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The politics of sport funding in Brazil: a multiple streams analysis

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The politics of sport funding in Brazil: A Multiple Streams Analysis

Abstract

Since the earliest State interventions in sports, the Brazilian State has assumed the role of overseeing and financing the nation's organised sport systems. The significant relationship between the State and sport, established over decades, contributed to sport being influenced by the country's political agenda, influencing the implementation of sport funding policies. In order to understand more about how this relationship developed, this article applies the multiple streams theory of policy change to examine the Brazilian high-performance sport policy domain. Policy analysis and media analysis are combined to examine the ways in which the political context, problem framing and policy solutions were brought together by a range of policy entrepreneurs. The study examines how the Brazilian Olympic Committee (BOC) lobby effort acted to expand investment possibilities, and how policymakers acted swiftly to seize the window of opportunity and implement policies that stimulated Brazilian preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2016 (Rio 2016). The article suggests that while other countries have also developed policies for elite sport to boost Olympic preparation, Brazilian policy decisions and changes were tardy, in some cases fleeting, and only expanded existing policies that had weaknesses in resource distribution criteria.

Keywords: public policy; high performance sport; multiple streams; sports funding; Brazil

INTRODUCTION

Since 1941 the Brazilian State has assumed the role of overseeing and financing the nation's organised sport systems. The nation's legal configuration, the financial fragility of the sports administration institutions and the way sports financing was centralized by the State have all contributed to the current Brazilian sports arrangements (Camargo and Mezzadri 2018). This context reinforced the historical and cultural role of the State as the main sponsor of Brazilian sport, including elite sport, which has acquired significant importance from the Federal Government over the years (Linhaes 1996, Starepravo 2011). This significant relationship between the State and sport, established over decades, connected sport with the country's political agenda. Being granted its own government Ministry in the mid-1990s consolidated a space for dialogue and policy development, with the expectation that specific policies would reinforce the role of sport and leisure as social rights (Toledo 2014). However, over time, state actions favoured elite sport, and the hosting of major sports events, to the detriment of community sport (Bueno 2008).

The various financing policies have undergone changes and adaptations, justified, above all, by the sport mega-events Brazil would host. Among these changes, 'federal transfers' to the sports federations, via Lotteries, as well as the amount directed to the Brazilian athletes funding program, Bolsa-A atleta, were increased (Brasil 2001, 2010, 2015a). A time-bound law aiming to encourage private initiatives to invest in sports through tax deductions which was meant to cease in 2015, was instead continued (Brasil 2006, 2015b). Also, the Federal Government announced the addition of \$295 million that would be used to boost Olympic preparation (Brasil 2012).

Academic literature highlights that the interest in improving sports results is historically linked to a global idea that success in competitive sport could lead to international prestige, and represent the nation's potential (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, Grix and Carmichael 2012). The State's use of sport might also have manifested as an international trend and a feature in the process of convergence of sports policies (Houlihan 2012, De Bosscher *et al.* 2015, 2016). In addition, aspects of spectacle and show business incorporated by sport have broadened its visibility in the media and consequently, increased the importance of sports results (Pires 1998). In turn, this has intensified relations between State and sport, justifying the expansion of public investments to elite sport, especially among countries elected to host sport events (Grix and Carmichael 2012).

Although sports science has for some time been pointing to a growing involvement of the State with financing elite sports (Houlihan and Green 2008, Grix and Carmichael 2012, De Bosscher *et al.* 2015), in Brazil, part of the academic community has been critical regarding high public investments to elite sport and the expressive allocation of resources to sport mega-events (Castro and Souza 2015, Guimarães 2017). Among other things, such criticisms relate to the possibility of applying resources in other areas (e.g. health and education), or the expansion of sports facilities and activities in the country (Matias *et al.* 2015). In Brazil, this involvement is believed to be associated with factors such as the fragility in the involvement of the private sector in sponsoring sport (Almeida 2010), the relevant involvement of interest groups that move both in the political and sports fields (Correia 2016) and the possibility of using sports context as an area for obtaining economic and political privileges (Cunha 2012). However,

there is a gap in investigations into the process that stimulated the political changes cited.

However, the financing process for Olympic preparation carried out by Brazil, seems to differ from other countries that hosted mega events in recent years, such as China in 2008 and the United Kingdom in 2012. In these cases, investment strategies for Olympic preparation began to be developed at least ten years before the events were held (Shuhan et al. 2011, Grix and Carmichael 2012, Goranova 2014, Zheng and Chen 2016). As will be presented throughout this study, in Brazil, the peak of investment in sport occurred in 2012, three years after the country was chosen as the host city for the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In any case, it is posited that State support is intimately woven into the Brazilian sport tapestry. However, with that brings questions of the balance between autonomy and centralised control. In order to understand more about the political dynamics of State intervention in Brazilian sport, the aim of this article is to analyze the political process and discuss the reasons which stimulated changes in financing policies for Brazilian sport. The specific focus in this case is on the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the reasons for the political decisions made. The theoretical approach of Multiple Streams (MSF) was employed. The use of MSF in this study represents an initial effort to apply this theory on the field of elite sport policies in Brazil.

Context: Brazilian Sport, Rio 2016 and the Funding Problem

To set the scene for this research, a brief historical context is presented. This context also serves as the foundation for 'the problem' examined here – that of funding for the Brazilian system.

