

The internationalization of higher education in Brazil: A marketing policy

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When market logic and commodification of education prevails, education is treated as a negotiable product, governed by the rules of trade and influenced by competition. This is very different from the concept of internationalization of higher education – whose essence is the academic cooperation, institutional solidarity, and freedom of thought (Dias Sobrinho, 2010).

Abstract

This article discusses how the ongoing processes of globalization are creating educational policies that pertain to, or are deliberately attached to the internalization of higher education in Brazil. With that being the case, these policies have become predicated on market based agreements, and have thus become important components of the overall commercialization of education as a service that should be available to those who have the means to claim it. It is with this reality that education may no longer be seen as a fundamental human right, but as something that is available in the general market of global exchanges and transactions. The paper critically the important interplays of these and related issues, and weighs the neoliberal versions of education against possible systems of learning that afford people their social and citizenship rights.

Introduction

Globalization has influenced the public policy world, with a significant emphasis on the internationalization of financial markets that has been promoting the integration and strengthening of regional blocs. In this context of globalization, higher education became a central theme in the field of agreements and treaties for economic development, integrating the arena of international trade under the General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Given this new perspective, education is seen as a service and not a human and social right and has started to have new forms of international regulation (Leuze, Martens & Rusconi, 2007; Santos, 2010).

Given the strong presence of neoliberalism in contemporary Brazilian educational policies, where the process of internationalization of higher education is seen by the capitalist market as a lucrative source, this paper discusses the challenges of higher education on the promotion of social emancipation. Guimarães-Iosif (2011) points out that the effort for global citizenship education has been losing more and more space in this scenario of internationalization of higher education designed by the neo-colonial

globalization forces, which aim to train entrepreneurs for the market and not participating and emancipated citizens. In this context, this paper asks to what extent the internationalization of higher education in Brazil is a strategy to consolidate the widespread marketing policy favoured by neoliberal globalization or a factor in promoting social equity and empowerment of the citizen in this country.

The paper is divided into three parts. Firstly, it offers a brief historical overview of the policies of higher education in Brazil. It then analyzes the influence of international organizations in the process of internationalization of education at this level in times of neoliberal globalization. In the third part, in order to understand the new forms regularization of internationalization of public policy, it points out the challenges facing higher education in favour of emancipation and social equity. Recent studies in the area of internationalization of higher education and contemporary challenges of Knight (2007), Dias Sobrinho (2010), Santos (2010), Guimarães-Iosif (2011) and Mello & Dias (2011) contributed to the analysis and theoretical arguments of the issues addressed in this paper.

We conclude that the internationalization of higher education in Brazil, is serving the interests of international agencies and national and international financial sectors, following market-driven logic, in a similar fashion to other education policies aimed at this segment of education. The state went from a supplier role to that of a regulator. Social issues are ignored in many situations and thus we observe a deepened inequality and social injustice and a perpetuation of the colonization of minds in our country.

Higher education policies in Brazil

The elitist view of higher education in Brazil goes back to the time of colonization (1500-1822). The ruling class went abroad to have access to the best universities, thus the internationalization of higher education already existed even before the masses – the poor, blacks, natives – obtained the right to education. At the end of the nineteenth century, the country "had more than 90% of its population illiterate" (Guimarães-Iosif, 2009, p. 46), a period in which the first institutions of higher education were opened in the country.

In early Twentieth Century, Brazil has undergone profound and constant education reforms devised by Teixeira, Francisco Campos, Lourenço Filho. On the international scene, World War I (1914-1919) brought incontestable changes for everyone. With the dawn of the Industrial Revolution in 1930, and with the advent of an ever-more accelerated urbanization, the need for skilled labour became more evident thus triggering a national investment in higher education to meet the demands of capitalism. Decree n. 19.851/1.931 established the norms of the organization of universities and their operation at the federal, state and private levels.

The Federal Constitution of 1934, made education a fundamental right for everyone for the first time, however the education policies of the time only served the ruling class. The 1937 Federal Constitution, enacted during the dictatorial period ruled by Getúlio Vargas (1937-1945), put educational policy to the service of capitalist needs. The constitutional text suggests the preparation of a larger contingent of manpower for the new activities offered by the market. The educational system has become the most effective manipulation of the lower classes (Freitag, 1986). Once again the world is undergoing intense transformations: World War II (1939-1945) erupts.

