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The Bolsa Família Case: A Road to the Unconditional Basic Income

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Summary

Abstract:

The theory of the Unconditional Basic Income (UBI) has been debated for centuries (Suplicy, 2006). However, one of the major obstacles to the implementation of the UBI is lack of empirical testing. Basic Income pilots have been put into practice in recent years around the world (Standing, 2013). Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs that resemble the UBI, to a certain degree, as is the case of the *Bolsa Família* (BF), have also been implemented. This project is internationally considered as an example of success in combating historical poverty and inequality in Brazil. Observing what lessons may be learned from the Brazilian experience, the present work thus aims to analyze the *Bolsa Família* program so that contributions to current UBI studies may also be considered. To achieve this end, based on the theoretical foundations of the UBI (Van Parijs, 1991, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2005, Mckay, 2001, Vanderborght, 2005, 2006, Standing, 2013, Pettit, 2007, Purdy, 1988, Merrill and Neves, 2021), some central topics are addressed, namely: (i) Freedom, (ii) Labor, (iii) Politics and (iv) Feminism. In addition, existing Basic Income projects are taken into account (Widerquist, 2019; Suplicy, 2006). Subsequently, the present study focuses on the *Bolsa Família* experience, narrating the genesis of the program, as well as its implementation and evolution over the years, which makes it possible to look into how the Brazilian socioeconomic indexes (Campello et al, 2013; Neri, 2018) have been affected since the creation of this Income Transfer policy. The main developments of the *Bolsa Família* project are then analyzed from the theoretical perspective of the UBI with a focus on the aforementioned topics, that is, Freedom, Labor, Politics and Feminism. From a preliminary stance, it may be observed that the *Bolsa Família* was enhanced especially up until 2013, when the Brazilian trade balance was going through a thriving moment of positive economic rates. However, upon reaching a period of crisis and unemployment, there were multiple setbacks in socioeconomic achievements obtained between 2003 and 2013. Hence, this work suggests that, if there were greater investments in quality public services, alongside investments in consumerism brought about by the BF, socioeconomic fluctuations would not have affected the beneficiaries of the CCT so strongly. Nevertheless, without intending to be an end in itself, the present work aims to engage and encourage the debate on setting up a functional and improved Unconditional Basic Income project.

Keywords: Unconditional Basic Income, *Bolsa Família* Program, Public services, Liberty, Labor, Politics, Feminism.

Resumo:

A teoria da Renda Básica Incondicional (RBI) tem sido debatida há séculos (Suplicy, 2006). No entanto, um dos grandes obstáculos à implementação da RBI é a falta de testes empíricos de políticas dessa natureza. Pilotos da Renda Básica têm sido colocados em prática nos ultimos anos ao redor do mundo (Standing, 2013). Programas de Transferência de Renda Condicionada que se assemelham em certo grau à RBI, como é o caso do Bolsa Família (BF), também têm sido implementados. Esse projeto é considerado internacionalmente como um exemplo de sucesso no combate à pobreza e à desigualdade históricas no Brasil. Nesse sentido, o presente trabalho tem como objetivo analisar o programa Bolsa Família de modo a contribuir aos estudos da RBI, observando quais lições podem ser aprendidas a partir da experiência brasileira. Para tanto, com base nos fundamentos teóricos sobre RBI (Van Parijs, 1991, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2004, 2005, Mckay, 2001, Vanderborght, 2005, 2006, Standing, 2013, Pettit, 2007, Purdy, 1988, Merrill e Neves, 2021), propõe-se um debate em torno dos tópicos centrais dessa literatura, quais sejam: (i) Liberdade, (ii) Labor, (iii) Política e (iv) Feminismo. Adicionalmente, os projetos de Renda Básica já existentes serão brevemente citados (Widerquist, 2019; Suplicy, 2006). A partir dessa revisão de literatura, o trabalho trata da experiência do Bolsa Família, narrando a gênese do programa, bem como sua implementação e evolução ao longo dos anos e como os índices socioeconômicos brasileiros (Campello et al, 2013; Neri, 2018) foram afetados desde a criação dessa política de Transferência de Renda. Em sequência, os desdobramentos principais do projeto Bolsa Família são analisados sob o prisma teórico da RBI com foco nos tópicos supracitados: Liberdade, Labor, Política e Feminismo. Em sede preliminar, observa-se que o Bolsa Família foi potencializado durante o momento de forte superavit econômico na balança comercial brasileira, sobretudo até 2013. No momento em que o país adentrou um período de crise e as taxas de desemprego escalam vertiginosamente, percebem-se múltiplos retrocessos nas conquistas socioeconômicas obtidas entre os anos de 2003-2013. Nessa lógica, o trabalho sugere que, caso houvesse um maior investimento em serviços públicos de qualidade, coordenado ao investimento em consumo gerado pelo BF, as oscilações socioeconômicas não teriam ocorrido. No entanto, não se propondo a ser um fim por si só, o presente trabalho visa a fomentar o debate acerca da construção de um projeto de Renda Básica Incondicional funcional e aperfeiçoado.

Palavras-chave: Renda Básica Incondicional, Bolsa Família, Serviços Públicos, Liberdade, Labor, Política, Feminismo.

1. INTRODUCTION

La utopía está en el horizonte. Camino dos pasos, ella se aleja dos pasos y el horizonte se corre diez pasos más allá. ¿Entonces para que sirve la utopía? Para eso, sirve para caminar.
(Utopia is on the horizon. I walk two steps, it moves two steps further and the horizon runs ten steps further away. So, what's the point of utopia? The point is this: to keep walking.)
Fernando Birri, apud Eduardo Galeano. *Las Palabras Andantes* (Walking Words), 1993.

The Unconditional Basic Income (hereinafter UBI) has been the subject of social, political, economic discussions for more than a hundred years, as noted by Bertrand Russel (1918, apud. Widerquist et al., 2013) and Milton Friedman (1968). Some scholars, however, have given it much more attention over the last few decades (Van Parijs, 2000, 2004, 2013; Vanderborght, 2013; Meade, 2013; Esping-Andersen, 2001; Mckinnon, 2003; Suplicy, 2003, 2006). Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as noted by Guy Standing (2020), this topic has gained new strength in the context of global politics. The author (ibid.) points out to the urgent need to make a basic income a reality in order to build a healthier and less fragile society from the socioeconomic perspective. According to Standing, a Basic Income to all would be a significant step towards it.

Nonetheless, when the literature related to the UBI is reviewed, one of the main problems is the lack of concrete examples that can help its debate and thus improve it. In the studies on UBI (Standing, 2008), one thing that is often done is the analyses of policies that promote Conditional Cash Transfer. However, these Conditional Cash Transfer policies, albeit more common around the globe and consequently easier to be analyzed, are not universal as in the UBI proposal. The *Bolsa Família* program in Brazil is one of these oft quoted policies whose granting of the benefit, where applicable, depends on compliance with the following conditions: prenatal exam, nutritional monitoring, health monitoring and school attendance of 85% (eighty-five percent)[1].

Even though it is a commonly cited experience, yet there is not a study that thoroughly examines the *Bolsa Família* outcomes, which could better contribute to the UBI debate. Guy

[1] Law, N. (2004). 10.836 de 9 jan. 2004. (2004). *Creates the Bolsa Família Program and further providences. Brasília, DF, 9*.

Standing (2008) does it from a more general perspective in his article *How cash transfers promote the case for basic income*. Nevertheless, the objective in the present work is to look into the specific case of the *Bolsa Família*, which is not done by Standing (ibid.). Therefore, by resorting to the Brazilian policy as a concrete instance with its respective benefits and short comings (Lavinas, 2018), it may be possible to better understand how the UBI theory may be put into practice more effectively. That is, when it comes to aspects such as how to stimulate work, how to promote gender equality, how not to stigmatize social minorities, the *Bolsa Familia* might be helpful for the UBI debate.

That is the reason why this study focuses on the *Bolsa Família* program in Brazil, one of the rarest UBI examples whose origins date back from 2001 with President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, and that is still currently active after some developments by Luís Inácio Lula da Silva in the 2000's. All the same, it is important to keep in mind that the *Bolsa Família* program is not a UBI program itself, but a Conditional Cash Transfer policy. In this specific Brazilian experience, only a part of the society is eligible for the aid, which is then basically given to poor families.

As a matter of fact, the Brazilian program has generated an intense debate within the Brazilian society, both media-wise (Mantovani, 2009) and academy-wise (Campello & Neri 2013; Ipea Soares, Sátyro, 2009)[2] and has many significant outcomes to be discussed and analyzed from a UBI perspective. For example, Lavinas (2018) argues that the program was not successful in providing a real inclusion of the poor into Brazilian society. The author (ibid.) sees the aid as a way for the State to excuse itself from focusing on improvement of public services. On this note, this study will take arguments such as those into consideration in order to delve into what may be learned from the *Bolsa Família* experience and, therefore, be added to the current UBI discussion.

Besides, throughout this study, it is interesting to notice how the BF program was slowly solidified throughout the years and how the popular opinion reacted to the policy. A significant part of the population has taken it more negatively and pejoratively, which leads to discussions about its political feasibility (see Chapter 4, Sections 4.1 and 4.2).

In a preliminary stance, the *Bolsa Família* might seem to imply a significant motor in the struggle against poverty and inequality, as it will be observed in Chapter 3. Still, when analyzing the policy until 2018, it is important to notice its oscillations and how it responded to

[2] The detailed bibliography is found in Chapter 6 – Bibliography.

unstable economic periods. The best results of the BF program coincide with a good economic momentum of Brazil, which was not maintainable once the economic crisis struck the country (see Chapters 3 and 4). It may be argued that, in the case of the UBI, the cash transfer by itself would not probably achieve the status of a more equal society as suggested by the literature (see Chapter 2). As a matter of fact, a more organized range of public services is vital to achieve more equal and just socioeconomic levels.

The main objective of this work is, therefore, to review enough content concerning the UBI literature at the same time it leans over BF statistical analysis, so that one may learn from the BF experience and enhance the UBI debate. Arguments such as why the *Bolsa Família* was a success and if it achieved its main objectives are then considered. Moreover, the chances of the BF program being converted into a UBI in the long run, alongside possible improvements to be made in the Brazilian CCT, are discussed.

The present dissertation is thus organized into four main chapters besides this introduction: Chapter 2 is an overview on the Unconditional Basic Income literature; Chapter 3 presents and analyses (qualitatively and quantitatively) the *Bolsa Família* policy in Brazil; Chapter 4 examines the BF policy through the lenses of the UBI literature, so that, Chapter 5 may withdraw concluding remarks.

2. THE UNCONDITIONAL BASIC INCOME DISCUSSION:

The solution to poverty is to abolish directly by a now widely discussed measure: the Guaranteed Income.
Martin Luther King Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Communism.* (1967)

This chapter aims at reviewing the literature on the Unconditional Basic Income. In order to do that, it will be organized into four sections. The first section below takes into consideration the introductory elements of the UBI, focusing on what was likely to be the origin of the whole concept as well as on the more recent contributions in the academic and political context. In sequence, the remaining sections in this chapter discuss arguments regarding Freedom, Labor, Politics and Feminism through the lens of the UBI.

These four topics (Freedom, Labor Politics and Feminism) were selected due to the discussion of the *Bolsa Família* in this work (see Chapter 3). The outcomes of the Brazilian policy involve these four topics, which turn out to be fundamental to the objective of this dissertation, which is reflecting on the the *Bolsa Família* through the lens of the Unconditional Basic Income (see Chapter 4).

2.1. Unconditional Basic Income: a brief overview

The definition of the term Basic Income, as Van Parijs (2004) stated, is “an income paid by a political community to all its members on an individual basis without means test or work requirement” (2004). The fundamental aspects are thus the following: unconditionality, individuality and universality, which means it is a financial aid given to every single person regardless of their economic situation.

It is complicated to pinpoint who, when or where to explain the genesis of the Basic Income idea. In fact, there are many different terms that refer to this concept: Guaranteed Income, Citizen’s Income, Social Dividend, Universal Grant are just some examples. One of the first main political philosophical figures to address the subject was Thomas Paine, during his studies in the XVIII century. In his works, the Englishman often discussed topics such as social justice and true democracy. He was of vital importance for the Illuminist Revolutions during that time period, both in the American and French contexts[3]. In his text entitled "Common Sense" (1976), Paine, while thoroughly criticizing the European authorities of his time on issues such as oppression, taxation and slavery, for example, he treats the government as a "necessary evil" whose primary goal should be to function on behalf of society or people as a whole.

Paine delves into this discussion, arguing that, when it comes to economy, the state should protect their citizens, especially those who are sick, disabled, old and young, which could be done by redistributing wealth and building a fairer taxation system as compared to the one that existed at the time. This aid from the state would grant each citizen socioeconomic stability, as they wouldn't starve, and the young ones would have access to education. From this discussion, then, the Basic Income idea was born.

Further on, throughout the XIX and the XX centuries, more philosophers addressed the theme, such as Bertrand Russel, in his work "Proposed Roads to Freedom" (1918). The British Labor Party brought up the Basic Income idea to the party conferences during the post-World War One period, when, for the first time, the proposal gained strength as part of a relevant political movement.

However, only in the second half of the XX century, the UBI discussion became more relevant in the academic and political scenarios, especially in the United States and in Europe. That was the moment when scholars like Milton Friedman, Erich Fromm and Robert Theobald started to address the theme more thoroughly. It is interesting to notice how each author engages in the UBI discussion in his own personal way.

Friedman, for example, has a specific proposal that is different from the original Basic Income idea; it is called the Negative Income Tax (1969). The main difference from the original UBI idea is related to the non-universality aspect. The proposal by the American economist works by exempting citizens from taxes. The poorest the person, the greater their exemptions. If the citizen started earning more and more, the aid would diminish, until it reached a point where s/he would not be eligible for the benefit. After this cut-off point, s/he would just earn it according to her/his wage and pay regular taxes, with no exemption. This would be an

[3] CARVALHO, Daniel Gomes de. *O pensamento radical de Thomas Paine (1793-1797): artífice e obra da Revolução Francesa*. 2017. Tese (Doutorado em História Social) - Faculdade de Filosofia, Letras e Ciências Humanas, Universidad de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2017. doi:10.11606/T.8.2018.tde-12062018-135137. Access in 2020-12-29.

alternative to the UBI proposal, which, as stated by Friedman (ibid.), has many flaws. Still, it is a perspective that enriches the discussion and, therefore, will be taken into consideration (Section 2.2) with more details in this dissertation.

The Sabatical Account is another example of UBI related proposal. Idealized by Claus Offe (1999), it would allow individuals to live from the benefit for a certain period of their life. It would act like a sort of insurance, based on which people would be able to leave the workforce temporarily for any reason, such as in case of unemployment, inability to find a good job, need to take care of a sick family member or a child, or even if it is just to take some time off work. Nevertheless, since this aid is temporary, the individual would eventually need to return to the labor force.

Two other UBI related proposals that are worth mentioning here are the Stakeholder Grant (2005) and the Participation Income (1996). The first proposal refers to a grant to be given to every citizen when s/he turns eighteen or twenty-one years old, so that every individual would have a "more equal" opportunity when starting his or her adult life. The main problem regarding this proposal is that individuals might burn the opportunity (the stake) away in a short period of time, and thus prevent the grant from fulfilling its main purpose, which would not happen if it were something offered on a regular basis. Since the Stakeholder Grant does not take into consideration the childhood of the individual, it may fail to provide them with "equal opportunity". In other words, it is not just by giving out the grant that the problem of inequality will be sorted out. The Participation Income (1996) is based on the necessity of the individual to have an active role in society, which would include seeking a job, having a job, taking care of an infant or sick relative, participating in volunteer work, to name a few instances.

As far as politics is concerned, the Basic Income was more thoroughly discussed in the United States 1972 elections, when McGovern, the democrat candidate that opposed Nixon, had a detailed UBI proposal in his platform. In the end, Nixon won the election, and eventually also proposed a Basic Income program that almost came true, if it were not for the US Congress ban. The Dutch Labor Party also became involved with the UBI discussion during that time, though the proposal did not develop as it did in the US case.

In 1986, the Basic Income European Network was created in Louvain, during a conference in Belgium, organized by Philippe Van Parijs and a group of fellow academics. The purpose of the organization was to exchange information and data regarding the UBI subject in

Europe. In 2004, since it drew worldwide attention, this organization had its name switched to Basic Income Earth Network.

Nowadays, it is possible to say that the UBI is intensely present within the political discussion of many countries across the globe. Basic Income has been officially addressed in the political scenario of countries such as the UK, the US, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Brazil, South Korea, Namibia, Nigeria, India, South Africa, and so on.[4]

More recently, as shown by Guy Standing (2020), the debate was once again sparkled in the political, mediatic and academic environment due to the Covid pandemic, which demonstrated how fragile the world economy is.

From an experimental perspective, the Unconditional Basic Income still has a long way to go. There have been only a few experiences so as to support the UBI theories[5]. In Alaska, for example, there is a policy called the Alaska Permanent Fund[6], which has been taking place for decades and has entitled each citizen a certain amount of money every year. It started in 1976 as a two-hundred-dollar benefit, and it has gone up to 1,600 dollars in 2019. This money comes from the sale of oil reserves extracted from Alaska soil. In other places, such as Finland and India, temporary UBI programs were also tested (Tsvirko, 2019).

Besides those instances, there were policies of Conditionate Cash Transfers (CCTs), which bare some similarity with the UBI proposal, since there is also an extra income provided. The main difference, as the name suggests, is that it is not a benefit given in a universal way. In other words, only some individuals are entitled to this aid, and they need to fulfill some requirements occasionally. One famous example of CCT is the *Bolsa Família* program, a Brazilian policy created in 2003 (see Chapter 3). This financial assistance implies the fulfillment of certain obligations (such as medical checkups and school attendance). Besides, it is given only to households that live under extreme poverty, and if the children in these households attend school regularly. These CCTs policies are commonly mentioned in UBI discussions. In the article entitled *How Cash Transfers Promote the Case for Basic Income*, Guy Standing (2003) analyses different CCTs, which will be vital within the scope of this work (see Section 2.4).

[4] See Standing, Guy, How Cash Transfers Promote the Case for Basic Income (2008).

[5] See Standing, Guy, How Cash Transfers Promote the Case for Basic Income (2008).

[6] For more information, check the website for the Alaska Permanent Fund Foundation https://apfc.org/.

The Basic Income debate includes a series of subject matters that are analyzed in the book *Basic Income: An Anthology of Contemporary Research* (2013). Some examples, which bear great importance within this work, are personal freedom, social and economic justice, environmental sustainability and, as already mentioned, feminism. Therefore, in the following sections this study leans on each of those topics, which may be helpful when analyzing the *Bolsa Família* outcomes further on.

2.2. Freedom

As already stated in this chapter previously, one of the most heated discussions regarding the Unconditional Basic Income is related both to the economic freedom that people would gain and the imposition of taxes and duties especially on the richer social classes.

Erich Fromm (1966) analyzed the psychological aspects of the Guaranteed Income proposal. In a section of the book "The Guaranteed Income", Fromm (ibid.) argued that every person is obligated to work in order to have access to and satisfy basic needs, such as alimentation, housing, entertainment, among others.

Throughout history, there has always been a certain scarcity of resources, which generated poverty and starvation (Fromm, 1966). However, during the twentieth century, some countries achieved economic abundance, so as the levels of poverty decreased in comparison to previous times. In this new society, Guaranteed Income would be affordable and would free men from labor necessity (ibid.).

Nonetheless, Fromm (1966) argues that society maintained, from the periods of scarcity, negative psychological traits, mainly such as selfishness and individuality. As a result of this "psychological lag", as the German scientist states (ibid.), people are still holding on to these old traits, a kind of capitalist individuality (ibid.). He even uses the term *homo consumens* to refer to twentieth century humans who would never be satisfied with their main economic status; instead, they would insatiably desire for more and more individual abundance, which might be related to extreme consumerism.

Once those individuals managed to get rid of this selfish ambitious stigma and shared the resources in a healthier way, a mindset of social abundance could be achieved, allowing the implementation of the Guaranteed Income. That way, we would leave the pre-human civilization, hooked on survival, to enter a more human society. In this new reality, humankind would be able to focus on more philosophical issues, such as the meaning of life through understanding the world where we live.

However, to achieve that goal, the Guaranteed Income would not suffice. The sociological problem of the *homo consumens* would still be there, which would make a systematic transformation necessary to free humankind from this stage of consumerism, individuality, economic ambitiousness, and selfishness. After all, there is always financial competition among individuals in the mind of the *homus consumens*.

Fromm (1996) reaches the conclusion that another way to achieve the goals of the Guaranteed Income would be to build a society where the state pays a small amount of money that covers all basic human necessities, such as alimentation and housing, at the same time it offers quality public services, such as transportation and education. This would be crucial to shift society (especially western society, which is the one Fromm refers to) from the *homus consumens* stigma, which could not be dealt with only by means of the Guaranteed Income alone.

Therefore, Fromm (1966) sums up that the conception of freedom should not be the one inspired by the *homus consumens*, which is basically the right to property and its exploitation. In order to correct inequalities and truly integrate poor sectors of the society, freedom should be understood from an inclusive perspective. Once again, the Guaranteed Income provides the economic freedom, but does not free mankind from the "false scarcity stigma" (ibid). The Guaranteed Income should, indeed, come together with a profound psychological, philosophical, religious, and educational transformation (ibid.).

Of course, Fromm's point of view is more in line with a left-wing view of the ideal society. To counterbalance this perspective, though, the Basic Income Anthology (2013) also includes the libertarian economist Milton Friedman's stance. Oddly, Friedman (1968) does not react to the Basic Income idea in the stereotypical right-wing way. He is in favor of a UBI related policy, acknowledging that the poorest segments of the society are the least free ones, and that a financial aid like that would precisely target their needs.

However, Friedman (1968) distances himself from Fromm (1966) when it comes to developing his ideal of Basic Income. The American economist believes that the state, by aiding the poor, is acting against their freedom, determining what to consume and how to live.

Consequently, he proposes a mechanism called Negative Income Tax, which works by exempting people from taxes. The poorest the person, the greater his or her exemptions. If the citizen started earning more and more, the aid would diminish, until it reached a point where s/he would not be eligible for the benefit. After this cut-off point, she/he would just earn it according to her/his wage and pay regular, proportional taxes, with no exemption.

The main aspect here to be analyzed is that Friedman (1968) does not problematize the *homus consumens* as Fromm (1966) did. That is, the economist does not see consumerism as a problem, but as a solution, a means to achieve progress. The major problem, according to Friedman's arguments, is that the state curtails freedom from the poor people by means of an unideal assistance. In other words, when it comes to trying to perform social equity, Friedman sees the Basic Income idea, which he names the Negative Income Tax proposal, as an alternative to the Welfare State. Nonetheless, that is the opposite path Fromm (ibid.) pursues.

Another relevant discussion concerning the UBI and philosophic freedom is led by Van Parijs (1991). In his article entitled "Why Surfers Should Be Fed", the author explains the Crazy-Lazy theory. According to him (ibid.), one can picture an island where there are two groups of people: the lazy and the crazy. While the crazy bunch are always pursuing more work and resources, the lazy are just doing the least to have a comfortable life. If the lazy population wanted to give away a share of their land to the crazy, in order to work less, they would not earn less than what they used to, since the crazy would pay the lazy a fee for the use of their share. Van Parijs (1991) believes the UBI should work along these same lines; that is, every individual should be entitled to a share of land that could be converted into income. However, since we do not live in Van Parijs' island, every individual would just be entitled to the income, which would also be considerably important in a world where automation is growing exponentially, and unemployment rates are following suit.

Van Parijs (ibid.) argues that the UBI would maximize the concept of real freedom from a libertarian perspective. However, the philosopher Elizabeth Anderson (2001) believes otherwise. The latter states that the Basic Income would not generate freedom in the scale the former predicted, since it would not create true equity in society. The basic concept of libertarian freedom advocates for providing people with the means to achieve their aims. On the other hand, the UBI would be way more valuable to healthy than to disabled people for not offering to society resources in a just and isonomic way. Besides, there would still be big resistance from the richer social sectors. As a matter of fact, they would feel that their freedom diminished or restrained as a result of wealth redistribution, which might end up stigmatizing the Basic Income idea. Nevertheless, Anderson (ibid,) does not totally oppose to the proposal; the philosopher claims that it requires testing. As for the other issues, especially regarding the equity arguments, she believes they would be adjustable by means of an isonomic public assistance.