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3 The visibility and legitimacy of Brazilian sport gained a greater spotlight
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5 when, from the mid-1990s, the theme begins to formally enter the political agenda
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7 of the country through the creation of the Ministry of Sport. This broadened the
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9 discussions of subjects that dealt with the needs of the area and facilitated the
10
11 insertion of these discussions in the political arena. In its first ten years, the
12
13 Ministry approved and implemented the main (and current) policies for elite sport
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15 in Brazil, from budgetary resources and, above all, extra-budgetary resources,
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17 from Federal Lotteries (Mezzadri *et al.* 2015).
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21
22 There were many opportunities to introduce and shape policy in the early
23
24 2000s as a result of demands related to the sport, especially in relation to major
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26 sporting events that Brazil sought to host. These included the 2007 Pan-
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28 American Games held in Rio de Janeiro, the 2014 Football World Cup and Rio
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30 de Janeiro's bid to host the Olympic Games (OG) and Paralympic Games (PG)
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32 in 2016. Sport matters would be kept on the political agenda of the country
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34 (Castro *et al.* 2016). Further, the choice of Brazil as host country of events (OG
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36 and PG) would facilitate both the development of actions for elite sport, and the
37
38 decision-making of these proposals (Correia 2016).
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42
43 In the political arena, concern with Brazilian sports results began shortly
44
45 after the London 2012 Olympic Games (BBC Brasil 2012). In less than 20 days
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47 after the closing of that event, the Brazilian Government news portal would review
48
49 the results of the athletes and their 17 medals won (Brasil 2012). At that time, the
50
51 Government would show the first concerns to increase investment in sports to
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53 boost athletes' preparation in pursuit a top ten position for the Rio 2016 Olympic
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55 Games (Rede Nacional do Esporte 2012). Although the results of Team Brazil
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57 were considered positive, Government investments in the years leading up to the
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3 event had increased significantly and some results obtained in London did not
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5 correspond appropriately with the growth in investments (Brasil 2012). The BOC's
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7 discontent was based on the fact that, in 2008, Brazil reached the 23rd position
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9 in the Olympic medal table, and in 2012, even with a 57.7% increase in
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11 investments, the country advanced only one place, to 22nd. At that time, some
12
13 actors involved in Brazilian sport affirmed that the focus on the medal table was
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15 so important that even the global financial crisis, should be confronted in order to
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17 allow a better Brazilian Olympic preparation (Correia 2016). The funding policies
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19 alleviated the financial difficulties of most sports institutions in Brazil, especially
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21 those linked to the Brazilian Olympic Committee (BOC) and which received funds
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23 from percentages of federal lotteries, but did not fully solve the financial problems
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25 of Brazilian sport (Almeida and Marchi Júnior 2011). Elite sport failure seemed to
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27 be such a problem that the Brazilian government was determined to focus on it,
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29 not only by investing in sports facilities, but also in financing the athletes'
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31 preparation.
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38 This can be seen in the study carried out by Almeida and Marchi Júnior
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40 (2011) on Olympic sport funding in Brazil. The authors identified that, although
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42 there were criteria based on sports results obtained in several competitions at
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44 international level, the distribution of resources, carried out via the BOC to 28
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46 sports, ended up benefiting a specific group of eight sports, which received about
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48 50% of the resources. The authors concluded that there was an imbalance in
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50 resource management due to the established criteria, which ended up harming
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52 the 20 sports that divided the other 50% of federal resources. Besides the
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54 historical characteristic of private enterprises not having a relevant role in
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56 financing Brazilian sports (Starepravo 2011), the discrepancy in the values
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distributed by the BOC only reinforced the financial difficulties experienced by some sports. Up to 2009, of these 20 sports, 16 did not have sponsors, which reinforced the importance of public financing for the development of their activities. During that period, among those sports that did not have sponsors, 13 were individual sports: badminton, boxing, cycling, ice sports, fencing, equestrian, weightlifting, modern pentathlon, rowing, taekwondo, shooting sports, triathlon and sailing (Almeida and Marchi Júnior 2011). This fact highlighted the need for action that could solve or at least reduce the financial problems of Brazilian athletes, especially individual sports.

With this context in mind, this study examines how elite sport was problematised and inserted in the political agenda of Brazil between 2008 and 2016.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Multiple Streams Framework (MSF) conceives policy as being constructed in an ambiguous environment, with much complexity and randomness. In this sense, MSF assumes that political decisions are not based on rational or stable processes (Kingdon 1984). On the contrary, complexity tends to force policies to be developed and implemented without necessarily generating expected results.

According to MSF, policy changes and actions arise from the dynamics of three variable streams: problems, politics and policy. The problem stream concerns public perceptions and opinions of problems that demand governments' attention. For Béland and Howlett (2016), these problems receive attention from policy makers as a result of crises or through feedback from programs that attract public attention. The politics stream includes the environment, the ideology and

political context of the government, national mood and the agents involved in the process. Finally, the policy stream involves the understanding of possible and tolerable actions and solutions to a given problem, as well as technical and financial feasibility of these actions (Zahariadis 2007). Although these variables flow autonomously and are independent of each other (Kingdon 1984), it is through the interconnection and coupling of streams that problems are 'sold' in an attractive way (Ackrill, Kay, and Zahariadis 2013).

The MSF proposed by Kingdon (1984) was originally adapted from Cohen, March e Olsen (1972) organizational choice model of 'Garbage Can'. Both the original model and the MSF theory claim that these ambiguities, complexities, and randomness arise not only from the plurality of ideas, interests, and interpretations of the diverse and heterogeneous agents within the policy arena, but also from the fact that often the moment, also called an 'opportunity window', suggests the need for good timing in the creation of new policies. 'Opportunity windows' open and close abruptly, forcing the political system into immediate decision-making, which often leads to policy implementation without the process of investigation and analysis of the problem being finalized (Cohen *et al.* 1972, Kingdon 1984). This would explain why part of the implemented policies do not generate the expected results for a given problem.

Often, the speed in the decision-making process is stimulated by the action of the various political actors involved in the most diverse spheres of political discussion, in particular, policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon 1984). Policy entrepreneurs advocate various, specific policy ideas by successfully taking advantage of the coupling of the three streams in due time (Béland and Howlett 2016). They are willing to invest their resources (time, energy, reputation, and

sometimes money) to promote proposals and encourage society to pay attention to particular problems. It is widely understood that entrepreneurs, through their persuasive skills and available resources, join problems with policies, facilitating their acceptance in the political arena (Zahariadis 2007; Travis and Zahariadis 2002; Béland and Howlett 2016).

