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Joint Editor in Chief

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Associate Editor

*Gender, Work and Organization*

Dear Prof Banu Ozkazanc-Pan and Prof Theresa O'Keefe

We deeply thank you for suggesting to us the option of submitting our manuscript for review after substantially revising it by incorporating the comments of three GWO reviewers. We have now revised our manuscript “Feminist NGOs, Welfare Organizations and Economic Abuse: An Institutional Logics Analysis”. We deeply appreciate the effort made by all three reviewers offering us their excellent comments. We would like to deeply thank the reviewers for helping us improve the manuscript and bringing it to its current version. We sent out the paper for professional English editing and we explain how we dealt with all the comments that they have offered in the table presented below.

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| **Reviewer1’s comments** | **Our response** |
| … throughout the reading of the manuscript, I was not entirely sure that the concept of coordinating feminism, as a bridging logic between market and state feminism is an adequate one. | We believe that the source of this comment is our previously overly vague definitions of both institutional logic and the way we propose the relationship between coordinated, state and market feminism, should be understood. We, therefore, introduced a set of clearer definitions for our terminology in which coordinating feminism is a notion that we borrow from Nicola Sharp-Jeffs not in order to bridge between state feminist and market feminism but instead to signify a current route that generates formal and informal collaborations even if unable to generate institutional change:  “*Coordinating Feminism*, one that operates within existing policy constraints by generating collaboration and alternatives.Unable to form policy or achieve the embracement of a feminist policy, *Coordinating Feminism* may well introduce a discourse, a logic, guidelines for the prioritization of alternative practices that, for instance, are not based on blaming and fixing women”. |
| A more adequate theoretical framework would enquire into the ways in which new ideas are adopted by organizational actors, thereby altering the perception of their professional mandate, and bring about a change in institutional logics. | The case of welfare organization treatment of economic abuse in Israel (and elsewhere), is now better explained as a case of no institutional change and lacking adaptation of new ideas by organizational actors. The efforts made they did not instigate any institutional change. The epitome of the absent institutional change is the inability of any of the actors interviewed to allocate any material resources for the benefit of EA survivors.  Our paper shows how the institutional logic hasn’t changed. What has changed thanks to exposure to a feminist institutional logic constructing EA victim/survivors as eligible for material resources is just a practice of referring them elsewhere, outside the welfare organization. We now explain these points much better:  “The salience of the interplay between formal and informal forces in struggles to dominate institutional storylines, encouraged scholars to turn to the notion of *institutional logic,* as a source impacting values, sense-making and even action, without necessarily gaining dominance. As was explained by MacKay and “Institutional logics can operate at the level of ‘common sense’ and taken for granted-ness, as well as providing discursive or framing resources around which coalitions of actors can mobilise. Whilst there will be a dominant logic in any given institutional context, it is important to recognise this will co-exist with other alternative and subordinate logics, providing the opportunity for contestation, and, potentially, change over time” (2019: 13-14). Thus, the notion of institutional logic is particularly suitable for accounting for minor but crucial impact made by a feminist institutional logic within an otherwise neo-liberal reactionary and exclusionary institution of welfare regime”. |
| Authors may want to look at the literature on institutional change, and feminist institutionalism. For example:  -   John L. Campbell 2010. Institutional Reproduction and Change. Oxford Handbook of Comparative Institutional Analysis;  - Carol Bacchi and Ronnblom 2014 Feminist Discursive Institutionalism: A post structural alternative. NORA       22,3;  - Georgina Waylen, 2014. Informal Institutions, Institutional Change and Gender Equality. Political Research Quarterly 67,1: 212-223. | We have incorporated the suggested sources into our literature review using them to frame the emergence of the practice of referring victim-survivors elsewhere for assistance without changing the institutional logic at the welfare organizations that employ them. Here’s how we now explain our distinct project separating it from new institutionalism as well as from feminist institutionalism.  “Feminist scholars have engaged in recent years with institutional change (Campbell, 2010), namely, with the possibility that a major value-laden assumption, producing guidelines for action within a specific social or political arena, would be replaced by an oppositional framework, introducing a set of alternative values, norms and ways of sense-making (Waylen, 2014; Bacchi and Ronnblom, 2014). The question leading to the interest taken in the institutional approach concerned the odds that feminist political activism would gain the power to replace exclusionary gendered assumptions with inclusionary equitable frameworks liberating women of historical constraints. However, as many have observed, the replacement hasn’t occurred and instead collaboration and ambivalence emerged in institutional arenas (Halley et al., 2018). Clearly, political struggles both indicated the potential for change and practically, left gender and intersectional power structure in place (MacKay, 2014). |