Another academic who addresses the issue of Freedom within the realm of the UBI is Philip Pettit (2008), who has an interesting and different view of the topic when compared to the ones previously mentioned in the present work. Pettit (ibid.) does not believe that the UBI is justified by liberal or libertarian principles, simply because it would be a state intervention in the economy. On one hand, authors such as Van Parijs (1991) are not entirely wrong when stating that the UBI would provide freedom to a significant amount of people. On the other hand, Pettit (ibid.) argues that employees and housewives are examples of groups that lack freedom for socioeconomic reasons, and a Basic Income would be able to shift this paradigm. According to the Irish political theorist, the perspective which would justify such economic aid should be the Republican. Only then the UBI would guarantee the economic independence of certain social groups and, consequently, enhance individual freedom, which implies freedom of speech, leisure and so on.

Karl Widerquist's (2011) seems to agree with Pettit:

> The rules we live under today do not make most people free to refuse unwanted active cooperation with others. Land that was once free for all to use is now claimed by governments, businesses, and individuals. Most people reach adulthood with no direct access to the resources they need, they can only obtain resources by meeting conditions set by others – by employers or governments. They have the nominal right to refuse but they do not have the effective power to refuse; someone will interfere with anything they might do to support themselves (alone or in groups). They cannot work for themselves; they must work for a property owner or a government.

From Widerquist's perspective (2011), we are not able live apart from society and still have a way of subsistence. Humankind has evolved to a point where the planet no longer has a way-out option. Every piece of land is seized by either a government state, or a private corporation, which strongly supports a UBI policy.

The author goes forward saying that the present economy reached a point where groups of the society, such as property owners and governments, claim resources that could be destined for individuals who need to work as their employees in order to survive. The problem is this situation unbalances individual freedom, for it provides some people with way more than others. And, as the taxation system is flawed as far as this issue is concerned, a UBI would be an option to sort it out.

2.3. Labor

The focus of this section is discussing Labor from the perspective of the Unconditional Basic Income. There are two main ways to go about this topic. One may engage in a (i) philosophical discussion on whether all citizens should work (or seek work) to receive a basic income, and\or in (ii) a macroeconomic-environmental discussion about the need for full employment in post-production or post-Fordist societies. In the present work, the latter becomes more relevant, since the object of analysis is the *Bolsa Família* and its empirical repercussions. Besides, the *Bolsa Família* is not a proper UBI assistance; therefore, it does not fully replace the necessity of labor, which drives us away from the philosophical debate about labor. Hence, the focus will be on macroeconomics.

Although the philosophical aspect will not take centerstage within the scope of this research, it still needs to be acknowledged. Van Parijs (1991) thoroughly addresses the philosophical debate on Basic Income and Labor and even stimulates other authors, such as Van Donselaar (2009) and Anderson (2001). Van Parijs uses a metaphor of the island with "crazy and lazy" people to prove that all citizens should have the rights and access to resources available in society. For the Belgian economist, a reality in which part of the population chooses not to enter the labor market and still receive resources to live a dignified life is philosophically reasonable (see Subsection 2.2).

Other scholars, however, argue there are limitations to the unconditionality aspect of the Basic Income as proposed by Van Parijs. Anderson (2001), for example, claim that unconditionality can create injustices within society, once it provides both citizens who are fully capable to enter the labor market and citizens who are physically or psychologically disabled with the same aid. Nonetheless, according to Anderson, this latter group would need more support than the first.

Van Donselaar (2009) also criticizes Van Parijs' metaphor. The Dutchman suggests that Van Parijs' proposals naturally create a parasitic reality within society, where some would have to rely on others for support. Van Donselaar believes that for Van Parijs' UBI proposal to be satisfied and for it to be fair, there must be plenty of socioeconomic resources available for all citizens. This is, however, an extremely delicate condition, as the Dutch philosopher points out.

On the other hand, as far as macroeconomics is concerned, Claus Offe (1992), for instance, mentions the Basic Income proposal confronts socioeconomic pressures for full employment and productivism. In this sense, according to Offe, the UBI opens up the possibility for public policies that should be more aligned with environmental and sustainability agendas. Also, it would be more effective than the Welfare State on combating inequality and socioeconomic exclusion.

The UBI proposal, by removing the necessity of labor, builds up a reality where artistic skills which are more focused on human capital are valued. Automation would also be strongly stimulated by the advent of the Basic Income as well. Unworthy job positions would be extinguished as long as there were no longer people undergoing precarious working conditions. As a result, working conditions would improve considerably. Due to the Basic Income, employees would then have much greater autonomy to negotiate with their employers.

André Gorz (1997) also discusses the macroeconomic aspects of the UBI. The author addresses two distinct basic income proposals. The first would be insufficient and would serve as complementary income for the individual, so that they had the minimum to survive out of the combination of this aid and their salary, and still maintained the need for employment so that there is subsistence. The second proposal mentioned by Gorz would be sufficient for subsistence, since it would spare the individual from labor.

The first idea, advocated by neoliberal theorists, is fundamentally flawed, according to Gorz. One of the consequences of insufficient income is that it worsens labor conditions, bringing about precarious employment. However, this should be solved by the second Basic Income option referred by the author, based on which greater freedom is given to the citizen, who can choose to enter the labor market or not.

As for Gorz (1997), the UBI debate revolves around the conditionality aspect of the Basic Income. The author assumes that he has already advocated that the beneficiaries should provide their community with service of social interest in order to earn the benefit. Then Gorz started to support unconditionality for moral issues. The author believes this community work would not be essential from an economic point of view. Also, he claims that the reality in which individuals are not obliged to work generates countless benefits and encourages various forms of social services that are not necessarily associated with the productivity reasoning as adopted by Offe.

Fred Block (1990) was another sociologist who addressed the theme of the Basic Income from a post-production or post-industrial perspective. The author focuses specifically on the case of the United States. The main argument explored by Block is that there is no direct relationship between full employment and economic growth in the US. Thus, a UBI that reduced the number of employed workers would not be negative according to the macroeconomic perspective. In addition, the sociologist recognizes, in line with Gorz and Offe, the possibility generated by the UBI for beneficiaries to invest in their own personal ventures, which can even significantly strengthen causes such as feminism and environmentalism. The big loser with the advent of a Basic Income would be, as far as Block is concerned, large companies that rely on cheap labor, such as fast-food franchises. Business groups would probably oppose such Basic Income proposal and hinder its implementation. To overcome such opposition, however, there should be a strong political coalition supporting the UBI.

Another extremely relevant debate regarding labor and the Basic Income is brought up by Merrill and Neves (2021) and Thomas (2020a). The latter advocates for the State as Employer of Last Resort (SELR) as an alternative to increasing unemployment and as means of generating financial equity for the working class, since it means full employment in the society7. Additionally, according to the author, this initiative would be superior to the UBI for three main reasons: (i) macroeconomically SELR acts as a stabilizer, having an anticyclical effect and preventing economic downturns, since it guarantees full employment and reasonable wages; (ii) the proposal reforms the capitalist system, is able to "euthanize" the rentist class and assist the decommodification of labor; (iii) it is interpreted, by Rawls (apud Merrill and Neves, 2021), as a method that is just and fair, since it creates an environment in which citizens find dignity by means of labor. Finally, it is worth mentioning Thomas understands the UBI proposal as a stimulant of inflation.

Merrill and Neves (2021) counterargue the points developed by Thomas (2020a). From the macroeconomic perspective, the pro-SELR argument aims at creating jobs, increasing productivity and preventing inflation as well as economic downturns. Concomitantly, SELR supporters claim that the UBI may discourage work and eventually decrease productivity, increase inflation and cause economic downturns. As a matter of fact, the premise that a UBI

[7] In Thomas (2020a) the SELR thesis is explained more deeply. In a nutshell, it consists of a proposal for a federally funded program based on which the government employs all of the jobless who are ready, willing, and able to work in a public sector project on a base wage.

policy promotes unemployment is unfounded. As seen in Section 2.6, the Basic Income projects that have already been tested did not generate mass unemployment; only a minority of the experiences have shown a slight reduction in employment rates. In addition, some of the tests, such as the ones in India and Namibia, have seen a significant growth of individual entrepreneurial activities as a result of the UBI (Widerquist, 2018, and Standing, 2013). Still, if there is unemployment and inflation due to the implementation of a Basic Income policy, there are ways to combat this. Merrill and Neves, for instance, suggest requalification programs and training for individuals to reintegrate the labor market.

On the issue of the rentist class, Merrill and Neves disagree with Thomas, by arguing that, in comparison to the SERL, the UBI grants more autonomy to the working class in order to negotiate with rentiers. The argument by the Portuguese scholars is based on the fact that a UBI project would act more effectively in decommodification of labor. As Meade argued (1993, apud Merrill and Neves, 2021), salaries are insufficient mechanisms in the search for redistribution of resources. Moreover, it would be fair to say that any measures should be accompanied by a range of economic policies. Hence, it is utopian to believe that the SELR or the UBI ideas would, by themselves, revolutionize the capitalist market and the relationship between rentiers and workers.

When it comes to justice and equity, a major argument in defense of SERL is how employability has a positive psychological effect on the individual. As it turns out, however, this argument is flawed because the present social reality is distinct from a reality in which the UBI would exist. In other words, there would be no psychosocial pressures on individuals to find a job and there would be no more workers (or fewer workers) accepting precarious jobs or, as Graeber (2018) puts it, "bullshit jobs". Thus, the UBI creates more fertile conditions for individuals to seek meaningful work which would fulfil them on a personal and philosophical level, which would therefore change the present reality where people enter the labor market only for economic reasons. The UBI, but not the SERL, should be able to revolutionize this scenario, since work would no longer be attached to subsistence. Besides, individuals would be free to invest time and money in personal entrepreneurs[8]. It is undeniable that this dissociation of labor with subsistence (even if it is not entirely observed) that the UBI promotes is not only more revolutionary than SELR, but it also has more positive effects from the psychosocial perspective.

[8] As a matter of fact, UBI pilots show that personal entrepreneurs are highly stimulated among beneficiaries of the Basic Income (see Section 2.6).

It is noteworthy that, throughout this section, the debate concerning labor and the UBI was held from a more theoretical perspective. In section 2.6, notwithstanding, UBI pilots that have already been implemented will be listed, and a discussion how it affected labor statistics in each case will be carried out. In the meantime, the next section addresses the topic of politics within the UBI debate.

2.4. Politics

David Purdy's article entitled "Political Strategies for Basic Income" (1988) puts forward important arguments related to the UBI, as follows: (i) ethical desirability, (ii) historical preconditions, (iii) economic viability and (iv) political feasibility. Purdy (ibid.) focuses on the political feasibility of the proposal, reminding his reader that the first three outlooks on the UBI (ethical, historical, and economic) are significantly influential in the political discussion.

Addressing the issue of political feasibility, the author (1988) lays down three requirements for the UBI to come true: (i) formation of a political majority pro UBI, (ii) political agreement among this majority and (iii) success of the government in implementing the policy, by overcoming the natural difficulties and the political opposition. That is, there needs to be a sort of consensus among the population (or at least among their majority) that the UBI will be worth it, even though there will always be winners and losers from the economic perspective. Therefore, it is vital to have solid popular support, which would mean, according to Purdy (ibid.), the political majority in our hypothetical parliament or government.

However, it is fundamental to note that the minority that may be financially hindered by the UBI's implementation is not just any minority; they are the richest share of individuals, who have a unique influence over the rest of the society on many different aspects (financially, culturally, politically, etc.). Therefore, this issue will not be worked out once most of the people are in favor of and are being aided by the policy; as a matter of fact, it is an issue that, sociologically speaking, requires way more than popular support.

Thus, Purdy (1988, p. 6) states that:

> A strategy which ranges the poor and disinherited against an alliance of organized workers, big business and the state, is clearly doomed to failure. Some way has to be found of avoiding this unequal contest. The most obvious strategic imperative is to detach trade unions and their members from the nascent power bloc. They have to be weaned away from their conservative adherence to the priorities and norms of the present system of employment: persuaded to regard BI as a liberating potency rather than a mortal threat; and convinced that their best interests lie in striving to overhaul and redesign society's arrangements for organizing work and distributing income.

Purdy's standpoint makes it clear how important it is to have cohesion among the UBI supporters, which historically seems to be a challenge. Radical proposals normally face more resistance from society. The Great Depression, in the 1930's, is a good example of a crisis when more conservative reforms (rather than a radical UBI proposal) took place. Still, Purdy (ibid.) believes that the Basic Income needs to be something slowly matured, so it can be successfully implemented into society.

Also, it is worth mentioning Cavala and Wildavsky (1970), right-wing representatives from the 91st Congress in the US who were overly against the UBI proposal; in fact, they regarded the idea to be absurd. From their outlook, it remains clear that any proposal which presumes an increase on taxation, even if the goal is to reduce poverty, is a sensitive topic when it comes to right-wing politicians.

Yannick Vanderborght (2005) was another author to address the political issue concerning the UBI. The Belgium professor debated three examples of how the Basic Income proposal was treated by Trade Unions: the Belgians, the Canadians and the Dutch. The outcomes of Vanderborght's reports (ibid.) are worth taking note. None of the Trade Unions showed a disposition pro UBI. The Belgians basically put forward four main arguments against the proposal: (i) fear of an increased difficulty for the Trade Unions to negotiate better salaries; (ii) possible flexibilization of the labor market rules; (iii) chance of tax raises, which would affect union workers; and (iv) ambiguity of the work requirement concerning eligibility rules concerning unemployed insurance. This strong negative stance by the Belgium community is shocking if you take into consideration the wide UBI debate among scholars from that country.

In the Canadian case, the situation is a bit more complex. Yannick (2005) points out that the discussion on the implementation of a UBI dates back to the 30's in the French-English speaking country. From the political perspective, the debate is driven mainly by the left-wing politicians, but without much success according to the author. The Trade Unions themselves do not have a clear position regarding the UBI. They agree that the implementation of such proposal is a matter of fundamental rights, which would mitigate the poverty issue immensely. However, few Canadian unions openly support the Income, since it would mean higher tax cost so as to allow a true progressive aid. Besides, there is a fear that a UBI would harm the Welfare State foundation, which is justified since the right-wing parties in the country support the Negative Income Tax, as idealized by Friedman (1968) and previously debated in this present work (Section 2.1).

Last but not least, the Dutch Trade Unions are not as resistant to the UBI proposal as their counterparts. There has been a vast debate in the political scenario since the 80's, as a result of the impossibility of the Dutch government to achieve a full employment equilibrium. However, the Netherlands still do not share a successful Basic Income proposal as part of their social-political system.

Based on Vanderborght (2005), it is only fair to say the UBI is a controversial matter among the Trade Unions of wealthy industrialized countries. One conclusion that may be drawn from Vanderborght's essay is that the fear of dismantling the welfare state is a relevant nemesis to the Basic Income idea. If it were viable to build a BI scheme independent from the welfare system, or even with a small impact on it, the political feasibility would increase considerably.

Shifting the focus of the debate from the northern hemisphere perspective, Van Parijs (2003) offers a brief analysis of how the UBI proposal would be feasible in more segregated countries, such as Brazil and sub-Saharan African states. The Belgium economist, however, points out an important difference between the Brazilian case and the African countries:

> "In a country like the Netherlands a modest Unconditional and Universal Basic Income is a realistic proposal for the immediate future: its net cost would be quite low, since a guaranteed minimum income already exists. But in countries like Brazil, where no general targeted minimum income program exists, and where an important part of aggregated income is not detected by the tax system, it is obvious that the immediate introduction of a Universal Basic Income would be irresponsible." Van Parijs (2003, p. 2)

Additionally, the author says that, in cases like Brazil, the best solution for the poorest sectors of the society is for the government to create financial aids that should gradually evolve to a Basic Income. In fact, the primary issue in these developing countries currently is extreme poverty. Anyways, there needs to be more caution in such cases, so the programs created (mostly Conditionate Cash Transfers) do not create dependency or unemployment traps, which would hinder the possibility of a future UBI policy.

In the sub-Saharan cases, there are higher rates of extreme poverty, which increases even more the necessity of a UBI policy directly. The few pensions that already exist in sub-Saharan Africa already have good results (Van Parijs, 2003), enhancing the health standards of the population. Still, once the pensions may reduce incentives for a formal job, the formal employment trap is something to be aware of.

Standing (2008) also provides us with a quite detailed analysis of the Basic Income discussion in developing countries. In his text entitled "How Cash Transfers Promote the Case for Basic Income", the British author establishes five principles to analyze economic redistribution policies:

(I) The Security Difference Principle – A policy or institutional change is socially just only if it improves the security of the least secure groups in society. The Security Difference Principle stems from Rawls, who from a liberal philosophical perspective essentially argued that social and economic inequalities are only just if they allow for the betterment of the worst-off groups in society (Rawls, 1973).

(II) The Paternalism Test Principle – A policy or institutional change is socially just only if it does not impose controls on some groups that are not imposed on the most free groups in society. Underlying this principle is the Millian liberal view that there is a prima facie case against paternalism (except in the case of young children and those who are medically frail), particularly against those forms that constrain the freedoms of the disadvantaged.

(III) The Rights-Not-Charity Principle – A policy or institutional change is socially just if it enhances the rights of the recipient of benefits or services and limits the discretionary power of the providers. This third principle is also crucial for assessing alternative benefit schemes. A right is possessed by virtue of a person's humanity or citizenship and cannot be made dependent on some behavioral conditionality. Social and economic entitlements should be rights, not matters for the discretionary decisions of bureaucrats or philanthropists or aid donors.

(IV) The Ecological Constraint Principle – A policy or institutional change is socially just only if it does not involve an ecological cost borne by the community or by those directly affected. Benefit schemes should be subject to the constraint that they should not deliberately or carelessly jeopardize the environment.

(V) The Dignified Work Principle – A policy or institutional change is just only if it does not impede people from pursuing work in a dignified way and if it does not disadvantage the most insecure groups in that respect. The two-part test in this principle involves two implicit value judgements – that work that is dignifying is worth promoting (whereas any deterioration in working conditions or in opportunities would not be), and that the policy should enhance the range and quality of work options of the most insecure groups relative to others, or more than for others. The main point is to determine whether or not a scheme favors the development of more freely chosen work opportunities and work capabilities.

From these principles, Standing analyzes several aid policies, starting with food aids, which are considerably problematic, mostly because extreme poverty cannot be reduced to a shortage of food. In this case, in the author's opinion, the aid ends up being a sort of charity, instead of an economic rights assistance. In other instances, such as Afghanistan and some African countries (overall in the Great Lakes region), the people who receive food are obligated to sell it to fulfill other fundamental needs. A cash transfer would be cheaper and more efficient than the food aid, whose outcome turns out to be a paternalistic approach to the extreme poverty reality, without successfully solving it.

The second kind of subsidy which Standing (2008) addresses are Vouchers and Food Stamps, which happen to share many of the typical problems of food aids. They all result in a restrictive assistance, according to which the person who receives the benefit cannot spend on what he/she thinks is more necessary. Empiric data shows this often causes yet another problem.

In the United States, for instance, people who received Food Stamps buy more food than they would if they received cash, which ends up creating obesity problems and, consequently, failing to sort out other fundamental issues, such as health.

Standing's arguments (2008) also cover the Conditionate Cash Transfer (CCTs) discussion and how they were developed in Asian and African countries. The author makes it clear that this kind of aid is far more successful than the previous ones (food aid, food stamps and vouchers). Finally, Standing goes on to discuss how CCTs were developed as a central policy in Latin-American countries. And the most remarkable example (and the closest to the heart of this dissertation) is the *Bolsa Família* aid in Brazil.

Programs such as that one imposes certain conditions on the person who benefits from them. In this specific Brazilian case, the family who receive the aid need to have their children enrolled in school, and students must show proof of school attendance, otherwise the cash transfer will cease. Standing (2008) reminds us that, although such programs still have a paternalistic approach, they show far better results than simpler aids, not only by increasing the life quality of the ones who benefit from them, but also by helping to integrate those beneficiaries into society (in the Brazilian case, by means of education). Other examples of *Bolsa Família*-like policies are the *Progresa* (Mexico), *Familias en Acción* (Colombia), *Programa de Asignación Familiar* (Honduras), *Programme of Advancement through Health and Education* (Jammaica) and *Red de Protección Social* (Nicaragua). Outside Latin America, Bangladesh also adopted something called Cash for Education Scheme.

Standing (2008) examines these social policies considering the aforementioned principles. As far as the Security Difference Principle, one may see that 20% of the beneficiaries in Mexico and Nicaragua were non-poor groups (ibid.). This number went up to 40% in Bangladesh. One relevant issue of such programs is the amount of unregistered households, which complicates the cash transfer to poor families. Another issue concerning these schemes is schooling availability: in cases where there are not schools near the households, families in need might be prevented from receiving the aid.

However, the biggest question brought up by the author (ibid.) is whether the conditioning of the aid to those that so desperately need it is justifiable. Additionally, by imposing such conditions, the government is also gauging that the assisted individuals are not able to make choices in their best interests, which is also problematic, because it leads us to the paternalistic issue previously discussed in this Section in relation to other aid schemes.

Still, Standing (2008) recognizes the importance of such policies. Despite their shortcomings, women's labor and independence, for example, were boosted in the societies where those policies were implemented, which support the Dignified Work principle established by the author.

Finally, Standing (ibid.) approaches the issue of social pensions and disability pensions, and their positive impacts on society. In cases such as rural Brazil, for example, social pensions boosted small agricultures (ibid.). In Namibia, children's education was guaranteed by the pension.

Standing (2008) thus acknowledges that all those benefits speak for the Unconditional Basic Income. Contrary to one of the biggest fears regarding the proposal, it would not foster dependency; in fact, the assistance schemes proved to foster independency, by removing the poverty trap and empowering the poorest social sectors. Also, the author (ibid.) believes it is economically viable; that is, it does not imply any complicated endeavor.

After approaching the issue of politics, it is also key to consider how the UBI might be related to feminism, which is the topic of the next section below.

2.5. Feminism

Withorn (1990) and Orloff (1990) argue that an Unconditional Basic Income might sound, at first glance, favorable to women, once it would provide housewives with more independence. However, this might as well take a treacherous path. If only few women chose to follow a career, there could be discrimination against them, which might cause greater difficulty for those women to achieve equal working conditions. Withorn (1990) states that the implementation of the UBI nowadays would increase sexism in society, especially when it comes to the labor perspective.

Pateman (2004) and McKay (2001), nonetheless, have a distinct point of view. Pateman (2004) believes that the UBI would by itself antagonize the "androcentric society", once it would concede more economical freedom to women who opt for the domestic work. The impacts the UBI would have on the non-domestic labor is yet something to be examined from an empirical perspective; the theoretical discussion is still weak and unfounded, according to Mckay (2001) and Pateman (2004)

Anne Alstott (2001), who shows a different perspective than the previous authors, claims that the UBI would have positive impact on the poorest households. According to Alstott (ibid.), women who are part of more criminalized groups in the society are economically vulnerable, and the UBI would help them considerably. There are already many women that are forced to abandon the non-domestic labor force, so the impacts of the Basic Income to this sector cannot be ignored. In the end, the UBI would have a profound influence on gender discrimination, by setting the same income floor for all individuals.

After considering relevant issues concerning the feminism within the UBI debate, the following section aims at providing an overview of the pilots that have been implemented so far.

2.6. Already existing UBI Programs and Experiments

There are few places where a permanent Unconditional Basic Income program has been implemented. The first to be mentioned should be the Alaska Permanent Fund (see Section 2.1). In that case, the resources that makes the cash transfer possible comes from oil extraction in Alaska. The policy started in 1976 as a two-hundred-dollar annual transfer, and it has gone up to sixteen hundred dollars until 2019. This case is probably the closest one to an ideal Unconditional Basic Income (Widerquist et al., 2013).

As a matter of fact, temporary UBI programs were tested (Tsvirko, 2019) in countries such as: The United States, Canada, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Spain, The Netherlands, Iran, Kenya, Namibia, India, China, and Japan. Most of those experiments are still under analysis and soon it will be possible to withdraw conclusions on their socioeconomic impacts.

The US experiences, proportionally, are many. Besides Alaska, the US shares quite a lot of experience when it comes to UBI programs. There is, for example, the program of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Cassino Dividend in North Carolina, which was created in 1997 and transfers between $4.000,00 and $6.000,00 annually, without any obligations for the beneficiary. Since the creation of the program, labor rates remained stable. The affected rates were as follows: while educational mental health increased, crime and drug addiction decreased.

