

Prejudice, Diversity, Human Rights and Diversity-valuing Policy: a Critical Analysis of Governmental Initiatives to Promote Diversity in the Workforce in Brazil

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ABSTRACT

The growing debate on diversity in the workforce has brought implications to various sectors in Brazil. The Brazilian government has developed initiatives to strengthen and expand policies towards the promotion and valuing of diversity in the labor market. Amongst these initiatives, we highlight the Diversity Seals of Recognition awarded to institutions that promote diversity, according to specific criteria of the different seals. There are initiatives for granting these seals in the local, state and federal government. Some have focused on gender, others on race, and others yet, have focused on diversity in general. Considering the governmental initiatives in diversity promotion, the present paper has the objective to verify if these initiatives have effectively contributed to the promotion of diversity in the workforce in a systemic manner, influencing work relations² within companies, or if it has merely generated discontinuous and partial actions that show little contribution to a change of paradigm in the qualified inclusion of minority segments in the workforce. To perform such verification, initially, the country's existing Seals of Recognition will be analyzed and, more specifically, the "Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal" will be analyzed, since the authors of the article had been directly involved in this Seal's restructuring.

¹ The authors thank the researcher Rocio Alonso Lorenzo for her comments and Ana Cléia Aguiar for bibliography researches.

² To the authors, the work relation is the formal job relation. However, the contemporary practices make us admit other types of work relations such as autonomous work, eventual or seasonal work and informal. Those are not formal jobs, and do not provide a regular salary.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last decades the Brazilian public sector has been implementing some specific initiatives seeking to promote diversity in the workforce. Among these initiatives we highlight the Diversity Seals of Recognition, the main focus of this paper. These seals are awarded to public and private organizations to encourage the development of actions towards the valuing and promotion of diversity. To be granted them, organizations must send information, through pre-determined tools, in which they demonstrate their actions towards the inclusion and valuing of minority groups which present disadvantages related to their insertion and progress in the job market, especially women, blacks, indigenous, people with disabilities, youth, and the elderly, among others.

It is understood that diversity-promoting policies are directly linked to the promotion of equity as they seek to offer opportunities to historically underprivileged social groups. Besides being a tool for supporting equity, the promotion of diversity also represents a tool for discovering and better employing talents, which without this incentive would rarely be included and appreciated in the labor market.

The present paper has the goal of analyzing the government's performance in the promotion of diversity in the workforce, through the Seals of Recognition implemented, and more specifically, the Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal. The objective of such analysis is to investigate whether these actions developed by the government have contributed effectively to the insertion and valuing of these minority segments in work relations. The hypothesis, in this case, is that the government actions have contributed very little to a transformation in working relations within companies and organizations, which has brought no structural changes, but only discontinuous and partial actions, with questionable results.

The choice of the Seals of Recognition as subjects of analysis, and more specifically, the Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal, is due to the authors' involvement, throughout the year of 2008, in the development of the restructuring proposal for this seal, which enabled them to collect information that made this reflection possible.

Research has shown that there are four different seals of recognition currently implemented in the country. Two of them focus solely on gender and race/ethnicity and

the remaining include other segments besides these two, such as the elderly, homosexuals, people with disabilities, among others. All of them present a group of tools for application and evaluation, and they evaluate the following work processes of the organizations: human resources management, communication, and customer relation, relation with suppliers and with the community. One of them focuses exclusively in private companies, while the others include non-governmental and governmental organizations.

The Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal was created in 2006, by a Municipal Decree and its first edition lasted until the beginning of 2008, when there was an exchange of Secretaries in the Municipal Labor Secretariat, the agency of the municipality to which the Seal belonged. Throughout the year of 2008 the second edition proposal for this Seal was formulated, considering the results of the first edition and the understanding of what would be necessary to promote the inclusion and valuing of minority segments within the companies. Initially in companies that rendered services to the Municipal Secretariat of Labor, then, in services or products supplying companies to the São Paulo City hall, and finally, in all other companies in the city. If, in its first edition the seal revealed itself insufficient in the promotion of the diversity in a systemic and effective form, its second edition, restructured, was never implemented by a number of factors - political, economical and contextual, which can demonstrate the government's difficulty in assuming the promotion of diversity as a policy towards the promotion of social justice in work relations.

To present its results, this paper is structured in the following manner: initially we introduce a literature review of the concept of diversity, its characteristics in Brazil and in the city of São Paulo, and the role of government in promoting it. We then present the four seals of recognition identified through Internet and direct research, followed by a case study about the Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal. Finally, there are analyses of the São Paulo Seal, under the literature reviewed.

Although the seals are recent policies, they are innovative actions and may contribute to influence businessman, and public and private managers to adopt pre-determined diversity promoting measures. However, the Seals format (which indicators are evaluated and how, and how the monitoring of the participant companies is performed), and its strategy of implementation (partners, advertisement, and incentives) are essential to promote effective changes in the work processes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

a. DIVERSITY IN BRAZIL

In its general meaning diversity is difference, multiplicity of diverse things. In Human Sciences the term diversity attempts to explain the differences among human beings and understand the consequences brought on by these differences.