In general, these entrepreneurs are not located in specific locations in the community, and may be in or out of government, in elected or appointed positions, interest groups, and even research organizations. They are, however, one of the key elements in the process of breaking the status quo for the beginning of policy change (Carroll et al. 2018). Moreover, there is also no specificity in the reasons or objectives for which they advocate for a particular solution. The returns and benefits may come to them through the possibility of acting on the policies they approve, satisfaction with participation, or even personal enhancement in the form of job security or career promotion.

Zahariadis (2007) presents a series of criticisms that have been imposed on the model over the years. One of them is the argument that the flows may not materialize independently and that their interconnection can be seen as strategic and deliberate. However, for the author, politics does not operate in a systemic way. On the contrary, the policy decision-making process can be considered a dynamic activity, full of consequences. Furthermore, the assumptions that justify decision-making are simplifications of the reality and the interdependence of flows. The MSF theory was created with the purpose of explaining: a) Why do policy makers pay attention to one particular problem over others? b) How and why do political agendas change over time? c) How do policy makers choose solutions to a particular problem? (Kingdon 1984).

The MSF has been used in studies that approach the process of political change from different perspectives. These include areas such as public health (Guldbrandsson and Fossum 2009), school sports and physical education (Houlihan and Green 2006, Reid and Thorburn 2011), national walking policy (Milton and Grix, 2015) and physical activity promotion (Piggin and Hart 2017). The theory has also been deployed in the Australian elite sport policy context, where Sotiriadou & Brouwers (2012) where it was found that stronger connections were being developed between community sport and high-performance sport, with the government playing an increasing leadership role at the time. More recently, Peng, Skinner, and Houlihan (2019) applied the theory to understand the conditions and the process that led the Chinese government to initiate a football reform plan. In Brazil, although already used in the sport area, MSF was applied in an investigation about the formulation and organization of the policy for educational sport (Viola Machado *et al.* 2017).

In all of these studies, the use of MSF was associated with an interest in trying to clarify the relationship between the political and social context and the political proposals that aimed to solve the existing social problems or demands. The understanding of MSF and its application underlies our choice in its use in this study. We understand that MSF attaches importance to time and context. We also understand that the Brazilian context is marked by the active and significant participation of sports management entities such as BOC and that within them there are various policy entrepreneurs who advocate in favour of some 'solutions' for sport. In addition, it is known that policy changes occur over time, through windows of opportunity coming from events or crises in Brazil, such as the choice of the country to host major sporting events over the past few years. These

reasons led us to choose the MSF theory to understand what would have inspired the policy changes and the reasons for the decisions that led to implementing the policies that currently finance Brazilian sport. In addition, this study extends the application of MSF to a political and cultural environment in which sport is heavily funded by the State.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study focused mainly on the period from 2008 to 2016. This timeline was chosen because it covered the timing of the candidacy and the choice of Rio de Janeiro as the venue for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, as well as the context of preparing and carrying out the Games. The information collected during this period allowed us to identify the mobilization of public and private agents for the candidacy to the Games, as well as the thematization of the event by the different national entities.

The methodological proposal of this study is in line with the statement by Zahariadis (2007), that Multiple Streams theorizes processes from macro to micro scale, with the objective of trying to discover the rationality of political actions. Thus, based on the studies previously carried out by Piggin & Hart (2017) and Houlihan & Green (2006), a series of macro, meso and micro aspects of agenda setting were analysed.

[paste Table 1 here]

At a macro level, we sought to identify the dominant issues in the Brazilian political and economic context that would allow us to understand the Brazilian situation (politics) between 2008 and 2016. This study particularly considered the Government's statements about the need for investments and / or budget cuts in the various public services and that could impact on the development of State actions aiming the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. In addition, we sought to identify the main media reports and the scientific literature on the topic over that time period. Although several journalistic and television sources were searched, these focused mainly on news broadcasted by the main Brazilian news programs, including O Globo, UOL Esporte, Terra, and informative material by Brazilian Olympic Committee (BOC). Other documents used that contained the amounts transferred via sports financing policies were acquired by requesting from the National Secretariat for High Performance Sports, of the Ministry of Sports. The searches were conducted through keywords such as "funding of the sport", "financing the athlete", "funding the Olympic Games," "Olympic Games", "sport policy", "Olympic Games in Brazil" and "Olympic preparation ". After the searches, the subjects directly related to the theme were selected and organized.

At a meso level, we analysed the process around the political proposals (policy) designed so that the problem of the sport, at that moment, was solved. At this level, our focus was centred on the documents available on the online platform of the Brazilian Congress (Chamber of Deputies and the Senate), referring to the proposals in the parliamentary scope. Documents of official bodies of the Brazilian State were also collected, such as the Olympic legacy books, the Olympic application dossier and journalistic sources available on digital platforms. In addition, we analysed reports of managers and political actors

involved in the political processes regarding the proposed changes in the period, present in studies that had interviews on the subject.

Advertising materials reported by the Ministry of Sport and/or other sport governing bodies composed the micro level elements. For this level, we sought to identify the advertising actions carried out by the various interest groups involved in preparing for the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

In addition, to quantitatively understand the changes in sports policies, the annual amounts of federal sport funding were also analysed. These amounts were acquired through a request to the National Secretariat for High Performance Sports, of the Ministry of Sports, which provided documents containing the annual amounts passed on by the Federal Government to the Brazilian Olympic Committee (BOC) and the Brazilian Paralympic Committee (BPC), as well as other sports management entities. Such documents contained information on the financial transfers made from the federal lottery, the money obtained through tax deductions and transfers of budgets through agreements signed between the Ministry of Sports and sports management entities.

All documents originally written in Portuguese were translated into English in order to perform a qualitative analysis of the data. The findings are presented in line with the problem stream, politics stream and policy stream as noted by Kingdon. The problem stream is incorporated in two ways. It is presented above in the context section for this study, and it is diffused through the discussion of the politics stream and policy stream.

FINDINGS

The Politics Stream in Brazilian Sport

In MSF theory, the politics stream concerns the pressure of political groups, the ideological distribution in the National Congress, and public opinion on a particular problem (Kingdon 1984). Regarding elite sport funding issues, although some weaknesses were identified in the resource allocation criteria (Almeida and Marchi Júnior 2011), Brazil was experiencing a period of visibility in matters related to the sport that had never been witnessed. In the space of five years, the country approved, three significant sports financing laws.