During the 1960's and 1970's, there was a federal cash transfer experiment that took place in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Iowa, North Carolina, Seattle, Denver, and Indiana, involving around 7,500 people (Kearney and Mogstad, 2019). The main effect that pilot had was a small decrease of working hours: 17% among women and 7% among men. The most recent US test, in Stockton, California, started in 2019 (ibid.). The participants were given $500,00 monthly, and results evaluated in October of that same year found that most participants had been using their stipends to buy groceries and pay their bills. The health quality of the beneficiaries increased significantly. Around 43% of the participants had a full or part-time job, only 2% were unemployed and not actively seeking work. Despite this considerable experience, the US still struggles in the political scenario to implement a permanent UBI nation-wide[9].

In Canada, there was a trial run in the province of Manitoba, between 1974 and 1978. As result, this Canadian experience led to a drop of hospitalization rates whereas the number of high school graduates rose (Ruckert et al., 2018). More recently, in 2017, a new project, which was supposed to last for three years, was implemented in Ontario. However, due to the elections in 2018, when the Liberals were replaced by Progressive Conservatives, the program was cancelled, which motivated the beneficiaries to file lawsuits against the government.

Brazil has two examples of UBI pilots, other than Conditionate Cash Transfer policies. First, there was the project tested in Quatinga Velho, a small town in São Paulo State, which lasted from 2008 to 2014. Each beneficiary was provided with US$ 13, 60 worth of aid. According to Pasma (2014), the outcomes were the following: (i) rise in nutrition rates, for 25 % of the basic income was spent on food; (ii) improvements in health, clothing and living conditions; (iii) microenterprise development; (iv) improvement in social capital and new expectations for the future of recipients' children. There has been no indication of the basic income being spent on drugs or alcohol (Pasma, ibid.).

Also, in the small city of Maricá, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a permanent UBI policy was implemented in 2013. This city is, like Alaska, an exporter of oil. The implementation of the Cash Transfer Policy is thus financed by the oil selling profits. However, there are two major differences between Maricá and Alaska. First, the Brazilian program is not unconditional, which does not make it a proper UBI policy. The benefit is limited to a segment of the

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[9] For more information about the UBI and the US context, it is worth reading Andrew Yang, one of the political actors that advocate pro UBI. See: Yang, A. *The war on normal people: The truth about America's disappearing jobs and why Universal Basic Income is our future*. New York: Hachette. 2018.

population who belong to a lower socioeconomic stratum. Still, the number of people targeted by the aid has been increasing, which might help to turn into a proper UBI in the future. The second big difference between this case and the North American is the amount transferred. The Brazilian policy is significantly less: it is approximately a monthly US$ 20,00 transfer in current exchange. However, it is important to recognize its importance; it is the closest a Brazilian region ever got to an Unconditional Basic Income, and it is a policy with future perspectives for enhancement (Pereira, 2020).

The Finnish government also performed a trial from 2017 to 2018. In this experience, two thousand citizens who were unemployed received a monthly income of € 560,00 (US$ 635,00) for the period of two years. The results are still under analysis, but it is possible for Young (2019) to affirm that this pilot did not increase employment rates. It did, however, increase wellbeing of the participants (Young, ibid.).

In Spain, a pilot was conducted in Barcelona, during 2017. An income was provided to a total of 1.000 selected households. The aid could go up to € 1.675 depending on the household composition. There were different categories of beneficiaries: conditional (when the beneficiary needed to participate in social programs, such as community works); unconditional (the aid would be given at any circumstance); limited (the amount of the income would be reduced in case of a hypothetical extra income); and non-limited (extra income would not reduce the total assistance). Results diverge among the classes of beneficiaries. The only result that was present in all categories was unaffected employment rates and an increase on mental health and life satisfaction (Martín, 2018).

Germany has an ongoing project that started in 2019 and transfers up to US$ 466,00 to 250 people. It is supposed to last for three years; then the control group of beneficiaries will be compared with other 250 people that are not receiving the benefit (Standing, 2020).

Meanwhile, The Netherlands implemented a similar project to the one that took place in Barcelona. Some beneficiaries have received the monthly income of approximately US$ 1.050,00. While a part of the control group must fulfill work obligations, the other has no conditionalities. This pilot is a work in progress, so results and implications are still to be drawn.

Heading into the Middle East conjuncture, the Iranian government also promoted a Basic Income test. This case is the only UBI policy permanently active which functions nationwide. The income given is equivalent to US$ 45,00. The governmental goal in providing this assistance is to rationalize the oil profits among the population. As for the outcomes, one might say that the policy ended up reducing poverty and inequality. Additionally, there is no evidence that this Basic Income discouraged employment (De Wispelaere, 2016).

The largest and longest UBI project is currently taking place in Kenya. Having started in 2016, it will go on until 2028. The income given is of 75 US cents per adult, per day. Primary results indicate that local economy was boosted in Kenya, since the purchasing power rose significantly. Further analyses, however, remain to be carried out (Ruckert et al., 2018).

Namibia is another African case of UBI policy testing. The program went on from 2008 to 2009 with the monthly stipend of US$ 6,75. The income was given to all citizens under sixty years old and residents in the Otjivero-Omitara region, without any conditionalities. Results included the rise of child nutrition and schooling, as well as the drop of criminality (Widerquist, 2018).

The Indian case is thoroughly analyzed by Standing (2013), and the views regarding the pilot were highly positive. The author pointed out eleven results from the UBI test: (i) Many families invested in improving sewerage, which helped them to fight against malaria; (ii) nutrition enhanced considerably, which also improved the statistic about weight-for-age; (iii) the markets that served poorer areas increased their profit, which allowed an improvement on food quality, once those recipients had more access to nutritious meals; (iv) better health allowed for increased school attendance among children, whose families were also able to afford items such as shoes and transport to schools; (v) people who were financially vulnerable, such as poor families, women, and people with disability, suddenly had money to make their own choices regarding household decisions; (vi) it lead to small scale investments that allowed for the creation of several small businesses; (vii) employment rates rose, reshaping labor movements as more people worked either near their homes or in their actual homes, or farming crops, for example; (viii) bonded labor, a type of modern slavery, decreased significantly; (ix) the debt from the beneficiary families diminished substantially, which happened to be a negative consequence for moneylenders; (x) beneficiaries were also able to put some money aside, which increased their financial stability; and (xi) the villages were in a more independent position in comparison to food subsidy schemes. All in all, people did gain a financial autonomy they had never seen.

These concrete experiments are vital to the evolution of the Unconditional Basic Income discussion. It allows for a more efficient planning when it comes to allocation of resources and public policy decision-making. Still, it is fundamental to bear in mind that each country has their own reality and idiosyncrasies, especially when dealing with societies that are economically disparate. For example, due to social, economic, cultural, and political differences between citizens, it is highly likeable that the results from the tests conducted in Finland are way different than the one in India. Therefore, even though the Indian case is a necessary one, it is a small breakthrough in a huge global challenge.

In fact, inspired by the belief that experiences such as the ones described above are fundamental to provoke the UBI discussion, this work aims at better understanding the *Bolsa Família* program and hence contribute to this relevant and necessary debate.

To summarize the UBI experiments presented thus far, a table compiling all pilots is introduced below.

Table 1 – all UBI pilots

Location	**Payment**	**Population Coverage**	**Duration**	**Conditionalities**	**Effects**
Alaska Permanent Fund (US)	1.600,00 US dollars (variable)	Entire population of Alaska	On going	None	Increase of fertility
US states (NJ, PA, IA, NC, WA, CO, IN)	Variable	7,500 people	1968-1974	None	Drop of working hours
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Cassino Dividend (US)	US$4.000,00 - US$6.000,00	Adult Native Americans in North Carolina	On going	Adult Native Americans in North Carolina	Improvement in education and mental health; decrease of crime and drug addiction
Stockton, California (US)	US$500,00 monthly	125 people	2019-2020	None	Benefit mostly spent on basic needs (preliminarily).
Maricá (Brazil)	US$ 20,00 per month	20.000 families so far	On going	Income cap as high as 3 minimum wages	Improvement in nutrition, education, local business, and health.

Quatinga Velho village (Brazil)	US$13,60 per month	100 residents of the village	2008-2014	None	Improvement in nutrition, education, local business, and health.
India	US$2,80 per month	Around 6.000 people.	2011-2012	None	Improvement in nutrition, education, local business, and health.
Canada, Manitoba	Around 3.000,00 to 6.000,00 Canadian dollars	Around 10.000 people	1974-1979	None	Improvement in education and health.
Kenya	75 US cents p/ day	20.000 people	2016-2028	None	Yet to be drawn
Spain	Up to 1,675 euros (US$1,968) per month per household	1.000 households	2017	Conditional, unconditional, limited, and unlimited (different modalities).	~~Various, depending on the modality.~~ Generally, regardless of the modality, mental health and life satisfaction were boosted.
Iran	US$ 45,00	All the Iranian population	On going	None	Decrease of social inequality and poverty
Germany	Up to US $ 466,00	250 people	2019-2022	None/randomly chosen	Yet to be drawn
Namibia: Otjivero-Omitarra region	US $ 6,75 p/ person	All residents under 60 years old	2008-2009	Beneficiaries had to be nder 60 years old	Local economic growth
The Netherlands	US$ 1.050,00 per month	250 people	2017	Partly conditional and partly unconditional	Yet to be drawn.

Next, this study turns to a theoretical and empirical discussion of the *Bolsa Família* policy by specifically addressing the functionality of Brazilian program.

3. THE *BOLSA FAMÍLIA* PROGRAM

-Quem nasce em Bacurau é o que, hein?
-É gente.
(-What do we call the ones who are born in Bacurau, huh?
-People)
Bacurau (2019). Directed by: Kleber Mendonça Filho e Juliano Dorneles

This chapter aims at analyzing the creation of the *Bolsa Família* program. After a brief introduction, which shows how the program was conceived and put into practice, the outcomes of the policy, as well as its evolution throughout the years, are also taken into consideration. Additionally, several critical arguments regarding the policy are discussed.

The *Bolsa Família* in 2003 was a result of a long process (Campello et al., 2013). The social security debate in Brazil started during the first decades of the twentieth century. However, it was only during the Getúlio Vargas administrationin the 1930's, when legislation concerning social security was created[10]. Over the following decades, it continued developing until it reached a whole new status after the promulgation of the new federal constitution in 1988.

The new federal constitution played indeed an important role in the development of social programs. Right in the beginning of the constitutional text[11], the fundamental objectives of the Federative Brazilian Republic are set. Among them, the eradication of poverty and decrease of social inequalities are highlighted. Further on, in article 21st, social security is established as a right to be enforced by the federal administration. Also, according to article 23rd, all the three public spheres (federation, state and county) must be held accountable for fighting against poverty, thus, promoting social integration. This whole scenario was of vital importance for the creation of programs such as the *Bolsa Família*.

According to Ana Fonseca (2018), executive secretary of the program in the year of its creation, the embryo of the *Bolsa Família* developed from the project presented by Senator

[10] Decreto-lei nº 5.452, de 1 de maio de 1943. Approves the consolidation of the labor laws. Lex: collection of legislation: federal edition, São Paulo, v. 7, 1943
[11] More precisely in article three of the Brazilian constitution.

Eduardo Suplicy that proposed an Unconditional Basic Income in Brazil in 1991. Besides, two important laws passed in that same decade: the *Estatuto da Criança e do Adolescente* and *Lei Orgânica de Assistência Social*[12], which paved the way to the *Bolsa Família*. Later on, during the administration of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, several assistance programs were created, such as the *Bolsa Alimentação* and the *Bolsa Escola*[13].

During the 1990's, inspired by Senator Suplicy's proposal, several cities adopted Cash Transfer Policies. Cities such as Campinas, Ribeirão Preto and even the capital city, Brasília, introduced the financial aid to fight famine and poverty. Since the mentors of the policies acknowledged it was common for poor children to abandon education so that they could assist their families financially, these aid programs required the assisted families to have their children attending schools. Besides, such programs also stipulated a minimum amount of time of family residence in the city to become eligible for the benefit (Campello et al., 2013).

It is important to point out that, in that first moment, when city (or county) governments were responsible for the aid, there was a huge discrepancy between regions. Poorer cities were assisted the same way as the richer counterparts, as shown by Lena Lavinas (2005). It was already clear at that time that a stronger presence of the federal administration was vital for the better-functioning of the cash transfer policies. That was what the president Fernando Henrique Cardoso tried to implement when the *Bolsa Escola*, *Bolsa Alimentação* and other aids were created by the end of his administration. Even though the situation got a little better, poverty was not substantially reduced. The results from these programs were not satisfactory (Campello et al., 2013). In 1999, a research from IPEA showed that 34% of the Brazilian population lived beneath the poverty line and 14% below the indigent line.

Still, it is important to describe the economic situation in Brazil at that time. The country faced an unprecedented economic crisis during the late 1980's and early 1990's, with an unparallel inflation rate. The situation only started to get better in 1994 during Itamar Franco's administration (Ianoni, 2009), when an economic plan was idealized by the minister of economy at the time, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. The success was such that it boosted FHC's popularity and made his election for president possible at that same year (ibid). The sociologist would govern Brazil from 1995 to 2002[14].

[12] Loosely translated into *Child's and Adolescent's Statute* and *Social Assistance Organic Law*. It is important to note that I take responsibility for all translations in this dissertation.
[13] Loosely translated into *Alimentation Grant* and *School Grant*.
[14] Fernando Henrique Cardoso was reelected in 1998.

It may be argued that Fernando Henrique Cardoso had two different postures regarding economic aid policies when his two administrations are compared (Draibe, 2013). During the first term (1995-1998), the focus was to stabilize the economic situation and bring down inflation, so that he could ensure the success of the previous administration and his idealized economic plan, *Plano Real* (ibid). After his reelection, from 1999 to 2002, there was a much greater attention to the aid policies. It was at that moment when *Bolsa Escola*, *Bolsa Alimentação* and *Programa Auxílio Gás*[15] were created. However, those programs were scattered among several federal administration secretaries that did not interact much. Moreover, there was not good cohesion between the federal government and the counties (Campello et al., 2013).

This scenario provoked a heated discussion during the 2002 presidential race, which ended up being between Luís Inácio Lula da Silva, who had already run and lost to Fernando Henrique in 1994 and 1998, and José Serra, who was supported by FHC himself, since both belonged to the same political party. Both candidates (Lula and Serra) made it clear that the cash transfer policies needed to be enhanced and optimized (Almeida., 2003). However, it was much easier for Lula to criticize FHC's failure in reducing poverty levels substantially. Serra, on the other hand, did not criticize his party colleague. Lula ended up winning the presidential race and, in his inauguration speech as an elected president, he promised to work on the poverty rates the previous administration failed to decrease.

Having briefly introduced the Bolsa Familia case in the Brazilian political scenario, the next section deals with the conception and implementation of the policy, as of 2003.

3.1. The implementation of the plan

In 2003, as elected President, Lula turned his attention to assistance programs so as to unify those programs that had already been created previously but were not successful. From this unification, the *Ministério Extraordinário de Segurança Alimentar e Combate à Fome*[16] was created (Campello, 2013). This ministry came up with a new program, *Fome Zero*[17], which included the *Bolsa Família* as its most important strand. Even though the *Fome Zero* project was presented as the main assistance policy by Lula's administration, the *Bolsa Família* was the one that consolidated itself as the excellence program of that time, and it ended up incorporating *Fome Zero* in 2004.

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[15] Loosely translated into *School Grant*, *Alimentation Grant,* and *Gas Aid Program*.
[16] Loosely translated into Ministry of Food Security and Fight Against Hunger.
[17] Loosely translated into *Zero Famine Program*.

The *Bolsa Família* was firstly introduced as a *Medida Provisória* 132[18]. It was only later that it turned into the Federal Law number 10.836[19], which merged the *Bolsa Família* with the already existing programs, namely: *Bolsa Escola, Cadastramento Único do Governo Federal, Bolsa Alimentação, Programa Auxílio Gás* and *Programa Nacional de Acesso à Alimentação*[20]. Then, the new policy worked by transferring financial resources to families who were in a situation of extreme poverty. In return, the families needed to fulfill a few requirements, that is, a minimum of 85% of child school attendance and updated medical follow-ups including general health and even prenatal care of all those families assisted (Campello et al., 2013).

Even though the conditions for the application to the *Bolsa Família* aid are controversial, the program is a means to fight extreme poverty. According to the Brazilian government, it is vital not only to assist poor people in their immediate needs, but to provide them with tools to develop their human capital (Campello et al., 2013). As a matter of fact, the *Bolsa Família* includes the aforementioned prerequisites so as the beneficiaries can jointly improve their education, health, and social assistance levels. The struggle against poverty was then strategized in three steps: (i) prompt financial aid to rescue people out of extreme poverty; (ii) provide public services of education, health and social assistance to break the cycle of inequality in the Brazilian society and (iii) progressively integrate these marginalized groups by means of propaganda and public policies (Craveiro and De Aquino Ximenes, 2013). Consequently, to analyze the success or failure of the *Bolsa Família*, one must consider the big picture, that is, not only the micro aspects of the money transfers, but the effects of this aid on social groups, as well as other integrated policies which complement the BF program and the public services offered.

The *Bolsa Família* was able to reach a great amount of people in need (Craveiro and De Aquino Ximenes, 2013). In comparison to the *Bolsa Escola* program, which assisted around five million families by providing each one of them with R$ 45 (forty-five reais) in 2003, the *Bolsa Família* assisted around eleven million families providing each one of them with R$ 107 (one hundred and seven reais) in 2006.

[18] Loosely translated to *provisional measure number 132*

[19] BRASIL. Law nº 10.836, de 9 jan. 2004, creates the *Programa Bolsa Família*, and states further providences. Available in: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2004-2006/2004/lei/l10.836.htm#:~:text=LEI%20N%C2%BA%2010.836%2C%20DE%209%20DE%20JANEIRO%20DE%202004.&text=Cria%20o%20Programa%20Bolsa%20Fam%C3%ADlia,Art. Acess in 22/04/2021

[20] Loosely translated into *School Grant, Unified Register of the Federal Government (see https://www.gov.br/cidadania/pt-br/acoes-e-programas/cadastro-unico), Gas Aid Program and Food Access National Program.*

Initially, the major reason that caused the success of the *Bolsa Família* was the registration of the families that lived in poverty (Craveiro and De Aquino Ximenes, 2013). The federal government built a mechanism along with the local governments that allowed this successful registration, which helped to increase the number of people receiving the aid. During the *Bolsa Escola* program, many people who would be eligible for the assistance were not included due to the absence of an efficient registration process. The formation of the so called *Cadastro Único* [21]made it simpler for the families to apply for the assistance and for the government to transfer the resources.

Once the aspects concerning the conception and implementation of the BH program have been considered, it is of utmost importance to take into account the effects of the policy.

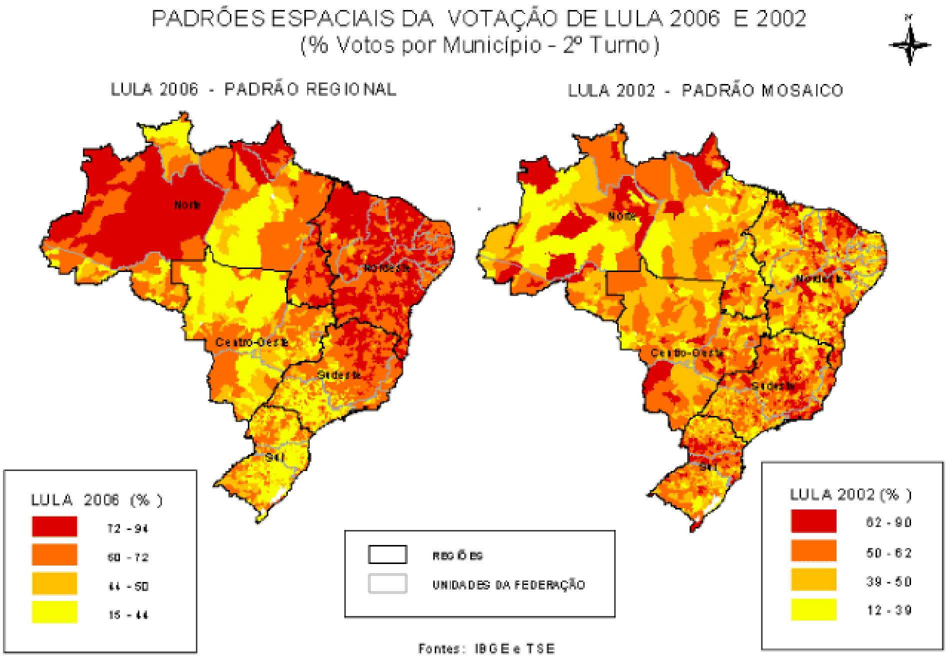
3.2. Effects of the *Bolsa Família* policy

In this section, several of the effects from the Cash Transfer policy under analysis are examined. This is done from a quantitative and qualitative perspective (Guba and Lincoln, 1994) at the same time, which should allow us, by the end of the present section, to draw conclusions over the theme and, further on, to draw a parallel between Unconditional Basic Income issues (Chapter 4) and the empirical case of the *Bolsa Família*.

Firstly, it is interesting to see how the electoral map shifted from 2002 (before the *Bolsa Família*) to 2006. Soares and Terron (2008) compared how Lula's voting map changed from the second round of 2002 to 2006: Lula gained many more voters in poorer Brazilian regions, but, at the same time, lost support in richer regions, as seen in the map bellow:

[21] Loosely translated as *Unified Register*.

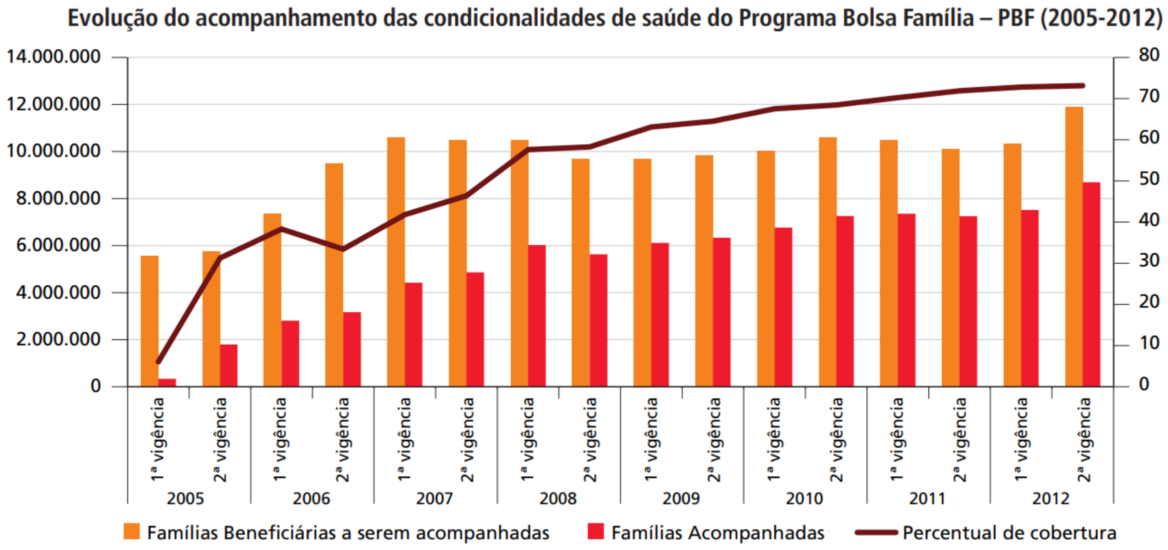
Map 1 – Special patterns of Lula's voters in 2006 and 2002 (% of votes per municipalities – 2nd round) – Sources: IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics) and TSE (Electoral Supreme Court).



The study by Soares and Terron (2008) concludes that the *Bolsa Família* effect was likely to be a decisive factor on the transformation of the electoral map in the Northeast region and in the states of Amazonas and Minas Gerais. What remains unclear is what caused the loss of Lula's influence over the center-south (South and Center-West regions plus the state of São Paulo) of the country. However, it is unlikely that this decrease in the center-south share of support is directly correlated to the *Bolsa Família* policy, which is why discussing this point any further is outside the scope of this work. The relevant result of the transformation of Lula's electoral map from the year before (2002) and after (2006) the creation of the BF is that the policy was, most likely, the main factor to bring about such change. Additionally, there are scholars (Pereira et al., 2015, and Amaral and Ribeiro, 2015) that assume the BF program was also a big decisive factor on Dilma's election and reelection years later, which, once again, implies that the success of the *Bolsa Família* did affect the Brazilian electoral map.

