

**THE DUALITY OF BRAZILIAN HIGHER EDUCATION: BETWEEN INCLUSION
AND COMMERCIALIZATION**

***A DUALIDADE DA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR BRASILEIRA: ENTRE INCLUSÃO E
MERCANTILIZAÇÃO***

***LA DUALIDAD DE LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR BRASILEÑA: ENTRE INCLUSIÓN Y
MERCANTILIZACIÓN***



Anderson BOANAFINA ¹
e-mail: anderson.boanafina@fiocruz.br



Carina Elisabeth MACIEL ²
e-mail: carina.maciel@ufms.br



Tatiane LIMA ³
e-mail: tatianelimaufms@gmail.com

How to reference this article:

BOANAFINA, A.; MACIEL, C. E.; LIMA, T. The duality of Brazilian higher education: Between inclusion and commercialization. **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 19, n. 00, e024087, 2024. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v19i00.18730>



| Submitted: 30/11/2023
| Revisions required: 01/12/2023
| Approved: 15/03/2024
| Published: 20/07/2024

Editor: Prof. Dr. José Luís Bizelli
Deputy Executive Editor: Prof. Dr. José Anderson Santos Cruz

¹ Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), Rio de Janeiro – RJ – Brazil. Doctor in Education. Pedagogical coordinator at Casa de Oswaldo Cruz and professor-researcher at the PPG in Professional Education in Health/ EPSJV - Fiocruz.

² Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS), Campo Grande – M – Brazil. PhD in education. Professor at the Faculty of Education at UFMS, working in the Postgraduate Program in Education. Coordinator of GEPPE/MB.

³ Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS), Campo Grande – MS – Brazil. PhD in Education from the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul.

ABSTRACT: Higher education policies, in the face of social and economic transformations, express the inherent conflicts of capitalist society, despite presenting discourses advocating access for all. Therefore, the article aims to problematize the socio-historical conditions that affect the construction of inclusive higher education. Developed through documentary and bibliographical research, the data are analyzed from the perspective of dialectical historical materialism and reveal the movement to expand admission to public and private institutions. As a result, it is concluded that inclusion policies in higher education follow the logic of the system in which they are generated and determine dualities at this level of education. However, in public education, policies interfere with the socioeconomic profile of students, increasing the entry of oppressed groups, while in private commercial higher education, this movement is expressed through students with FIES financing, who are white, female, and enrolled in night classes.

KEYWORDS: Access. Inclusion. Policies. College education.

RESUMO: *As políticas de ensino superior, face às transformações sociais e econômicas, expressam os conflitos inerentes à sociedade capitalista, apesar de apresentarem discursos que defendem o acesso para todos. Portanto, o artigo tem como objetivo problematizar as condições sócio-históricas que afetam a construção do ensino superior inclusivo. Desenvolvidos por meio de pesquisa documental e bibliográfica, os dados são analisados sob a perspectiva do materialismo histórico-dialético e revelam o movimento de ampliação do ingresso em instituições públicas e privadas. Como resultado, conclui-se que as políticas de inclusão no ensino superior seguem a lógica do sistema em que são geradas e determinam dualidades neste nível de ensino. Porém, no ensino público, as políticas interferem no perfil socioeconômico dos estudantes, aumentando o ingresso de grupos oprimidos, enquanto no ensino superior privado comercial esse movimento se expressa por meio de estudantes brancos, financiados pelo FIES, do sexo feminino e matriculados em turmas noturnas.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Acesso. Inclusão. Políticas. Educação superior.

RESUMEN: *Las políticas de educación superior, ante las transformaciones sociales y económicas, expresan los conflictos inherentes a la sociedad capitalista, a pesar de presentar discursos que defienden el acceso para todos. Por tanto, el artículo pretende problematizar las condiciones sociohistóricas que inciden en la construcción de una educación superior inclusiva. Desarrollados a través de investigaciones documentales y bibliográficas, los datos son analizados desde la perspectiva del materialismo histórico-dialéctico y revelan el movimiento hacia la ampliación del ingreso a instituciones públicas y privadas. Como resultado, se concluye que las políticas de inclusión en la educación superior siguen la lógica del sistema en el que se generan y determinan dualidades en este nivel educativo. Sin embargo, en la educación pública las políticas interfieren con el perfil socioeconómico de los estudiantes, aumentando el ingreso de grupos oprimidos, mientras que en la educación superior comercial privada este movimiento se expresa a través de estudiantes blancos, financiados por el FIES, mujeres y matriculados en clases nocturnas.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: Acceso. Inclusión. Políticas. Educación superior.