The utilization of the term diversity has, in recent years, carried a strong political meaning related to understanding the physical, cultural and religious differences among people, and searching for ways of harmoniously dealing with these differences, encouraging a broad dialogue seeking to deconstruct prejudices and discrimination present in our relations.

To Fleury (2000)³ “*Diversity is defined as a mix of people with different identities interacting in the same social system*”. Pereira (2001)⁴ highlights five main dimensions that compose diversity: religious, generation, racial/ethnic, gender, and cultural. Expanding Pereira’s diversity dimensions, the Centro de Estudos das Relações de Trabalho e Desigualdades (CEERT) [Center for Studies of Work Relations and Inequalities], defines diversity as:

*“...multiplicity of characteristics, origins, options and behavior of people. It means recognizing the existing differences, being them related to gender, sex, color, age, ethnicity, religion, nationality, style, and even the existence of physical, hearing or visual disabilities”*⁵

To verify how the issue of diversity is presented and developed in Brazil, it is necessary to understand its historic formation and the characteristics of its current situation, emphasizing its social, political, and economic dynamics.

Brazil was colonized by the Portuguese beginning at the year 1500. Before the Portuguese arrival, the territory was inhabited by people who are known today as indigenous. Additionally to this scenario, in 1532 the slave traffic from the African continent to Brazil had initiated, which lasted, officially, until 1888, the year of the

3 Fleury, Maria Tereza Leme, artigo, Revista de Administração de Empresas, EAESP/FGV, São Paulo – Brasil – Jul/Set.2000

4 Pereira, Rosa Vani in: Secretaria de Estado da Educação / Sistema de Ação Pedagógica/ Consultoria em Políticas Públicas. Dicionário do Professor. Belo Horizonte, SEE-MG/SIAPE/PPP,2001.

5 www.febraban.org.br/diversidade, highlight by the authors.

abolition of slavery. Beginning on the XIX century the arrival of immigrants⁶ to the country, particularly European and Asians, was encouraged.

Taking into account its population establishing, the Brazilian social structure is the fruit of dialogues and conflicts among diverse cultural matrixes of blacks, indigenous, and whites. Nevertheless, being a diverse country has not allowed diversity to be experienced in a democratic manner (Pereira, 2001).

The debates about the racial makeup of Brazilian society after the Proclamation of the Republic – 1889 until the 1930s - show that the prevailing diversity in Brazil, instead of being a reason for pride, was often treated as a problem. Freire (1933)⁷ offers an explanation to think of Brazil and its cultural and ethnical diversity, through the theory of racial democracy, where we are all equal. In the relationship model offered by Freire's theory, it became increasingly difficult for Brazilians to understand how our differences resulted in social inequality. In the words of Fleury:

“a contradictory society emerged. Brazilians value their diversified origin, including its African roots, present in the music, the food, the religious syncretism; they like to imagine themselves as a society without race or color prejudices. But, on the other hand, it is a stratified society, in which the access to educational opportunities and prestigious work positions in the job market are defined by economic and racial origins”.

Brazil has an elevated degree of income inequality when compared with other countries with available data on income distribution. According to the IPEA – [Applied Economical Research Institute] Report (1995), the income of an individual belonging to the 10% richest segment is, in average, thirty times higher than the income of an individual who belongs to the 40% poorer segment⁸. According to Santos⁹, *“there is in the country a phenomena that the specialists, when referring to social differences, label asymmetry”*. Still according to the same author, *“it refers to the absence of harmony: the hyper-abundance co-existing with absolute scarcity”*. On one hand we have a very wealthy country, predominantly white, and with the richest people; on the other hand, we have a distinctly non-white population, where *“the few remaining indigenous also belong”*, with the poorest ones.

⁶ Besides contributing to the replacement of slave labor, the immigrants encouragement also had the objective of promoting what was known as the “whitening of the population” policy, due to a great part of the population at the time being composed of blacks brought from the African continent.

⁷ Freire, Gilberto – Casa Grande & Senzala, São Paulo, Global, 2003.

⁸ Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada – Políticas Sociais – Acompanhamento e Análise, number 10. The report points that to the majority of countries the income of the richest is, in average, 10 times higher than the income of the poorest.

⁹ Santos, Helio. 2001. – A busca de um caminho para o Brasil – A trilha do círculo vicioso, São Paulo, SENAC.

As determinants for this inequality, the report presents: the difference in educational opportunities that is reflected on the labor market, which affect certain groups, considering various issues, such as race and gender issues, as well as geographic location.¹⁰ According to Lima (2001) "education serves as an important explanatory variable of racial inequality, but does not explain the differences in distribution when the level is the same", besides, in the words of Bulgarelli (2003) "It's not just black and people with disabilities who have little schooling, but the Brazilian population in general."

