o seu conhecimento da realidade não seja manipulado, para fins políticos e ideológicos, pela ação dos seus professores;

⁶¹ <http://escolasempartido.org/component/content/article/2-uncategorised/484-anteprojeto-de-lei-estadual-e-minuta-de-justificativa>

2 - Da mesma forma, a liberdade de consciência, garantida pelo art. 5º, VI, da Constituição Federal, confere ao estudante o direito de não ser doutrinado por seus professores;

3 - O caráter obrigatório do ensino não anula e não restringe a liberdade de consciência do indivíduo. Por isso, o fato de o estudante ser obrigado a assistir às aulas de um professor implica para esse professor o dever de não utilizar sua disciplina como instrumento de cooptação político-partidária ou ideológica;

4 - Ora, é evidente que a liberdade de aprender e a liberdade de consciência dos estudantes restarão violadas se o professor puder se aproveitar de sua audiência cativa para promover em sala de aula suas próprias concepções políticas, ideológicas e morais;

5 - Liberdade de ensinar – assegurada pelo art. 206, II, da Constituição Federal – não se confunde com liberdade de expressão; não existe liberdade de expressão no exercício estrito da atividade docente, sob pena de ser anulada a liberdade de consciência e de crença dos estudantes, que formam, em sala de aula, uma audiência cativa;

6 - De forma análoga, não desfrutam os estudantes de liberdade de escolha em relação às obras didáticas e paradidáticas cuja leitura lhes é imposta por seus professores, o que justifica o disposto no art. 8º, I, do projeto de lei;

7 - Além disso, a doutrinação política e ideológica em sala de aula compromete gravemente a liberdade política do estudante, na medida em que visa a induzi-lo a fazer determinadas escolhas políticas e ideológicas, que beneficiam, direta ou indiretamente as políticas, os movimentos, as organizações, os governos, os partidos e os candidatos que desfrutam da simpatia do professor;

8 - Sendo assim, não há dúvida de que os estudantes que se encontram em tal situação estão sendo manipulados e explorados politicamente, o que ofende o art. 5º do

Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente (ECA), segundo o qual “nenhuma criança ou adolescente será objeto de qualquer forma de exploração”;

9 - Ao estigmatizar determinadas perspectivas políticas e ideológicas, a doutrinação cria as condições para o bullying político e ideológico que é praticado pelos próprios estudantes contra seus colegas. Em certos ambientes, um aluno que assuma publicamente uma militância ou postura que não seja a da corrente dominante corre sério risco de ser isolado, hostilizado e até agredido fisicamente pelos colegas. E isso se deve, principalmente, ao ambiente de sectarismo criado pela doutrinação;

10 - A doutrinação infringe, também, o disposto no art. 53 do Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente, que garante aos estudantes “o direito de ser respeitado por seus educadores”. Com efeito, um professor que deseja transformar seus alunos em réplicas ideológicas de si mesmo evidentemente não os está respeitando;

11 - A prática da doutrinação política e ideológica nas escolas configura, ademais, uma clara violação ao próprio regime democrático, na medida em que ela instrumentaliza o sistema público de ensino com o objetivo de desequilibrar o jogo político em favor de determinados competidores;

12 - Por outro lado, é inegável que, como entidades pertencentes à Administração Pública, as escolas públicas estão sujeitas ao princípio constitucional da impessoalidade, e isto significa, nas palavras de Celso Antonio Bandeira de Mello (Curso de Direito Administrativo, Malheiros, 15ª ed., p. 104), que “nem favoritismo nem perseguições são toleráveis. Simpatias ou animosidades pessoais, políticas ou ideológicas não podem interferir na atuação administrativa e muito menos interesses sectários, de facções ou grupos de qualquer espécie.”;

13 - E não é só. O uso da máquina do Estado – que compreende o sistema de ensino – para a difusão das concepções políticas ou ideológicas de seus agentes é incompatível

com o princípio da neutralidade política e ideológica do Estado, com o princípio republicano, com o princípio da isonomia (igualdade de todos perante a lei) e com o princípio do pluralismo político e de ideias, todos previstos, explícita ou implicitamente, na Constituição Federal;

14 - No que tange à educação moral, referida no art. 2º, VII, do projeto de lei, a Convenção Americana sobre Direitos Humanos, vigente no Brasil, estabelece em seu art. 12 que “os pais têm direito a que seus filhos recebam a educação religiosa e moral que esteja de acordo com suas próprias convicções”;

15 - Ora, se cabe aos pais decidir o que seus filhos devem aprender em matéria de moral, nem o governo, nem a escola, nem os professores têm o direito de usar a sala de aula para tratar de conteúdos morais que não tenham sido previamente aprovados pelos pais dos alunos;

16 - Finalmente, um Estado que se define como laico – e que, portanto deve ser neutro em relação a todas as religiões – não pode usar o sistema de ensino para promover uma determinada moralidade, já que a moral é em regra inseparável da religião;

17. Permitir que o governo de turno ou seus agentes utilizem o sistema de ensino para promover uma determinada moralidade é dar-lhes o direito de vilipendiar e destruir, indiretamente, a crença religiosa dos estudantes, o que ofende os artigos 5º, VI, e 19, I, da Constituição Federal.

