

**INTERNATIONALIZATION AT HOME IN DISTANCE POSTGRADUATE
EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

***A INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO EM CASA NA PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO NA AMÉRICA
LATINA E CARIBE NA MODALIDADE A DISTÂNCIA***

***LA INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN EN CASA EN EL CONTEXTO DE POSGRADOS EN
LA AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE A TRAVÉS DE LA EDUCACIÓN A DISTANCIA***

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ABSTRACT: This research presents experiences and reflections about the home internationalization modality in the context of postgraduate studies through distance learning. This research has a qualitative focus in which the philosophical hermeneutics is used, in a first moment, it presents the conceptual boundaries about the needs of internationalization, and its forms and challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean. In a second moment, it presents the results of students' experiences that had the opportunity to live this modality in Chile, Colombia, and Brazil. The results that are presented, show the motivations, evaluations, lessons, and challenges at the moment of taking a PhD course in this modality. Home internationalization in postgraduate studies is created by the emergency of a new relationship between the international institution directly with the students. For students, the satisfaction is in completing the PhD that in other scenarios and modalities could not be possible without losing personal and professional bonds. The biggest challenge is in self-discipline and the management of time and space to study.

KEYWORDS: Internationalization. Home. Postgraduate. Latin America. DE.

RESUMO: Este estudo tem por objetivo apresentar reflexões a partir da experiência de estudantes em nível de doutorado sobre a modalidade da Internacionalização em Casa no contexto da Pós-graduação, através da Educação a Distância. Pesquisa de horizonte qualitativo com abordagem da Hermenêutica Filosófica, num primeiro momento, apresenta demarcações conceituais sobre a necessidade da internacionalização, suas formas e desafios no contexto da região da América Latina e Caribe. Num segundo, apresenta resultados de uma experiência com estudantes que vivenciam esta modalidade no Chile, Colômbia e Brasil. Os resultados expressam as motivações, avaliações, aprendizagens e desafios em cursar um doutorado nessa modalidade. A internacionalização em casa na Pós-graduação propicia a emergência de uma nova relação entre uma instituição internacional diretamente com o estudante. Para os estudantes, a satisfação está na realização de um curso que em outros moldes não seria possível sem perder os vínculos pessoais e profissionais. O maior desafio passa pela disciplina e gestão de espaços e tempos de estudo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Internacionalização. Casa. Pós-graduação. América Latina. EAD.

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RESUMEN: *Este estudio tiene como objetivo presentar reflexiones a partir de la experiencia de los estudiantes a nivel de doctorado sobre la modalidad de Internacionalización en el Hogar (en casa) en el contexto de los Estudios de Posgrado, a través de la Educación a Distancia. Una investigación de horizonte cualitativo con un enfoque hermenéutico filosófico, en un primer momento, presenta demarcaciones conceptuales sobre la necesidad de internacionalización, sus formas y desafíos en el contexto de la región de América Latina y el Caribe. En un segundo, presenta resultados de una experiencia con estudiantes que experimentan esta modalidad en Chile, Colombia y Brasil. Los resultados expresan las motivaciones, evaluaciones, aprendizajes y desafíos para cursar un doctorado en esta modalidad. La internacionalización en casa en la escuela de posgrado proporciona el surgimiento de una nueva relación entre una institución internacional directamente con el estudiante. Para los estudiantes, la satisfacción está en la realización de un curso que de otra manera no sería posible sin perder los lazos personales y profesionales. El mayor desafío es la disciplina y la gestión de los espacios y los tiempos de estudio.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Internacionalización. Casa. Posgrados. América Latina. EAD.*

Introduction

Internationalization has assumed a priority role in Higher Education in different countries around the world. This requirement has occupied a prominent role both in institutional policies, in funding edicts, and in academic production. Moreover, international academic rankings define internationalization as one of the points to be evaluated and considered in institutions, causing greater competition among universities, giving the perception that knowledge is seen as a commercial value or currency of exchange (LAUS, 2012).

As far as Postgraduation is concerned, its necessity is demarcated as a daily claim. However, this requirement should be problematized in the light of some fundamental questions, such as: What does internationalization actually consist of? What is the ideological content that is intrinsic to this discourse? What is the space that internationalization is occupying in institutions? What specificities should internationalization take into account when done in Latin America and the Caribbean? What is the meaning assumed in the Latin American context in experiences of "internationalization at home" in distance postgraduation courses?