| As the manuscript does not deal directly with feminist NGOs, nor with the interaction between them and formal institutions of the welfare state, the manuscript should be reframed around the organizations it analyses, and less around feminist NGOs and the constraints they face under the neoliberal regime. | We now rely on Barandiarán, Jose Canel & Bouckaert (2023), who indicated the salient principle of current neo-liberal welfare regimes: collaborations. We apply their argument in validating the framing of our data as allowing us to see, unexpectedly, that such collaborations generate action that may allow those in need, enhanced access to resources.  Moreover, we now directly deal with the feminist NGO *women’s spirit* and explain better its interaction with formal institutions, specifically the Domestic Violence Prevention Centers. This reinforced focus on a feminist NGO and its collaboration with welfare organizations, legitimizes, to our minds, the possibility of indicating it as paving a form of feminist political action even under the constraints of the neoliberal regime. |
| If possible, it may be illuminating to underscore how neoliberalism has changed the ways in which different welfare agencies meet the needs of economically abused women. | In response to this comment we now explain that we have a dual objective – understanding the impact of the current neoliberal welfare regime on welfare agencies; and, understanding the impact of the current neoliberal welfare regime on feminist NGOs who are part of partnerships cooperations and have the opportunity to introduce an alternative institutional logic that is based on the foundation of victim-survivors material needs. |
| While authors were able to glean different institutional logics (mostly bureaucratic and therapeutical) from the interviews, there are few examples of a coordinating logic. | Coordinated logic wasn’t part of our project but the alternative institutional logic does refer now to collaborative governance. |
| p. 12, Why  this short subsection: the meaning of EA at the NII if in the next section there is an extensive analysis of the EA at the NII? | It was a misstate and it was erased. Thanks. |
| p. 13:  "Turning to the social worker for approving ‘domestic violence’ is active action that some employees described as demanding an effort on their part. The procedure is organized so that a negative answer to a woman claiming support fits better employees’ time constraints" This interpretation should be contextualized. I would suggest first analyzing what it takes to make a phone call, and then, if necessary, refer to time constraints, and how refusing benefits fits better time constraints. | We now added a sentence that prepares the reader better for our interpretation:  “Because the neoliberal context is responsible for continuous under-staffing, employees reported continuous heightened workload levels. The briefest course of action is dismissal and refusal of benefits” |
| p. 14. As far as I understood most of the women applying for benefits are already beneficiaries of social assistance benefits. Is this the case? If so, it should be clarified. | We don’t have the data to indicate that. While many among IPV survivors live in poverty and may already be getting some allowances IPV is known to occur in diverse social locations which would mean that among the applicants some have no experience in being supported by welfare organizations. This is particularly true for the assistance units who are women in divorce proceedings not necessarily living in poverty. We now added this information to the description of our participants. |
| p. 15: whose debts? The applicant or her partner? | In EA the debts that are expected to be of concern to welfare organizations are those generated by her partner who left her to pay them off. We added an explanation. |
| p. 18: how do we know from the excerpt that the employee wants to help the economically abused woman? The employee speaks about workload. | We added the information in brackets:  (“you want to help everyone”) |
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| **Reviewer2’s comments** | **Our response** |
| My overall sense is that this paper has potential, but needs a substantive amount of revision. For one, the paper is difficult to read, as many of the sentences are clunky and hard to follow. Here are a few examples:  -       “a UK located observation would be accurate for the Israeli welfare organizations: “they lag behind”(2) -       “Instead, survival consideration expressed in funding practices directed their attention to short term projects.” (3) -       When the routine act is perceived as rational, distancing from the loyalty to replicate it to the point of performing a challenging act is no simple matter.” (6) | The paper was streamlined, sent to an English editor, and no longer contains these sentences. |
| the passive voice makes it difficult to asses who is doing what in the sentence | We are now using almost no passive voice |
| in other cases, the authors use terms that are not previously described | We now ensure all terms are properly described and defined before applying them. |
| The authors are advised to carefully review and revise each sentence to ensure that it can be easily understood. In some cases, it might be easier to divide a sentence into several sentences in order to make each idea clear to the reader. | We revised the sentences so that all sentences are much shorter and send to a professional editor as well. |