In Brazil, the education factor is used both to justify not hiring blacks and when this occurs, the maintenance of those in subordinate positions in the work process. According to Lima (1999), "I - the process of work is a social and political relationship that produces the same time value (added value) and a **set of social relations** (Authors' underlining) between capital and labor, and technology and the organization work the expression of these relationships" (Le Come, 1992), "II - historically, these relations are of different aspects and intensities, directly linked with the strategies of entrepreneurs and workers in defending their interests, to re-produce not only as relations of production, but also relations in production (Burawoy, 1978), **which implies the need of in the workplace, are processed elements "new" such as ethnicity, gender, culture and subjectivity** (Castro, 1993)"(Authors' underlining)

The International Labor Organization (ILO) states that gender and racial inequalities are structural axles of the social inequality in Brazil, which, in turn, is in the root of the perpetration and reproduction of poverty and social exclusion (Abramo e Farranha, 2005)¹¹. These inequalities are observed through labor market indicators and the access to basic services.

The historic situation of women in Brazil is marked by a strong influence of patriarchal family values from the country's colonial age. The stimulation of industrialization, starting in the 1930s, contributed to women progressively going to work in factories and offices. Currently, the Brazilian population is composed of approximately 51.5% of women, who face various challenges, such as disadvantages in the labor market, prejudice, and sexual violence, among others.

¹⁰ The geographic issue in Brazil is important to the understanding of inequalities in the country. The country's territory is divided in 5 main regions (north, northeast, center-west, southeast, and south), while most of economic activity and income is concentrated in the southeast region, north and northeast present some of the worst social and economical indicators.

¹¹ Manual de Capacitação e informação sobre Gênero, raça, pobreza e emprego: guia para o leitor. 2005. OIT. Brasília. [Manual of Training and Information about gender, race, poverty, and work: a guide to the reader.]

In the racial inequality axle, we have issues related mainly to blacks¹² and indigenous¹³. The former represent presently approximately 45% of the Brazilian population and the latter, less than 0.5%. The blacks face challenges from an uncompleted abolition, which was not followed by a policy of access to education and jobs to ex-slaves in the Brazilian society (Carneiro, 2002)¹⁴. Likewise, the indigenous have faced historical disadvantages that have lasted until these days. To this scenario are added difficulties in access to basic services that would take into consideration, adequately, their ethnic specificities.

Besides racial and gender aspects, other diversity segments present peculiarities that influence their situation in the Brazilian job market. Those are the youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, and the GLBT (Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transgendered).

The elderly population (over sixty years old) in Brazil has been rapidly increasing. In 1980, there were approximately 16 elders for each 100 children. In the year 2000, this ratio had raised to 30 elders for each 100 children. However, the society is not ready for this change in population profile and, although people are living longer, the quality of life does not accompany this evolution. On the other side, in 2006, there were roughly 34.7 million youngsters between the ages of 15 and 24 in Brazil, according to IBGE (2000). The youth face issues mainly related to the poor quality of formal education that does not allow for a proper inclusion in the labor market.

In Brazil, data from the 2000 Census demonstrate that people with disabilities represented 14.5% of the population, which was about 24.6 million people (IBGE, 2000). People with disabilities have difficulties in the access to education and other basic services, but this situation has been improving with the implementation of public policy that promotes the inclusion of this segment in the society.

According to the Brazilian Association of Gays, Lesbians and Transgendered, around 10% of the Brazilian population is homosexual, which is the equivalent to approximately 16 million individuals. The GLBT segment faces challenges in

¹² IBGE [Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics] classifies as blacks the individuals who self-define (and declare so in census) as blacks or mulatos.

¹³ Although they are called by the common name "indigenous", the original population of the Brazilian territory present today approximately 227 different ethnicities, and speak over 180 languages.

¹⁴ CARNEIRO, Sueli. "Expectativas de ação das empresas para superar a discriminação racial". Reflexão, Ano 3, nº 8, setembro Ethos, 2002.

guaranteeing their fundamental rights, due to violence and the absence of specific protection laws¹⁵.

São Paulo is the biggest city in Brazil with a population estimated in 10.990.249 people, according to data of the IBGE (2007)¹⁶ and responds for the third biggest budget of the Federal Union. The numbers that exemplify the diversity in São Paulo are expressive. The black population represents approximately 47.6% of the city total¹⁷. The women, who represent 52.3% of the population, receive, on average, 75.5% of the remuneration received by men in the metropolitan area of São Paulo, and the rate of female unemployment is 40% superior to that of male unemployment. It is estimated that more than 1 million people with disabilities live in the city, and it is continuously more frequent to have proposals for public actions and policy directed to the cultural, social and economic integration of the city's GLBTs segments.