The importance of internationalization experiences in Postgraduation enables a broad development in the formative trajectory. This goes from conceptual aspects related to the course, planning, development of attitudes and values and recognition of the socio-affective dimension (BONILLA ESQUIVEL; MONTES SILVA, 2020).

The objective of this study is to perform two movements: a first one, comprehensive, where we seek to enter this debate; a second one, to present a report of the experience of 11

students from an International University, based in Spain and with units throughout Latin America, especially Mexico and Puerto Rico, with experiences of internationalization in graduate studies in distance education at home. They are students from Brazil, Chile, and Colombia at the doctoral level. The study seeks the motivations, understanding, meanings, learnings and challenges of such internationalization.

Important research by Streck and Abba (2018) analyzes internationalization in Latin America based on data produced by a network of higher education managers and researchers in the region. This is a contribution that allows for the broadening of understanding about the meaning of the internationalization we do or intend to do. The authors problematize internationalization both from a market logic, from neoliberal policies, and from the perspectives of the hegemonic, globalizing logic, which often mitigates cultural potentialities, developing a colonizing internationalization, generating even more dependence and reinforcing the colonial heritage. The invitation made by the authors, in this problematizing movement, is precisely to perceive the tensions between a way of doing internationalization in Latin America and the Caribbean that is not that of seduction to the "new siren song", but that can reinforce intercultural perspectives in the direction of intercultural experience. In this sense, the authors consider this a great challenge, believing that thinking about internationalization in the region presupposes considering the specificities of this place.

The extensive analysis made in the study by Streck and Abba (2018) also shows that the hegemonic rationality of a north-south internationalization has reinforced power relations that translate both into the expectations of those who disseminate it and into the search for the northern path by exchange students. At the same time, they warn us that, many times, the form of this logic, with strong roots in the United States, ends up directing curricula where the English language has replaced even other idiomatic references in the name of internationalization. As an alternative, the authors suggest a way of doing internationalization from a decolonial perspective. However, they alert to the fact that this field of investigation is still very recent and needs to be better deepened conceptually and theoretically in Latin America and the Caribbean, considering the characteristics of the context itself (STRECK; ABBA, 2018).

Another study, evaluating the scientific production on the subject in the period of a decade, finds that internationalization is an emerging theme with a sharp growth in recent times and requires further studies that can expand the field:

On the other hand, the development of more studies based on empirical evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, can more convincingly support the advancement of the area and the generation of new theoretical propositions (DAL-SOTO; ALVES; SOUZA, 2016, p. 245, our translation).

It is from this context that we seek the expansion of meanings about a perspective full of intentionalities, objectives, projects and ways of dealing with knowledge. Therefore, this study pursues the hypothesis that internationalization processes translate political, economic, social, cultural and epistemological worldviews about how knowledge is produced, valued, recognized and considered to be necessary in training trajectories. Beyond the tensions, it is fundamental that we know which internationalization we believe in and which one can contribute more to our ways of life. This is a great challenge guided by pedagogies of critical horizons that can, beyond the realization of a formal process, foster perspectives of belonging, extra-border openness, cultural valorization, and the reinforcement of identity and protagonism.

Conceptual Demarcations

According to the *Comité Économique et Social Européen* (2014), people who have internationalization experience have more advantages in the employability processes. Santos and Almeida Filho (2012) consider that internationalization is the fourth mission of the university, with teaching, research and extension being the other three. For them, internationalization works as a propulsive model that contributes to the achievement of the great final objectives of the university, in what they call integrative sets, in training and innovation research, in cultural diplomacy, and in the consolidation of integrative spaces of knowledge. Far from thinking that integration is a marginal action, it is seen as the primordial mission of an institution. It is both a means and an indicator of quality in education (KNIGHT, 1999). Let's look at its broad scope and meanings:

The process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the aims, roles or organization of post-secondary education, promoting the improvement of the quality of education and research for all students and teachers, bringing a significant contribution to society (WIT *et al.*, apud MAUÉS; BASTOS, 2017, p. 335, our translation).