In 2001, a law was approved that formalised the transfer of funds collected by federal lotteries to the Olympic and Paralympic committees (Law No. 10,264). This funding would become the main source of funds for the committees, which, in turn, would pass the funding to sports institutions linked to them (Brasil 2001). Then, in 2004, a law was put in place which established funding for individual athletes. This 'Bolsa Atleta Program' (BAP) directed resources from the Ministry of Sports to athletes who reached the podium in national and international competitions (Brasil 2004). Finally, in 2006, the Sports Incentive Law was ratified. This law aimed to stimulate private investment in sport via tax deductions for sport sponsorship (Brasil 2007).

As of 2008, Brazil experienced an economic crisis, echoing the international crisis (Perondi 2017), which in turn triggered a political crisis that would hamper the approval of public policies, mainly related to funding (Paula and Pires 2017). However, the crisis did not disrupt the bid plans for the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Through the candidacy, different political

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3 parties and spheres were mobilized. The interest in hosting the largest sport
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5 events in the world enabled the consensus, even if momentarily, of large and
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7 distinct political parties in Brazil at the municipal, State and federal levels.
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9 Although in the legislative context, Congress and the National Senate, it was
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11 possible to observe constant attacks for manifesting ideological oppositions, in
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13 general, for the common interest in hosting the OG and PG, an alliance was
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15 created between the Mayor of the city of Rio de Janeiro (Cesar Maia, for the party
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17 of Democrats - DEM), the Governor of the State of Rio de Janeiro (Sergio Cabral,
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19 the Brazilian Social Democracy Party - PMDB) and the President of the Republic
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21 (Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the Workers' Party – PT) (Pantotas 2008).
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26 In addition to the national context, the Government began to expand and
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28 strengthen its partnerships with the international community, aiming, among other
29
30 things, to take a place among the countries that would have hosted the mega-
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32 sport events. Some of these diplomatic meetings were held directly by President
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34 Lula, who sought, in addition to strengthening the interest in hosting the Olympic
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36 Games, establish allies for this to become possible (Terra 2009).
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40 Throughout the course of the candidacy, Lula's speech reinforced the idea
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42 of the importance of hosting such events. His speech even reinforced that not
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44 even the financial crisis would compromise efforts to organize the Games.
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46 According to Lula, in addition to the fact that the crisis has not yet reached Brazil,
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48 its possible impacts would be solved in due time and based on specific measures
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50 already being prepared by the Central Bank (O Globo 2008).
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54 One of the central pillars that supported the interest, at least the
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56 presidential interest, in hosting such events was the concern to place Brazil in a
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58 prominent position in the world economic map. This interest would be related to
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3 the model of government implemented by the Lula government, which sought to
4 stimulate international interest in investing in Brazilian economic development
5 (Almeida 2004). In other words, diplomatic and economic ambitions, associated
6 with the need for Brazil to reinforce its insertion in the international community,
7 exemplified above all by the insertion of the country in the BRICS alliance, were
8 part of the flow of the political situation (Politics). Such interests reified the
9 narratives supporting the realization of major sporting events.
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19 The Brazilian financial crisis which started at the end of the Brazilian
20 candidacy for the Games, would be felt, in fact, from 2012 (Perondi 2017). On
21 the one hand, in the face of the crisis, the government sought to reduce public
22 spending (Paula and Pires 2017), on the other, in view of the imminence of the
23 Olympic Games, the political discourse of the actors involved in the sport was
24 that the country needed to take actions that favour Olympic sport (Correia 2016).
25 For those actors, although the country was experiencing budget cuts, it was
26 necessary to find ways to solve both the structural needs of sports facilities and
27 the financial requirements for the preparation of Olympic athletes.
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40 In the Politics Stream, it was possible to observe an active participation of
41 policy entrepreneurs from different areas, advocating in favour of the country's
42 investments in sports mega-events. For the representatives responsible for
43 Brazil's candidacy, hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games would make it
44 possible to increase the future prospects of Brazilian youngsters, as well as
45 stimulate the practice of sports. Furthermore, investing in sports and the
46 possibility of receiving the JO / PG was to advocate for the construction of a
47 legacy that would accelerate social and economic transformation in a sustainable
48 manner (Comitê Rio 2016 2009). Another portion of entrepreneurs, not directly
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3 inserted in the sports universe, ratified this argument. For them, a well-planned
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5 investment in these sports mega-events could benefit economic and social
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7 progress, even reducing the impacts of the economic downturn that some
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9 countries were going through (Brasil Econômico 2012).
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12 Private companies actively participated in the bid. Companies from the
13
14 telecommunication, civil aviation, banking and construction industries made up
15
16 the interest groups involved, which financed Rio de Janeiro's bid to host the
17
18 Games in 2016 (Uol Esporte 2009, Mascarenhas *et al.* 2012). The connection of
19
20 such companies to the Games would be clear during the course of the
21
22 organization of the event. The civil aviation companies, which financed the
23
24 campaign, were responsible for the travel of the Games Organizing Committee,
25
26 during the whole period (COB 2016). Construction companies, in turn, were
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28 subsequently linked to the infrastructure works carried out both in Rio de Janeiro
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30 and in other parts of the country by the Growth Acceleration Program launched
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32 by the Federal Government (O Globo 2014).
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37 The relationship between the Government and interest groups was
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39 broadened throughout the process of preparing the country for the Games. Public
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41 banks opened lines of credit for entrepreneurs to invest in areas associated with
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43 the Games (Brasil Econômico 2011). This directly benefited the actors involved
44
45 in lobbying and campaigning for the event. The hotel industry, who invested
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47 resources in the construction and expansion of hotels in the city of Rio de Janeiro
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49 and were also linked to the financing of the Games campaign, benefited from
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51 such initiatives (Uol Esporte 2017).
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56 The convergence of various interests, involving the Government group,
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58 the Olympic and Paralympic Committees and private industries, resulted in a joint
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3 action that stimulated the search for a solution to the then problem of Olympic
4 and Paralympic sport. As pointed out by the MSF, although entities have their
5 own peculiarities, visions and interests, the common interest in solving a given
6 demand tends to create bridges and communication channels that facilitate the
7 circulation of information and strengthen the idea of intervening in politics
8 (Kingdon 1984). This occurred through the association of the political sphere with
9 the private sphere.
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19 Apart from to the 'political windows', the involvement of interest groups
20 stimulated the strengthening of a movement in the political arena in search of
21 actions in favour of sport. Public opinion was also essential for government
22 decisions to be taken. According to surveys conducted around the country, 65%
23 of the population considered themselves optimistic and confident about the
24 hosting of the event in Rio de Janeiro (EBC 2014). At the end of the country's
25 preparation for the event, due to the political and economic stress caused by the
26 financial crisis, although the percentages of support were reduced, 54% of the
27 population still supported the event, believing in the benefits it could provide to
28 the country (Veja 2016).
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42 The coalition in favour of the Olympic Games, consisting of the Ministry of
43 Sport, sport-related political representatives, the Olympic and Paralympic
44 Committees, private enterprises, and various policy entrepreneurs was
45 encouraged by the support of public opinion in favour of the event. In addition,
46 the lobby in favour of the country's image in the international economic and
47 political scenario, the use of mega-events as a strategy to face the financial crisis
48 that occurred mainly in the international context, associated with the interest in
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securing the position in international alliances such as the BRICS, favored decision-making in the political arena in favour of investments in elite sport.