Regarding its age composition, São Paulo has 20% of its population in the age range from 15 to 24 years, which corresponds to 3 million youngsters coexisting with the problems of unemployment, violence, lack of leisure and culture spaces, among others. On the other hand, the estimated number of people with ages above 60 years-old, has reached 1 million and 161 thousand in the city of São Paulo.

b. THE DIVERSITY AT WORK IN BRAZIL

The income inequalities of the country are reflected in the Brazilian labor market. The historical dynamics of Brazilian society and the discrimination of the segments pointed above are observed in the indicators of insertion in the job market. People with disabilities have been observing a change in their job market insertion path, thanks to a Law that requires companies to hire them¹⁸. Despite that effort, aspects such as the low educational level of this segment and companies' difficulty in appropriately receiving these professionals are pointed as some of the impediments in the hiring process (Bahia e Santos, 2007)¹⁹. The LGBT Segment has specific dynamics related to

¹⁵ <http://sistemas.aids.gov.br/imprensa/Noticias.asp?NOTCod=65176>

¹⁶ http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/presidencia/noticia_visualiza.php

¹⁷ DNA Paulistano 5 – Oeste. Instituto Datafolha. Folha de São Paulo, 31/08/2008.

¹⁸ The Law number 8.213 of July 24th 1991 (Law of Quotas) ensures a percentage of job positions to people with disabilities in companies that have over 100 employees.

¹⁹ Bahia e Santos. A Inclusão Profissional de Pessoas com Deficiência no Brasil por meio de Ações das Organizações do Terceiro Setor: O Caso da Associação Amigos Metroviários Excepcionais (AME). VI CONFERENCIA REGIONAL DE ISTR PARA AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE. Salvador, 2007.

the prejudice, the violence, and the educational deficiencies that reach more intensely the transvestites. Elders and youngsters have difficulty to be inserted or re-inserted in the job market, where the youth embody the highest unemployment rates in the country: 17,8%, approximately 3,2 times higher than the unemployment rate for adults of 25 years and older (5,6%). Women and blacks are inserted in a more precarious manner than white males, as far as the level of occupations they reach, as well as the salaries they obtain. It is important to stress that the more the above described characteristics appear in one person (for instance: a black woman with disabilities), the more the discriminations increase and the more social indicators worsen.

The rate of precarious work and informality over the Brazilian total of jobs is 57%. While the proportion of precarious work over the total of male jobs is 54%, to women this rate raises to 61%. In terms of race, 50.4% of white people's and 65.3% of black people's occupations have been considered precarious or informal. A great proportion of female occupations are concentrated in the more precarious segments of work, such as autonomous work, domestic services and non-paid occupations. The percentage of women in domestic services (18%) is one of the highest among Latin-American countries (Abramo e Farranha, 2005).

c. THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PROMOTION OF DIVERSITY IN BRAZIL

The public sector's first initiatives for diversity promotion in Brazil have started in the State level, with the establishment of consulting agencies in 1984, in the State of São Paulo. At that moment both the Council of the Feminine Condition and the Council of Participation and Development of the Black Community were created. Inspired by this initiative, others similar initiatives were created in the states of Rio de Janeiro, Porto Alegre, Minas Gerais, and others.

In 1988 the federal government created, within the Ministry of Culture, the Advisory Board to Afro-Brazilian Matters, which was later substituted for the Palmares Cultural Foundation. In this way, until the end of the 1980s, the focus of the initiatives

was in gender and race and the main actions aimed at the promotion of health, education and culture.

During the nineties the social movements compelled the government to put into practice many actions in its three spheres: local, state and federal. As an example, we can mention: in 1991, in the Government of the State of Rio De Janeiro, was created the Secretariat of Defense and Promotion of the Black Population; in 1992 the Coordination of Black Population Matters was created in the city of São Paulo; in 1996 the federal government created the Inter-ministerial Work Group for the Valuing of the Black Population. Still in 1996 the federal government recognized Zumbi dos Palmares as a National Hero, having his name enrolled in the Book of the Nations Heroes.

The government's first initiative directed toward the promotion of diversity in the workforce was in 1995, with the creation of the Program for the Implementation of Convention 111, in partnership with the International Labor Organization – ILO. This program sought to promote equality of chances and treatment in the workforce, and to fight discrimination at work and in professions. In the same year, within the scope of the Ministry of Labor, Work and Income (MTE), a Work group was created for the Elimination of Discrimination in Work and Occupation (GTDEO). This group, composed by representatives of the government, of workers, of employers and of the Ministry of Labor (MTE), had the mission to develop an action plan for the elimination of discrimination in the labor market. In 1997, the MTE launched the “Brazil: Gender and Race” Program, which had as one of its main products the implementation of Centers for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Fighting Against Discrimination at Work and in Professions, in all the ministry's Regional Labor Stations and Sub-stations.