However, these processes involve broad understandings from the political, economic, social, cultural, and epistemological dimensions, among others. This understanding is important so that we do not see internationalization from hegemonic perspectives guided by the logic of neoliberal policies, which are experts in always presenting us with "a new siren song. In this sense, an important study by Cunha (2017) demystifies this horizon by problematizing the tensions when thinking about internationalization, considering a kind of antinomy created by the discourse of quality in higher education and democratization. The study revisits the genesis of this discourse in the logic of the neoliberal economy, its education funding agencies, and its project of education for society. It demonstrates how globalist perspectives sometimes deny aspects of regional identity based on a strategic rationality whose horizon is the increase of power and profit. The tension increases when one seeks an affirmative and inclusive perspective that contrasts with this meritocratic discourse. The perspective of advancement in internationalization processes is associated with the intercultural and epistemological dimension (CUNHA, 2017). Based on this reference, in line with the authors, we agree that:

Internationalization cannot be seen as the privilege of an academic, political, cultural economic elite that has access to the resources necessary for mobility and experience in other contexts. There are other forms of internationalization that can be part of the cultural formation of a people. Especially with the emergence of new technologies, which assist in communicating, learning, and exchanging experiences, in real time, with people who are in other geographies (STRECK; ABBA, 2018, p. 12, our translation).

From the point of view of how it takes place, with reference to studies by (WIT *et al.*, 2015; MOROSINI, 2011), aspects of internationalization are presented that translate into ways in which it occurs or can occur:

When analyzing the internationalization of higher education, especially in the context of globalization, three important aspects should be observed: a) the way internationalization occurs, whether in a process of exchange, called horizontal, or submission and even exploitation, called vertical; b) internationalization developed internally or at home; c) internationalization developed abroad (MAUÉS; BASTOS, 2017, p. 336, our translation).

In relation to the first aspect, it is important to pay attention to whether this form promotes a relationship of broad awareness about the process, institutions and effective partners. Otherwise, the vertical form mitigates the internationalization action to a relationship of favor or dependence where only one of the poles attributes the meaning of the action. As for the second aspect, the authors emphasize the relevance of internationalization relations that grow a lot in the current globalized context, both in terms of their presence in the curricula and

in the arrival of students and teachers from other institutions in the country where the student is located. Let's see how it is understood: "Also in recent years, a new concept has emerged called "**internationalization at home**", which proposes to live the international experience without leaving our home, our university and even our country" (STRECK; ABBA, 2018, p. 13, emphasis added). The third modality, on the other hand, involves effective outgoing movements of the student to another country to carry out his studies. In this perspective, there is an effective mobility of people, projects and programs (MAUÉS; BASTOS, 2017).

With regard to Latin America, a recent study conducted a systematic literature review analyzing scientific articles from four databases (REDIB, Web of Science, SciELO, and Scopus) that index articles in the 2015-2020 interval. The study recovers historical aspects of internationalization in the region, reinforcing the inequality of the development of this perspective in relation to northern countries, as it is shown that:

[...] Latin American countries received only 1.9% of all international students, behind Africa with 2.5%, Arab States, 6.1%; Central and Eastern Europe, 9%; Asia-Pacific, 21% and North America and Western Europe with 58%; it also has the lowest percentage among the regions when it comes to implementing internationalization strategies (ARANA; PEREIRA; PERES, 2021, p. 05, our translation).

The study calls attention to a greater awareness in the region about the importance of internationalization. It was reinforced that the internationalization model is still in the perspective of cooperation agreements with occasional projects of partnerships between universities. The authors reinforce how the economic logic process has been pressuring these actions, which have become more restricted to government policies, because there is no common project in Latin America and the Caribbean. This results in great difficulty in conjugating internationalization in the region. The study shows that some countries, such as Bolivia, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Central American countries, did not appear in the research. In this sense, the debate is still emerging, and without a common project, the initiatives that occur are often motivated by countries that are external to the region (ARANA; PEREIRA; PERES, 2021).

Regarding the context of Internationalization in Postgraduation in Brazil, research by Ramos (2018) recognizes in its conclusion how internationalization processes already integrate the teaching activities and scientific research of the main programs in the country in these last thirty years, promoting profound changes in the culture of Postgraduation in Brazil. From an extensive survey of empirical data made by Ramos (2018), it was shown that, in the Brazilian case, the international modality (to abroad) is the most recognized and practiced in the

effectuation of numerous partnerships. It also points to the need to expand these actions in order to have a greater impact upon return. It notes the decrease in the sending of researchers abroad for sandwich doctorates and post-doctorates. It claims the need for policies that start attracting foreign academics to the country. One of the strategies for improvement is the investment in teachers trained abroad, who can work in the country and mobilize networks and academic partnerships. Finally, the study concludes that there is an absence of a national strategy that makes effective and sustainable processes in the internationalization of the Brazilian post-graduation courses extremely difficult (RAMOS, 2018).