The Policy Stream in Elite Sport in Brazil

The MSF seeks to analyze the political process and understand why a proposal enters the public agenda and how this process is built. According to the theory, the implementation of a given policy is influenced by the pressure that the political system suffers from the problems and their demands (Kingdon 1984). Such problems, in their turn, would be due to both crises and events. In both points we can identify similarity with the Brazilian case.

With regard to the crisis, the BOC had already shown dissatisfaction with the results in the last Olympic Games (Brasil 2012). The second point, events, would be, however, the main factor. With the choice of Rio de Janeiro as the host city of the OG and PG, there was a focus on actions that would not only fulfil the requirements to host the Games (Figuerôa *et al.* 2014), but also actions that enabled the preparation of athletes for such competitions (Correia 2016). At the time of crisis, the needs of Brazilian sport gained greater visibility and the 'policy windows', originated from the creation of the Ministry of Sports, would remain open stimulated by the interest, especially in relation to political, economic and tourist visibility, to host the largest sporting events on the planet (Almeida 2010). In this sense, the implementation of financing policies was justified by three factors: 1) historically and culturally, private industries did not actively participate in sports financing in the country; 2) the interest in hosting sport mega-events generated the need to expand the public financing base for Brazilian sports 3) Mega-events could be a strategy to leverage the country's economic and social

development, helping to face the financial crisis that some countries were going through.

According to the MSF, policies are not carried out instantaneously or spontaneously. Actors involved in the political process tend to focus their attention on individualized problems, according to the emergence of each one of them. Just as 'policy windows' open and close abruptly, so do problems. For this reason, the attempted resolution of a problem and the implementation of a policy often occurs suddenly, and based on the combination of elements already known or realized by other policies (Kingdon 1984).

The MSF assumes that both the agenda and the decision-making arena are permeated by ideas and solutions produced by various specialists inserted in a given 'policy community'. Although this community may not be directly linked to the interests of sport, it is linked to the decision making of possible solutions. Here, the MSF distinguishes between 'policy community' and 'interest groups'. 'Interest groups' could be formed by governmental and non-governmental organizations such as businesses, industries, professional associations, trade unions and lobbyists connected by the various interests of the area. 'Policy communities' would be composed of experts in a given policy area. The assumption brought by the theory would help to understand the reason that led the Federal Government to decide on a given policy in the face of the need to expand the financing of sports for the Olympic preparation. The theoretical understanding of the political process could elucidate the decision-making process that has taken place in relation to Brazil's sports funding for OG/PG. Furthermore, it would be possible to identify the abrupt or subtle changes in policy decisions implemented. A study carried out by Correia (2016) illuminated some

of these punctuations. The author identified that the first political decisions were related to structural issues, such as the construction and improvement of sports spaces. However, over time, throughout the process of preparation for the Rio 2016, the specialist community noted the need to focus efforts on the preparation of athletes who would be part of the Brazilian Olympic team. As illustrated by MSF, the problems of Brazilian sport suddenly appeared and, while one of them was solved, others also appeared.

The decision-making process was marked by an intense relationship and perhaps overlap or reversal of roles between the political community and interest groups (Uol Esporte 2017). Stakeholders were at the forefront of the entire proposal-making process, making up the majority in the group of experts responsible for thinking about proposals. This group was composed mainly of members of the Ministry of Sports, the Brazilian Olympic Committee (BOC) and the Brazilian Paralympic Committee (BPC) (Correia 2016, Uol Esporte 2017). The group posited there was the short time to implement actions. The way forward would have been to change and broaden the sport policies already in execution, in particular direct financing to athletes (Correia 2016). Thus, in 2010, one year after the choice of Rio de Janeiro as the host city of the OG and PG, the "Brazil Medal Plan" would be established.

The proposal to modify the athletes' funding policy indicated a sensitive problem in the management of Brazilian sports. The community involved in the decision-making process understood what should be done - investing in athletes who had chances to win medals - but they did not know exactly how to accomplish this. According to Correia (2016), the specialist group was faced with the fact that

there were no organized data to identify which athletes or sports should benefit from the funding.

The plan created by the group and implemented by the Federal Government modified the structure of the BAP and instituted a new category that would only benefit individual athletes who had chances to win medals and who were ranked among the top 20 in their sport (Brasil 2010). This new category would benefit athletes with an up to \$ 5,000 per month funding. Besides the benefit created to individual sports athletes, the plan enabled a sponsorship structure to team sports, which would be brokered by the Federal Government. A group of four State-owned companies (BANCO DO BRASIL, BNDES, CAIXA e PETROBRAS) would finance 36 Olympic and Paralympic sports rated as possible medal sports at the Rio 2016 Games (Rede Nacional do Esporte 2012).