In 1968, during the second period of military rule (1964 – 1985), occurred the first university reform. The concept of education, in the decade from 1965 to 1975, was revised and reinvented under a new approach: the economic (Freitag, 1986). Standards were set for the organization and functioning of higher education and effected structural change in universities. It established a single organizational model for public and private universities. Under military rule, the new Law n. 5.540/1968 was meant to "steer the purpose of Brazilian universities by parameters of efficiency, effectiveness and administrative modernization in a managerial and rationalizing perspective of academic life" (Bittar, Oliveira, & Morosini, 2008, p.12). The expansion of private higher education occurred rapidly. The possibilities of implementing policies that promote democracy, providing answers to the social demands of all Brazilians, were weakened by the suppression of political and civil rights during periods of dictatorship.

Almeida Filho (2008, p. 110) adds that, in the '80s and '90s, government policy deliberately promoted the "opening of higher education as a field of deregulated market", serving two strong trends in higher education: the privatization and internationalization. The privatization rapidly expanded the number of vacancies, especially in private institutions operated by for-profit ventures that. On the other hand, the author warns that developing countries such as Brazil are being invaded by massive offerings of Master in Business Administration (MBA) and other levels of higher education programs offered by institutions from North America and Europe.

Contemporary context

At the turn of the 20th century, the evaluation process assumed a leading role, establishing national rankings among institutions, and emerging competitiveness in the system. The National Council of Education and the National Examination of Courses (Law n. 9.113/1995), the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (Law n. 9.394/1996) and the National Assessment of Higher Education (Law n. 10.861/2004) was created to establish evaluation criteria and enable the assessment of institutions. Today higher education is directly linked to the globalization process and the guidelines imposed by international agencies. From the perspective of profitability, higher education is considered as a source of knowledge and value to the market. "The Evaluative State acquires the connotation of evaluation in all aspects of reality and education at all levels of the system. However, it is in higher education that we see the greatest impact" (Morosini, 2006, p.112). The constant search for education and certification of educational systems is present in a continuum at national, regional and international levels.

Almeida Filho (2008) analyzes the dominant model of higher education in Brazil, whose curriculum structure is due to: a) design a linear and fragmentary knowledge, b) models overcome academic and vocational training; c) incomplete or frustrated university reforms; d) deregulation of higher education. The policies of the Brazilian state have endorsed and aligned themselves to neoliberal-capitalist development policies and, as a result, oppressing social rights. Despite the undeniable progress made along the educational history of this country, this market vision is overlapping with the guarantee of social rights. Investments and subsidies for Private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have been frequent. This fact demonstrates a strong presence of neoliberalism.

The guidelines undertaken by the government serve to implement the programmes of the World Bank, aimed at reducing state-offered public education and the expansion of private higher education, through the flexibility and diversification of HEIs. The government's actions are portrayed clearly in the University for "All" Program implemented in 2005. The program aims to allow access for low-income population to university education through the granting of full and partial scholarships in degree courses at private HEIs, which in turn receive tax incentives from the government. The engineering management program balanced the popular impact, meeting the demands of the private sector, the requirements of the World Bank and the restriction of public policies that are of higher cost to the government. The Program was established as a neo-liberal educational policy. The social content of the program was reduced to satisfy the greed of private institutions (Catani & Gilio, 2005).

Inequalities arising from the colonial period are still present and continue plaguing Brazilian society. The failure of educational reforms in Brazil is mostly due to elitist policies that have almost always greatly favoured the domestic and international market overriding the needs of the majority of the population (Guimarães-Iosif, 2011). Policies directed at higher education over the last decade, although adopted with the help of a democratic lobby, have been aimed at privatizing education and transforming students into customers. The market principles adopted in education have allowed the proliferation of large national and multinational publicly traded corporations and the participation of foreign investors, who focus on the economic market.

A great example is the Brazilian Anhanguera group who has become the 2nd largest purveyor of higher education in the world, after having more than 400 thousand students in Brazil, only trailing behind of Apollo Group in the United States (Ninni & Cruz, 2011). The Brazilian educational groups – Anhanguera Educacional, Kroton and Estácio Participações – opened capital in the Stock Exchange. The results are linked to macroeconomic movements, under the aegis of a neoliberal global economy. It is worth adding that not only HEIs follow these precepts, but also public policy and the organization and management of the state, thus promoting a type of social exclusion intensified by neoliberal globalization.

In the current period, according to Olssen, Cood and O'Neill (2004), globalization has encouraged a gradual deregulation by individual nation-states through the international movement of capital and goods. In addition to the pressures of free trade, other related developments involve: a) the close-knit relationship between the state and business sector, and close relations between states and multinational corporations; b) new systems of control and accountability; c) the growing trend of marketization and deregulation of social services, including education at various levels; and d) standardized institutional competition as a strategy to encourage the efficient use of resources.