In 2001, after the Durban Conference²⁰, a National Council for Fighting Discrimination was created, and from then on, affirmative action²¹ policies were developed in the Ministries of Agrarian Development, Foreign Affairs, Culture, Education and Health. In May 13th of 2002 the National Program of Affirmative Action was created, under the coordination of the Special Secretariat of Human Rights, inside the Ministry of Justice.

²⁰ World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobic and Intolerance. Durban, 2001.

²¹ Affirmative actions are special and temporary actions driven by the State and /or firms, spontaneous or compulsory, with the goal of eliminating inequalities historically accumulated, ensuring equal opportunities and treatment as well as to compensate for losses caused by discrimination and marginalization, on racial, ethnic, religious, gender, among others.

The GTDEO first concrete results started to appear in 2002, when the Labor Public Prosecution Service Ministry installed the National Coordination for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Elimination of Discrimination in the Workforce. In 2005 this Coordination launched the Equal Opportunity for All program, with the objective to sensitize economic sectors to adopt anti-discriminatory measures and affirmative action, with the purpose of reverting inequalities. The first actions were developed in the banking sector, where, according to the IPEA, “*we verify a significant and recurrent picture of gender and racial inequalities*” and the first measures included demographic researches for the correction of distortions.

In January of 2003, within the scope of the federal government were created: the Special Secretariat of Women Policies (SEPM), the Special Secretariat of Human Rights, and the Special Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality Policies (SEPPIR), all with statuses of ministry and designed to construct policies for the support of vulnerable segments of society. Still in 2003, the Brazilian government, in partnership with the ILO, implemented the Program of Institutional Strengthening for the Equality of Gender and Race, the Eradication of Poverty and Generation of Jobs (GRPE). Organized in a tripartite commission format - Government, unions and civil society – its performance resulted in the incentive to the adoption of policies of gender, race, and people with disabilities in companies. Many activities in the federal level, as well as in different localities, occurred, including: workshops, seminars and qualification courses for public workers and representatives of the social movements. From this initiative, the Seals of Recognition were born as mechanisms to ensure the promotion of Diversity in the Work Environment, which will be analyzed in the next section.

It is possible to identify, in recent years, an expansion and strengthening of public policies²² directed towards the black population, the women, the homosexuals, to youth, elderly and people with disabilities. This is due, mainly, to the action of social movements in their negotiations with the public administration – particularly, the black, feminist, indigenous, GLBT and youth movements.

²² The Public Policy is a planned set, parameterized, organized and coordinated actions that meet a particular need or demand justified by public interest and the constitutional rights of all citizens, with equality and fairness, the responsibility of the state.
Source: Guia de Geração de Trabalho e Renda: Nova Perspectiva na Elaboração de Políticas, Programas e Projetos de Geração de Trabalho e Renda. Brasília: Fundação Banco do Brasil, São Paulo, SP: Instituto de Políticas Públicas Florestan Fernandes, 2008.
Vários colaboradores

3. SEALS OF RECOGNITION IN BRAZIL

a. TYPES OF SEALS

The interest for this theme has arisen from the experience of the staff in the elaboration, implementation and evaluation of the “Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal”. From this proximity to the theme, successive searches in the Internet were made on Diversity Seals experiences in Brazil. In these searches the following key-words were used: “*diversity in the workforce*” and “*diversity seal*”. Focusing in work, four experiences had been found: the Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal; the Gender Equity Seal, the São Paulo State Seal of Diversity and the Ethnic-racial Diversity Seal of Salvador.

The **Gender Equity Seal** was formulated in 2005, by the Special Secretariat of Women Policies (SEPM), having as a conceptual reference the National Plan of Policies for Women and the Federal Constitution of 1988. It seeks the promotion of citizenry, since it is a tool that ratifies the company’s commitment to gender equity. On its 1st edition, it focused its tools to conceive “*the different stages of the work process: recruitment, selection; internal training processes; professional growth and career plans; health plans, job safety and benefits; having as feature , the issue of health plans and job safety*”²³ Beginning at the 3rd edition, currently in use, comprehending the periods of 2009 to 2010, mechanisms were incorporated to the Seal, related to fighting discrimination practices and moral or sexual harassment occurrences, as well as practices of sensitization towards gender equity and internal and external information dissemination.

The **Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal** was created in 2006, in the city of São Paulo, by the Municipal Secretariat of Labor, having as its conceptual reference the data on gender and race in the labor market, produced by the ILO²⁴. According to the Municipal Decree that created it, Act n° 47.911/2006, its objective is to “*foment the overcoming of racial and gender discrimination, valuing and promoting diversity in the work environment*”²⁵. In its 1st edition, the enrollment was made by the signing of a Pact in which participants committed to: not allow any type of

²³ Authors’ underlining.

²⁴ [HTTP://www.oit.org.br/info/download/modulo2.pdf](http://www.oit.org.br/info/download/modulo2.pdf)

²⁵ Authors’ underlining

discrimination in recruitment, access to training, remuneration, evaluation and promotion of employees; build a diagnostic demographic census of the staff; develop an Action Plan; write annual reports to evaluate such Action Plan. Its 2nd edition, initiated in 2008 had significant modifications, which will be further approached in the case study below.