As far as medical assistance provided by the BF program is concerned, one cannot fail to mention the remarkable role of the SUS (Unified Health System), the public health care system in Brazil. The coordinated work of the *SUS* and the public agencies responsible for the registration of the families who were eligible for the BF made the number of families assisted in the program rise substantially, as shown in the Graph 1 below. In orange are the number of families aided by the program; in red, the families who had regular medical follow-up done regularly by the *SUS*; the brown line shows the percentage of medical coverage.

Graph 1: Monitoring development of health conditionalities of the *Bolsa-Família* Program. Source (Júnior et al., 2013).



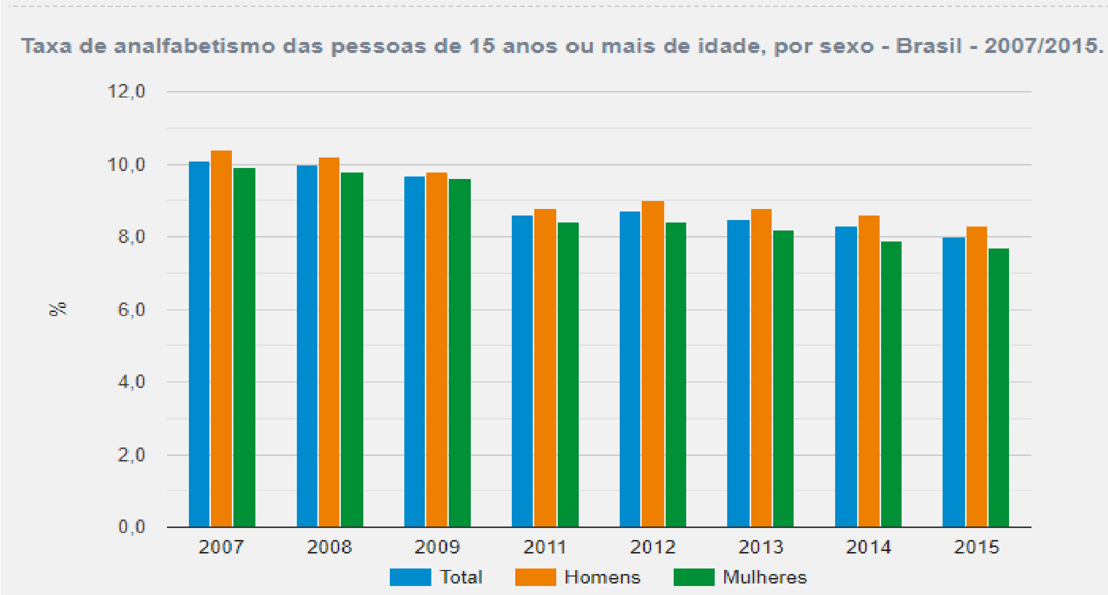
These data are highly relevant once they allow a clearer path to be followed as for the public policy decision-making. Indeed, it means the government has more data to plan its public policies. Consequently, both the government and the citizens gain from this process. One of the best attributes of the *Bolsa Família* was the use of information gathered by the statal agencies to enhance public services (Júnior et al., 2013). The program considerably improved the quality of medical assistance and had a profound impact on these assisted families, especially when it came to children and pregnant women (Ibid., 2013).

Additional studies about the influence of the *Bolsa Família* on children's health were carried out. Santos et al. (2010), for instance, shows that the *Bolsa Família* had an impact on the weight of newborn children. Babies from families who are assisted by the BF program are more likely to have healthier birth weight. In the essay from Facchinni et al. (2013), the authors show how children that benefitted from the BF program are more likely to have regular medical checkups. Also, the vaccination program was boosted among children who signed up for the *Bolsa Família*.

Rasella et al. (2013) is another example of study that analyzes the BF program effects on public health. The authors estimated that in cities where most families in need were covered by the *Bolsa Família*, child mortality dropped an average of 17%. Moreover, their study also concluded that the increase of assistance by the public health care system alongside the increase of the family income decreased infant mortality rate, which enabled those families to have a better quality of life.

As far as education is concerned, Graph 2 below makes it clear that, after the implementation of the BF program, there was a significant decrease of illiteracy among citizens aged 15 and over. The three different colors show the rates among men (orange), women (green) and total (blue) between 2007 and 2015.

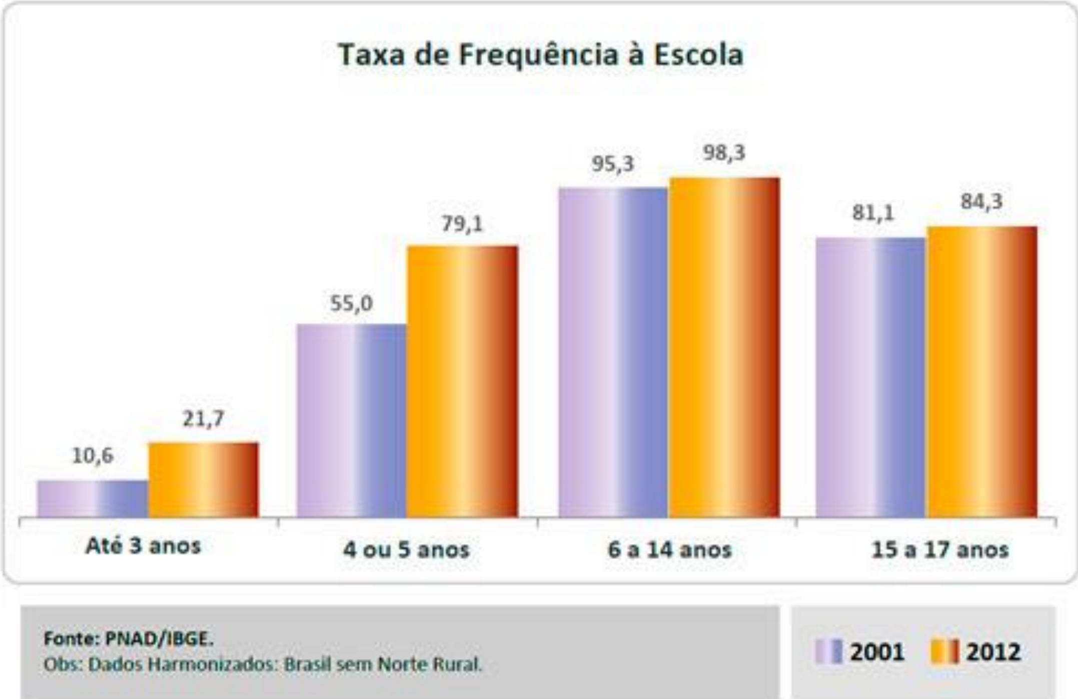
Graph 2: Illiteracy rate by gender among people aged fifteen and older - Brazil 2007/2015. Source PNAD/IBGE



To corroborate the argument in favor of the increase of school attendance, Graph 3 shows a comparison between the years 2001 (blue) and 2012 (orange):[22]

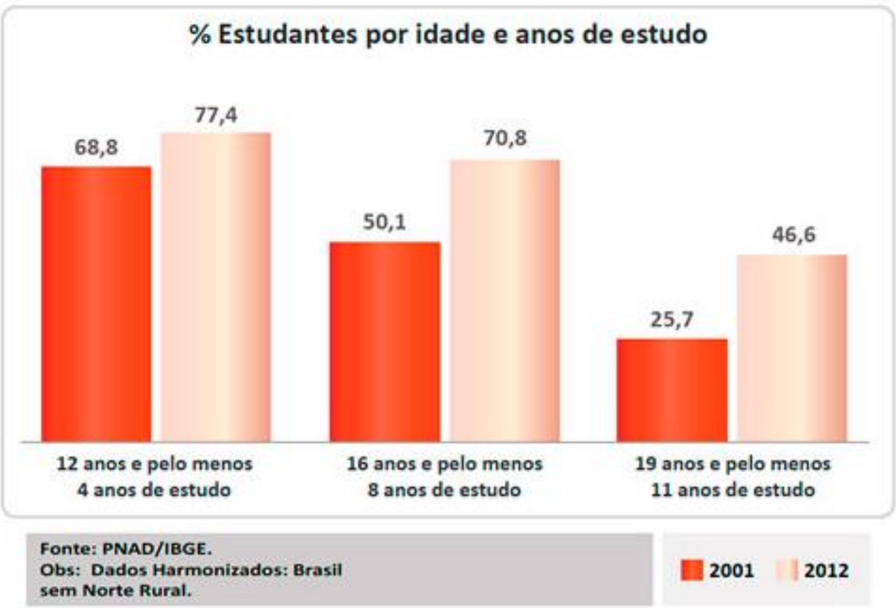
[22] Source PNAD/IBGE

Graph 3: School attendance rate. Source: PNAD and IBGE.



Graph 4 below compares the percentages of different age students who actually went to school in 2001 (red) and 2012 (pink). From left to right the graph presents the following information: 12-year-old children who attended school at least for 4 years; 16-year olds who attended school for at least 8 years; and 19-year olds who attended school for at least 11 years.

Graph 4: Percentage Students by age and years of study. Source: PNAD and IBGE.



The following Table refers to the IDEB (rates of basic educational development[23]). “IEDB Observado” refers to the actual grades and “Metas” refers to the goals set by the Institute of Education. The three tables are as follows: primary school (until 5th grade); secondary school (until 9th grade) and high school.[24]

Table 2: Grades of the IDEB (rates of basic educational development). Source: Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (INEP)[25]

Anos Iniciais do Ensino Fundamental

	IDEB Observado								Metas							
	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Total	3.8	4.2	4.6	5.0	5.2	5.5	5.8	5.9	3.9	4.2	4.6	4.9	5.2	5.5	5.7	6.0
Dependência Administrativa																
Estadual	3.9	4.3	4.9	5.1	5.4	5.8	6.0	6.1	4.0	4.3	4.7	5.0	5.3	5.6	5.9	6.1
Municipal	3.4	4.0	4.4	4.7	4.9	5.3	5.6	5.7	3.5	3.8	4.2	4.5	4.8	5.1	5.4	5.7
Privada	5.9	6.0	6.4	6.5	6.7	6.8	7.1	7.1	6.0	6.3	6.6	6.8	7.0	7.2	7.4	7.5
Pública	3.6	4.0	4.4	4.7	4.9	5.3	5.5	5.7	3.6	4.0	4.4	4.7	5.0	5.2	5.5	5.8

Anos Finais do Ensino Fundamental

	IDEB Observado								Metas							
	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Total	3.5	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.9	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.4	4.7	5.0	5.2	5.5
Dependência Administrativa																
Estadual	3.3	3.6	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.2	4.5	4.7	3.3	3.5	3.8	4.2	4.5	4.8	5.1	5.3
Municipal	3.1	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.1	4.3	4.5	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.9	4.3	4.6	4.9	5.1
Privada	5.8	5.8	5.9	6.0	5.9	6.1	6.4	6.4	5.8	6.0	6.2	6.5	6.8	7.0	7.1	7.3
Pública	3.2	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.0	4.2	4.4	4.6	3.3	3.4	3.7	4.1	4.5	4.7	5.0	5.2

Ensino Médio

	IDEB Observado								Metas							
	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Total	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.8	4.2	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.3	4.7	5.0	5.2
Dependência Administrativa																
Estadual	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.6	3.9	4.4	4.6	4.9
Privada	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.7	5.4	5.3	5.8	6.0	5.6	5.7	5.8	6.0	6.3	6.7	6.8	7.0
Pública	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.6	4.0	4.4	4.7	4.9

Os resultados marcados em verde referem-se ao Ideb que atingiu a meta.
Fonte: Saeb e Censo Escolar.

The graphs above demonstrate how the education levels increased since the start of the *Bolsa Família* program. Nevertheless, despite the increase of these rates, they are still lower than an acceptable level (see Chapter 5; Lavinas, 2018).

Addressing the actual education rates that concern the *Bolsa Família*, Craveiro and De Aquino Ximenes (2013) show that, when it comes to school attendance, the government can keep track whether this requirement is met in all 5.570 Brazilian municipalities. Based on that,

[23] Loosely translated from Índice de Desenvolvimento de Ensino Básico.
[24] Source: Saeb and Censo Escolar.
[25] Loosely translated from Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research.

it was possible to conclude that out of 170 (one hundred and seventy) thousand schools had at least one student which is assisted by the BF program in that period.

In 2001, according to Craveiro and De Aquino Ximenes (2013), only 44% of students were able to graduate from secondary school (9th grade) before the age of 16, when the expected age should be 14. This rate is considerably worse among the 20% poorer students: within this group, only 17,4% being able to graduate.

The paradigm concerning the age students graduated from secondary school shifted with the BF program. According to the National Research of Domicile Sample[26], in 2011 (IBGE, 2011), seven years after the beginning of the *Bolsa Família* program, out of 20% of the poorer students, 43% of them finished secondary school (*Ensino Fundamental II*), that is, the 9th grade, as it is shown in the IDEB, Table 2. In this scenario, it is relevant to point out that the national graduation rate (the whole student population across the country) in that grade was 63%. Even though there was a considerable increase from 17,4% of graduates in 2001 to 43% in 2011, among the economically disadvantaged classes, there is still marked inequality within society from the education perspective. This proves the major challenge is not only to provide education democratically, but also to ensure family, social and economic stability that allows the infant to remain at school. This was not achieved by the BF program as one would wish (Campello et al., 2013). There is still, among the poorest segments, a great number of socio-economic issues to be resolved in Brazil that prevent children to complete elementary education, such as lack of basic sanitation, economic instability, food insecurity, homelessness, lack of infrastructure, just to name a few. The *Bolsa Família* surely helped the macro situation, but it is still far from being enough, as Lavinas (2018) argues (Sections 2.6).

The School Census done in 2012 (INEP, 2012) showed BF assisted students were less likely to drop out of elementary (either primary or secondary)[27] school in the last years. Comparing the students covered by the *Bolsa Família* and all students from public schools, 4,4% of the assisted ones dropped out, while 4,8% of all students abandoned elementary school in the last years. As far as the other educational segments (high school and pre-school) are concerned, the likeability of assisted students to drop out was also lower if compared to all students from public schools (ibid.). Once again, the positive effects of the BF program are proved true.

[26] Loosely translated from “Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios”.
[27] Brazilian schooling system is divided in Fundamental one (first to fifth grade, which would be equivalent to Elementary school in the U.S.), Fundamental two (sixth to nineth grade, equivalent to Middle High School in the U.S.) and High School (first to third senior year, equivalent Senior High School in U.S.).

According to the same Census (ibid.), the approval rates of BF assisted students from elementary school (primary and secondary, or fundamental school, as called in Brazil) were lower than the total amount of students from public education. This comparison, however, showed different results when analyzing students from high school, where those who are assisted by the BF had a higher approval rate.

After a thorough analysis of the educational impacts of the *Bolsa Família*, Craveiro & De Aquino Ximenes (2013, p. 121) claim that, due to the considerable social inequality, the Brazilian educational system still has a long way to go until it reaches a more isonomic level. The school, as a fundamental educational institution, needs to know how to welcome different people from different backgrounds, that is, different gender, socio-economic status, sexuality, race, ethnicity, cultural groups. The problem of lack of isonomy is, nevertheless, also disseminated among other sectors of society, which means that, even if the education system were perfect, there would still be dropout rates among the poorer students, despite the improvements in educational aspects that resulted from the BF program (ibid.).

Moving onto the macroeconomic aspects, Paiva, Falcão and Bartholo (2013) show that ~~the~~ GINI index had a historical drop during the 2000's. Also, Souza and Osório (2013) note that the *Bolsa Família* had indeed a significant impact on the drop of the Gini coefficient.

Lanjouw and Neri (2003), Kageyama and Hoffmann (2006), Osorio et al. (2011) and Souza and Osorio (2012) point out that extreme poverty must be analyzed from various perspectives, such as geographical, demographical, educational, and occupational. Moreover, there are four different strata regarding poor households as defined by the *per capita* income: extremely poor (households with an income lower than R$70); poor (income range between R$70 and R$140); vulnerable (between R$140 and R$560); and non-poor (above 560). These classifications were the ones adopted in 2011 by the BF program and, obviously, took into consideration the costs at that time.

As we may see below, Table 3 shows how these economic strata changed from 2003 (the year before the *Bolsa Família* program was implemented) to 2011:

Table 3: Population by income stratum. Source (Souza and Osório, 2013).

População por estratos de renda – Brasil (2003 e 2011)

Estratos	Pessoas			Famílias		
	2003 (%)	2011 (%)	Variação (p.p.)	2003 (%)	2011 (%)	Variação (p.p.)
Extremamente pobres	8,0	3,4	-4,7	5,5	2,6	-2,9
Pobres	15,9	6,3	-9,6	12,0	4,4	-7,7
Vulneráveis	50,3	49,1	-1,2	50,5	44,8	-5,6
Não Pobres	25,9	41,3	15,4	32,0	48,2	16,2
Total	**100,0**	**100,0**	-	**100,0**	**100,0**	-

Fonte: PNAD/IBGE.

In this table, there are (from top to bottom) extremely poor, poor, vulnerable, and non-poor. In the columns, we can see the number in each stratum in 2003, in 2011 and the variation between those years. Therefore, it remains clears that it was a period when the poorer sectors of society had a considerable economic gain. The rates in all the social economic strata in the table decreased, except for the non-poor.

Souza and Osório (2013) debate that these statistics show the possibility of eradicating extreme poverty and poverty during that period. For the authors (ibid.), however, eradicating does not necessarily mean to reduce to zero, but to make it residual. Thus, the low percentage of extremely poor and poor population would represent transitory families, who find themselves in these conditions for individual reasons that can be overturned in the short-term. The complicated aspect about this residual argument is its vagueness; there is not a defined rate according to which residual poverty may be recognized. Besides, the registrations in the *CadÚnico* (Unified Register, see footnote 20) are also imprecise in some cases, for the families themselves can hide income or even fail to give the correct information. As noticed by Soares (2009), the family's income may become quite volatile from time to time.

All in all, it is important to mention that the *Bolsa Família* program was only one of the causes for the shift in the inequality levels. As analyzed by Neri (2020), the *Bolsa Família* (translated by the author as *Family Grant*) played indeed a big role in the decrease of poverty since its creation[28] (the research presented by Neri in 2020 covers the period until 2015). Also, the author (ibid.) showed both education levels and employment levels saw significant increase from the 1990's on. Due to the commodities boom (Helbling, Mercer-Blackman and Cheng, 2012), especially over the 2000's, Brazil was going through a very thriving moment as far as economy was concerned. This scenario helped, in fact, to increase employment levels.

[28] The research presented by Neri in 2020 extends until 2015

Obviously, all this conjuncture is a complex process, which involved economic aspects, and successful public policies. Still, as reported by Neri (ibid.), the effects of the *Bolsa Família* were positive during these years, that is, from 2002 until 2015.

The discussion concerning employment levels is also addressed by Souza and Osório (2013). The data gathered by these authors show how employment rates evolved through the *Bolsa Família* years, as seen, as follows, in Table 4.

Table 4: Working-age population insertion in the labor market by income stratum. Source (Souza and Osório, 2013).

Inserção no mercado de trabalho da população em idade ativa por estratos de renda – Brasil (2003 e 2011)
(Em %)

Fontes de renda	Extremamente pobres		Pobres		Vulneráveis		Não pobres		**Total**	
	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011	**2003**	**2011**
Inativos	29,2	42,7	31,0	37,0	25,5	30,4	22,2	19,4	**25,5**	**25,9**
Estudante ou previdência	5,6	6,1	7,8	7,6	9,5	9,6	12,1	10,0	**9,8**	**9,6**
Outros	23,6	36,6	23,1	29,4	16,1	20,8	10,2	9,4	**15,6**	**16,3**
Desocupados	12,9	14,6	10,8	8,6	7,6	6,4	4,0	2,7	**7,2**	**5,0**
Não remunerados	18,2	24,7	10,2	11,1	5,2	4,2	2,6	1,6	**5,8**	**3,9**
Informais	37,3	17,7	35,8	36,5	32,4	29,7	24,7	25,2	**30,8**	**27,6**
Rurais	18,5	9,6	12,2	14,8	5,8	5,6	1,6	2,0	**6,1**	**4,5**
Urbanos	18,8	8,1	23,6	21,7	26,6	24,1	23,1	23,2	**24,7**	**23,1**
Formais	2,5	0,4	12,2	6,7	29,4	29,3	46,5	51,1	**30,7**	**37,7**
Total	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**

Fonte: PNAD/IBGE.

In the first column (right to left) the graph shows work-related categories: Inactive (students, beneficiaries from social security and others), unemployed, non-paid, informal (rural or urban), and formal workers. Each column organizes each social stratum (extremely poor, poor, vulnerable, and non-poor), comparing the labor status of each group in 2003 and 2011.

Table 4 clearly indicates that unemployment fell considerably over the analyzed decade. Additionally, another aspect that is worth mentioning is the decrease of informal and non-paid labor while employment was on the rise.

However, if attention is drawn to the extreme poor column, we see that unemployment rate did not drop as much as in the other strata. Still, the number of socially assisted people and students rose within the extreme poverty stratum. That is why it is important to analyze the educational rates alongside labor rates, as in Table 5.

Table 5: Working-age population schooling by income stratum. Source (Souza and Osório, 2013).

Escolaridade da população em idade ativa por estratos de renda – Brasil (2003 e 2011)
(Em %)

Nível de escolaridade mínimo	Extremamente pobres		Pobres		Vulneráveis		Não pobres		**Total**	
	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011	**2003**	**2011**
Sem escolaridade	53,7	45,0	40,5	37,9	24,4	23,8	7,1	8,9	**23,0**	**18,0**
Completou a 4ª série	32,6	25,9	36,3	28,3	32,1	23,9	15,8	13,5	**27,7**	**19,3**
Ensino fundamental	10,0	18,1	15,4	19,6	21,1	22,2	16,1	15,7	**18,2**	**18,9**
Ensino médio	3,8	10,5	7,7	13,8	21,2	27,9	41,8	42,5	**24,7**	**33,6**
Ensino superior	0,1	0,4	0,1	0,5	1,2	2,2	19,2	19,4	**6,5**	**10,1**
Total	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**	**100,0**

Fonte: PNAD/IBGE.

In Table 5, social strata (Extremely poor, Poor, Vulnerable, Non-poor) is organized from left to right; schooling levels (Non-educated - those who went up to 4th grade school-, secondary school, high school and university education), from top to bottom. As far as the extreme poor stratum is concerned, these data demonstrate that, although there was a decrease of employment, educational rates increased considerably, which means more people attending to schools for a longer time. Thus, it leads us to the conclusion that, whereas labor rates dropped among extremely poor people, educational rates rose. As a matter of fact, one may say that these educational stats were positive in all social strata.

These three data (economic, labor and educational) are significant in terms of the *Bolsa Família* effects. First, it may be argued that the poverty trap[29] is not something to be afraid of when analyzing the BF policy, since the number of extreme poor, poor and vulnerable decreased between 2003 and 2011. Also, the total amount of unemployed dropped over those years. In the income strata, where employment did not increase, educational rates rose significantly, indicating that the occupation level rose within all segments of society under analysis here. This information is vital in the scope of this study, so we can further correlate the BF results with the Unconditional Basic Income debate (see Chapter 4).

Despite the positive results from the BF policy to tackle economic disparity, equality rates began to drop after 2015, when the Gini Index indicates a substantial rise in inequality. Moreover, the increase of unemployment and the drop of commodities prices followed, which

[29] This term refers to the chance of the Cash Transfer to discourage people to improve their quality of life, as seen in Friedman (1966).

questions the capacity of the *Bolsa Família* to confront inequality. As a matter of fact, many authors (as in Lavinas et al., 2010) claim that the aid itself cannot fight against inequality all by itself (see Section 2.6). Yet, one might argue that, from a financial perspective, without the program, many families would be in a far more precarious situation.

Another rate worth pointing out is related to how the *Bolsa Família* affected family composition, as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Family composition indicators by income stratum. Source (Souza and Osório, 2013).

Indicadores de composição familiar por estratos de renda – Brasil (2003 e 2011)

Estratos de renda	Tamanho médio das famílias		Crianças por família		Famílias sem crianças (%)		Famílias com quatro crianças ou mais (%)	
	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011
Extremamente pobres	5,1	4,1	2,7	1,9	10,3	21,9	27,9	13,9
Pobres	4,6	4,5	2,0	2,1	12,0	14,2	12,5	15,6
Vulneráveis	3,5	3,4	1,0	1,0	41,6	39,6	2,1	2,5
Não pobres	2,8	2,7	0,5	0,4	65,9	70,2	0,2	0,1
Total	**3,5**	**3,1**	**1,0**	**0,8**	**44,1**	**52,8**	**4,2**	**2,2**

Fonte: PNAD/IBGE.