The proposals developed by the interest group also demonstrated the political strength of team sports in Brazil, which historically dominate the Brazilian sports and financial scene (Almeida and Marchi Júnior 2011). Since the earliest meetings to develop the BAP in the early 2000s, experts had considered the possibility that the program would benefit only individual sports athletes (Brasil 2003), as much for the structural and evaluative question as for lack of sponsorship for those athletes (Guimarães 2009). However, due to the mobilization of BOC representatives, the benefit was extended to athletes in team sports (Camargo 2016).

As pointed out by Kingdon (1984), policy entrepreneurs play an important role in the decision making process. In addition to attaching solutions to problems, policy entrepreneurs are instrumental in articulating the streams and engaging problems and decisions in the open policy window. In the case of Brazil, these

entrepreneurs, represented by the members of the BOC, were fundamental for other solutions to be attached to the problems within Brazilian sport, which were currently being experienced. The proposals suggested by the then president of the BOC allowed the proposal of Bolsa-Alela to be reformulated, increasing the benefit to other Brazilian sports groups and athletes (Camargo 2016). As occurred during the process of formulating the BAP, so did the implementation of the Brazil Medals Plan. In addition to the benefit created for individual sports athletes, the plan made possible a sponsorship structure for team sports through negotiations brokered by the Brazilian Federal Government.

Reais and Rio: The Effects of Increased Funding

As mentioned, during the period investigated by this study, the Brazilian sports funding policies, formalized in Law, were already in force: Agnelo/Piva Law, BAP and Sports Incentive Law. With the imminence of the Olympic Games Rio 2016, the main change brought was associated with the Brazil Medals Plan.

The Plan reformulated the amounts and created a new category in the BAP. Through the proposal brought by the Plan, the Government brokered sponsorship from State-owned companies to some selected sports and expanded investment in infrastructure to improve and set up sports centres. Although the sponsorship amounts from these companies were not disclosed, the Federal Government pointed out that the investment that would come directly from the public coffers would amount to approximately US \$ 295 million. Part of this amount would be directed to the technical and logistic support areas in those teams that would represent the country in the Games, and another part would be

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3 invested in the construction and improvement of training centres across the
4
5 country (Rede Nacional do Esporte 2012).
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8 In addition to these actions, stimulated by the 'policy windows' opened by
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10 the sports preparation movement, the Federal Government has expanded the
11
12 budgetary resources of the Ministry of Sport. From 2010, the Ministry intensified
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14 the provision of public resources directed to the Olympic preparation. Sports
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16 management entities, which had approved projects, signed agreements with the
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18 Ministry of Sports, expanding the sources of resources for Olympic preparation.
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20 Between 2008 and 2016, 158 projects were approved, linked to the areas of
21
22 'Modernization and Expansion of Infrastructures', 'Acquisition of Equipment and
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24 Sports Materials', 'Human Resources', 'Creation and Implementation of Training
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26 Centres', 'Sports Competitions' and 'Preparation of Athletes' (Almeida *et al.*
27
28 2016).
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33 Besides the changes directly influenced by legislative changes, Federal
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35 Lottery resources passed to the Olympic and Paralympic committees, have
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37 changed due to the amounts collected for lottery tickets. In Agnelo/Piva Law, the
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39 amounts passed on are based on the gross collection obtained by the sale of the
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41 lottery tickets. During 2008 and 2016, the pass-through suffered four changes,
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43 three of them related to the increase in ticket prices, which occurred in September
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45 2009, January 2011 and January 2014 (G1 2014). The only modification provided
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47 by Law occurred in 2015, when the percentage of transfers to the Committees
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49 was changed. On this occasion, the transfer, which originally was 2% of gross
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51 collection, rose to 2.7% (Brasil 2015a).
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56 Both the increase in funds made available by the Ministry of Sport and the
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58 changes in lottery ticket amounts plus the change in the pass-through percentage
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of the law resulted in changes in the amounts passed on to the sport in the period. In relation to the transfers from the Ministry of Sport, two moments of great changes were identified. The first occurred in 2010, when the Ministry began to invest more widely in sports. The second, in 2012, when as a result of the Games, the Ministry held a wide public call with resources for Olympic preparation. However, the major difference of financial transfers occurred in 2016, when the Brazilian Senate approved the change in the percentage of transfers to the committees. As a result of these changes and the Olympic preparation, in 2012 the Brazilian sport had a percentage increase of 130% in financial transfers compared to the year 2008. Such changes can be observed in Table 2.

[paste Table 2 here]

Distinct from other policies, the amounts in subsidies from the Sports Incentive Law (sponsorships via tax deductions) have changed according to the interest of the private or individual initiative in financing the sport. Thus, if there is no increase in the public interest in investing in sports projects, amounts tend to remain static. During the entire period, the only legislative change that occurred in this policy was related to its validity. The Law that originally would remain in force until 2015 was amended, establishing a new term of validity, until 2022 (Brasil 2015b).

DISCUSSION

The increase in resources from the financial incentives directed to the Olympic

preparation were justified by the need to ensure good results at Rio 2016. This justification was also aligned with the understanding of the importance of the international prestige that nations generally seek and that could be obtained, albeit partially, through success in competitive sport. Such arguments were high on the policy Brazilian policy agenda in terms of shaping the 'policy 'problem'. This justified the increase in investments in Brazilian elite sport, echoing actions in other countries, such as what happened in the United Kingdom from 2005 (Grix and Carmichael 2012).

In a period and historical context marked by the incapacity - and even the lack of interest - of the private sector in solving the financial problems of national sport, the State, by means of policies for the sport of income, reinforced its role as the main financier of Brazilian sport. This occurred when the Federal Government increased the number of agreements signed by the Ministry of Sports and launched the Brazil Medals Plan. In addition to focusing resources to sports, the State brokered sponsorship negotiations from State-owned enterprises, drastically raising public resources for Olympic preparation.