| A second, related challenge was that the paper needed a lot more information, description, and context. For instance, the paper provides a critique of “Market feminism” and “state feminism,” but does not provide an in-depth description of each of these terms. It is therefore difficult to assess their contributions with the concept of “collaborating feminism.” It would be helpful in the literature review to describe each term, what it means, how it’s been used, what its limits are, and how it relates to the other terms. | Market feminism and state feminist are now better explained, however, the arguments applying them are not ours. We followed earlier papers, published by Kantola to show that her dichotomy misses on a third way of feminist action. The point is explained now through collaborative governance – which is an approach that underscores the extent to which feminist activism, as one form of political activism, may enhance its impact, when introducing an institutional logic, even if institutional change does not occur. |
| The goal of the paper could also be clarified. For instance, the abstract asks: How do Feminist NGOs negotiate this (legal) ambivalence? The paper, however, is not about feminist NGOs but state welfare organizations. What is the justification for studying questions related to feminist activism in a state agency? Why might we assume that any feminist ideology has seeped into state agencies? The authors could tackle this by stating, for instance, that although feminist movements have not succeeded in passing specific legislation addressing economic abuse, the study investigates whether some elements of feminist narratives and practices have permeated into the practices of the state in helping victims of economic abuse by focusing on social workers in welfare agencies. This would then help to justify the study and its findings. | The justification is now explained as part of the idea of collaborative governance – which shifts the emphasis from analyzing each type of organization on its own towards identifying the possibility that state welfare organizations’ employees may embrace the institutional logic which a feminist organization develops, even if they are unable to impact budgeting, unable to reduce the power position of the dominant institutional logic.  We thank reviewer2 for articulating the point of our paper so well – we now adopted the suggested articulation and structured the revised paper around it. |
| Furthermore, it would be helpful to describe what the authors understand to be “feminist” about the views and actions of welfare workers. The paper seems to imply that there is an “emergence” of feminist values in the views and practices of welfare workers (thanks to “the impact of ideas from external ideological campaigns” p. 6), although this is not explicitly stated nor defined, largely because the literature review focuses on feminist NGOs and does not clearly connect these to state agencies. However, feminist NGOs and state welfare agencies are very different institutions. If the authors want to examine the extent to which feminist ideologies have seeped into welfare agencies, this should be explicitly stated and described more thoroughly. What counts as “feminist” in the practices and narratives of welfare workers? Where did they get those ideas? What connections are there between feminist NGOs and welfare workers? What might account for any feminist logics operating in welfare organizations? | Because the notion of feminist impact emerged inductively from the analysis, these questions cannot be discussed in the literature review but rather are empirical question which we are now able to answer in the discussion section. |
| The paper also needs more information about the welfare system in Israel: how does it operate, what resources does it provide, which people does it help, etc. It was unclear how the various agencies mentioned in the paper (DVPC, NII, Assistance Units) operate, what they do, and how they connect to each other. Furthermore, given that these are welfare organizations, are they working specifically with low-income families? If so, what are some of the criteria for giving assistance? There is some limited info on page 11, and additional information shows up in snippets in the findings section, but this info is difficult to follow and requires the reader to assemble these pieces of the puzzle as they read. My recommendation is to take any contextual information from the findings section and transfer it to the descriptions, and add more details about how these agencies operate, how people request and access services, which populations they serve, what services they provide and how, etc. | We were unable to respond to this comment because of word counts limitation. |
| Throughout the findings and discussion, the authors present multiple forms of institutional logics, broken down into their constitutive elements (sources of legitimacy, occupational identity, source of authority, and normative base). The authors do this for three models (for a total of 12 distinct constitutive elements). However, in many cases the analysis offered in each element is backed by one quote or less and not thoroughly discussed. My sense is that the authors are trying to do too much analysis with too little data (at least the data that is given) | We have added quotes and separated the two insititutional logics in a way that turns the analysis more analytical and better supported. |
| It’s also unclear whether these ultimately contribute to the larger argument around collaborating feminism. There are several ways to address this.  One option is to create a table with a simplified version of these ideas and discuss them thoroughly in a separate discussion section, ensuring that there is sufficient data in the previous section to support each of the 12 elements. | We have created three comparative tables that clarify the argument of the different institutional logics. |