From top to bottom on the far left, there are the social and income strata (Extremely poor, Poor, Vulnerable, Non-poor). In the columns, from left to right, we see family composition: average size of the families, children per family, families without children, and families with four children or more. This information is extremely important when we start analyzing the possible contributions of the *Bolsa Família* to the Unconditional Basic Income debate (see Chapter 4).

According to Table 6, when comparing 2003 and 2011, one may observe families from the four income strata all together started to have fewer children. When analyzing each stratum separately, only within the poor stratum there was a significant rise; the vulnerable had a slight increase, while the two other, non-poor and extremely poor, decreased. This means that the *Bolsa Família* program, which provides more money according to the number of children in each family, does not encourage parents to have more children.

In the following tables 7 and 8, there are two interesting indicators that show the poor people had their living conditions changed throughout the *Bolsa Família* years.

Table 7: Indicators of family access to public infrastructure services by income stratum. Source (Souza and Osório, 2013).

Indicadores de acesso das famílias a serviços públicos de infraestrutura por estratos de renda – Brasil (2003 e 2011)
(Em %)

Estratos de renda	Eletricidade		Água		Esgoto		Lixo	
	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011	2003	2011
Extremamente pobres	83,9	96,7	56,8	60,3	28,2	41,8	55,3	57,8
Pobres	93,2	98,3	69,4	68,9	43,7	48,6	69,9	68,1
Vulneráveis	97,6	99,5	82,1	82,0	66,6	71,2	85,9	86,8
Não pobres	99,7	99,9	92,3	91,4	88,1	87,9	96,1	96,1
Total	**97,0**	**99,6**	**82,4**	**85,4**	**68,6**	**77,5**	**85,6**	**89,7**

Fonte: PNAD/IBGE.

Table 8: Indicators of family access to consumer durables by income stratum. Source (Souza and Osório, 2013).

Indicadores de acesso das famílias a bens de consumo duráveis por estratos de renda – Brasil (2003 e 2011)
(Em %)

Estratos de renda	Conjunto básico de bens		Conjunto completo de bens	
	2003	2011	2003	2011
Extremamente pobres	9,1	38,5	0,1	1,7
Pobres	21,0	51,7	0,2	2,2
Vulneráveis	49,9	69,0	2,0	12,2
Não pobres	84,3	83,7	25,6	42,4
Total	**55,1**	**74,6**	**9,2**	**26,1**

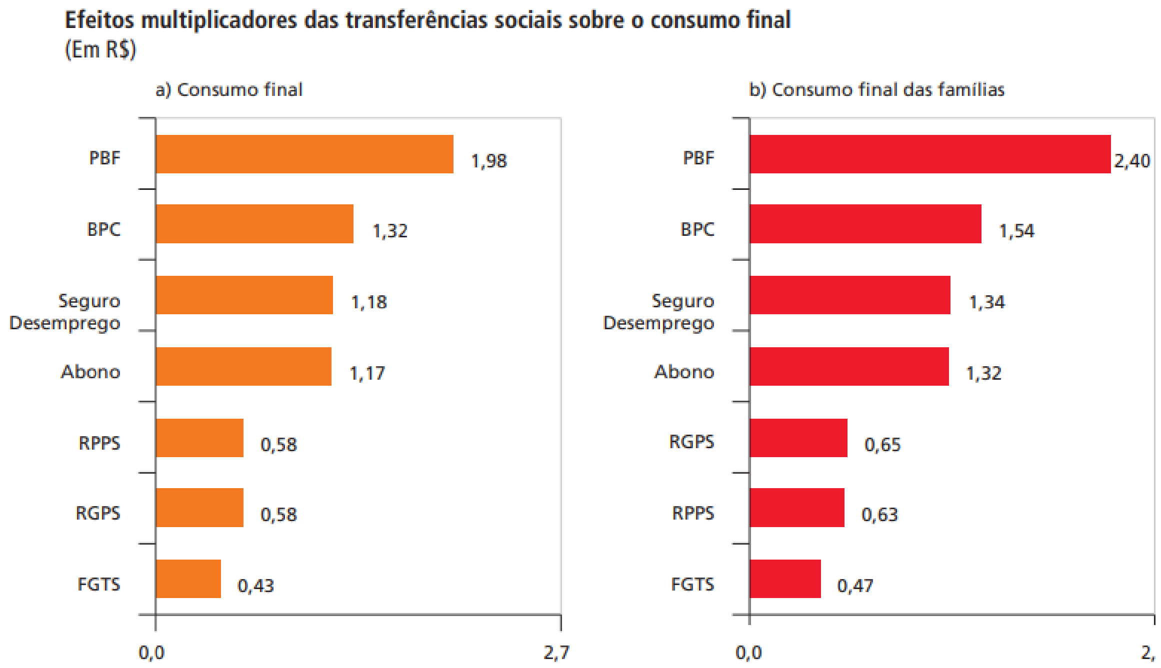
Fonte: PNAD/IBGE.

Table 7, from left to right, indicates how much each social stratum gained access to public infrastructure services such as electricity, water, sewerage, and garbage collection. During the period of 2003-2011, it is interesting to notice that the only statistics that decreased, albeit rather little, were water access to poor, vulnerable, and non-poor people, sewerage to non-poor, and garbage collection to vulnerable. Overall, popular access to basic services increased considerably, especially within the extremely poor stratum. Even though these stats are still highly unsatisfactory for any country and there is still much to improve socially in this area of basic services, we may state that the *Bolsa Família* significantly helped the Brazilians to improve their quality of life.

Table 8 shows how families gained more access to a set of consumer durable goods. On the left, we can see the numbers of basic goods, while on the right, we see the complete set of goods, which include those that are not fundamental to subsistence. The basic goods section of Table 8 is of particular relevance to this study, since it refers to items of fundamental needs, which show a considerable increase within the extremely poor, poor, and vulnerable strata. However, Table 8 indicates improvements that are still unsatisfactory. After all, basic goods should be accessible to every citizen/family.

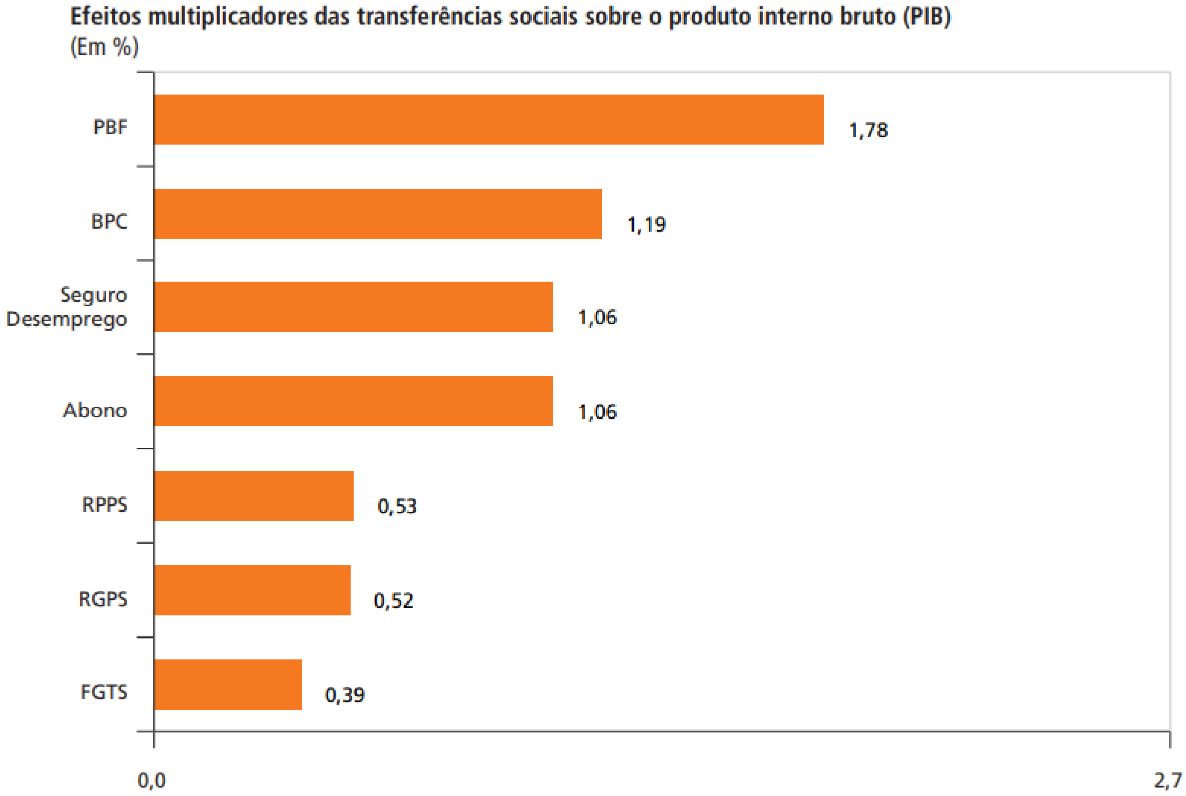
Having analyzed several tables and graphs that show statistics from a more social perspective, it is necessary to turn the attention to the other fundamental aim of this study: the economic aspect of the policy. Below, there is Graph 5 showing how the *Bolsa Família* (referred to as PBF) transfer has multiplier effects over final consumerism by individuals (orange) and families (red) in comparison to other social transfers. It becomes clear that the BF program is by far the most powerful cash transfer when it comes to effects over consumerism.

Graph 5: Multiplier effects of social transfers on final consumerism. Source (Neri et al., 2013).



Moreover, in Graph 6, on the next page, it is possible to make a comparison between the cash transfer policies from the GDP (Gross Domestic Product, PIB in portuguese) perspective (Mostafa, Souza and Vaz, 2010). Once again, the *Bolsa Família* stands out in the comparison. Graph 6 shows that, by increasing R$1 of the BF spendings, the GDP would increase R$1,78. That is what the authors (ibid.) consider as the multiplier effect.

Graph 6: Multiplier effects of social transfers on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Source (Neri et al., 2013).



On the following page, the set of statistics in Table 9 proves how several income types affect the inequality in Brazil, which supports the Gini index result. From top to bottom, the sequence is Income from agricultural work, Income from industrial work, Income from service sector work, Income from public administration work, Retirement pension and other pensions, Rent and donations, Capital income, *Bolsa Família* and BPC (a benefit for elders and disabled in vulnerability who earn less than ¼ of the minimum wage). Each line shows the influence different aspects have on inequality variation.

Thus, Graph 6 clearly demonstrates that, even though the BF program has a significant effect on inequality, it still is way less important when compared to the incomes from both the industrial and service sectors, as well as public administration works.

Table 9: Inequality Variance Decomposition (1995-2006) - Gini Index. Source (Neto and Azzoni, 2013).

Decomposição da variação da desigualdade (1995-2006) – Índice de Gini

	Efeito Concentração	Efeito Participação	**Total**
Renda do trabalho da agricultura	-32,3	-12,9	**-45,2**
Renda do trabalho da indústria	37,6	2,8	**40,4**
Renda do trabalho dos serviços	52,9	2,1	**55,0**
Renda do trabalho da administração pública	31,7	-1,0	**30,8**
Aposentadorias e pensões	-10,5	5,1	**-5,4**
Aluguéis e doações	-0,4	-0,4	**-0,8**
Renda do capital	1,6	-0,1	**1,5**
Bolsa Família	3,6	11,2	**14,8**
BPC	1,9	7,0	**8,9**
Total	**86,1**	**13,9**	**100,0**

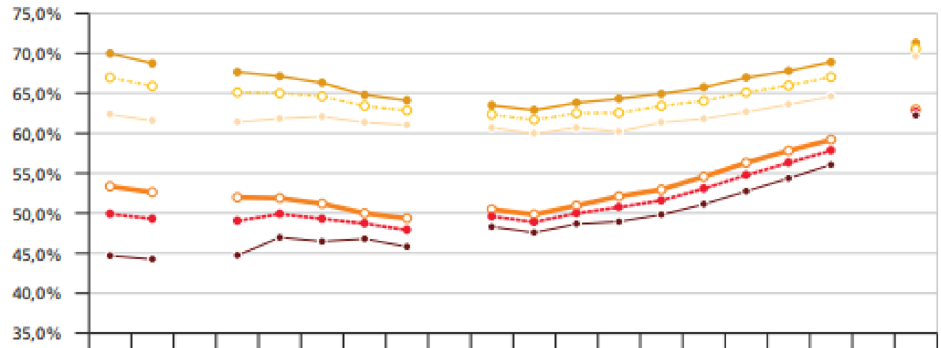
Fonte: estimativas dos autores a partir dos microdados da PNAD-IBGE.

These stats relate to Neri (2020) arguments that have been previously and briefly discussed in this section. According to the author (ibid.), even though the *Bolsa Família*, or *Family Grant* (as translated by him), plays a major role fighting against inequality, the industry and service income are way more relevant when it comes to the Gini index. As a matter of fact, the main reason for the drop of the Gini index in the first years of the twenty first century (1995-2006) was the high employment rate brought about by the thriving economic moment in Brazil. The rise of employment rates was greatly affected by the commodities boom (Martins and Rugitsky, 2018). Therefore, it is important to consider the macroeconomic situation in order carry out a fairer analysis of the *Bolsa Família* and its effects.

As for labor rates, another relevant aspect to address is the shifts on female and male workforce. In Graph 7 bellow, it is possible to analyze the rates from 1992 to 2011.

Graph 7 – Contribution and social security rates by the working population between 16 and 59 years, according to gender (1992-2011) (in %). Source: PNAD/IBGE.

Taxas de contribuição e de proteção previdenciária da população ocupada de 16 a 59 anos, segundo sexo (1992-2011)
(Em %)



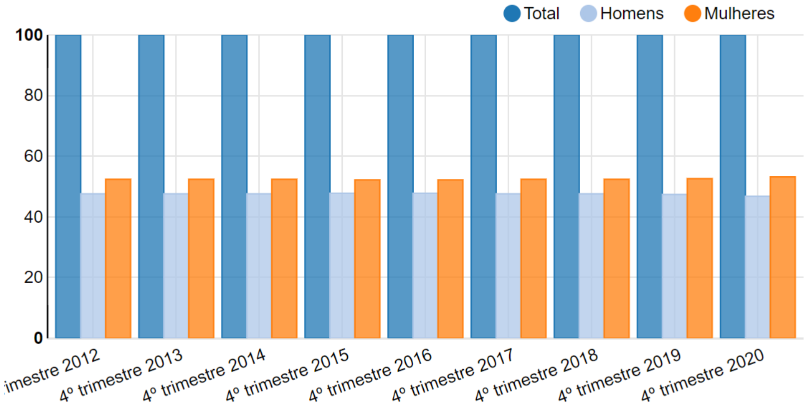
	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Homens – Contribuição	53,3%	52,6%		52,0%	51,9%	51,2%	50,0%	49,4%		50,5%	49,8%	50,9%	52,1%	52,9%	54,6%	56,3%	57,8%	59,2%		63,0%
Total – Contribuição	49,9%	49,3%		49,0%	49,9%	49,3%	48,7%	47,9%		49,6%	48,9%	50,0%	50,8%	51,6%	53,1%	54,8%	56,3%	57,8%		62,6%
Mulheres – Contribuição	44,7%	44,2%		44,7%	47,0%	46,5%	46,8%	45,8%		48,3%	47,6%	48,6%	48,9%	49,8%	51,1%	52,7%	54,4%	56,1%		62,2%
Homens – Proteção	70,0%	68,7%		67,6%	67,1%	66,3%	64,8%	64,1%		63,5%	62,9%	63,8%	64,3%	64,9%	65,7%	66,9%	67,8%	68,9%		71,3%
Total – Proteção	67,0%	65,9%		65,1%	65,0%	64,6%	63,4%	62,8%		62,3%	61,7%	62,5%	62,6%	63,4%	64,0%	65,1%	66,0%	67,0%		70,6%
Mulheres – Proteção	62,4%	61,6%		61,4%	61,8%	62,1%	61,4%	61,0%		60,7%	60,0%	60,7%	60,2%	61,4%	61,8%	62,7%	63,6%	64,6%		69,6%

Fonte: PNAD/IBGE (vários anos).
Elaboração: SPS/MPS.
Obs.: exclusive áreas rurais da região Norte (salvo Tocantins).

It is interesting to notice how the gap between female and male workforce decreased. In 2003, the number of women contributing to social security represented 48% of all working-age female population, while male contributors represented 61% the working-age men. Moving forward to 2011, these same stats were, respectively, around 56% (women) and 64% (men). Thus, the 13% gap decreased to 9%.

However, it is unclear if the increase of women in the labor force was due to the *Bolsa Família* or to the good economic momentum that Brazil was going through between 2003 and 2011. According to IBGE and PNAD data, it is possible to notice that female unemployment increased more than male, as seen in Graph 8 bellow.

Graph 8 – Percentage of unemployed working-age women and men (2012 – 2020). Source: IBGE/PNAD



Fonte: IBGE - Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios Contínua trimestral

The Graph above shows the difference between male and female unemployment aggravated in the period of 2012 to 2020. The percentage of men's unemployed varied from 47,6 % to 46,8% along those years, while the women's counterpart varied from 52,4% to 53,2%.

Another key aspect that is relevat to emphasize in this research is the effect of the BF program on fertility rate (*taxa de fecundidade* as in Table 10 bellow).

Table 10: Total Fertility Rates (TFR), by ranges of per capita household income - Brazil (1991-2010). Source: Alves and Cavenhaghi (2013).

Taxas de fecundidade total (TFT), por faixas de renda domiciliar *per capita* – Brasil (1991-2010)

Características socioeconômicas	1991	2000	2010
Sem rendimento até ¼ SM	5,5	4,6	3,3
¼ a ½ SM	3,1	3,2	2,7
½ a 1 SM	2,3	2,4	1,9
1 a 2 SM	1,8	1,8	1,3
2 a 3 SM	1,6	1,4	1,2
3 a 5 SM	1,5	1,3	1,1
5 ou mais SM	1,2	1,1	1,0

Fonte: censos demográficos do IBGE.

The lines in Table 10 refer to income strata. From top to bottom: no income to ¼ minimum wage (MW), ¼ to ½ MW, ½ to 1 MW, 1 to 2 MW, 2 to 3 MW, 3 to 5 MW, 5 or more MW.

Bearing in mind that the BF program reaches people from the first segment only (no income to ¼ minimum wage), it is possible to conclude from Table 10 that the policy helped to decrease fertility rate. The effect was so far-reaching that the drop was higher than the one observed from 1991 to 2000. After all, the logical assumption might be that the lower the fertility rate is, the less it will drop.

Besides, if we consider that the strata are transitory and that people from the ¼ to ½ minimum wage group may have come from the previous segment, the BF policy also affected those families on having fewer children. The impact is even stronger in the segment that corresponds to ½ to 1 minimum wage, where a small increase in fertility rate in the 1990's is observable. Consequently, it would be possible to affirm that the *Bolsa Família* helps to diminish fertility rate.

Concerning the effects of the *Bolsa Família* on the work force, there is a vast literature on the theme (Lavinas et al., 2012; Campello et al., 2013), carrying out analyses from different perspectives. Some focus on the effects of the BF programs on child labor; others, on labor opportunities to women and among the beneficiaries in general.

Oliveira and Soares (2013, page 341) compiled several academic researches about the *Bolsa Família* effects on labor force, and, mostly, the results were positive. Three examples of those academic studies are worth mentioning here. Ribas and Soares (2011), Ferro et al. (2009), and Tavares (2010). Ribas and Soares (ibid.) noticed women employment rates rose throughout the 2000's decade, along with an increase of poor people participation in rural areas. Ferro et al. (ibid.) showed the participation of women who had children increased, at the same time there was a decrease of child labor, which is extremely positive. Finally, Tavares (2010), whose research focused on mothers, indicated an increase of their participation as well, despite a noticeable retraction of labor participation in the poorest segments analyzed. However, the author suggests more empirical data should be required to draw a tendency.

Regarding child labor, all the specific research (Oliveira and Soares, 2013) showed that the *Bolsa Família* indeed decreased this rating and increased the number of children enrolled in schools. However, the data related to adults show mixed results. All in all, the occupation rates related to men, in general, increased, even though informality also rose in some of the researches just mentioned.

As for women, the results were more controversial. In some cases, there was a decrease of the rate pointing to women in the labor force (Oliveira and Soares, 2013). Still, the authors (ibid.) argue this is not always a negative indicator, since it may reflect the possibility offered by the *Bolsa Familia* for women to remain at home raising their children. In general, it should be reasonable to claim the results indicate the benefit does not motivate laziness; on the contrary, it stimulates job offers and helps the rise of employment rates.

As far as how the Bolsa Família affected local communities, the analyses by Vieira et al. (2013) and Chaves et al. (2019) take into account the specific cases of Ibatiba and Itapetinga two cities, respectively located in the Southeast and Northeast of Brazil. According to both researches, two outcomes stood out. First, small businesses from these cities grew considerably in different sectors, such as grocery shops, pharmacies, clothing shops and bakeries. The income generated by the BF was also spent on education and housing. Besides, most of the beneficiaries affirmed that they spent the biggest share of the benefit on basic needs, which varied from month to month.

The studies by Vieira et al. (2013) and Chaves et al. (2019) prove that the BF analysis does not concern only the beneficiaries, but the Brazilian society as a whole. Small businesses in countryside cities such as Ibatiba and Itapetinga are strongly benefited with the increase of the cities' residents' purchasing power.

To sum up, the main effects of the *Bolsa Família* program regarding its beneficiaries may be listed as follows: (i) increasing coverage of beneficiaries (at least until 2014, as it will be further discussed in Section 3.4, Graph 1); (ii) shift on the Brazilian voting map (Map 1); (iii) increase in children's health rates and decrease in child mortality; (iv) educational boom (Graphs 2, 3, 4 and Tables 2,5); (v) reduction of extreme poverty, poverty and vulnerable groups (Table 3); (vi) increase in employment rates among the working age population (Table 4) and more specifically in female labor (Graphs 7 and 8); (vii) decrease in fertility rates (Tables 6 and 10); (viii) enhancement of public services of infrastructure, such as electricity, water, sewerage and garbage collection (Table 7); (ix) increase of consumption power (Table 8); (x) the growth of small city businesses (Vieira et al., 2013, and Chaves et al., 2019).

The data under analysis so faar suggest that the *Bolsa Família* has had profound impact on the Brazilian society. As a result, one may claim the effects of the program, namely, education, labor opportunities, food security and housing, also provide a significant part of the Brazilian population who are the beneficiaries of the policy with fundamental rights. This argument by itself would make the end of the assistance unimaginable nowadays. Still, one of the conclusions from the extensive research (Oliveira and Soares, 2013) is that the BF program indeed needs building up. More importantly, public policies offered alongside assistance policies also need to be enhanced, so that they both can act in a structured and coordinated way.

To add up to the analyses and discussion, the following section considers then specific cases of the policy.

3.3. Two Specific Instances

This section approaches two specific instances of the Bolsa Familia effects. For that, the following subsections respectively discuss the Londrina case and the Recife case.

3.3.1 The Londrina Instance

Mariano and Carloto (2009) traced the *Bolsa Família* effects in the city of Londrina. After a qualitative research with a focus on gender inequality, the authors (ibid.) concluded that the BF program, despite providing people in poverty with basic needs, reinforced gender inequality.

That conclusion was drawn because the number of families where the mother took the role of “housewife” increased after the beginning of the program. Therefore, based on the empiric case analyzed, the link between women and domestic work escalated.

The authors (ibid.) add that, in many cases, the *Bolsa Família* aid often reinforces sexist gender roles, once it feeds on the relation between women and maternity. It is indeed a worrisome conclusion. Nevertheless, another perspective from which to consider this evidence is to imagine that the *Bolsa Família* provided many mothers with a better financial stability. Without the aid, their situation would be far more precarious. It is difficult to state that this parental neglect would not occur without the *Bolsa Família* policy.

3.3.2 The Recife Instance

The study conducted by Lavinas et al. (2012) analyzed the results from a survey undertaken in the city of Recife, where data from people who received the *Bolsa Família* were gathered. The focus of this study was on the influence of the policy on women.

The results from the survey were controversial. It suggested the *Bolsa Família* did not encourage people to have more children, which proved contrary to popular beliefs (see Subsection 2.6). However, as for the labor aspect, it was shown that it was incompatible for women to work and receive the BF benefit at the same time, due to the income cap per capita for households to become eligible for the financial aid. Employment does not necessarily remove families from poverty, but it might hinder their eligibility condition for the BF, according to the research (Lavinas et al., ibid.). This brings on another problem: the difficulty for mothers to have a professional career and attend to family responsibilities at the same time. In case women have a job, they need to resort to services such as daycares, which should be offered by the state, but are in fact hardly a part of the Brazilian reality.