Still on the internationalization models, as we have already stated, the new modality defined by Knight (2020) as IPPM, International Program and Provider Mobility, draws our attention. This modality involves a foreign provider, a Higher Education institution that offers courses, academic training program, to students from a host country. The teaching modality is distance learning, and the commitment is not from an institution-institution perspective, but from the provider institution directly to the contracting student. The syllabus is offered by the institution, with professors and lines of research, and it is up to the student to be able to organize himself/herself, with classes, supervision, orientation, and evaluations in the distance learning modality. For the author, this teaching method, which is growing worldwide and, in the region, poses some difficulties in terms of evaluation in that the countries do not have control over the number of students attending these programs. The providers are internationally renowned institutions (KNIGHT, 2020). We are talking about one of the fastest growing modalities in the current context. Let's look at the data revealing this perspective of the IPPM in the United Kingdom:

The breakdown by region is revealing. Overall, Asia received 48.7% of the students, followed by Africa (22.5%), European Union (10.9%), Middle East (9.6%), North America (4.6%), non-EU Europe (2.8%), Australasia (0.6%), and South America (0.4%). This indicates that Latin American institutions and students are not yet significantly engaged in IPPM. Research is needed to understand why, given the long history of Latin American collaboration with European and North American universities (KNIGHT, 2020, p. 179).

This is precisely the objective of this study, which seeks to understand the modality of Internationalization at Home by listening to graduate students who study this modality in the Latin American context.

Methodological approach

This is a qualitative approach study that seeks the expansion of meanings in the processes of understanding and interpretation of texts and contexts from the horizon of Philosophical Hermeneutics (GADAMER, 2002).

In this perspective, the methodology recognizes some necessary movements in the process of knowledge construction that is revealed in the search for data: First - Knowing the structuring terms of qualitative research; Second - Defining the object in the form of a question or a problematizing sentence and theorizing it; Third - Outlining the field strategies; Fourth - Addressing the research scenario informally, seeking to observe the processes that occur in it; Fifth - Go into the field armed with theory and hypotheses, but open to question them; Sixth - Sort and organize the secondary and empirical material and become impregnated with field information and observations; Seventh - Build the typification of the material collected in the field and make the transition between empirical and theoretical elaboration; Eighth - Exercise second-order interpretation. The understanding provided by the attentive, deep and impregnating reading that gave rise to the empirical categories or units of meaning, at that moment, which must merit a new theorizing process; Ninth - Produce a text at the same time faithful to the findings of the field, contextualized and accessible; Tenth - Ensure the criteria of reliability and validity (MINAYO, 2012).

This way of doing research goes far beyond procedures, but retains within it the reflection on the meaning of the information accessed and the necessary movements in the construction of listening, understanding, reworking and building new knowledge. Therefore, doing qualitative research requires dense movements, because:

The moment he understands the meaning of what he has been told and what he has observed in the field, the researcher no longer needs to be glued to the lines: his imprisonment to them is one of the greatest weaknesses of those who do qualitative analysis, because it means that the researcher was not able to go beyond the descriptive level of his empirical material (MINAYO, 2012, p. 624, our translation).

The subjects of our research are 11 students, 9 of whom are pursuing doctoral studies at an international institution in the distance learning modality, and 2 have already concluded. Among these 11, we have three countries represented: Brazil, Chile and Colombia, and one Brazilian lives in Spain. The largest number is Brazilians, 7, with another two Chileans and two Colombians. The selection criterion was based on the contact with each participant, 9 of whom are undergraduate students, and 2 of whom we had contacts by conference and by participating

in the defense of doctoral theses. As for the region where they live, among the Brazilians, two live in the South, one in the Southeast, one in the Northeast, one in the North, one in the Center-West, and one in Spain. In total, there are 2 women and 5 men. As for the foreign subjects, they are all women and two live in Santiago, Chile and two in Cali, Colombia. Of the 11 (eleven) subjects, 9 (nine) work professionally in Higher Education and 2 in the third sector.