| I believe a better solution is to remove all of them and focus the paper on providing thorough evidence to support the main claim about how social workers are engaged in collaborating feminism. The authors can still reference some of these findings, but without having to list all four elements for each welfare institution and extensive evidence to back up each of the 12 claims. | In our analysis, institutional logic are the main framework thus, it was impossible to omit their indicators. However, the current analysis is organized in a way that clarifies the different aspects and collaborative feminism emerges clearly from each of the three tables comparing the logics. |
| It would be helpful to replace the word “interviewees” with the specific roles played by the people the authors interviewed. Although the description suggests that interviewees included managers, direct service workers, and social workers, it’s unclear how their roles impacted their responses or the ways they could (or could not) apply feminist ideas. | A qualitative study cannot isolate the causal impact of any one factor and thus, we are unable to contribute a causal argument explaining the specific impact of the interviewees’ organizational position. |
| **Reviewer3’s comments** | **Our response** |
| The paper currently lacks front-to-back consistency.  In particular, there seems to be a gap between (i) the focus on the work of feminist NGOs in introducing feminist logics in relation to how welfare organizational employees respond to economic abuse, and (ii) interviews with employees of Israeli state welfare organizations which appear to focus on how these employees deploy logics to frame their responses to economic abuse in practice. | We have now ensured such consistency  Correct! When we began our study we never thought that what would emerge in our material are the distinct differences among social workers – those staying with welfare organizations’ dominant institutional logic and others embracing the collaboration with feminist NGOs. However, this isn’t necessarily a gap but rather a common inductive analysis allowing a commitment to a gendered understanding of EA to emerge from the analysis as well as the cooperation with feminist NGOs. We have now framed this issue straight forward in our introduction suggesting that inductive analysis may indicate the impact of feminist NGOs in ways we were not aware of before:  “Our study presented hereafter does not report such formal cooperation, but it suggests the possibility that when welfare organizations’ employees are asked about their work routines, their answers will inductively reflect such cooperation, indicating a minor feminist impact that deserves attention”. |
| One suggestion is to narrow the focus of your paper (i.e., focus only on research questions 1), an alternative option might be to be more explicit in your theory development, findings, and discussion about how the feminist NGO logics come to influence the logics of welfare organization employees. Clarifying the focus of the paper - and reflecting this consistently in the abstract, introduction (including research questions) - will help to lay the groundwork for a distinctive theoretical contribution. | We chose the second option. Further, we reorganized the paper for better consistency between the different parts. |
| For a good discussion of how multiple institutional logics can emerge in a field see: Bryant, Melanie, and Vaughan Higgins. "Managing the grand challenge of biological threats to food production: The importance of institutional logics for managing Australian biosecurity." Australian Journal of Management 44, no. 4 (2019): 534-550. | There is an important difference between the project we report here and Bryant and Higgins' (2019) discussion of multiple institutional logics: their conceptualization is based on the formal recognition of the multiplicity while in our case the multiplicity is left implicit and encouraged only by the neo-liberal managerialist lacking resources for support, almost forcing social workers who are willing to help to turn to the resources made available by feminist NGOs. Particularly important in signifying this difference is the proximity of their field to the institutional ambidexterity approach with its four ways of generating organizational change which in our case does not exist and would confuse the reader to expect change. Thus, we thank you for introducing us to their work but we only took from them the need to emphasize better the co-existence of conflicting institutional logics in the way discussed by Cloutier and Langley (2013):  “Cloutier and Langley (2013) have observed the multiplicity of institutional logics that may occur following cooperation with other organizations, maintaining a political gaze into potentially incompatible conflicting values that are encountered in the context of such multiplicity. They developed an approach in which among the many forms of relationships between institutional logics, the multiplicity goes unnoticed but nevertheless, creates possibilities for marginalized action.” |