In this sense, Lavinas et al. (2012) notes a flaw, not in the *Bolsa Família* per se, but in public policies. Women, according to that specific research, were not able to receive the benefit and work at the same time. Once they had a job, they had difficulties raising their children, for they were still be deemed as poor and had neither the means nor the time to raise their children properly. The authors (ibid.) point out the necessity for a more reasonable offer of public services, which would fully allow women to maintain a professional career, and also ease the burden on poor mothers.

The Londrina and Recife cases give us an even clearer picture of the effects of the Bolsa Familia policy. Also, it is essential to bear in mind that all the BF outcome considered in this study should be helpful in the Unconditional Basic Income debate (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4).

Before this chapter is rounded up, it is also relevant to examine how the BF program was developed in Dilma's and Michel Temer's mandates and how it was perceived by political and social classes. Additionally, criticism made from the media and the academy should be analyzed as well.

3.4. The evolution of the policy

After president Lula's reelection, in 2007, the *Bolsa Família* program kept expanding. It became articulated with different governmental sectors, such as Social Assistance, Education and Health. The articulation between the federal administration and the states developed, and, in general, many of the initial effects of the policy became more obvious.

An impressive example regarding achievements of the policy is presented in the research by Silverira-Neto and Azzoni (2011), who show that the spending of 1% of the GDP on the *Bolsa Família* generated an increase of 1,44% of the GDP itself and a 2,25% growth in the beneficiaries' household income. This indicates the investment made by the grant is indeed productive.

One development which is worth pointing out is the Benefit of Overcoming Extreme Poverty, destined to families with income per capita of less than R$ 70 (seventy reais). Even though the *Bolsa Família* had a significant impact on poverty, simulations run by Osorio and Souza (2012) estimated that a bit less than 1% of the households benefitted by the grant were still in extreme poverty situation (less than R$ 70 per capita). This new development would thus help these remaining families in overly precarious situation.

Besides, the CadÚnico (Unified register, see footnote 20) had its share of development. The mechanism created in 2003 was enhanced during the early 2010's. As pointed out by Paiva, Falcão and Bartholo (2013), 10% of the 2,9 million of individual micro-entrepreneurs are associated with the *Bolsa Família*, indicating that the program does stimulates small business (22% of these 2,9 million are in the CadÚnico). Out of the 3,6 million microcredit operations, 760 thousand were carried out by people who benefitted from the BF and aimed for enhancing their commercial activities.

In 2005, the Program of Eradication of Child Labor (PETI) was integrated to the BF. Since one of the conditions to receive the *Bolsa Família* aid is that the family have their children enrolled in and attending school, there was a considerable increase in schooling among the age group under 18 years old. The number of illiterates in Brazil also dropped. (See Graphs 2 and 3).

During the time when Dilma Roussef was president (2011-2016), the program kept growing stronger. Vasconcelos et al. (2019) presents a clear, albeit succinct, analysis of those years. One of the main acts from Dilma in the beginning of her mandate was the creation of the Brazilian Misery Eradication Program (*Programa Brasil Sem Miséria*). This was idealized to fight poverty and extreme poverty, for the *Bolsa Família* program was able to ease the burden in those two groups, but not to solve it completely. Therefore, Roussef planned, by means of the Misery Eradication program, to work on "(1) productive inclusion (rural and urban); (2) income guarantee for social protection; and (3) access to public services for social protection and promotion" (Vasconcelos et al., p. 7, 2019).

By employing those strategies, the government's idea was to complement the *Bolsa Família's* accomplishments with more assistance policies (such as the Misery Eradication), and public services that could socially integrate the poorer people.

Other acts/programs from that same period worth mentioning are the following: the PNAN (National Plan for Food and Nutrition Security of 2012/2015); the update of the PNAN; the Reference Framework of Food and Nutrition Education (FNE) for Public Policies; the National Strategy for Promotion of Breastfeeding and Healthy Supplementary Feeding in *Sistema Único de Saúde* (SUS, Unified Public Health Care System); and the Food Guide for the Brazilian Population (Vasconcelos et al., p. 7, 2019).

However, at the outset of Dilma's second mandate, Brazil faced a deep economic crisis, marked by recession and unemployment. This led to a severe cut down on public spending (see Table 10, 11 and 12). With Dilma's impeachment in 2016 and Michel Temer's taking over the presidency, the posture from the government regarding public policies and spending shifted strongly. The congress, together with the executive, approved a constitutional amendment[30] which froze the limit of public spending for twenty years.

Vasconcelos et al. (p. 9, 2019) analyzed the end of Temer's administration as follows:

> In May 2018, the proposal for Provisional Measures to make feasible an agreement made with the cargo transport movement resulted in the cancellation of budget programs, which had already undergone previous cuts, such as agrarian reform and technical assistance, and rural extension programs, focused on preserving biodiversity, fighting gender violence, providing basic sanitation services, sustainable development, housing, as well as several programs of Health and Education.
>
> These facts confirm worrisome projections of a return to food insecurity, hunger and poverty in the country. It is necessary to point out that the State can be held liable for noncompliance with its obligations to social policies, especially Food and Nutrition Security, considering besides the constitution, the San Diego Protocol, signed by Brazil in 1996, in which the State cannot retreat in relation to the economic, social and cultural rights, Law No.11.346/2006 and Decree No.7.272/2010, which establishes the *Sistema Nacional de Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional* (SISAN, National System of Food and Nutrition Security).

Three tables below, also taken from Vasconcelos et al. (2019), support the excerpt above and show the shift on economic spending as of Temer's administration. It is worth noting the presidential mandates are divided in the following timeline: Lula (2003-2010), Dilma (2011-2016) and Temer (mid 2016- 2018). Additionally, it is important to keep in mind that the

[30] ____.PEC 241. Brasília: Câmara Federal, 2016b

thriving economic moment in Brazil lasted until mid-2014. Right after that, in 2015, the country was hit by a financial crisis.

Table 11: Number of families benefited and accumulated annual budget value of the *Programa Bolsa Família* (PBF, Family Grant Program) in Brazil, 2004 to 2018. Source (Vasconcellos et al., 2019).

Number of families benefited and accumulated annual budget value of the *Programa Bolsa Família* (PBF, Family Grant Program) in Brazil, 2004 to 2018.

Year	Number of families	Yearly budget (BRL)
2004	6,571.839	3,791,785,038.00
2005	8,700.445	5,691,667,041.00
2006	10,965.810	7,524,661,322.00
2007	11,043.076	8,965,499,608.00
2008	10,557.996	10,606,500,193.00
2009	12,370.915	12,454,702,501.00
2010	12,778.220	14,372,702,865.00
2011	13,361.495	17,364,277,909.00
2012	13,902.155	21,156,774,695.00
2013	14,086.199	24,890,107,091.00
2014	14,003.441	27,187,295,233.00
2015	13,936.791	27,650,301,339.00
2016	13,569.576	28,506,185,141.00
2017	13,828.609	29,046,112,934.00
Until June, 2018	13,736.341	14,881,878,458.00

Note: BRL: Brazilian currency (*Reais*: R$).

Based on data from the Ministry of Social Development (Brazil) [22].

Table 12: Number of participating students and yearly budget of the *Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar* (PNAE, National School Nutrition Program). Brazil, 2003 to 2018. Source (Vasconcellos et al., 2019).

Number of participating students and yearly budget of the *Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar* (PNAE, National School Nutrition Program). Brazil, 2003 to 2018.

Year	Participating students (in millions)	Yearly budget (in billions of BRL)
2003	37.3	0.954
2004	37.8	1.025
2005	36.4	1.266
2006	36.3	1.500
2007	35.7	1.520
2008	34.6	1.490
2009	47.0	2.013
2010	45.6	3.034
2011	44.4	3.051
2012	43.1	3.306
2013	43.3	3.542
2014	42.2	3.693
2015	41.5	3.759
2016	40.3	3.400
2017	40.6	3.900
Until June, 2018	40.8	1.800

Note: BRL: Brazilian currency (*Reais*: R$).

Based on data from the Ministry of Social Development, National Fund for Education Development (Brazil) [38].

Table 13: Percentage of budget reduction of programs and goals of the National Food and Nutrition Security Plan. Brazil, 2014-2018. Source (Vasconcellos et al., 2019).

Percentage of budget reduction of programs and goals of the National Food and Nutrition Security Plan. Brazil, 2014-2018.

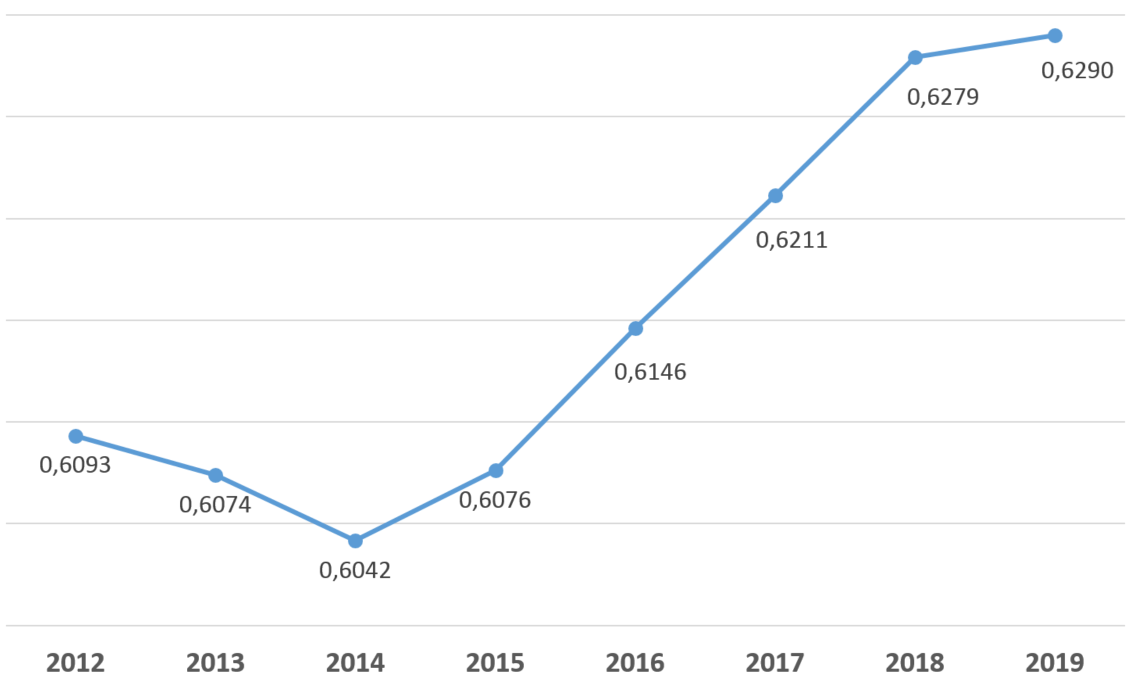
Program/Goals	LOA (2014)	LOA (2018)	Reduction (%)
Distribution of food to traditional and specific population groups (food basket)	BRL82 million	BRL27.4 million	67
Ecological grant program	BRL106.2 million	-	100
Support for the sustainable development of *quilombola* communities, indigenous peoples and traditional peoples and communities	BRL6 million	-	100
Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (ATER)	BRL630 million	BRL185.4 million	71
Technical Assistance and Rural Extension for settled and extractive families (ATES)	BRL357 million	BRL19.7 million	94
Productive inclusion of women	BRL32.5 million	BRL3.6 million	89
Food Acquisition Program (PAA)	BRL1.3 billion	BRL431 million	67
“Water for All” Program (Cisterns)	BRL248.8 million	BRL40.8 million	94
International Humanitarian Cooperation	BRL38.4 million	BRL6.3 million	84

Note: LOA: Annual Budget Law; BRL: Brazilian currency (*Reais*: R$)

Based on data from the National Council on Food and Nutrition Security (Brazil) [59].

The conjuncture is indeed worrisome. The biggest accomplishments in Brazil during the twentieth century were social-oriented, such as the drop in food insecurity, extreme poverty, economic inequality, just to name a few. Since the budget cuts made by Temer’s administration, those rates have been escalating. One example is the rise of the Gini Index, as seen in Graph 9 below:

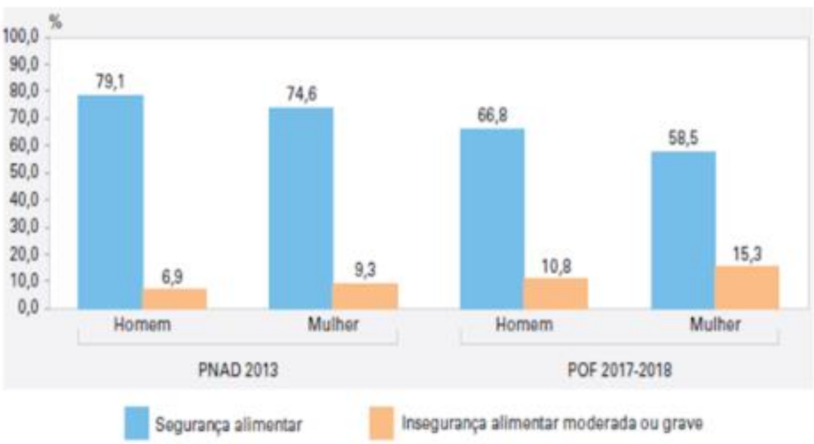
Graph 9: Gini Index - Brazil 2009-2019. Source: FGV Social / CPS from PNADC’s data / IBGE



Even though it was already possible to notice an increase in the index in 2015, after the budget cuts and the social programs defunds, the rise was overpowering. The rates of unemployment also rose substantially with the upcoming economic crisis, as seen in Graphs 10, 11 and 12 bellow.

Graph 10: Unemployment rate – Brazil (%) – Source: IBGE. From March, 2012 until December, 2018.

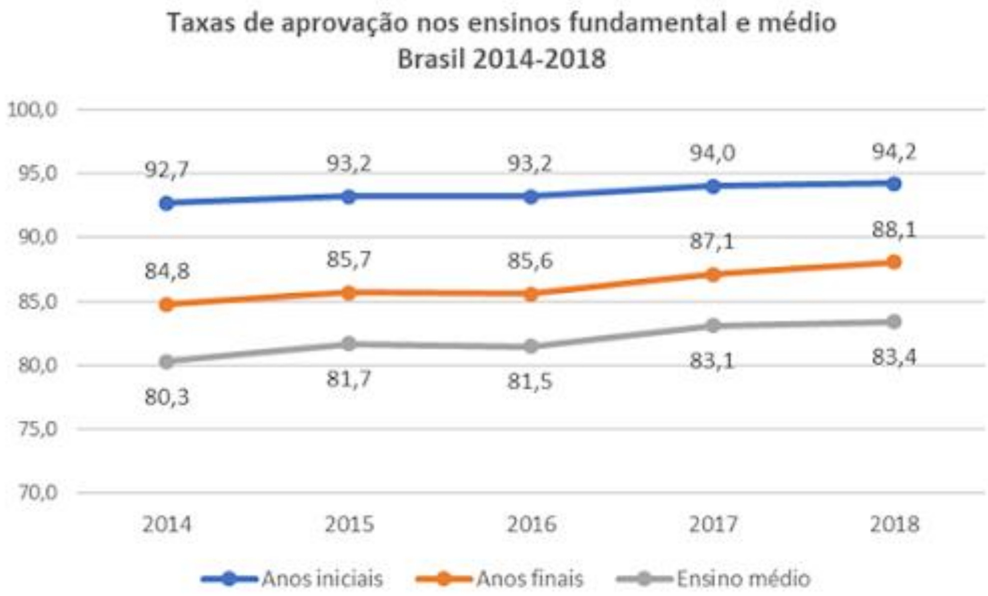
Graph 11: Food security in Brazil, 2013 and 2017-18. Source: IBGE, PNAD and POF[31].



Fonte: IBGE, PNAD 2013 e POF 2017-2018

[31] POF Stands for *Pesquisa de Orçamentos Familiares*, loosely translated to Family Budget Survey

Graph 12: Approval rated in basic school and high school, Brazil 2014-18. Source: INEP (Education Institute).



The analyses of three graphs above show divergent results. Food security and employment levels suffered severely with the economic crisis. In the macro level, the inequality rates suggest that the *Bolsa Família* was not able to maintain those social gains (see the Gini index - Table 7). The educational rates concerning approval were, however, sustained even during fragile economic times.

It is fundamental to make two remarks at this point. Firstly, most of the data available concerning the *Bolsa Família* effects after the economic crisis in 2015 are scarce. Therefore, it is difficult to compare data from researches such as Campello et al.'s (2013) with data gathered in the following years (Tables 11-13 and Graphs 9-12), when the shift on the economic panorama is clear. Campello et al. (ibid.) compares several statistics from before and after the BF program implementation, in order to understand its effects. Unfortunately, Campello et al. (ibid.) does not yet contemplate how the BF effects responded to the economic crisis that hit Brazil.

Additionally, to the previous argument, it is naïve to assume that the *Bolsa Família* policy has the capacity to influence these stats alone. Those statistics fluctuations are a response to a series of events, a series of social programs and public policies~~,~~ that affect global economy. Even though the BF program is relevant in this equation, it is not the only variant, or the most effective one. Still, it is reasonable to claim that those people affected by the economic crisis would be more vulnerable without the financial aid.

Since studies that analyze the specific *Bolsa Família* effects during the economic crisis are still not available to be mentioned and quoted here, a more general panorama is provided here. It is possible to observe some of the retraction regarding the financing of the program (Tables 11, 12 and 13), and macro data (Graph 9, 10 and 11), which include not only the *Bolsa Família* beneficiaries, but all Brazilian society.

Thus, the BF itself was undermined by Temer's administration due to the economic crisis (2015 onwards). Also, the program was crucial for the families who benefitted from it, even after the cuts from the federal government.

This confirms Lavinas's (2018) argument. The economist defends that the major issue regarding Cash Transfers such as the *Bolsa Família* is that the policy, by itself, is weak and inefficient. True socioeconomic inclusion will only be achieved by public policies regardeless of the individual's purchasing power. Of course, Cash Transfer programs are highly important, but are far from enough when analyzing the bigger picture, and hence the struggle against poverty and inequality. The economic crisis that struck Brazil strengthens Lavinas's arguments.

Having considered how the *Bolsa Família* evolved throughout different presidential mandates, this work turns the attentions to different criticisms directed at the program. This should help the reader to understand how the policy was perceived by different segments of society.

3.5. Criticisms about the Policy

Even though the *Bolsa Família* is a remarkably successful program, especially in its first years (see Subsections 2.3, Campello et al., 2013), it has its share of criticism. It is interesting to notice how criticism comes from both right and the left-wing parties, and from the most variated sources: political, mediatic and social.

The first and most basic criticism that needs to be pointed out is the conditioning of the *Bolsa Família* transfer. Many authors (Craveiro and De Aquino Ximenes, 2013; Ramos and Cuervo, 2012) argue that the conditions established by the government to fulfill the eligibility requirements to receive the aid go against Human Rights doctrine and legislation.

Food security and a decent life are fundamental rights of every citizen, and it is the homeland state responsibility to provide all civilians with fundamental rights. Therefore, the requirements of medical checkups and school attendance to receive the BF transfer are viewed as problematic by many authors (Craveiro and De Aquino Ximenes, 2013; Ramos and Cuervo, 2012).

However, despite the reasonability of the criticism and the fact that fundamental rights are not something to be bargained, it is important to acknowledge the intentions of the BF conditions are not negative. It is undeniable that the program boosted schooling and that the health rates among the beneficiaries improved considerable (see Subsection 2.3). Nonetheless, one may argue that it might have not happened without the conditionalities.

In the political scenario, Senator Cristovam Buarque (2004) was one of the first politicians to address, in a pejorative way, the economic assistance policy created by the Workers Party. In 2004, the senator asserted, during an interview, that the program *Bolsa Escola* had been turned into a sort of *Bolsa Esmola*, (loosely translated into *Alms Grant*). Cristovam Buarque thus believed that the policy created in Fernando Henrique Cardoso's administration had been transformed into some kind of charity scheme under the presidency of. The Social Democrats, Fernando Henrique Cardoso's Party, who had lost the 2002 presidential elections to the Workers Party, even made an editorial[32] taking advantage of the pejorative way that Buarque referred to the assistance policies. The expression "*Bolsa Esmola*" would then become a recurring statement in political debates, either by the opposition, to criticize PT (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, loosely translated into *Workers Party*) administration, or by PT itself, to argue that the opposition was against economic assistance policies which were vital to millions of Brazilians[33].

In the political mediatic scenario, Pires and Dias (2015) examine how the newspaper "Estado de São Paulo" referred to the *Bolsa Família* in its news and articles. The researchers (ibid.) considered texts published in 2003, 2008 and 2013, so that the analysis could show how the newspaper standpoint evolved over the years of the BF program.

In the firsts texts analyzed, according to Pires and Dias (2015), the newspaper adopted a stance of negative criticism at the policy, highlighting its flaws and imperfections. Also,

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[32] This editorial can be found in <https://www.psdb.org.br/acompanhe/noticias/bolsa-esmola-editorial>

[33] An example can be found in this article published in PT's website <https://pt.org.br/bolsa-familia-virava-lei-ha-15-anos-sob-governo-lula/>

during that time, the newspaper writers often showed concern with the program turning into charity, and even quoted the expression "*Bolsa Esmola*".

Moving onto 2008, as Pires and Dias (2015) demonstrate, the *Bolsa Família* did not receive much attention from "Estado de São Paulo". The policy was more hotly debated when the elections of that year were being addressed, in which case the focus would be on how the program affected the elections. The newspaper treated the assistance policy mainly as a political instrument of bargain in the electoral disputes.

Finally, in 2013, the context of the policy was totally different from the previous years. Ten years after the creation of the BF, it was an undeniable success from both the economic and social perspectives (see Sections 2.3). Therefore, Pires and Dias (2015) point out the "Estado de São Paulo" shifted their positioning; instead of focusing on the flaws of the program, it highlighted how important it was for the Workers Party. Besides, when interviewing left-wing supporters, whom Dilma Roussef, the president at the time, was aligned with, one of the arguments was the Social Democrats played a vital role in the creation of the *Bolsa Família*.

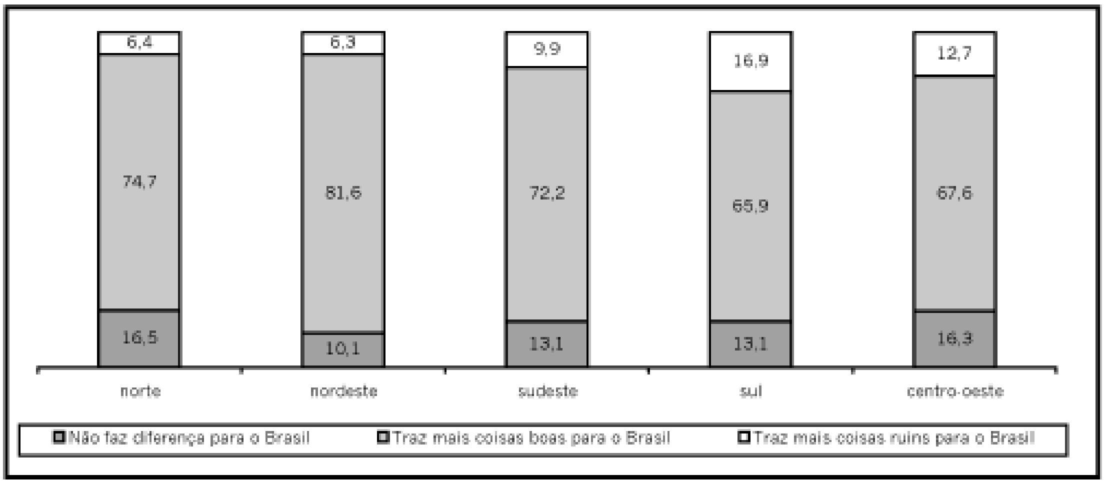
Pires and Dias's analysis (ibid.) show how the perception of the policy was transformed over the years. It is also important to mention that the authors (ibid.) acknowledge the "Estado de São Paulo" newspaper Estado de São Paulo has a liberal conservative bias, which generally implies a contrary positioning to the Workers Party. In fact, a pro-*Bolsa Família* stance was never adopted by the news and articles published. Even when the sociopolitical conjuncture made it hard for the newspaper to criticize the policy, they adopted a pragmatic view, according to which the success of the program was not entirely the Workers Party's merit. Besides, they did not fail to point out that it had a vital political importance to the presidency at the time. Nevertheless, bearing in mind that this newspaper represents a significant part of the elite in the Brazilian sociopolitical environment, it is instigating to note how the positioning of this specific media shifted throughout the years.