It was performed the research technique of the in-depth interview modality, which consists of one of the techniques of qualitative research and, unlike the quantitative interview, consists only of open questions that allow a freer expression of the interviewee, and that were applied individually (MINAYO; DESLANDES, 2011). Aiming to have the perception of these students, we prepared a brief questionnaire and sent it by e-mail to each of them. In the preamble of the questionnaire, we presented the concept of internationalization at home (KNIGHT, 2020; MOROSINI, 2011; STRECK; ABBA, 2018; WIT *et al.*, 2015). The questions ranged from knowledge about the internationalization modality; motivations for studying a doctorate at an international institution; evaluation about this experience; main contributions and challenges; suggestions if they thought it necessary for the improvement of this process, to free expression about something else they wished to add. The students had 15 (fifteen) days to answer and, in this period, the return of all the questionnaires sent was received. The collection took place between January 20th and February 5th, 2022. For the sake of moral preservation, we did not identify the participants by their real names after some lines were recorded. All participants signed the Informed Consent Form - ICF.

The hermeneutic analysis consists of an epistemology that becomes methodology, and always seeks to broaden the interpretation and understanding of the facts. It performs this movement in a freer way, without categorizing, without the pretension of reaching a conclusion, but of amplifying meanings about what is shown and what we do not always see. It is a critical-abundant immersion of the facts from the guiding themes in each research question. It is on these themes that we will be discussing below.

Results

Knowledge of Internationalization at Home

Among the 11 interviewees, 9 claimed to know the terminology and 2 did not. Those who claim to know the term refer to previous experiences, such as: having already taken a Master's degree in the same modality and in the same institution in units and headquarters in different countries. The other Brazilian who lives in Spain stated that he didn't know the term even after having taken a Master's degree in the same institution. Regarding knowledge, one doctoral candidate from Colombia not only knew the term, but actually works in the Internationalization Coordination of a renowned University in Colombia. Another Chilean doctoral candidate states that her knowledge is a result of internationalization experiences and taking online courses with universities in Panama and the United States. She also pointed out that her knowledge is related to her teaching profession, where she teaches online courses in several countries, such as Uruguay, Costa Rica, Bolivia and Peru.

Among the other two students interviewed, from Chile and Colombia, who did not know about internationalization, the Chilean student stated that:

I did not know the concept as such, but I had some notion of colleagues who studied in other countries without leaving home. However, some years ago in Chile, studying in this way did not have the same prestige as leaving the country to study a postgraduate degree, nowadays this situation has changed and more and more professionals opt for this modality, especially in the scenario of pandemic and post-pandemic (Student 1, 2022).

The understanding one has from this first listening is that most students who chose their distance doctorate already knew about the Internationalization at home Modality.

Motivations for choice

The motivations to study a doctorate in this modality are diverse and range from the possibility of studying a course not offered in Brazil, having had a significant experience having studied a Master's degree in the same modality with the same institution, the contact with students from other countries in the integrative disciplines at the beginning of the course, the need to continue studies, the expansion of knowledge and interaction with professors from other countries, the possibility of double degrees, and the possibility of getting to know new cultures and studying advanced and internationally recognized concepts.

Besides these aspects, other reasons that led these students to seek the modality are highlighted, such as the expansion of the use of English and Spanish languages, the learning of new methodologies, the living of new experiences, the search for expanding interdisciplinarity, the recognition for becoming an International Doctor, the little offer of courses in this modality in Chile and Colombia, the possibility of studying for a doctorate while remaining close to the family and still developing professionally, remaining in the work they already do, as well as for the seriousness and demands of the course and for believing that this will be the most sought after modality in education for the present times given the advancement and modernization of technologies.

This broad set of motivations expresses configurations of new ways of relating and researching in the distance Post-graduation in Internationalization modality at home. In addition to being close to and continuing to work in their professional activities, since all postgraduates maintain work links in important institutions, the interviews translate the search for an expansion of meaning and intercultural learning. They also translate a certain need for international recognition for the possibilities offered. The need to develop another professional profile, more open to technologies, to new approaches and individual and collective learning, is reinforced. Equally open to the development and expansion of languages in Spanish and English: this need is more evident in the case of Brazilians, as the Chileans and Colombians speak and write in English and Spanish, and read in Portuguese. The fact that the course is not offered in their contexts of origin has been a strong motivational factor for their choice. Among the multiple statements, there is one statement by an interviewee that synthesizes this motivation of internationalization at home, and also adds the cost factor as an additional motivation.:

My country Chile has few doctorates in education and health, so a good alternative was to look outside the country, one possibility was to migrate to Spain, to do a doctorate in the native language, and that was more complicated for my family, leaving the work was complex and economically not feasible. The institution offered the opportunity to study from home, at a reasonable cost. (Student 2, 2022).