The authors emphasize that globalization is not a homogeneous or universalizing process. Its various dimensions – economic, political and cultural – will have different manifestations in different national contexts. Some groups, such as social movements, see globalization as a new form of colonization, threatening to destroy their cultures and exploit their people. In this context, instead of promoting autonomy, neoliberalism is a new system of political and economic control. Within the neoliberal model, the role of the state is now seen as a facilitator and instigator of the proper functioning of the market.

Neoliberal globalization aims to create niches in society and does not allow everyone to have access to education, culture, knowledge, and new technologies of information and communication, a fact which promotes and intensifies social inequalities. The neoliberal framework is one of the agents that helped promote Brazil's economy, which today is the 6th biggest economy in the world. In contrast, and despite many advances, there remains a great social divide, and the vast majority of the population lives at the margins of society.

The role of higher education in the knowledge economy

Until recently, the internationalization of higher education was only seen in the context of universities. Academic mobility aimed to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences and increase academic quality and scientific advancement. Internationalization happened through partnerships and university cooperation. With the advent of globalization and neoliberalism, globalization has acquired greater importance and some new meanings in regards to the competitive market in our information and knowledge society.

Note that the new regulations, which the countries and blocs have undergone, are happening worldwide. In a global perspective, the transnationalization of higher education is seen through the eyes of profit, which goes against the educational and social purpose. Global policies are being transformed into national policies, the interests of capitalists are transformed into public policy, or rather that of the nation state. "Neoliberal state policies have not shown that they have a public nature, that is, being focused on the interests of the majority, but rather, have been characterized by traits that are deeply private or private, because they look to meet the interests of accumulation" (Romão, 2008, 169).

In Brazil, the dismantling of the nation state accentuates the dependence on economic activities and denationalization. When you globalize, the University is no longer a "space where the contradictions in the country could express their identity and where we can defend collective interests, expressed in overcoming social inequality and economic, political and cultural emancipation for the majority of its inhabitants" (Almeida, Souza, & Mancini, 2008, p.195). In this context of internationalization of higher education it is essential for the country, especially civil society, to stand together and use this moment not only to meet market interests, but also to strengthen the state in favour of the interests of minorities who are excluded from this process.

In the words of Almeida Filho (2008, p. 118), "resist or adjust to the academic expectations of international corporations will become a major dilemma faced by the university system in Brazil this century." Dagnino (2008, p. 78) adds that "it is necessary to generate a discussion about how new actors, are seeking to give themselves a new significance in the social fabric. And at the same time making the public university seeks actors in society with which to build alliances."

To consider higher education institutions as for-profit companies and run them as such, thus mostly concerned with their profitability, is maintaining educational policies as reflections of social inequalities. Education should promote learning beyond society and the knowledge-based economy. More than ever, to attract and enroll international students comes to represent currency, either by the imposition of school fees, the expenses that students (through scholarships or investment from their families) must bear,

such as transportation, housing, food, healthcare, and leisure activities. Furthermore, there is significant potential that the student will promote the host country (language, culture, and political and economic interests) once back in the country of origin.

The influence of the market in the process of internationalization of higher education

In Brazil, the State policies and the policies of Higher Education have followed the guidelines of international organizations – the World Bank (WB), World Trade Organization (WTO), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – which have had significant influence in the Brazilian development process. These organizations encourage a minimum-performance State as a provider and prioritize economic issues at the expense of social welfare (Leuze, Martens, & Rusconi, 2007). "The market has acquired a transnational quality, corroborated by the inclusion of education in GATS rules that fall within the WTO" (Morosini, 2006, p.112).

According to Knight (2007), the increased global demand for higher education has resulted in a diversity of providers of educational services that cross physical borders. These providers can be classified into two categories: 1) the traditional higher education institutions that are normally dedicated to teaching, research and service and have a commitment to society, 2) and new or alternative providers (agencies, corporations, virtual universities) that focus on teaching and delivery of educational services. The international mobility of programs happens through franchises, partnerships and reciprocal certifications. A key factor in frontier-independent programs is the aspect of who grants credits for the courses or graduation credentials for the program. In the current manner that such programs are proliferating, they will undoubtedly bring change in regional, national and even international regulatory systems.

We are living with two constructs of education that are in permanent tension, one that persists in following the traditional goals of education – education of citizens, education and social advancement – and another, on the contrary, that by stimulating competition, promotes the commodification of education.