Castro et al. (2009) paints an interesting scenario to understand how the *Bolsa Família* program is perceived from the Brazilian population point of view. The authors (ibid.) brought together a series of surveys that analyzed public opinion regarding the cash transfer policy.

The article (ibid.) starts with an evaluation of the public opinion taking into account the regional perspective. It is worth noting the regions that are less affected with the cash transfer tend to think that the policy is more harmful to the country, as shown in Graph 13 below.

Graph 13: General Perception over the Bolsa Família by region (%) Brazil, 2008. Source: Castro et al., 2009.

Figura 1
Percepção geral sobre o Programa Bolsa Família por região (%)
Brasil, 2008



Fonte: DATAUnB

The regions are, from left to right, north, northeast, southeast, south, and center east. In white, we see the percentage of people in each region who believe that the BF program brings about more negative results to Brazil; in grey, the percentage of people that believe the policy has more positive consequences. Finally, in black, or dark grey, the Graph shows how many believe that the program did not make any difference.

Castro et al. (2009) also discuss several other important data, such as: in comparison to people that did not have any contact with assisted groups, people who knew someone who benefitted from the *Bolsa Família* were more likely to believe it brought about positive results. Based on this evidence, the authors carried out a research to collect data on how the population perceived the program as far as the following aspects were concerned: (i) if the program included people that do not need the assistance; (ii) if the policy encourages families to have more children and to become too passive (as in not being encouraged to look for a job, for example); (iii) if the beneficiaries spent that money on fundamental needs or not; and (iv) if BF made the beneficiaries' family lives better or not. Once again, it was more likely for the interviewee to have a negative perception regarding each topic if he or she did not have any contact with a beneficiary.

Generally, however, the research by Castro et al. (ibid.) showed that the majority of the interviewees had positives perceptions of the program. The only exception was in the questions regarding the tendency of the beneficiaries to have more children and to become discouraged to look for a job. In these two questions, the majority responded *yes*, which could point to a negative side of the program. Yet, it is important to emphasize that official data prove otherwise (see Section 3.2). Despite this specific controversy, the research by Casto et al. (ibid.) made it clear that the *Bolsa Família* had popular support.

Lavinas (2018), however, has a rather unique view of the *Bolsa Família* policy. The economist argues that the aid provided by the program is a form of citizenship provided (ibid.) by cash transfer, which, according to the author, is considerably problematic.

As already addressed in this work (see Section 3.2), it is important to consider the macroeconomic structure when analyzing the *Bolsa Família* program. It is undeniable that the escalation of commodities prices generated a positive moment in Brazilian economy, dropping unemployment and rising the GDP. From the macroeconomic perspective, the BF policy helped to increase the buying power within the economically vulnerable segments of the Brazilian population. And that is the point made by Lavinas's (ibid.). According to the author (ibid.), by conceding citizenship via money transfer, economic vulnerability is not solved; it is only postponed. The groups that receive the benefit are still vulnerable to economic fluctuations, which are highly likely to turn up at some point.

After a chain of events that led Brazil into an economic crisis, several socioeconomic indicators, such as food security, housing, sanitation, employment, retracted from the levels that had increased in the beginning of the twentieth first century. In this scenario, The *Bolsa Família* by itself was not able to secure those rates. The Gini index rise since 2012 (see Graph 7) demonstrates this retraction from the socioeconomic gains.

This conjuncture relates directly to Lavinas's criticism (2018). Even before the economic crisis, the economist argued that the economic citizenship[34] provided by the BF program was not sustainable. True citizenship in such unequal country like Brazil would require a profound investment in public services, which should be able to give the poor social segments access to education, health, sanitation, transport, recreation, and so on. Thus, the socioeconomic gains of the population would be more solid, and less vulnerable to economic fluctuations, even

[34] Lavinas (2018) states that the BF granted citizenship by enhancing the purchasing power, which explains the lexical choice **economic citizenship**.

though they would not be totally safe from lack of public funding. After all, that kind of funding can always be cut down. Still, more solid investments on public services would certainly mean more stability than any cash transfer policy can offer.

It is evident that the Workers Party, under the Lula's and Dilma's administration, focused on improving public services as well as cash transfer policies (Campello et al., 2013). However, it was far from what Lavinas (2018.) considers necessary in the Brazilian case. And time did prove her right. All one needs to do is to consider the drop of the socioeconomic rates (see Subsection 2.5).

A possible criticism against Lavinas's (ibid.) views is that citizenship based on power of consumerism is a reflex of the socioeconomic reality in Brazil. Even if it is agreed that the best way to tackle inequality is via public services, generating a better economic stability, that would not correspond to the Brazilian society. Even if there was improvement on public services, people would still need resources to consume basic goods, which would range from food to books. It is almost utopian to believe that public services would suffice in the fight against poverty and inequality.

Nevertheless, Lavinas's (ibid.) position regarding the *Bolsa Família* is no less relevant. The author (ibid.) herself admits that the main problem about her perspective is not the Cash Transfer itself, but the lack of coordination with other public policies, which would provide quality and stable public services.

It is worth remarking that the present study strongly agrees with the Brazilian economist (ibid.). Her arguments are clearly in line with the Unconditional Basic Income theorization, once they strengthen the position which defends the implementation of the income alongside quality public services and move away from the idea of citizenship based on purchasing power (Lavinas, 2018), which could, indeed, create a truly democratic society. Since this is clearly a topic that needs further discussion, it will be more thoroughly addressed in the Conclusive Remarks.

The present chapter described how the *Bolsa Família* was created and how it evolved over the years. As a result of a process that started with the new Brazilian constitution, way back in 1988, the program had several effects (see page 61, Section 3.2) and was one of the main factors leading to a historical drop in poverty rates in Brazil.

It is interesting to compare the practical effects with the popular view of the policy. The *Bolsa Família* success is not consensual among the Brazilian population (see Section 3.4). Moreover, its funding oscillated throughout the 2010 decade, mainly from the economic crisis that ravaged Brazil. Nevertheless, one of the fundamental implications of this chapter is the fact that the *Bolsa Família* was able to survive as a public policy through different administrations and distinct economic conjunctures (Compton and Hart, 2019).

After engaging in the main discussions on the Unconditional Basic Income (see Chapter 2), this chapter aimed at presenting a general overview of the *Bolsa Família* in Brazilian society. Throughout this chapter, it is possible to understand how the program was idealized, built up, put into practice, and how it affected society in different ways. Different perceptions and criticism of the program were also listed and discussed. The purpose was to guide the reader through the *Bolsa Família* trajectory, so that, in the next chapter, the discussion is aligned with the UB, whose theorization may then be supported by means of the *Bolsa Família* experience.

4. AN ANALYSIS OF THE *BOLSA FAMÍLIA* FROM THE BASIC INCOME PERSPECTIVE

Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by actions of human beings.
Nelson Mandela, *Make Poverty History* speech (2005).

In this chapter, the focus is on what the *Bolsa Família* experience, over the two analyzed decades, can teach us so that the Unconditional Basic Income debate may be enhanced. All the topics addressed in the chapter concerning Unconditional Basic Income (see Chapter 2) are vital here once this literature, and theorization, is reviewed on the basis of practical cases such as the *Bolsa Família*.

The following sections will approach the specific topics brought up in Chapter 1, namely Freedom, Politics and Feminism, and seek to understand how the *Bolsa Família* acted as far as those issues are concerned.

4.1. *Bolsa Família,* UBI and Freedom

When considering the topic of Freedom and the specific case of the *Bolsa Família*, the most obvious author to start with, among all those previously mentioned in Chapter 2, is Philip Pettit (2008). Republican freedom, that is, freedom as non-domination, is the argument which justifies, according to the author, why everyone should be provided with the basics to their subsistence. This of course, strongly connected to the *Bolsa Família* aid.

Pettit (2008) explains how the utilitarian and liberal points of view do not strongly argue for the UBI implementation. The liberal aspect, specifically, is simply not coherent, for true liberalism understands freedom as a non-intervention term. According to this liberal stance, a UBI taxation would be regarded as anti-freedom.

Thus, Pettit (2008) can only justify a UBI policy based on the Republican argument. Once all people are considered equal as far as the republican-democratic-political aspect is concerned, it is also indispensable to argue that all citizens should sustain economic independence. This would be satisfied by a UBI policy that ensured everyone should be granted with dignity and independence. In order to exemplify common economic dependences within society, Pettit (ibid.) mentions situations related to employer-employee and family provider-family dependents. This dependency context is extremely harmful to republican ideals, since it assumes that every citizen has minimum conditions to live regardless of any tutelage of another person.

When this discussion is transposed into the Brazilian reality, one simply cannot fail to overlook, both from the historical and the current perspective, the undeniably outrageous socioeconomic disparities in Brazil (Gini, 2019). Thus, when it comes to the struggle against inequalities in Brazil, it is possible to claim that the *Bolsa Família* and cash transfer policies are vital, and, consequently, a way to provide citizens with the Republican Freedom described by Pettit (2008).

By analyzing the effects of the BF (see Chapter 3, Section 3.2), one may notice the policy was crucial for social inclusion in different areas. Access to basic goods and access to education are key necessities to citizenship and political participation. And the *Bolsa Família*, along with other concomitant public policies and a favorable economic conjuncture, increased rates of sanitation, education, and housing, as pointed out throughout Chapter 3.

As a matter of fact, this process of public assistance increased the so-called freedom as a non-domination (Pettit, 2008) up to rates never seen before in the Brazilian panorama[35]. In other words, more citizens were in a state of socioeconomic dignity, and thus less subject to the arbitrary domination of others. This socioeconomic inclusion could also be noticed from a political perspective (see Map 1 in Section 3.2), despite the backlash it may also have provoked in the society, as it will be explained below.

As seen in Section 3.5, the popular perception towards the *Bolsa Família* was often negative (see Graph 11), which eventually affected the political perspective. In order to better understand this context, it is necessary to carry out a sociopolitical analysis of aspects leading to President Temer's administration (2016-2018) and the subsequent budget cuts, which can only be understood if one goes beyond the economic crisis explanation.

The presidential elections of 2014 were extremely disputed between Dilma Rouseff (Lula's successor and candidate of the Workers' Party, who had already been elected president in 2010) and Aécio Neves (candidate of the Social Democratic Party, the same party of former

[35] According to the Gini index (see Graph 9, section 3.2) and other social indicators throughout Chapter 3.

president Fernando Henrique Cardoso). The final electoral result was decided by a small margin of 3,28 % of the total votes separating Dilma, who was reelected, from Aécio (Santos, 2017).

In this political scenario, it is interesting to note that the *Bolsa Família* was a commonly debated topic between the candidates and among their voters. While Dilma and her party made use of the success of the *Bolsa Família* program in the electoral campaign, Aécio often argued that the program was inefficient, that it contributed to public deficit, and that much of the program's success was due to Fernando Henrique Cardoso's presidency and early CCTs that originated the BF policy, as the *Bolsa Escola* for instance. (Amaral, 2015)

From the electorate perspective, there was a clear split between Dilma voters and Aécio voters regarding the BF topic. The first group thoroughly defended the amplification of the *Bolsa Família*, acknowledging its importance to the Brazilian society. On the other hand, social democrat voters often argued that the program was inefficient, calling it *Bolsa Esmola* (Alms Grant), and claiming that it was a way for the Workers' Party to buy votes (Santos, 2017).[36] From that moment on, a series of popular rallies, supported by Aécio and several right-wing politicians, took place claiming for Dilma's impeachment. All the narrative against *Bolsa Família* was fiercely reproduced by Aécio and his supporters, who insisted on stating that the policy was a way to buy votes[37]. Additionally, many of the right-wing protestants complained about the *Bolsa Família* as a policy that took away their financial freedom, arguing the public cash transfer was "their" money, and came from their tax payments. This aspect is directly correlated to the concept of Liberal Freedom addressed by Pettit (2008), and proves, to a certain extent, that the liberal argument for a UBI is flawed.

This Brazilian political conjuncture helped to pave the way for the impeachment of Dilma Roussef in early 2016, when Michel Temer, the vice-president of the colligation that had run in 2014, took office. Historically, Temer had a more right-wing approach towards the economy, which appealed to those who were anti-Dilma and anti-Workers' Party. Consequently, as already noted in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4), several budget cuts were made because of this presidential transition, which severely affected the *Bolsa Família*.

Therefore, it is vital to keep in mind the sociopolitical conjuncture to better understand this period (2015 onwards) and the budget cuts on the *Bolsa Família* policy. It was not simply a matter of an economic crisis, but also a social struggle. Around that same period, several left-

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[36] ___. **PSDB Pelo Brasil**. 2021. Available in: <https://www.psdb.org.br/acompanhe/noticias/pt-converteu-bolsa-familia-em-mecanismo-para-compra-de-votos>. Acess in: 9 apr. 2021.
[37] Ibid.

wing rallies were also organized, but lost the political and mediatic battle to the opposition. This ideological dispute is, once again, strongly related to the issue of freedom in the UBI discussion. The anti-Workers' Party protestants based much of their criticism against the *Bolsa Família* on the claim that the program was a restriction of their economic freedom.

From this process of resistance towards cash transfer policies, two alternative hypotheses can be drawn when picturing an Unconditional Basic Income scenario:

(i) a similar movement of people that feel undermined by the program and use the freedom argument to antagonize the policy could take shape. And that would gain strength once it occurred in the wealthiest segment of the society, which tends to be more influential, as observed in the anti-Dilma Brazilian rallies (Oliveira, 2016);

(ii) this antagonistic movement would not form because an Unconditional Cash Transfer is universal, and thus include everyone, in opposition to the *Bolsa Família*, which is means-tested. The program's beneficiaries would not be treated derogatorily, as it happened in the BF experience. Once more people were benefited, such hypothetical antagonization would weaken. That is, it would take a more elaborated socioeconomic narrative to convince a significant number of people that a UBI program would be economically disadvantageous. In other words, the social segment that pays more taxes rather than earning from the Basic Income is a small minority.

It certainly is a complicated discussion. Socioeconomic scenarios, such as the BF antagonization, are extremely difficult to predict, for there are countless variants in the equation. Still, it is a viable and necessary discussion, even if it is just meant to test its social acceptance.

Thus, from the social perspective, the data from the *Bolsa Família* in this specific discussion regarding *freedom* are complex and suggest contrasting results. On one hand, it is undeniable that freedom, at least in the republican sense used here, was provided to the BF beneficiaries; once they gained access to basic needs such as education, health, and sanitation, the poorer segments of the Brazilian society achieved greater and unprecedented republican freedom (Pettit, 2008). On the other hand, there was a sort of backlash from the middle and upper classes, who viewed this cash transfer as a curtailment of their own individual freedom. Consequently, those more privileged income groups exerted significant influence on the budget cuts related to the policy. Also, they became strong supporters of the political process of

Dilma's impeachment and the shift of the economic policy regarding the federal executive branch.

After an overview on how Freedom as a non-domination argument could be addressed in the *Bolsa Família* discussion, by correlating Pettit's theorization (2008) and the anti-Dilma revolts, the present work moves on to the debate that concerns Labor and the BF experience.

4.2. *Bolsa Família,* UBI and Labor

One of the main topics of discussion concerning CCTs and UBI is the effect that such policies would have upon employment rates.

Primarily, it is essential to state that the *Bolsa Família* debate is up to a certain degree distant from that regarding labor and UBI presented in Section 2.3. Since it is not an ideal Basic Income, the BF program is not a perfect fit for the philosophical discussion about the individual having access to a minimum subsistence without working. Due to the way it is currently structured, the Brazilian policy does not aim to replace labor with the aid, but to target extreme poverty and enable individuals in need to seek better conditions. In other words, the BF aid acts as a starting point.

Nevertheless, public opinion tends to believe that the BF demotivates people to find jobs (as noted in Section 3.5), even though studies (Oliveira and Soares, 2012) proved otherwise. Yet, t is possible to claim that the BF assistance does not encourage people to stay away from the labor market; on the contrary, among BF beneficiaries, employment rates rose during the first BF years (see Section 3.2).

It is arguable that, in some specific cases (as discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.4) such as Recife and Londrina, single mothers, while receiving the BF benefit, might be stimulated to take a more present role in their children's upbringing rather than get a job and rely on daycares, which would be an additional cost that many cannot afford. However, despite the narrative from the right-wing partisans (Santos, 2017), the data analysis in Chapter 3 (see Section 3.2) shows otherwise: the *Bolsa Familia* policy was part of an economic and political conjuncture that all in all increased employment rates.

General statistics (see Graph 7, Section 3.2) show that not only employment but also schooling among BF beneficiaries increased whereas unemployment dropped significantly.

When comparing female and male labor, the former had an increase that was proportionally bigger than the latter during the first decade of the *Bolsa Familia*, which is indeed relevant to consider. This general statistic contradicts what was seen in the two specific study cases in Section 3.3. Still, it is worth noting these gender labor data do not concern BF beneficiaries alone; it takes all Brazilians into account.

With the shift in the economic panorama (from 2014 onwards), unemployment rates rose again. The *Bolsa Familia* was not sufficient to keep them low. This indicates that the main driver for the rise in employment levels was indeed the Brazilian macroeconomic scenario, not the CCT itself.

When analyzing inequality rates, Neri (2020) defends the thesis according to which high employment rates are the main drivers for the decrease of socioeconomic inequality. The author recognizes the importance of the *Bolsa Familia* and other cash transfers in the struggle against economic disparities. Yet, employment should be regarded as the main reason for the decrease of the Gini index, for example.

When analyzed against the backdrop of good and bad economic conjunctures, the BF experience proves Neri's (2020) argument right. Even though CCTs are important drivers against inequality, they are far from being the main one, which does not make them less important.

It is important, though, to note that UBI cases may show distinct results from the BF experience. When analyzing the UBI existing pilots, most instances do not indicate that unemployment rates grow among Basic Income beneficiaries (see Section 2.5). Alaska is indeed one of the few cases where employment showed some signs of retraction. Also, according to a recent report in the World Bank, overall, the UBI did not act as a significant disincentive to work (World Bank Group, 2020, p.103).

However, the question that should also be asked in this discussion is if rising unemployment rates are indeed worrisome. Worldwide labor conditions are progressively more precarious (International Labor Organization, 2016), and they need to be taken into account alongside employment statistics. Therefore, if a UBI or CCT do not have a profound impact on labor rates or even influence a decrease in employment, the outcomes should not be deemed negative. Perhaps, the economy might even take advantage from this UBI scenario, where it would not be necessary for every citizen to have a job to sustain themselves, in which case, job conditions would enhance despite the raise in unemployment. Precarious labor would then become something rarer.

Another important and recurring argument is the automation of jobs, which naturally extinguishes labor positions and does not necessarily create new ones. Transport drivers, for example, are a class who might be severely affected in the near future, which will naturally make unemployment rise (Chinoracký and Čorejová, 2019).

This scenario might then suggest that the UBI debate should not be so focused on employment rates, which seem to be mostly unaffected by UBI and CCTs, despite the growth observed in some instances (see Section 3.2 for the BF case). However, even if unemployment does rise, the main concern should be socioeconomic dignity and economic feasibility. That may only be achieved, however, when cash transfer policies are rentable and sustainable from an economic perspective.

Authors referred to in Section 2.3 become relevant within the scope of this discussion once again. Gorz (1997), Merrill and Neves (2021) and Block (1990) argue that the society should not aim at full employment and productivism. The GDP is no longer strictly associated with full employment as it once was (Gorz, 1997). Besides, the issue about the privileges of the rentist class remains. Merrill and Neves (2021) thoroughly debate that the UBI could "euthanize" the rentist class, whereas Allan Thomas (2020a) suggests the SERL as a possible alternative to achieve that.

It is worth noticing how the UBI or CCT policies tend to grant freedom and liberty to the working class. In India and Namibia, for example, there was a clear increase of personal entrepreneurs among the beneficiaries of the pilots tested (see Section 2.6). In Brazil, the *Bolsa Família* strengthened small businesses in peripheral cities (Vieira et al., 2013 and Chaves et al., 2019). There is no evidence showing that the BF stimulated individual entrepreneurs among the receivers of the aid. Nonetheless, if the policy is understood as a starting point that has the potential to develop into a Basic Income, it might stimulate beneficiaries to take more chances on their own enterprises. One of the major goals of the Brazilian program would be to evolve from the current structure into a project that should resemble the UBI, which still is quite similar to the *Bolsa Família*, created in 2004 to basically target the same social groups.

Having approached the aspect of labor and the *Bolsa Família* in this section, the discussion moves on, in the next subsection, to address the political aspects concerning the BF experience.

4.3. *Bolsa Familia*, UBI and Politics

The first relevant point of analysis in this section leans on the effects of the Bolsa Familia over the electoral map. Soares and Terron (2008) compared how Lula's voting map changed from the second round of 2002 to 2006. In that comparison, Lula gained many more voters in poorer Brazilian regions while he lost support in the richer counterpart, as seen in Map 1 (Section 3.2).

The study by Soares and Terron (2008) concludes that the *Bolsa Familia* influence was likely to be a critical factor on the transformation of the electoral map in the Northeast region and in the states of Amazonas and Minas Gerais. The BF program was also a decisive factor on Dilma's election and reelection in 2010 and 2014, respectively (Almeida and Souza, 2015; Amaral and Ribeiro, 2015), which proved, once again, that the success of the *Bolsa Familia* affected the Brazilian electoral map.

Besides the voting map changes, it is important to fathom out the political feasibility of the policy and how it was built up. To better understand the process that originated the *Bolsa Familia*, we should return to the 1990's. After the end of the military dictatorship in 1988, extreme poverty and inequality rates were skyrocketing in Brazil (Codato, 2015). The Brazilian economic conjuncture was extremely critical, with high inflation rates (ibid.).

The presidencies that succeeded the military dictatorship[38] concentrated on fixing the economic crisis but failed to work out a social assistance agenda (Neri, 2006). In the second presidency after the dictatorship (Itamar Franco's mandate), the economic crisis began to stabilize with the *Plano Real* (Mendes and Venturi, 1994). Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Itamar's successor, followed this lead and balanced the economic conjuncture consistently (Silva, 2008). Later, towards the end of his second mandate, trying to reverse the extreme poverty panorama in Brazil at that time, FHC focused on social assistance policies by means of cash transfer (Tiezzi, 2004).

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[38] Respectively the presidents: Fernando Collor, Itamar Franco and Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

It is necessarty to remark, at this point, that it is unfair to consider social assistance policies the only way to fight inequality and poverty. As observed in Section 3.2 (see Table 8), the main cause of inequality decrease, during the 2000's, was the rise in employment rates. Therefore, it is fundamental to acknowledge the importance of the stabilization of the economic panorama in Brazil post-dictatorship, even when social aid policies were being neglected. Also, it should be noted that the Cash Transfer policies were only implemented by the government after the economic situation was settled. This leads us to wonder about the political feasibility of Cash Transfer policies from the governmental perspective. The macro-economic situation (as controlling inflation, for example) was prioritized so that, only afterwards, social aid policies were strengthened.

When addressing the UBI case, David Purdy's (1988), for example, argues that Cash Transfer policies were politically matured in Brazil and evolved by means of sociopolitical discussion. Still, this build-up of Cash Transfer policies, and later on of the *Bolsa Familia*, suffered setbacks over the decades. As analyzed in Section 3.4 (see Graphs 10, 11, 12), the BF aid was a controversial topic among Brazilians. Furthermore, Section 4.1 discussed the rallies against the BF policy, which may raise doubts about the actual political feasibility of the BF program within the Brazilian society.

Lack of popular support for the *Bolsa Família* might not happen in an Unconditional Basic Income scenario, though. Reaffirming what was stated in Section 4.1, the UBI, in comparison to the BF, covers a far higher number of people, which should also evoke a higher popular support. Nevertheless, it is also relevant to note the small portion of the population financially harmed by the UBI is the political, economic, and cultural elite, which may imply a complicated struggle when it comes to the political feasibility for the UBI in the Brazilian case. As Purdy (1988) concluded in his own article (ibid), the development of UBI's political feasibility demands time, engagement, and deliberation within society.