Introduction

Access to higher education expresses specific contradictions of the antagonistic disputes ongoing in the country. To the extent that it represents the articulating axis between market and capital, it also constitutes a necessary condition for social development, by influencing the understanding of knowledge as a means to change concrete conditions. In this segment, both the educational scope and higher education policies should not be analyzed in isolation from the totality, displaced from broader social processes.

Formulated in light of the clashes of interests that express the relations of conflicts intrinsic to capitalist society, higher education policies are justified by minimizing inequalities and expanding access. However, converging with guidelines set out in documents organized by international organizations, these policies do not aim to break with the current system. Furthermore, in the face of social, economic and political transformations, such actions tend to meet broader expectations of action, even if they should not (and are not able to) resolve educational issues of a structural nature.

From this perspective, as this level of education can enable social and economic inclusion, by becoming one of the means by which people seek better conditions of existence and professional occupation, the access of new socioeconomic groups imposed new demands on the formation of the students. Since access must be broad, conditions that favor the completion of the degree are now required, through permanence policies and institutional projects.

From the perspective of initiatives aimed at serving these oppressed social groups, although they do not solve structural issues, higher education policies contribute to the entry of some segments historically excluded from this level of education, such as people from public schools and/or families without university students, those with low economic income, rural, indigenous, quilombola and peripheral communities, as well as black, brown and/or disabled people.

In the legal framework of the last decade, two examples stand out in the inclusion process: Law no. 13,146, of July 6, 2015, which establishes the Brazilian Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (Statute of Persons with Disabilities) (Brazil, 2015); and Law no. 12,711, of August 29, 2012 – known as the Quota Law (Brazil, 2012) –, which provides for entry into federal universities and federal secondary-level technical education institutions and provides other provisions.

Upon completing 10 years in 2022, the Quota Law presents a relevant trajectory in Brazilian educational history. Alongside the Statute of Persons with Disabilities, they became instruments of inclusion by subsidizing affirmative actions aiming to allow, in addition to access, better conditions for permanence and success for people who were previously excluded. Regarding these effects, Fernandes (2022, p. 179, our translation) considers that, as a political strategy,

[...] affirmative actions have made it possible, in a short time, to expand and diversify the university contingent in recent decades, particularly in Federal Higher Education Institutions (IFES), democratizing access to this level of education.

In this sense, this article aims to problematize the socio-historical conditions that affect the construction of an inclusive higher education. The text analyzes the expansion of Brazilian higher education, under the effects of neoliberal policies, especially since the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC) (1995-2002), and its developments in the last 20 years.

Based on the principles of historical-dialectical materialism, documentary, and bibliographical research uses public access databases and sectoral studies. The text presented here presents the first results of a study on affirmative actions in higher education, investigating the factors that can influence access, retention and qualifications for historically vulnerable groups.

The socio-historical context of higher education in Brazil

The first point that deserves to be highlighted about Brazilian education, according to Boanafina and Otranto (2022, p. 33), is that it developed “divided into two large networks - the bourgeois and the proletarian [...]”, reflecting in the institutions of I teach the model of division of society itself. Thus, to understand the current Brazilian higher education scenario, it is necessary to know a little about the socio-historical context and the dynamics of policies and debates that permeate the issue of access and permanence of the population in undergraduate courses.

A look at the country's recent past, albeit brief, makes it clear that at the beginning of the 20th century access to school was limited, at most, to primary education. In the 1940s, for example, “for every 103 children who entered primary school, only one reached higher education”, highlights Romanelli (2001, p. 90). From the second half of the same century, the working class's access to school began to be expanded, but the objective was to meet the

demands of the industrialization process. Therefore, these would be offered the minimum necessary education. A social debt that, in addition to generating delays in the country's development, explains part of the inequities experienced by Brazilian society.

The fact is that the model adopted in the country prioritized the regulation of the population's access to higher education, sometimes through attempts to characterize a terminality in secondary education, aiming to cause a depletion of the demand for higher education; sometimes due to the limitation of places and public education institutions in the country. In the period 1956-1971, the movement called by Cunha (2007, p. 83) “surpluses in higher education”, that is, candidates who obtained an average in the entrance exams, but were unable to enroll in undergraduate courses, arrived to more than 160 thousand students, who demanded more places and resources for universities.