After a decade of its establishment in 1999, the Bologna Process, an issue high on the agenda of the European Union and the rest of the world, describes the ways in which nation states have been faring in the face of rapid and constant reforms of higher education, leveraged by globalization. The purpose of the Bologna agreement is to promote a system of comparable qualification, standardization of curricula, accreditation, assessment and mobility in the higher education academic area. "The Bologna Declaration is the formal record of an important process that aims to create a strong convergence in European higher education in order to efficiently answer problems, opportunities and challenges engendered by economic globalization" (Dias Sobrinho, 2010 , p. 173).

The changes to the neoliberal model in the field European educational responded to commodification of education and are reflected in other countries and blocs. To adapt to European globalization, each country had to make economic adjustments, reduce state intervention and the duties of providers of state-level social welfare, in order to be provided by supranational bodies. According to Dias Sobrinho (2010, p. 175), "it is a reform from above, without giving the university community the opportunity to participate fully in their discussions. The academic and scientific community worries that

the university has lost its long-term prospects." The essential functions of higher education began to be questioned, while the market economy is the only one who is dictating the rules.

Mello and Dias (2011) add that the European dimension, as difficult as it is to define, is a priority in the process of internationalization, which can be interpreted as the requirement to respond to the need to train highly qualified personnel for the labour market. For the authors, it rarely speaks of a Europe for citizens, based on humanistic principles and tolerance. The process of internationalization of higher education in the European Union has emphasized the aspect of efficiency and economic competitiveness. The Bologna Process is a stimulus to privatization, direct or indirect, in higher education and the transmission of messages that aim to merely encourage more competent labour, to meet current market requirements, that "education for citizenship and the development of a social contract between higher education and society. Grounded in the Anglo-Saxon way, it may be given a chance to consolidate a single thought" (Mello & Dias, 2011, p. 417).

In South America, the integration of countries has created blocks in order to build greater regional cooperation, which follows in the footsteps of the European model advocated in the Bologna Process. The Southern Common Market (Mercosur), established in 1991, covers the political, economic and social aspects of its member countries as a way to develop them and to reduce the discrepancies in the region. In the same year, was created the Education Sector of Mercosur (ESM). In two decades of implementation, ESM has formulated and implemented policies to promote educational integration between the Member States and their partners. Under its Higher Education policies, the intention is to create an academic space of evaluation, accreditation and mobilization that may also have regional representation. To maintain a structure of academic mobility, ESM implemented the Regional Academic Mobility Program for Accredited Courses (RAMPAC) in 2005 and the Mercosur Mobility Program (MMP) in Higher Education, that is still in its pilot phase.

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC, 2009), only eight Brazilian universities participated in the RAMPAC in 2009, covered only three courses – agronomy, engineering and medicine. The program is still incipient and its consolidation is still a challenge. The MMP, established in 2010, is the result of a partnership between Mercosur and the European Commission and aims to encourage cooperation between the academic community of the countries that make up the South American economic bloc. The program has not yet results.

The Science Without Borders Program (SWBP), created in 2011, is the latest internationalization program of the federal government, and aims to promote the consolidation, expansion and internationalization of science and technology, Brazilian innovation and competitiveness through exchanges and international mobility. The government aims to benefit 101.000 students (graduate and postgraduate) and researchers by 2015. The humanities and social sciences were not included in this program, which may be another indication that social development is not the focus of these new proposals¹¹.

¹ See the website – <http://www.cienciasemfronteiras.cnpq.br/>

Knight (2007) points out that despite that the mobility of students, teachers, knowledge and values has been part of higher education for centuries, in the last two decades there was a significant increase in the mobility of programs and forms of financing of educational services, whether physical or virtual. These changes present new opportunities – increasing access to higher education, strategic alliances between countries and regions, production and exchange of knowledge, income generation, and improvement of academic quality. The list of potential benefits is long and varied. However, the list of potential risks may include and is not limited to an increase in low quality education, reduction of public funding, non-recognition of foreign qualifications; elitism in terms of who can afford cross-border education, excessive use of English as a language of instruction, and non-compliance with national higher education policies. "The risks and benefits vary between developed and developing worlds and among the countries that send and receive students, institutions, enterprises and employers" (Knight, 2007, p. 153).