The importance of sporting success for a country's political and social context (Bergsgard *et al.* 2007, Grix and Carmichael 2012, Houlihan and Zheng 2013), was emphasized by various policy entrepreneurs in Brazil, who argued favourably for the application of public resources in Brazil's Olympic preparation. In particular, the increase in investments in elite sport were associated with the political, commercial and tourist visibility that the event could provide to the country. This discourse expanded the justifications for State involvement, which in turn, motivated the mobilization of both the public and private spheres (sponsors, investors and interest groups in general) in hosting the event.

For entrepreneurs not directly involved in the sports context, hosting Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro would promote economic benefits. These were hoped to be conferred on diverse areas, such as hotel, food, transportation and civil construction activities, which would be involved from the preparation and construction process until the event. This facilitated the creation of coalitions of forces from different spheres in order to prepare not only the athletes but also the Brazilian infrastructure in the ambition to obtain a positive sports representation in the Games. As such, this distinct political, economic or social opportunity contributed to the idea that 'something' needs to be modified. The interest in a given subject tends to mobilize political agents to work in ways that create and foster the need to solve a social 'problem'. In Brazil, the interaction of media, political and commercial interests converged as a facilitating aspect for political actors to mobilize in seeking for a solution to the demand or 'political problem' that both sport and the financial crisis were becoming. As pointed out by Zahariadis (2007), social interests, when tied to national identity and patriotism, tend to gain advantages in the political arena. This seems to have occurred in this case study.

The characteristics and the interaction between the three aspects of the MSF (problems, politics, policy) facilitated the understanding of how changes in the financing policy for sport between 2008 and 2016 originated. Policy entrepreneurs were instrumental in this process of dialogue. They helped create an atmosphere of need for changes in sports policy and were embedded in the political arena, facilitating acceptance and approval of the proposals. In addition, the effective participation of policy entrepreneurs allowed the proposals to be approved during the opening of the window of opportunity. In particular, Correia

(2016) explained how there was agreement, by all the working groups, regarding both the actions and the need for speed in the elaboration and implementation of policies.

Although the analysis of the political process has made it possible to understand the justifications imposed for the definition of sports financing policy in Brazil, and the alternatives that permeated the policy stream, in the period, such justifications can be considered questionable after the analysis of the results of actions. Despite relatively large investments in elite sport, changes and implementations of actions occurred over a very short period of time and appeared to be thought of as emergency plans, as noted by those involved and members of the academic community. Compared with other hosts of the Games, it is possible to identify this emergency feature. Since 1995, the Chinese government developed a plan for the country's Olympic preparation, called the Olympic Glory Plan. With the specific aim of boosting its Olympic preparations for the Games to be held in Beijing, in 2001 after the Sydney Olympic Games, the Chinese government changed the initial proposal, dramatically increasing the value invested in sports, as well as expanding the centres training scattered throughout the country (Zheng and Chen 2016). Additionally, the Chinese government would have invested strategically in areas with higher medal chances, especially Paralympic sports, an area in which the country could take advantage (Shuhan *et al.* 2011).

Although marked by criticism related to implementation strategies, the actions of the British government, in relation to public funding to elite sport, were implemented at the end of the Atlanta Olympic Games in 1996 (Goranova 2014). Since 2004, the development strategy of elite sport has focused on athletes and

sports who have the highest expectations of medals in the Games. Resource allocation to elite sport was accentuated at the end of the Beijing Olympics when the British government received confirmation that it would be responsible for hosting the 2012 Games. In the period between 2008 and 2012, investment in elite sports increased four times, focused mainly on sports with the highest medal chances (Grix and Carmichael 2012).

The Brazilian case differs from the others presented. Although sports funding policies were already taking place when Rio de Janeiro was chosen as the venue for the 2016 Games, the country did not have a specific policy for representation at the Olympic Games. Although Rio won the Olympic bid in 2009, the peak of investment in sports occurred in 2012 (130% compared to 2008). Between 2009 and 2011 the groups involved needed to formulate the actions that would make possible the development of the Olympic sport. The provision of resources through public calls from the Ministry of Sports seemed to momentarily overcome this fragility of actions. Through this strategy, the government could invest in sport until a definitive action could be found. However, due to lack of data and lack of clarity in the criteria that could be used for the application of resources, when launched, the Brazil Medals Plan only changed the existing sports structure.

The politics stream was marked by an extensive lobby carried out by policy entrepreneurs. Although the initial proposal would have been to invest in individual sports, with the highest medal chances, given the various interests and organizations involved, the criterion was discarded. The contest of interests reproduced the decisions made in the process of formulating the BAP, in the early 2000s, leading to the expansion of Brazil Medal Plan.

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3 The actions developed were not enough for the Team Brazil to reach the
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5 established goal. Despite the expectation that Team Brazil would rank among the
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7 top ten for Olympic sports and the top five for Paralympics, the stipulated targets
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9 were not reached. Although Team Brazil has achieved the best classification in
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11 history, it finished the Games in 13th place for Olympic sports and eighth place
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13 among Paralympic sports.
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17 For the representatives of the Government and the BOC the Olympic and
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19 Paralympics were positive, despite the failure of the Brazilian delegation to attain
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21 a high ranking on the final medal table. Speeches mainly emphasised that the
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23 sporting results were associated with the investment in sport, and that the
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25 investment made in the Brazilian sport was made in haste. However, the failure
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27 to reach the results did not avoid the criticisms made by the Sports Committee of
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29 the Chamber of Deputies (Câmara dos Deputados - Comissão do Esporte 2016).
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33 The Minister of Sport at the time emphasized that it was not possible to
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35 evaluate the athletes' performance only by the 'predicted' and not 'won' medals.
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37 For him, it was necessary to consider several factors, and that the investments
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39 made will serve as a basis for a better result in the Tokyo Olympics in 2020 (El
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41 País 2016). The BOC, in turn, commented that the initial medal target was indeed
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43 bold and difficult, and that all the same competitors in the high position in the
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45 table obtained fewer medals than in previous years (Globo Esporte 2016). For
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47 this reason, claims were made that Brazil's results needed to be considered
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49 positively.
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CONCLUSION

There are three distinct conclusions that can be observed from the data analysis. First, in recent years, through a series of policy interventions, sport, and particularly elite sport, has undergone a period of great visibility in Brazil. Not only was a ministerial portfolio for sport specially created in Brazil, but the sport agenda moved rapidly up the policy agenda with the country bidding for and then hosting the world’s largest mega events. This in turn, provided a period of significant visibility for sport in the political and social contexts. This visibility triggered the opening of a window of opportunities that allowed problems related to sport to be treated with importance, both because of the need to guarantee the successful hosting of sports mega events and because of the potential that sport might have to improve public support for the government.