As for the *Bolsa Familia* case, it is still relevant to observe the successful political feasibility. This might not be consensual (which would be even utopian) or vastly supported; after all, there is a significant group of people still antagonizing it (see Section 4.1). Nonetheless, the fact that the *Bolsa Família* program survived different administrations of diverse political ideologies flares up a considerable success in its framework and implementation as well as in its political feasibility. Additionally, Lula's electoral map (see Chapter 3, Map 1) also shows the success of the program; the most affected areas by the BF policy changed voting intentions in favor of the candidate. Dilma's election was also strongly influenced by the BF policy (Almeida and Souza, 2015, and Amaral and Ribeiro, 2015).

Finally, when analyzing the *Bolsa Família* case from a UBI perspective, it is imperative to consider the policy is a case from an unequal and less industrialized country. Originally, the UBI literature, and debate, was born in countries with lower inequality rates than Brazil. For that matter, it would be unreasonable to imagine a UBI implementation in countries such as Brazil the same way it would happen in European counterparts. As discussed in Van Parijs (2003), in unequal countries, it is fundamental to start Cash Transfer policies at the poorest popular segments.

That is why, back in the 1990's, Eduardo Suplicy idealized the Brazilian UBI as the *Bolsa Família*[39], which should progressively grow, until it reached out to the entire population. However, based on the current situation, one may claim that Brazil is unlikely to implement a UBI program any time soon. As a matter of fact, it should be also remarked there has been a weakening of the BF program since the economic crisis struck Brazil (see Tables 10, 11, 12, Section 3.4). Inequality in Brazil is, thus, far from being reduced to an acceptable rate. In order to approach a scenario where the UBI would be feasible, not only does Brazil need that the *Bolsa Familia* is able to fight inequality, but also that more stable economy and public policies provide the poorer segments with more social inclusion.

Having considered the political scenario of the BF in Brazil, the following section concentrates on the issue of Feminism.

4.4. *Bolsa Família,* UBI and Feminism

The feminist discussion, when analyzing the *Bolsa Família*, is indeed one of the most interesting and controversial[40]. Throughout Chapter 3, distinct reviews of the BF effects on feminism were highlighted, which demonstrates the complexity of the debate.

Based on general statistics, the formal workers rate increased within Brazilian population between 2003 and 2011 (see Table 3). When analyzing women specifically, there

[39] *Projeto de Lei Renda Mínima de n*. 2561/1992 http:// www.senado.gov.br/senadores/Senador/esuplicy/Programa/projeto_lei.asp. Access in: 22 jan. 2021.

[40] Taking into consideration the data analyzed in Chapter 3: the BF effects on feminism.

was a rise in the number of women contributing to social security, as seen in the Graph 7 (subsection 3.2).

It is, therefore, possible to affirm that the *Bolsa Família* implementation period included both men and women in the labor market. It might as well be noticed there still was a higher number of men contributing, but the gap between gender decreased. Before the BF implementation, women who contributed represented 48% of all the female working population, while men represented 61% of the male working population. These numbers are from 2003. In 2011, these same stats were, respectively, around 56% (women) and 64% (men). Thus, the gap that was initially 13% decreased to 9% (see Graph 7, subsection 3.2).

From a macro analytical perspective, it is viable to maintain that the BF policy had a positive impact on women labor. However, shifting the perspective from the big picture to specific cases, one may see different results.

As previously analyzed (see Section 3.3), Lavinas et al. (2010) and Mariano and Carloto (2009) analyze, respectively, Recife's and Londrina's responses to the BF implementation regarding women labor. Both cases suggest some of the women who received the BF aid were discouraged to find jobs; instead, they chose to raise their children and attend to domestic duties. Lavinas et al. (2010), for instance, develops an argument around women who entered the labor market and were thus no longer eligible for the financial assistance of the BF. According to the authors (ibid.), those women were forced to spend a considerable part of their income on daycare for their children, which, depending on their wage, might not pay off. This is a common problem in a context where public daycares are almost inexistent, as it was in the specific case of study, that is, the city of Recife (ibid.).

Ferro et al. (2009), on the other hand, showed a different reality. In their research, the authors (ibid.) noticed equal rise in employment rates of fathers and mothers (3 percentage points each), while children labor rates declined. Tavares (2010) also pointed out an increase in labor participation of mothers, both among beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the *Bolsa Família*.

Oliveira e Soares (2013) point out to a different perspective, according to which, in some specific cases, women participation in labor force decreased. However, as the authors (ibid) concluded such phenomenon was not necessarily negative. Even though the BF benefit is considerably small, it provides mothers with a situation of more financial security and economic independence. As a consequence, they may choose not to work in order to attend to their children's upbringing.

From the research available (see Chapter 3), it is yet to be concluded whether the increase in women labor was due to the *Bolsa Família* or to the thriving economic momentum that Brazil was going through between 2003 and 2011. According to IBGE and PNAD data (see Chapter 3), it is possible to notice that female unemployment increased more than male, as seen in Graphs 7 and 8. The difference between male unemployment and female unemployment aggravated in the period of 2012-2020. The percentage of male unemployed varied from 47,6 % to 46,8% between those years, while that of women varied from 52,4% to 53,2%.

Based on those statistics, it may be said that the female employment issue became more vulnerable than that of men during the economic crisis. Therefore, as for the labor aspect, one of the possible conclusions from the *Bolsa Família* effects on women labor is that the policy was not able to target gender inequality. The rise in female employment in the first BF years (see Graph 8) retracted in the following years, when the economic momentum shifted, which may suggest, therefore, that the economic panorama was the main responsible for the change on gender unemployment rates. Still, a more thorough study regarding the theme is required in order to make such assertions[41].

In summary, it is not possible to draw conclusive remarks on the *Bolsa Família* effects on female employment rates. The current research available (Lavinas et al., 2010; Mariano and Carloto, 2009; Ferro et al. 2009; Tavares 2010; Oliveira and Soares, 2013) diverge in their results. It is certain, though, to assume that women who chose to stick to domestic responsibilities started counting on the *Bolsa Família* assistance. And, since they were far more vulnerable before the program had been implemented, that may be regarded as a positive change.

Additionally, there is no evidence to assume the *Bolsa Família* discourages mothers to enter the labor force, or that the assistance makes it more difficult for women to be included in the labor market. It offers, though, more security to poor mothers. And this argument alone does have more positive than negative implications. Only Lavinas et al. (2010) and Oliveira and Soares (2013) imply a possible unemployment trap for mothers assisted by the *Bolsa Família*. Once again, this is not necessarily negative. Some mothers are offered with the possibility to choose not to enter the labor force and dedicate more time to their families. However, both

[41] Due to the objective of the present research, debating this specific issue any further goes beyond its scope.

Lavinas et al. (2010) and Oliveira and Soares (2013) flare up other problematic issues, namely, the lack of public services such as daycares that would promote female independence and make labor opportunities more favorable to mothers.

That debate leads us to consider the issue of feminism withing the realm of the UBI, which this section aims at. Withorn (1990) and Orloff (1990) had already argued that a UBI policy might exert negative influence over women labor inclusion. The authors (ibid.) suggest it may even make it worse in terms of gender discrimination in workspace, and thus get in the way of the feminist struggle to achieve equality in that environment.

Pateman (2004) and Mckay (2001), on the other hand, argue differently. The authors (ibid.) believe the possibility of women choosing domestic work is not necessarily negative. As a matter of fact, the liberty to choose might be interpreted as increased freedom to women, and not as an additional obstacle for female socioeconomic inclusion. Still, the authors (ibid.) recognize that empirical experiences need to be tested to better formulate such theories.

Last but not least, when discussing feminism and UBI, Anne Alstott (2001) argues that it is vital to consider women who are economically vulnerable and hence could gain freedom with the guaranteed income. That way, the implementation of a UBI would help the fight against gender discrimination in the macro socioeconomic level. It would ensure that mothers had enough to live and raise families regardless of fathers, who, without the UBI, often sustain the family on their income alone.

Caution, however, is needed when correlating the UBI literature to the *Bolsa Família* data analyzed in this chapter. As already stated in the introduction to this dissertation (see Chapter 1), it is vital to keep in mind the distinctions between the UBI and Conditionate Cash Transfers.

It is interesting to have the discussion about female freedom through the lens of the *Bolsa Família*. The CCT provided mothers with financial security, so they could spend more time on household chores, which is exactly what Anne Alstott (2001), Pateman (2004) and Mckay (2001) claim a UBI policy should do. The BF case does not prove Withorn's (1990) and Orloff's (1990) fears right or wrong as far as a greater difficulty in gender inclusion in the labor force is concerned. In the macrolevel, female unemployment was not clearly affected by the CCT.

Specific cases of study such as the one carried out by Lavinas et al. (2010) seem to agree with Withorn (1990) and Orloff's (1990) theorization. Nonetheless, it remains to be further debated, from both the academic and social perspectives, whether the decrease in women participation in non-domestic labor is something exclusively negative. The debate whether this process would implicate a greater gender discrimination in labor environment still seems to be questionable. Also, it is unclear if these two topics (female labor participation and gender discrimination in labor environments) can be dealt with separately. As discussed in section 2.4, Withorn (1990) and Orloff (1990) have a divergent perspective from Alstott (2001), Pateman (2004) and Mckay (2001). The *Bolsa Família* inconclusive results do not strengthen either side of this sociological debate; on the contrary, they provide ammunition to both.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS: Public Servicing as the Basic Income supporting policy?

I am not a client, a customer, nor a service user. (…) *I'm not a National Insurance Number or blip on a screen. I paid my dues, never a penny short, and proud to do so.* (…) *As such, I demand my rights. I demand you treat me with respect.* ***I, Daniel Blake, am a citizen, nothing more and nothing less****. Thank you.*
I, Daniel Blake (2016), directed by Ken Loach.

All the *Bolsa Família* effects (schooling, employment, sanitation, housing, fighting against inequality, to name a few) have been thoroughly discussed throughout the present dissertation. This final chapter proposes a synthesis[42] of all those results of the policy. Final correlations between the BF experience and the UBI literature is also drawn, so that this chapter may debate a hypothetical conjuncture for the conversion of the *Bolsa Família*, a Conditional Cash Transfer, into an Unconditional Basic Income policy.

As a matter of fact, the first decade of the *Bolsa Família* policy was proved positive as far as the socioeconomic gains are concerned. Literacy and schooling levels rose significantly (see Table 4 and Graphs 2, 3, 4 and 10). There was a high number of people who could break out of extreme poverty conditions (Table 3 and Graph 8). From the infrastructure perspective, considerable gains also took place (see Table 6 and Graph 9), even though the rise was shy or even not sufficient in some areas (see Section 3.3)[43]. All these aspects illustrate the republican argument by Phillip Pettit (2008), based on which beneficiaries gain dignity and, consequently, more freedom. The author (ibid.) uses the term *freedom* as non-domination (see Section 4.1). That kind of freedom was observable in the Brazilian political scenario as an effect of the *Bolsa Família*.

Regarding labor rates, the situation is indeed complex. Overall, unemployment rates, both among BF beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, fell during the 2000's (see Table 3 and

[42] It is important to highlight the choice of 'synthesis' here does not refer to the notion of text summary. The meaning attributed to this lexical choice, in the context of this research, is anchored in philosophy (De Souza, 2003) and refers to the attempt to address the main ideas considered throughout this work and to draw points of connection. In the field of dialectical philosophy (ibid.), 'synthesis' underscores the importance of dialogue and refers to the virtue of respecting the complexity inherent in trying to converge different points of view.
[43] Stats such as sewerage and water supply were still considerably low in the poorer social segments (see Table 6).

Graph 8). However, studies on female labor showed controversial results, as some women often refused to seek employment and chose to attend to domestic duties while receiving the benefit. It is not possible to say that this is a macro scale effect, but it happened anyhow. The specific cases analyzed by Lavinas et al. (2010) and Mariano and Carloto (2009) demonstrate that.

Still, it is possible to state that the BF program, overall, does not foster dependency or unemployment. According to Lavinas et al. (2010) and Mariano and Carloto (2009), the only controversial group that does not follow this trend are mothers.

Another interesting outcome is the significant drop of birth rates in some economic strata (see Tables 5 and 9). This is truly relevant evidence that contradicts popular belief (see Section 3.5, Graph 13), which tends to argue the BF beneficiaries are more likely to have more children. Also, the purchasing power among BF beneficiaries grew significantly (see Graphs 6 and 9). It is enlightening to observe the BF influence on macroeconomic rates, such as how the aid positively influenced the GDP and how it helped to redistribute wealth in Brazil. However, this positive effect of the BF was less powerful to tackle inequality when compared to employment in the industrial and service sectors (see Table 8).

Yet, it is vital to keep in mind the difficulty to separate the *Bolsa Família* effects from the economic momentum in Brazil from 2003 to 2011 (see Chapter 3, section 3.2). The correlation between the *Bolsa Família* and employment rates, and how they both impact inequality levels (see Table 8) is an example of that complexity. Although the rise of employment rates was an impressive result of the economic momentum, one might as well argue that the BF also had an impact on that. Hence, one may claim that both the BF and the economic momentum influenced themselves, in a symbiotic and dialectic relation.

The analysis carried out here refers to the BF years (2004 onwards) and the visible effects of the program. However, further statistical data and studies are necessary to observe how BF beneficiaries were specifically affected during the economic crisis from 2014-15 onwards. Such an investigation could help differentiate which rate shifts were more affected by the BF policy and which were more related to the economic conjuncture. Again, it is likely that those two variables (the *Bolsa Família* and the economic conjuncture) influence each other in a reciprocal way, which does not exclude the possibility of a distinction between them, to some extent, to understand their more specific influence upon society.

As a matter of fact, when only analyzing beneficiaries of the *Bolsa Família*, it is complicated to have a clear picture of how the program acted in a macro social level. As a matter of fact, the effects of the policy spread way beyond those groups directly affected. The injection of BF resources into beneficiary families also influence the surrounding environments. A simple example is commerce. BF beneficiaries consume more due to the cash transfer. As a consequence, local entrepreneurs tend to grow way more than they would in a non-*Bolsa Família* hypothetical reality. This effect of the *Bolsa Família* is considered in Vieira et al. (2013) and Chaves et al. (2019). In those two studies, the specific cases of the Brazilian cities of Ibatiba and Itapetinga are analyzed, and the authors (ibid.) show that the *Bolsa Família* transferred cash is often spent on local businesses (see Section 3.2).

Additionally, it is worth reiterating how these concrete outcomes of the policy are perceived by public opinion. While general results from the *Bolsa Família* are fundamentally good, public opinion tends to believe the BF effects are negative (see Chapter 3, Section 3.5). Examples of BF results that show a discrepancy between concrete research and general perception are birth rates and labor rates among beneficiaries. It is a popular belief that the families aided by the policy tend to become lazy and to have more children (Castro et al., 2009), which contradicts statistical data (Campello et al, 2013).

It is possible to notice that much of the UBI literature relates to the *Bolsa Família* experience. As debated in Chapter 4, the political feasibility for a hypothetical UBI, pointed out by Purdy (1988), was slowly achieved after the Brazilian re-democratization (see Sections 3.1 and 4.3). First, the economic panorama during the 90's had to become stable. Only then, the discussion about the UBI and CCTs grew progressively in the Brazilian political scenario, until aid programs were adopted by the end of the 90's, and the *Bolsa Família* was finally created in 2004. In this sense, one may claim that the BF program got more and more feasible over the years.

However, this consolidation process of the *Bolsa Família* had some setbacks. As discussed in Section 4.1, there were popular movements opposing the program, which ended up influencing the public funding of the BF. Still, it is unlikely to imagine a scenario where the BF program is extinguished by the Brazilian government. Despite the setbacks, that is an indicator of its success and effective political feasibility. This successful process of the *Bolsa Família* is a lesson to the UBI proposal and its supporters. Besides, the backlash from the civil society (see Section 4.1) shows the importance of provoking the debate in a macro level.

The criticism against the policy originates from both right and left-wing political sectors. Right-wing supporters campaigned for years (Dos Santos, 2017) that the BF policy is a way for the Workers Party to buy political support (see Section 4.1). On that note, it is curious, though, to note that both candidates who succeeded the Workers Party in the presidency (Michel Temer and Jair Bolsonaro) did not terminate the program. Besides, the Social Democrat Party (historical rivals of the Workers Party) never openly proposed the termination of the program; instead, they argued that it could be far more efficient (as debated in Chapter 3, Section 3.5). Those right-wing responses in the political field indicate the success of the *Bolsa Família* as a policy that survives (or that has survived so far) political power shifts. In other words, the *Bolsa Família* was so successful that there is no relevant political figure or party in Brazil that advocates for the extermination of the policy[44].

That positive response to the *Bolsa Família* might be interpreted in a favorable light if we are to hypothetically consider the implementation of a UBI policy in Brazil. It is even likely that the popular issue of antagonizing the Conditional Cash Transfer policy, as in the anti-Dilma protests, would fade away in a UBI scenario. After all, unlike the BF case, a substantial majority of the population would be benefited from the UBI. Therefore, the perspective for a UBI implementation in Brazil is not completely negative. Still, one should point out three major obstacles to be faced: (i) the economic viability, which represents the funding of the Basic Income by a new range of taxes; (ii) the decrease in socioeconomic inequality, which is vital to progress from a CCT to a UBI viable reality (Suplicy. 2007); and (iii) the formation of a political core that would vote pro-UBI inside the parliament.

Yet it is worth noting that left-wing criticism against the *Bolsa Família* is divergent from that of right-wing one. Leftists advocate in favor of the enhancement of the program by increasing the aid and coordinating the BF with better public policies. Such investments would guarantee basic services and basic goods to all citizens, regardless of their purchasing power.

Lavinas (2018), who is one of the main left-wing critics of the program, claims the BF policy failed on tackling inequality. The *Bolsa Família* reinforced the "pricing of access to basic services"[45], such as infrastructure (sewerage, water, light), education and health, to name a few. If there had been a better coordinated set of public services that truly enabled the poorer segments of the society to have access to those basic needs, the affected groups would not have been so vulnerable when facing the economic crisis that struck Brazil around 2015 (see Section

[44] This is possible to note in the political campaigns of the presidential elections of 2018, for example. More information is also found in Fenwick (2009) and in editorials of Brazilian newspapers such as *Valor Econômico*.
[45] Loose translation from Lavinas's original term *precificação do acesso aos serviços básicos*.

4.1). Many setbacks ended up hindering the achievements recorded during the 2000's, such as equality, infrastructure, and food security. Still, according to Lavinas (ibid.), the concept of welfare is being progressively capitalized, and the setbacks in the Brazilian socioeconomic achievements of the 2000's show how dangerous this capitalization is. Cash Transfer aids such as the *Bolsa Família* do not sort out the core of the issue of inequality; they only temporarily mitigate it. And, as stated by Lavinas (ibid.), an Unconditional Basic Income might have the same negative results in the long run.

Lavinas's (2018) proposal consists of three services being offered freely and separated from the *capitalization*[46] reality: (i) education, including professional capacitation; (ii) healthcare; (iii) decent housing policies. The only basic need that remains uncovered by such services would be food security, which could be covered by the UBI and price regulation. The offering of such services universally, unconditionally and free of charge does require, however, an extensive taxation reform to make it viable. It could be argued that Lavinas's list might as well include the following: water, sewerage, light, gas. These main infrastructural services should be free of charge up to a certain limit, so they are also de-commodified. It is reasonable to assume that a UBI can guarantee such services, but it is still a debate worth engaging with.

The Brazilian economist's view is often considered in CCTs and UBI discussions (Fromm, 1966; Van Parijs, 1991), for it is indeed an extremely relevant topic to be considered. It implies a criticism against the economic system as a whole; not just the UBI and CCTs alone. The idea that welfare needs to be unplugged from pricing is revolutionary and goes beyond the fundamentals of UBI and CCTs debates, which involve, most of the time, capitalist measures to solve capitalist problems. A reform in the economic system such as the one proposed by Lavinas (ibid.) argues for deeper structural changes in the western world socioeconomic reality. Yet, according to the Brazilian economist, the idea of the Unconditional Basic Income feels like an inspiring momentum to propose those structural transformations in the economic panorama. As a matter of fact, simply debating the UBI proposal is itself a revolutionary deed.

Debating the creation of a successful UBI policy in sync with the offer of public services, as proposed by Lavinas (ibid.), is indeed extremely necessary but it is also a highly sensitive topic. Realistically, the structural transformation in the socioeconomic scenario, as argued by the author (ibid.), also presupposes significant political support. A vast reform in the taxation system would be vital so that public services are offered and the UBI is rentable. Though it might technically sound simple, it would demand considerable effort in the political

[46] Loose translation from Lavinas's original term *capitalização*.

environment. This is even more complex in a country such as Brazil, where the public services are historically precarious. The Brazilian conjuncture regarding public services never had a big development as the Europeans saw, for example, during the twentieth century. A new taxation system should be isonomic and precise. At the same time, it cannot disrupt market incentives.

One still might counter-argue that those public services, as Lavinas suggested (2018), would not be necessary if an actual UBI were implemented (instead of the *Bolsa Família*, which is a CCT that complements income). In that case, beneficiaries would not be vulnerable when economic downturns caused mass unemployment; they would not need free public services, since they would have means to access private services via UBI transfer. The main arguments for this proposal are as follows: (i) it would enhance individual freedom, for the citizen would be entitled to decide how the money should be spent, and (ii) it would be more effective from a financial perspective, since public services are often poorly distributed among the population, as Standing (2019) highlights.

As Lavinas (2018) points out, that is a possible solution indeed, but it might be dangerous as well. For a UBI scheme to succeed without a strong welfare state or efficient public services, there would need to be a constant update on the UBI amount or a strict pricing control of the private basic services. Therefore, it is fair to say there would be a restriction on freedom in any case. It could even be argued that it is more viable to implement the UBI along with public services since that requires less influence over the private sector regarding pricing control or constant taxation reforms. This is not an argument against the UBI, but a suggestion to successfully de-commodify basic needs, by coordinating the Basic Income and Universal Public Services. Obviously, predicting which scenario would be better is a complicated but also a necessary debate the present work aims to engage with. The main conclusion from the *Bolsa Família* experience is that, despite all its achievements, the program was still weak against the economic recession. A stronger assistance policy, either by enhancement of public services or by increasing beneficiaries' purchasing power, would help prevent citizens' economic vulnerability.

To conclude, based on the theoretical debate (see Chapter 2) and the data under analyses (see Chapter 3), this research claims that the *Bolsa Família* policy was a success in Brazil. Such Conditionate Cash Transfers prove to be vital to make up for historical injustices in inequal countries. However, one should not neglect the importance of a positive economic conjuncture (De Almeida, 2009) and the possibility of the *Bolsa Família* exerting a decisive, reciprocal, and **symbiotic** influence on the economic panorama (see Graph 6).

Still, the best results of the BF program coincide with a thriving economic momentum in Brazil. Once the economic crisis struck the country, the socioeconomic outcomes achieved thus far fell apart, which leads up to the criticism discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. That, in the case of the UBI, the cash transfer by itself would not probably be able to create a more equal society; it is imperative to have good and efficient public services to achieve more socioeconomic justice.

One of the main contributions of this research has been debating different perspectives and outcomes of the *Bolsa Família* as a concrete experience in the Brazilian socio-economic context through the lens of the Unconditional Basic Income. Ideally, this research should inspire others to keep up the debate. By no means, this study aims at exhausting the subject; on the contrary, it will hopefully engage others in this so relevant and necessary discussion, which eventually may help to shed light on a path to a more just, fair, and equal society.

Finally, it is worth to make a brief, but relevant, comment concerning the metaphorical lexical choice in the title: the **road** is an essential part of human history. A road is not just a way of getting from one point to another. It does mean something in our collective consciousness. The road may be interpreted as a means of personal and cultural self-discovery. "The road is an instrument of entry and scape, a means to an end, a symbol of progress and a winding foreground for drama. (…) A road presents its traveler with ample opportunity for moments of revelation" (Barba, 2010). A great promise of the road may be its quick turns that afford the traveler an unexpected view and thus a new perspective. There is always something ahead and something behind you when you take a road.

The *Bolsa Família* as a road provides the traveler/citizen with new perspectives and experiences. Those are vital when it comes to the Unconditional Basic Income debate. The Brazilian policy might be understood as a road, that is, a choice that makes the UBI less utopian and more palatable. At the same time, one may not fail to acknowledge the UBI is part of the genesis of the BF, and still acts as a compass to the CCT road. This study does believe that the BF may represent a symbol of progress from different perspectives: personal, social, economic, cultural. The income transfer program might indeed be a foreground for drama; after all, there is so much debate and controversy when it comes to the multiple opinions on the program. However, if you take into account the UBI debate, its relevant issues and the BF experience, the traveler might have a glance of what might lie ahead: a road to more justice, fairness and equality in society.

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