The **São Paulo State Seal of Diversity** was launched in 2007, by the Secretariat of Institutional Relations from the State Government of São Paulo, having as its conceptual reference the Federal Constitution of 1988. It has as an objective *“the public recognition of public, private and non-governmental organizations, located in the State of São Paulo, that develop or committed to develop programs, projects and actions of diversity promotion and valuing in its environments and areas of performance”*.²⁶

In this same year, in the city of Salvador, capital of the State of Bahia, the Municipal Secretariat of Reparation launched the **Ethnic-racial Diversity Seal of Salvador**, using as conceptual reference the Federal Constitution of 1988. It is a *“public policy with the objective to sensitize organizations, as well as public, non-governmental, and private companies, established in the city of Salvador, for the promotion of ethnic-racial diversity as a value that generates equality of opportunities, competitiveness, and generation and fair sharing of income in the society”*.²⁷

To ensure a better understanding, there is a summary table, at the end of this paper, of the Seals and their characteristics, segments attended, targeted public, focus and tools.

4. The DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE IN THE CITY OF SÃO PAULO SEAL

a. CONTEXT AND THE SEAL’S FIRST EDITION

The **Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal** was instituted in 2006 by the São Paulo City Hall, with the purpose of fomenting the overcoming of racial and gender discrimination, valuing and promoting diversity in the work environment. The Seal was developed by the Municipal Secretariat of Labor, from a partnership signed with the ILO, through its Program of Institutional Strengthening for

²⁶ Authors’ underlining

²⁷ Authors’ underlining

the Equality of Gender and Race, the Eradication of Poverty and Generation of Jobs (GRPE). In its 1st edition, the Seal had the following main characteristics:

- a) It was a tool for the recognition of diversity efforts;
- b) The enrollment was open to all companies, non-governmental organizations and public organizations of the city;
- c) The enrollment was made by signing a Pact for the Valuing and Promotion of Diversity, in which the organization committed to present a diagnostic demographic census of gender and race in its personnel, followed by an Action Plan with the goals to be reached, its chronogram, and the plan to face the inequalities found. The Seal was awarded to the organizations at the signing act, and they committed to deliver, afterward, the diagnostic census, the action plan, and the report with results from the action plan.

In the Municipal Secretariat of labor, the Seal was developed through its Internal Commission for the Monitoring and Management of Diversity, the area responsible for diversity initiatives. Initially, many representatives of the government and civil society were involved for the elaboration of the Seal. In November of 2006 it was formally instituted through the signature of the Municipal Decree N° 47.911.

In March of 2007, the Seal was awarded to 38 organizations of the city, which signed the Valuing of Diversity pact and committed to deliver the race and gender diagnostic census of their staff, and the Action Plan for the period between March and October of that same year. Besides that, the signed agreement asked for the delivery of the action plan results report by November to ensure the renewal of the Seal for the following year.

The Decree that created the Seal also approved the election of a Managing Committee of 9 representatives of government and civil society. Such Committee was responsible for monitoring the actions, and analyzing the documents sent by the institutions that signed the pact.

As a result of the Seal's first edition we observed that from the 38 participant organizations, 6 were private companies, 7 were public agencies, 6 unions, and the remaining were non-profit organizations that targeted various social issues.

In May of 2008, with the replacement of the Municipal Secretary of Labor, a meeting with the representatives of the Managing Committee occurred, with the

intention to analyze documents sent by participant organizations and to make an evaluation of the Seal's first edition.

The analysis of the documents sent by the participant organizations showed some documents were missing. And, among the documents delivered there was no defined pattern in form and content. Information was structured in different manners, and we also noticed different internal strategies to deal with the Valuing of Diversity Pact proposals. Some organizations have founded internal Committees to think about the concept of diversity and how to operate it, others prioritized the manufacturing of the staff diversity census as a way to show the heterogeneity in its staff or simply to present the demographic profile of the institution.

Seeking to consolidate the main actions developed by the set of participant organizations, we reach the following list:

- i. in the great majority of organizations, we notice the performance of lectures and events on the subject of diversity to an internal and external public, those actions were carried through on important civic dates or holidays, such as Black Heritage Day, Indigenous Day, Gay Pride Day, People with Disabilities day, and others;
- ii. advertising the enrollment to the Seal and its proposals in internal communication channels: intranet, newsletters, magazines, packages, material used in lectures, etc;
- iii. some specific actions related to the organization's area of work, such as seminars on the conditions of public transportation accessibility, and on black population health issues, projects for digital inclusion for young indigenous people, projects of professional qualification for people who left the penitentiary system, approval of social clauses about the valuing of staff in collective conventions;
- iv. in one of the participant companies we observed human resources policies that intended to contemplate diversity, through the valuing of the black and indigenous staff members, and through hiring criteria privileging women, blacks and people with disabilities.

b. THE SEAL'S SECOND EDITION

With the ending of the first edition of the Seal, the process of restructuring for the next edition was initiated. A new coordinator for the program was hired, and he started discussions, research and evaluation with the remaining team to re-design the Seal.