Ante o exposto, entendemos que a melhor forma de combater o abuso da liberdade de ensinar é informar os estudantes sobre o direito que eles têm de não ser doutrinados por seus professores.

Nesse sentido, o projeto que ora se apresenta está em perfeita sintonia com o art. 2º da Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional, que prescreve, entre as finalidades da educação, o preparo do educando para o exercício da cidadania. Afinal, o direito de ser informado sobre os próprios direitos é uma questão de estrita cidadania.

Urge, portanto, informar os estudantes sobre o direito que eles têm de não ser doutrinados por seus professores, a fim de que eles mesmos possam exercer a defesa desse direito, já que, dentro das salas de aula, ninguém mais poderá fazer isso por eles.

Note-se por fim, que o projeto não deixa de atender à especificidade das instituições confessionais e particulares cujas práticas educativas sejam orientadas por concepções, princípios e valores morais, às quais reconhece expressamente o direito de veicular e promover os princípios, valores e concepções que as definem, exigindo-se, apenas, a ciência e o consentimento expressos por parte dos pais ou responsáveis pelos estudantes.”

Frisamos mais uma vez que projetos de lei semelhantes ao presente – inspirados em anteprojeto de lei elaborado pelo Movimento Escola sem Partido (www.escolasempartido.org) – já tramitam nas Assembleias Legislativas dos Estados do Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Goiás e Espírito Santo, e na Câmara Legislativa do Distrito Federal; e em dezenas de Câmaras de Vereadores (v.g., São Paulo-SP, Rio de Janeiro-RJ, Curitiba-PR, Vitória da Conquista-BA, Toledo-PR, Chapecó-SC, Joinville-SC, Mogi Guaçu-SP, Foz do Iguaçu-PR, etc.), tendo sido já aprovado nos Municípios de Santa Cruz do Monte Carmelo-PR e Picuí-PB.

Pelas razões expostas, esperamos contar com o apoio dos Nobres Pares para aprovação deste Projeto de Lei.

Sala das Sessões, em 23 de março de 2015.

Deputado IZALCI

PSDB/DF

ESP.MFUN.NGPS.2015.03.18

Appendix 5 – Excerpts from the EsP Website

Figure 1



National Day of the Fight Against Indoctrination at Schools

Figure 2



Duties of the teacher

Duties of the Teacher: ‘Hand to hand with the liberty of teaching is the liberty of learning, both secured by the article 206 of the Federal Constitution. The ideological-political indoctrination inside the classroom constitutes a clear abuse of the freedom of teaching, abuse that, implies the repression of the freedom to learn since this freedom comprises the right of the student of not being indoctrinated. Only a student that is conscious of their rights will be able to defend them against the abusive action of militant teachers. That is why, the **EscolasemPartido.org** elaborated the list of the teacher’s duties that you will see below. Ask your child’s school to print it out and stick the posters that contain this information to places that both students and teachers can clearly see and consult’ (ibid).

Figure 3



Catching the Indoctrinator

Catching the Indoctrinator: ‘In a general sense, the strategies used by these teachers that are masters of militancy in the ideological indoctrination are not subtle at all. You might be a target of ideological indoctrination when your teacher:

- Frequently deviates from the subject target of the discipline they are meant to teach to subjects related to the political scene, nationally or internationally;
- Exhibits to the students works of art of political/ideological content, subjecting them to the discussion within the classroom, without providing the necessary instruments for the decompactation of the vehicled message and not allowing students time to reflect upon the content
- Freely ridicularises or disqualifies religious or political beliefs;
- Ridicularises, disqualifies or defame historical, political or religious personalities;
- Entice students to participate in manifestations, public acts, protests etc.;
- Allows that the political or religious convictions of students interfere, positively or negatively, in their marks;
- Not only not hide, but also broadcast and advertise their own political and ideological distastes or preferences;

- Transmits to the students the impression that the world of politics is divided between the ones for the *good* and the ones for the *evil*;
- Uses their role to propagate ideas and value judgements incompatible with the moral and religious sentiments of the students, embarrassing them because they do not share the same ideas and judgements.’ (EsP, 2019, website pages, emphasis mine).

Figure 4



Plan your Denounce

Plan your Denounce: ‘When realising you are being victim of political and ideological indoctrination inside the classroom, the student faces the dilemma: denouncing - and getting exposed to the risk of being targeted by the teacher and becoming hostilised by their peers; or to remain quiet’ (ibid). For that, in order for to plan their report and find encouragement to do so, the EsP website provides a full guide on how to go about the process.

Figure 5



Advice for Parents

Advice for Parents: ‘Dear Parents, exercise your right that is secured by the article 12 of the American Convention on Human Rights: Parents have the right for their children to receive the religious and moral education according to their respective convictions. Therefore, sue for damages the schools and teachers that transmit immoral content to your children’ (ibid).