The countries domestic policies determine whether the internationalization of education is a risk or an opportunity, if the cooperation of countries of the Global North is in favour of colonization of the minds and an overvaluation of collaboration for the economic or social progress and development of countries. In Brazil, it is possible to observe that public policies focused on the higher education are moving more and more toward the risks than the benefits:

- a) there has been increased access to higher education, the number of student enrolment has increased from 3 million in 2001 to 6,3 million in 2010 (MEC/INEP, 2011), the counterpoint is that quality has lost space to quantity;
- b) the investment in public higher education has decreased, while subsidies and investment in private institutions has increased (88,3% of HEIs are private);
- c) undergraduate and graduate education in this country will, still, remain elitist, the vast majority of people who participate in internationalization programs are upper-class;
- d) English is the universal language in times of globalization, but the majority of the population has no command of the language, making it difficult for them to gain access to the transnational group. To participate in internationalization programs of the Federal Government, such as SWBP, it is not enough for individuals to be able to communicate and have an English course diploma, but they must also pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language, a fact that makes the policy very elitist and exclusionary.
- e) the national policies are geared toward efficiency, productivity and competition, while equity and social justice are only found in political discourse and are losing out to other market interests that dominate the sector.

Knight (2007) argues that the opportunities and risks of internationalization of higher education depend on the ability of countries to develop policies and regulations to integrate global policies within the national system of higher education, which may be able to comply or not with the global social, economic, cultural and economic requirements. Are the policies and the true interests of the countries involved the real determinants of the actions and programs offered to their citizens and are they making clear the real objectives: inclusion or exclusion, freedom or oppression, colonization or decolonization of minds.

To Guimarães-Iosif (2011), in reality, Northern Universities employ a global entrepreneur model that favours the programs of internationalization, aiming to increasingly educating global citizens, able to compete and succeed while exposed to various market conditions at the international level. One can identify two types of internationalization policies: the horizontal relationship between the Global North countries, based on the concept of learning and collaboration with other countries where the economy, culture and values are similar, and the vertical relationship between the Northern and Southern countries, those less economically developed, in which the discourse of teaching and help, is based, mostly, on exploitation. The latter happens from the top down, is founded on the principle that the knowledge created in the North should be imposed on the Southern countries. This model shows how the idea of superiority among people remains strong and helps to perpetuate oppression and inequality around the world. Knowledge, in this case, is used as a weapon in the process of colonization of the minds of citizens in the South Global.

The current landscape of higher education in the country puts in question to what extent is the internationalization of higher education for "all" or just for the elite? To what extent will it include or exclude people because of their language or the region where they live? What are the students who will take part in the mobility programs? To change the current Brazilian reality these issues must be better investigated in future studies.

Global challenges facing social equity and empowerment of citizens

The opening of markets and borders in the last two decades, has proven to be an advantage for the Brazilian economy, which has conquered the hyperinflation of the '80s. According to Ituassu (2011), the advancement of the country is recognized internally and externally, but in contrast, the inequality in respect to opportunities is a very old problem. The country is among the top ten countries with the worst income distribution. This is an aspect that is particularly historical and prominent to the educational system. Indeed, the advancement of the country has been marked by a capitalist revolution, a transformation oriented towards the market in an industrial society that is marked by centralized bureaucracy and motivated by materialism and consumerism.

In times of globalization and homogenization of nation-states, the challenges are complex and exist in plural dimensions when thinking in social, cultural, educational and historical terms. The classes aim to realize their hegemonic conception of the world in the form of common sense, that is, to make society internalize the values and standards that ensure the scheme of domination deployed by it (Freitag, 1986). It is this field that is required for a strengthened civil society.

A higher education that is more global and homogeneous has been installed by the new internationalization settings. The results of this process are undeniable. Participants broaden their scope of professional practice, create networks and learn the habits and customs of a different culture, and when these participants return to their countries of origin, they bring new knowledge and experiences. On the other hand, these experiments may reflect economic and social inequality experienced by different participating nations, as they tend to promote the standardization of curricula and cultures and the colonization of minds. In this context, international agencies have had ample space to intervene in the setting of educational products to be traded in the global market (Lima & Maranhão, 2011).

Given the globalization and domination that international capital has on the whole Western world, Almeida, Souza and Mancini (2008, p.192) emphasizes the search for a new perspective: "the construction of a globalization of opposition, which may seek to build a utopia but can go further, seeking the construction of a transformed reality, highlighting the voices of the past and allow the rescue of our emancipation" – the unfulfilled promise of modernity that we need in order to build a new model to support social justice.