| The paper would benefit from greater conceptual clarity. Both in relation to how the institutional logics approach is deployed (situating the approach more clearly in the literature), and in relation to some of the key terms used.  For example, early in the paper it would be useful to draw upon the existing literature where possible to clearly define/ distinguish (i) feminist NGOs and welfare organizations,  (ii) economic abuse and other forms of domestic and family abuse (including more discussion perhaps of the intersections between abuse types),  and (iii) ‘coordinating feminism’ and adjacent terms. | We now position ourselves in the institutional logic literature right at the first page of the introduction:  “Consequently, institutional multiplicity and ambivalence were generated allowing us to apply Cloutier and Langley’s (2013) multiple institutional logics approach, introduced below. It helped us investigate how a feminist institutional logic became part, even if marginalized, of state welfare organizations”.  We now explain in the introduction that by ‘welfare organizations we refer to state agencies operating as welfare organizations. We introduce the abbreviation of SWO:  “…social workers employed by State agencies operating as SWOs (hereafter SWOs)” .  The paper now opens with such a distinction:  “Over the past decade, several bills have been proposed in Israel to name and acknowledge economic abuse (EA) referring to a distinct form of controlling partner violence. It deprives women of their financial agency (Sharp-Jeffs, 2021) and is inflicted with or without physical abuse, often post-separation (co-author1 et al., 2021)”.    The first section of our literature review now deals with feminist NGOs and we have included such distinction in it:  “The definition of coordinating feminism that we use here relies on Barandiarán et al.’s notion of collaborative governance indicating continuous, partially formal, cooperating between state agencies, NGOs, business entities (e.g. banks), police, healthcare agencies and so on, in promoting support for populations suffering gender intersectional vulnerability, whose urgent needs are left underfunded under neo-liberal managerialism. EA survivors constitute such a population. Contrasting state feminism, coordinating feminism extends involvement beyond the project of policy change to the practical provision of support; contrasting market feminism, coordinating feminism maintains its impact beyond contracts gained from state agencies through leading campaigns and seeking forms to support women independently of state funding.” |
| It would be useful to redevelop the literature review so that it is more helpful in supporting the narrative of the paper and shows deeper engagement with both the merging literature on organizational responses to domestic and family violence/ intimate partner violence (e.g., see Wilcox et al., 2020) and the institutional logics’ literature. At the end of the literature review it would be helpful for the flow of the paper to reiterate its key points to the reader; pointers for what the reader should ‘take with them’ from that part of the paper. | A deeper engagement with the literature on organizational responses to IPV is now manifested in the section of economic abuse:  “Feminist activists have tackled employment sabotage establishing organizational responses protecting survivors through employment laws from discrimination or unfair dismissal among other things (Wilcox et al., 2020)”. |
| The section on coordinated support for survivors of economic abuse in Israel is really fascinating, but it might be helpful to provide some further detail for those not familiar with the context as this might help people to better understand the study’s findings. It’s stylistic, but I would also suggest moving this section to before the literature review/ theory development or making it clear how it links to the theory developed. | Details were added while splitting the the section into a section of alternative logic for each of the state welfare organizations. |
| The paper’s methodology is currently undescribed, and it would be useful to provide more detail about, for example, the interview schedule (e.g., where interviewees asked about the influence of feminist NGO on their logics/ practices?), sample composition (including a justification/ overview for the welfare organizations involved), and data analysis. Inductively theorizing institutional logics is complex, and therefore requires a clear articulation of the processes through which logics are identified from the data. For a good discussion see: Reay, Trish, and Candace Jones. "Qualitatively capturing institutional logics." Strategic Organization 14, no. 4 (2016): 441-454. | We have somewhat extended our methods section primarily adding questions from the interview schedule.  In terms of eliciting the institutional logic, we relied on the systematic guidelines provided by Toubiana and Zietsma (2017) which propose an analytical method that is predominantly consistent with Thornton et al. (2012). These authors discuss the proposed source by Reay and Jones and explain why theirs is a step forward. |
| The findings section includes some great insights and indicative quotes but is currently slightly too descriptive and would therefore benefit from a more analytical/ thematic presentation. It’s a stylistic choice, but given the repetition of the four institutional logic dimensions across the section, it may be useful to summarize the findings in a table that highlights the comparison made across the organizations in the sample. Alternatively, developing fewer themes in greater depth may help to better convey/ theorize from the analytical work undertaken. Finally, this section could be better connected to the paper's literature review. | We reorganized the findings section. |
| The discussion section is the least developed section of the paper. In particular, it reads as quite disconnected from the methodology and findings presented (e.g., the focus on different types of feminisms). Improving overall paper focus and front-to-back consistency is likely step in helping to clarify the paper’s discussion and to better establish the distinctiveness of the contributions made. | We rewrote the discussion so that it is now organized around the emergence of cooperation and coordinated feminism. |
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