Another statement reinforces this conjunction of factors combined with the candidate's needs and limitations:

"I had a great experience doing my Master's degree. Doing a PhD, in this same type of approach, with students from other countries participating in the initial stages of the course, seemed very appropriate. This, together with my limited time due to my professional activities, made the PhD in this institution ideal in my situation." (Student 3, 2022).

Still about the choice, another interviewee adds:

“The main motivation was the course itself, because this internationalization allowed me to take a course that I did not find similar in Brazil” (Student 4, 2022).

Evaluation of the Internationalization experience at Home

Seeking to find out more meanings and crossings of this experience, we asked how each of the interviewed doctoral students already mentioned in our methodology evaluates this experience of internationalization without having to leave home, and what are the main contributions, learning and challenges of this experience.

All those interviewed evaluate the experience as very positive, bringing contributions such as: being able to study for a doctorate, the profile of the professors with excellent training, methodologies that combine innovation and academic rigor, a good relationship with the thesis advisors. They also highlight as positive the flexibility of study schedules with activities developed at the doctoral student's pace. Another positive aspect is the investment in personalized training processes, because besides the personalized service that these students start to get, there is also the possibility of individual deepening. The opening of new research horizons is also reinforced, with indications for further studies in international publications. The personal value in relation to the cost value is considered great by one interviewee. The flexibility of schedules and time-spaces and the broadening of the research horizon, which is not limited to the classroom, are other aspects that stand out positively in the main contributions and learning experiences. The democratization of the training of masters and doctors, the exchange of knowledge between students with cultural diversity, and the learning of internationalized techniques and knowledge were also highlighted as positive elements in this type of internationalization.

On the other hand, regarding the challenges that are faced by the interviewees, they are also diverse, with emphasis on: the need for discipline, organization, and time management to study. All the interviewees highlight this as the biggest challenge. In second place is the need to have a good advisor. This point is relevant in most of the interviewees' statements so that there may be success and trust based on a common agreement in the process of building the thesis. One of the interviewees also emphasizes the importance of the human dimension in mentoring, because he considers that at many moments the process is lonely and needs this more comprehensive look at the mentoring relationship. For the interviewees, this teaching

profile is fundamental, because if this does not occur it may put the entire thesis construction process at risk. The use of technology is also a challenge highlighted by two of the interviewees. Only one student highlighted the difficulty with the use of readings in Spanish. Among the statements that translate this broad and complex movement of Internationalization at Home, we highlight an evaluation that summarizes other statements, as follows:

It is a very valuable experience, but it has advantages and disadvantages, among the advantages are being able to stay in the country, not leaving my family or my job, which also allows me to apply the knowledge and skills learned during the training process in the graduate program, also a very important element of the process is that links are established with teachers from other countries and that allows establishing research networks with researchers from other countries, something that is essential in the research work. Among the disadvantages is the organization of time, because not having exclusive dedication to the graduate program, as a student you have to be very organized to perform within the established times and get the most out of the instance. (Student 5, 2022).

It is reinforced that, for being a modality still under construction, it has, besides its potentialities, gigantic challenges. It is in this sense that in the next question we tried to hear what suggestions the students have for improving this process.

Suggestions and alternatives

As for the alternative suggestions, these range from institutional contributions, with guidance on time management, more effective monitoring of teachers in answering the questions in the Forum during the course phase, encouragement for more publications throughout the course, more group work, greater approximation of teachers and students in the broader context of the programs, greater diversification in the ways of presenting the content, such as, for example, more video classes with short summaries.

Other suggestions made by the interviewees refer to the adoption of a normative system with more clarity, more interactivity via web with students, permanent investment in the qualification of teachers in digital technologies, more agility in the delivery of Certificates/Diplomas and improve the guidance and support about the process of diploma recognition validation.