According to Demo (2000), the emancipatory process develops through political awareness by making the subject aware of his own history. An emancipated society requires individuals to have critical consciousness. Emancipated citizenship results from this emancipatory process, thus enabling citizens to say no to political poverty, seeking ways of overcoming obstacles, proposing alternatives, and organizing themselves into associations. Only then can society be free from oppression, and its citizens can be free from marginalization and the status of pawns.

From the pair of current neoliberal globalization tendencies is emerging another. Santos (2010) says that this new globalization is constituted by cross-border networks and alliances among movements, struggles, and local or national organizations, that in different corners of the globe are mobilizing to fight against social exclusion, the decline of public policies, violations of human rights and the precariousness of work directly or indirectly produced by neoliberal globalization. The author suggests an alternative globalization, counter-hegemonic, organized from the bottom to the top of society.

Given the transformation of higher education associated with the processes of changes in global society, Dias Sobrinho (2010, p. 61) asks the sense, reason and focus of the changes you want. For the author, "higher education has the difficult challenge of confronting the contradictions of regulation and autonomy, both the transnational and institutional spaces of global and national public policies, as in the realms of subjectivity, that is, the formation of subjects". When there is a joint effort of the nation state, civil society, national and international bodies, in favour of a just and caring nation, where the most precious gift to be valued and sought after is the dignity of the human person, reconciled with the demands of the knowledge and information, this challenge can be achieved. It is an urgent national policy directed also to social principles and not just marketing. Santos (2010) proposes an alternative to the transnationalization of solidarity that receives new information and communication technologies and promotes the formation of national and global networks that carry new pedagogies, new construction processes and dissemination of knowledge, new social commitments, national and global.

We must build new possibilities to intervene in the complex and dynamic reality in which we live. The change becomes not only possible but necessary in the interests of justice and social equity. It is urgent to adopt an educational agenda concerned with the construction of a democratic education and educators informed by civic participation and democracy. "The exercise of thinking about what things, for what, how, in favour of what, from whom, against what, against whom is a fundamental requirement" (Freire, 1997, p. 102).

Faced with this global hegemonic policy of exclusion and social inequity, we must form a global emancipated citizen. This critical and reflective citizen understands and questions the power relations that maintain and promote inequality. It is necessary that citizens question national and global problems and that they position themselves to

confront them. Emancipation is a way to organize collectively in order to strengthen civil society. Global citizenship involves three dimensions: the political, critical and emancipatory (Guimarães-Iosif, 2009).

The intention of the Brazilian system is not to promote the emancipation of its citizens, but to maintain them classified in social groups in which few are aware of the reality in which they live. The policy to maintain segregation and internationalization of education has been supporting and promoting this precept. Those able to enjoy the spoils of globalization and neoliberalism are the same ones who have access to quality education, in other words, they are those in favour of whom the policies are created in the first place.

Final thoughts

Public policies in Brazil, from colonization on, have been deployed, mostly to meet the market demands and interests of the ruling class. And over the years, they left a huge gap, widening inequality and social injustice, suppressing the rights of people living on the margins of society. The democratization of education, especially higher education and the universalization of education rights require both political will and a strengthened civil society, with space and voice in order to effectively participate in politics. We must change the way we define and implement policies, distributing resources more equitably so that the Brazilian population can enjoy the right to education guaranteed in Brazil's constitution.

The contemporary context of neoliberal globalization has promoted social inequality and privatization of nation-states, preaching a minimal role for the state, new forms of political regulation and economic and social development. The transnationalization of the economic market is blurring the boundaries between countries, relegating higher education to the whims of the market imposed by multilateral agencies. Education in the information and knowledge society is seen as a lucrative endeavour, adding value to countries seeking competitiveness and efficiency in the market.

Accordingly, based on official documents and authors writing on the subject, it is possible to discern that the internationalization of higher education in Brazil is losing its essential functions: academic cooperation, promoting social responsibility, scientific research, and exchange of experiences. It emphasizes the hegemonic culture of the Global North and at the same ignoring the local context of the public policies of the South on the internationalization of education. It also prioritizes the demands of international organizations and those of the market, either national or global, aimed at encouraging competitive spirit and the distancing of the nation state from social issues.

In this context, the formation of responsible citizens, equity, and social justice is losing out in favour of the logic of the market. In the words of Boaventura Santos (2010, p. 57), "there is room for the national and global based on reciprocity and mutual benefit." To meet the challenges posed by the globalization of education in neoliberal times, it is urgent to implement public policies that balance local, regional, national, and global issues and democratic reform, in which civil society has a recognized space and rises to claims its rights.

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