Second, the window of opportunity that opened favoured the approval of particular sport policies, with elite sport being one of the main beneficiaries. Significant funding was available and it was deployed into elite sport. There is often a binary division drawn up between elite sport and mass participation sport, with the logic that when more funding that goes into elite sport, mass participation sport will inevitably miss out (and the subsequent assumption that mass participation will result from an ‘inspiration’ effect from elite sport performances). This could be seen at various moments throughout the study, and this observation should encourage other analysts of sport funding to challenge the claims made about hosting mega sport events, considering what has occurred since Rio 2016.

Third, the data analysed allowed us to illuminate the political and policy connections through the theory. Political decisions in this case study of Brazilian elite sport were taken on an emergency and reactionary basis. The absence of

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3 long-term planning for elite sport in Brazil is evident through the various rapid
4 changes over time. Even though various window of opportunities have remained
5 open for a relatively long period (which is not always the case for policy
6 problems), until the year of the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the policy
7 changes were superficial and did not allow for policy success for Brazil at Rio
8 2016 (as measured by medal targets). The actions taken could be seen as similar
9 to those described in the original 'Garbage Can' model of policy making. Due to
10 the speed, ambiguities and the need to meet the interests of the various groups
11 involved, the implemented policies did not generate the expected results for the
12 problem presented by Brazilian elite sport.
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26 Pragmatically, the repercussions of the funding problems can be seen by
27 what has eventuated after Rio 2016. In addition to the issues related to the
28 athletes' results, it is apparent that planning for economic, sports and social
29 development, stimulating the participation of young people in sport, has not
30 occurred. A few months after Rio 2016, the Government had not yet defined a
31 management strategy for the built sports structures. Part of the sports venues,
32 including the Olympic Park, were closed and not expected to be used (Globo
33 Esporte 2017). Further, following Rio 2016, Brazilian sport suffered a great
34 change at the governmental level, and the budget for sport was sharply reduced.
35 Bolsa-Atleta Program has lost about 50% of its budget (Folha de São Paulo
36 2017). However, the biggest loss within the sports area was the dismantling of
37 the Ministry of Sport, which occurred in early 2019. The Ministry of Sport was one
38 of the areas impacted by the decision of the new elected government to reduce
39 the number of ministerial portfolios. The former Ministry was renamed the Special
40 Secretariat of Sport, and was linked to the new Ministry of Citizenship (Globo
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Esporte 2018). This indicates that although sport in Brazil certainly had windows of opportunity to access resources, the implementation of appropriate policies was not guaranteed.

From scrutinising the data through the lens of the MSF, it is possible to explain what has influenced and shaped policy decision making in elite sport in Brazil. Sotiriadou & Brouwers (2012) argue that the MSF provides “a strong foundation for understanding policy processes, and that it makes it possible to go beyond mere description of sport policies and historical narratives of how those policies emerged” (2012, p. 321). It is certainly the case for countries such as Brazil, which until recently have lacked in depth academic analyses of sports funding processes and programs, there is a need for both foundational stories and deeper critical analyses of the political machinations and contests that have taken place and which inform the contemporary sport policy landscape.

As pointed out by Sabatier (2007), MSF has limitations that are based on various assumptions of the processes under investigation. Assumptions about the context of the study could be at least partially addressed by conducting interviews with entrepreneurs and policy makers who were directly linked to the observed change processes. Therefore, a suggestion for future research is the use of interview data, which might provide a deeper view of the motivations and aspirations that inspired or guided the process of formulating the 'solutions' to the problem of sport financing in Brazil.

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Table 1. Overview of the datasets used in the research process.

Macro Level

political and economic situation (politics)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government's statements and documents - Media reports - Scientific bibliography - Television sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official documents collected on the digital platforms of the Senate, Federal Chamber and Federal Government. - Spreadsheets containing the financial amounts transferred via financing policies were made available by email by the National Secretariat for High Performance Sports (semi-official document). - Media reports and television sources were collected in the digital platforms of each media vehicle.
<i>Meso Level</i>		
political proposals processes (policy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sports Laws - Institutional reports and documents Other documents of official bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official documents collected on the Senate and Federal Chamber online platforms, as well as by request to the National Secretariat for High Performance Sports. - Institutional reports were collected on the BOC digital platform.
<i>Micro Level</i>		
advertising actions carried out by the various interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advertising materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collected on the digital platforms of the Federal Government, National Secretariat for High Performance Sports and BOC.

Table 2. Federal transfers to elite sport in Brazil between 2008 and 2016. In US \$ millions of dollars.

Agnelo/Piva Law	Sports Law	Incentive	Covenants	Bolsa-Alela	TOTAL	%
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2008	29.8	11.2	1.2	21.1	63.4	
2009	30.4	8.6	1.2	19.7	60.1	-5%
2010	38.6	10.6	20.4	24.8	94.6	49%
2011	45.9	14.4	23.4	31.8	115.7	82%
2012	47.0	13.7	50.9	34.5	146.2	130%
2013	46.6	17.9	0.96	35.9	101.5	60%
2014	49.1	20.7	16.2	37.7	123.8	95%
2015	49.2	19.5	12.5	33.4	114.8	81%
2016	70.5	11.9	0,0	28.4	110.9	75%

Source: Research Data.

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