Free considerations with additions

In this question we have the most varied opinions possible. In a way, they translate the formative moments that the students go through. Of the 11 interviewees, two did not want to add anything, claiming to have already expressed their ideas. The others are satisfied, as is the case of a recent doctor who considers himself to be fulfilled:

“Finally, I am very happy that I studied in Mexico, because I became a Doctor in International Projects, I improved professionally, even as a human being and of course I am more prepared for today” (Student 6, 2022)

Satisfaction that also manifests itself through another student:

“It has been an excellent experience, with a lot of learning, both academically and personally, in terms of time organization, self-study, self-regulation.” (Student 2, 2022).

Another (Student 8, 2022) considers that this teaching model can be applied in other institutions. Again, the need for greater support appears, with guidance regarding the process of diploma validation. The specialist who works in the internationalization sector at her university in Colombia reinforces that studying a doctorate in this way is an excellent option:

“It is very valuable to be able to study the doctorate virtually, to have such high-quality professors and to be able to progress in the study of education. If it could only be done in person, I would not have been able to take it.” (Student 9, 2022)

In this same perspective, there is a comment that reaffirms the potentiality of the experience for development:

“That distance learning, especially in an international institution, is an excellent option for professional growth” (Student 10, 2022).

Finally, there is a manifestation of a recent doctor who worked with the theme of Distance Education and, in his thesis, he evaluates the experience and suggests that there is still much to advance, as we see:

There is a lot of work to be done to expand distance learning. As I mentioned in my doctoral thesis, distance education is not for just any student, nor is it for just any teacher. A prepared teacher will know how to identify the difficulties and limitations of the students, even at a distance, and will work to overcome them (Student 11, 2022).

Such statements translate parts of new formative processes in our region about internationalization, which are being experienced by numerous graduate students and require a

lot of attention, deepening and understanding in a first moment. In a second moment, it is necessary to promote formative actions in order to think these movements within the horizon of internationalization policies at the Postgraduation level.

Final remarks

Thinking about internationalization processes involves broad and complex dimensions. In general, they range from questions of political orientation with strong interference from the globalization model and neoliberal economies, standardization processes, as well as profiles targeted by market logic. We are witnessing North-South addresses and their strategies in education, now in the processes at the post-graduate level. For these agents, Latin America is still a vast market to be explored. The great challenge lies, at first, in understanding the rationality that guides these formative processes. On the other hand, the case study carried out here, from a qualitative point of view, demonstrates the experience of 11 doctoral students that validates and suggests that internationalization at home is a very appropriate trend for the present times.

This satisfaction is referenced by the adaptive conditions between the course and the personal and professional trajectories. Hence the consideration that in another scenario they would not be pursuing such a doctorate. There also appears an element that may be investigated in future studies, which consists of an equation to be solved between the greater "flexibility" in the relationship between the international institution that occurs directly with the student, and the need to manage the times and spaces to be built in order to account for the realization of an excellent thesis study. From the point of view of flexibilization, it integrates neoliberal language and respect for individual choices. This appears in the contract that breaks the traditional frontier of inter-institutional agreements and takes effect beyond the level between the managing institution and the student. From the point of view of the effectiveness of the study, it is the greatest challenge for the students because of the need to accomplish goals in defined times and spaces under the guidance of a professor.

It was reinforced that internationalization at home allows this confluence of individual, personal, and professional objectives without losing cultural roots, on the contrary, in a certain way, meeting a longing for prospection and openness to new ways of knowing and new intercultural dialogues. The students demand more and more spaces for collective sharing, more guidance and support in the processes of diploma validation, and the recognition of the

humanistic dimension in the guidance relationship because they understand this to be the greatest bond with the institution for most of the time.

Latin America is very vast, multifaceted, and therefore it is difficult to have a homogeneous understanding of this region. We have made a point of drawing attention to it because it shows an effective trend towards internationalization in graduate studies. The study has shown, for example, that in the UK this is currently the fastest growing modality.

Some challenges remain: to discuss if in fact this modality consists in a process of democratization of access to the Internationalization of Postgraduation, to try to understand to what extent it can contribute to processes that transcend the colonizing logics that increase dependence. In further studies, I seek to understand if there have been effective changes and contributions from these new doctors in their working spaces, or if the process was only focused on the achievement of one more title in their educational trajectory.

On the part of this researcher, I can say that the horizon of this formative process, beyond the norms and institutional guidelines, depends a lot on the profile of the professors, especially the thesis advisors. This is a significant experience that I am having and that I am interested in sharing in the future as new challenges in our ways of learning and teaching in graduate studies. However, I believe that we are still very far from the perspective of a decolonial internationalization.

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