The starting point was the evaluation of the Seal's first edition to analyze the results and what could be improved. The intention was to optimize the initiative in order to sensitize larger number of companies to enroll, at the same time as they would seek to promote a more systemic and continuous action for the promotion and valuing of diversity in work relations. Among the considerations made from the first edition and the proposals for the second edition, we highlight the following:

- a. the need to incorporate new diversity segments (GLBTs, Elderly, youth and people with disabilities), since until then, the Seal focused primarily on gender and race;
- b. the emphasis of the Seal would be in the stages of human resources management and the supplementary attention to the relations with customers, suppliers, and the community. In the previous edition of the Seal there was no clarity on which items should be prioritized for diversity promotion. Hence, any actions performed by the organizations were valid, regardless of its actual short, medium or long term outcome. Starting at the Second Edition, some actions were established as mandatory for the enrollment, based on the understanding that only through these actions diversity would be promoted in work relations. Among these mandatory actions, we highlight those related to human resource management/employment practices (recruitment, selection, hiring, promotions, benefits, and dismissal);
- c. the need for a new tripartite management structure composed by Government, private sector representative associations, and social movement organizations (such as Human rights Councils and the Municipal Employment Committee). The Government, represented by municipal Secretariats related to diversity promotion at work, would be responsible for managing all processes for the Seal's implementation; the private sector representative associations would be responsible for divulging the information about the seal to the their member companies and their network, as well as for the monitoring of the enrollment process; the social movement organizations would be responsible for the monitoring of all stages, particularly the supervision of whether the companies that enrolled are fulfilling the established goals. This tripartite structure would

enable a more efficient monitoring of the enrolled companies, in the elaboration and implementation of its action plan, while it allows greater advertising and better monitoring of the implementation of actions. In its first edition, the management of the seal was almost entirely under the responsibility of the Municipal Secretariat of Labor, which limited the scope of actions;

- d. On its second edition, the Seal would be directed exclusively to private companies, unlike the previous edition in which it was directed to public and private organizations in general. The reason for such modification was the belief that the format of the seal is more appropriate to support policies of diversity promotion in private companies, and that the Seal should have a focus to become more efficient. Promoting such policies in public agencies and non-profit organizations would require an initiative with a different format;
- e. Another innovation on the Seal's second edition is that the steps for enrollment would be differentiated according to the stage of diversity promotion the company presented. In this manner, we would recognize in different ways the various efforts and it would encourage companies to move to more advanced stages of diversity promotion.

Over the second semester of 2008 restructuring proposals involving other stakeholders were developed. The intention was to launch the Seal's second edition in that same year, but due to the replacement of the Municipal Secretary of Labor, there was a change in the schedule. Although the new Secretary had shown interest in the proposal initially, he did not continue the implementation of the second edition of the Diversity Seal.

5. ANALYSIS

a. GOVERNMENTAL SEALS OF RECOGNITION IN BRAZIL AND THE CITY OF SAO PAULO SEAL

We have identified that the creation of all Seals happened between 2005 and 2007, being possibly connected to the creation, in the year of 2003, of the Special Secretariat of Women Policies (SEPM) and of the Special Secretariat for the Promotion of Racial Equality Policies (SEPPIR).

The analysis of the Seals points to the predominance of gender and racial/ethnic issues. We consider that this predominance of approach is linked to the ILO concept that states, as previously pointed out, that the matrix of Brazilian social inequality is within the dimensions of gender and race. It is important to mention that both the São Paulo Seal for Diversity at Work's 2nd edition and the São Paulo State Seal of Diversity expanded their reach to other segments, such as youth, elderly, people with disabilities, and the LGBT population.

With regard to the tools used, it was evidenced that all Seals require that companies present an Action Plan, a Diagnostic Demographic Census, and an Activity Report. The Action Plan is a tool that contributes to the systematization of the company's actions, and to the establishment of deadlines to reach its goals. The Diagnostic Census cooperates to the measuring of the participation of minority segments, as well as the areas and positions they occupy within the company. Through the Activities Report it is possible to identify in which phases of the human resources management the company centers its actions. When the company understands the relevance of these tools and delivers them to the Managing Committee with as much information as possible, it is possible to perform an evaluation and improvement of the developed actions.

The **Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal** was implemented, in its first edition, with a number of features that contributed in a limited way to promote diversity in organizations, due to its format and implementation strategy. Initially, it is noticeable that the Seal's implementation was a process that involved few stakeholders in the execution of actions: mainly, the Municipal Secretariat of Labor. There were few effective partnerships with companies and the non-governmental organizations. In addition, the process of dissemination was limited, which resulted in a small number of organizations that joined (38) for a city with more than 300,000 formal companies. The low enrollment rate should also be reconsidered through the strategies used to attract and involve companies in the process. Other compensatory measures, besides the use of the Seal in the company's advertisement material, must be offered to companies.

The obtained results demonstrate the need to develop a program with more effective monitoring. Not all organizations that received the Seal delivered the required tools, and, since there was no established format to be followed, it was difficult to analyze and compare the information from the reports that were indeed delivered.

The actions performed by the organizations, in general, focused in events of sensitization/information. Only one of the companies presented a clear policy of diversity promotion in human resources management. By not encouraging the establishing of priority points to diversity promotion, we lose the focus and raise the risk of providing only partial and discontinuous actions, with little long-term effect.

The second edition was formulated to provide modifications which should result in actions to promote diversity in a systemic and continuous manner, contributing to structural transformation in work relations. This resulted in a more complete proposal, that would require a higher budget than the previous issue, and would demand the involvement of other stakeholders in its production, particularly from other municipal Secretariats, but what we notice is slowness to execute actions.

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis of the Seals of Recognition that seek to promote and value diversity in the workforce in Brazil demonstrates that they are recent initiatives, which have started in 2005, but they are innovative in what refers to involving private companies and other organizations. They must be expanded and strengthened to encourage the dissemination of the debate and the practice of diversity in the country.

As presented in this study, there are currently four Seals. One at federal level, which focuses on gender and race/ethnicity, one at State level, in its first edition, in the State of São Paulo, and two at the municipal level, in the cities of Salvador (where approximately 80% of the population is black) and the city of São Paulo. Regarding the latter, it is important to emphasize that the second edition of the Seal has not yet been launched, “*waiting for better political and economic conditions*”²⁸, in the words of the Municipal Secretary of Labor. If on one side they are four important initiatives, in emblematic locations for the rest of the country, they are still too few for a country that has more than 5,000 cities. The small quantity of Diversity Seals of Recognition may be explained as being a new approach to a still little known theme to many public managers, who, due to their lack of understanding of its importance or to prejudice, consider such actions secondary.

Concerning the four studied Seals, we found that, in general, they suggest guidelines of actions to companies, as they establish which work processes should be

²⁸ With the world economic crisis, the municipal government has cut up to 30% of its Secretariats funding.

prioritized for the promotion of diversity. Virtually all of them seek to strengthen the work processes related to human resources (recruitment, selection, promotion, remuneration, benefits and dismissal), the process of internal and external advertising and marketing, and the relations with customers and suppliers; however, they are far away to promote structural transformation on work relations.

It was not the focus of this work to analyze the results of the presented Seals of Recognition. However, we have identified an increasing number of organizations (companies, associations and public agencies) that enrolled to these programs, and we have observed interesting strategies to promote diversity within each company, from the development of specific actions for the recruitment of minority segments until the establishment of percentages of job positions that must be filled by those segments. Other actions for the awareness of companies' internal and external public also deserve to be highlighted. However, the effectiveness of the Seals in the promotion of diversity may be verified in future studies.

Table: The Seals and their characteristics

SEAL	SEGMENT ATTENDED	TARGETED PUBLIC	MAIN FOCUS	SECONDARY FOCUS	USED TOOLS
Gender Equity Seal	Gender	Public or private organizations, For-profit or non-profit, of medium and big size.	Phases of Employment Practices in the Work Environment	Health plans and job safety; mechanisms to fight discrimination practices (sex, race, pregnancy, and sexual orientation) and the occurrence of moral and sexual harassment; sensitization practices aimed towards gender equity in the organization relations; internal and external institutional advertisement	Term of Enrollment Profile Form Questionnaire Plan of Action
Diversity in the Workplace in the City of São Paulo Seal	Gender, Race/ethnicity, people with disabilities, youth, and elderly.	Private companies in the city of São Paulo.	Phases of Employment Practices in the Corporation Environment	Other actions of diversity promotion focused in the improvement of work environment and work relations	Term of reference Rules Questionnaire Term of enrollment Term of commitment Term of partnership with public sector Term of Partnership for social Control
São Paulo State Seal of Diversity	Ethnic-racial, gender, age, people with disabilities and sexual orientation	Public , private, and civil society organizations located in the State of São Paulo	Strategic management; human resources management; services and business management	aspects related to religious diversity, geographic origin and the social class	Rules Term of Commitment Questionnaire Electronic form
Ethnic-racial Diversity Seal of Salvador	Ethnic-racial	Organizations/ private, public and third sector companies established in the city of Salvador	operational supervision management coordination	Gender, age, and people with disabilities in a transversal way	Rules Registration Request form Questionnaire Enrollment form Action Plan Term of commitment

Elaboration of the authors.