The scenario of dissatisfaction associated with demands from productive sectors for qualified professionals led the government to promote changes in education, among them: University Reform – Law no. 5,540, of November 28, 1968 (Brazil, 1968) – which on the one hand produced innovative effects, such as the characterization of universities as a space for interaction between teaching and research and extension, but, on the other, strengthened conservative conceptions by allowing the expansion of private institutions; and the promulgation of Law no. 5,692 (Brazil, 1971), which sought to characterize a terminal illness at the end of secondary education, aiming to cause a depletion of the demand for higher education (Boanafina; Otranto, 2022).

These two movements, in the midst of the civil-military dictatorship, served more as instruments for social maneuver than as educational policies. It can be said that it was an attempt to provide access to higher education for a small part of the population and, at the same time, reduce the flow of the majority of those aspiring to higher education courses, diverting their attention to the job market. Among the harmful effects of these measures, which have echoed for years, are the expansion of dual education and the great expansion of private education with a business profile in the country, as will be demonstrated later.

However, to understand the evolution of higher education in Brazil, it is necessary to remember, mainly, that these reforms emerged when the country was going through yet another attempt to achieve economic development. As there was a shortage of qualified professionals, especially for intermediate positions in industries, and there were not enough higher education institutions to meet the growing demand for undergraduate courses, the government encouraged what Fernandes (2020) characterized the predominance of isolated private institutions, training

specialized labor for the increasingly specific demands created by a capitalist market in constant mutation.

Martins and Vieira (2014, p. 97) highlight that “between 1946 and 1960, 18 public HEIs and 10 private HEIs were created. In 1960, enrollment was 93 thousand students, of which more than half were absorbed by the public sector”. From the government's perspective, in the search for a “viable path” to alleviate social pressures for education, the solution would be to opt for a higher education system that served national development, but, due to lack of financial resources, it adopted the “principle of expansion with containment” with the aim of achieving “maximum demand fulfillment at the lowest financial cost” (Martins, 2009, p. 19-20).

Thus, despite the complexity surrounding the topic, the issue of structuring and expanding higher education necessarily involves analyzing the conception adopted by the State regarding the function that this level of education should have in the context of Brazilian society. In a study carried out, Sampaio (1991, p. 19, our translation) understands that,

The expansion of private and non-university establishments is governed by market laws and is, therefore, conditioned by the most immediate elements of social demand, which is oriented towards obtaining a diploma. This creates a business education system in which the quality of the training offered is secondary and research is completely irrelevant.

The fact is that after the 1968 University Reform, regulatory policies were not established articulating public financing with the interests of society, especially in private higher education institutions (HEIs). As a result of the model adopted, the segmentation between public and private ended up generating major distortions in the universe of higher education which, in the words of Sampaio (1991, p. 18), “are coherent with Brazil as a whole, a deeply differentiated and unequal in geographic, social, economic and cultural terms”. Therefore, potential contributions of higher education to broad inclusion, reducing regional inequalities and between social groups, remained distant from the majority of Brazilians.

Government policies and the expansion of higher education under the aegis of capital

After a long period of political and democratic instability in the country, the first movement towards changes in the educational system occurred during the drafting of the 1988 Federal Constitution (Brazil, 1988), in which articles were inserted on the principles that should govern national education and, consequently, the regulation of the functioning of the education system in Brazil. However, it took 8 years (1988-1996) of debates and concessions so that the

new Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB) no. 9,394 of 1996 (Brazil, 1996) was sanctioned and promulgated.

In both the Federal Constitution and the LDB, the right to education became a social achievement. A way to combat inequities that, in the 1990s, already faced the barriers of “the expansion of the private sector and the gradual restriction of the public sector, the unequal regional distribution”, as Sguissardi (2006, p. 1024) reminds us. On the other hand, the democratization of access to education gained space on the country's political and social agenda. Driven, for example, by the World Declaration on Education for All (1990) – Jomtien Declaration – and the Salamanca Declaration (1994), movements in defense of the inclusion of members of historically excluded groups began to influence new debates regarding organization of education systems to serve everyone.

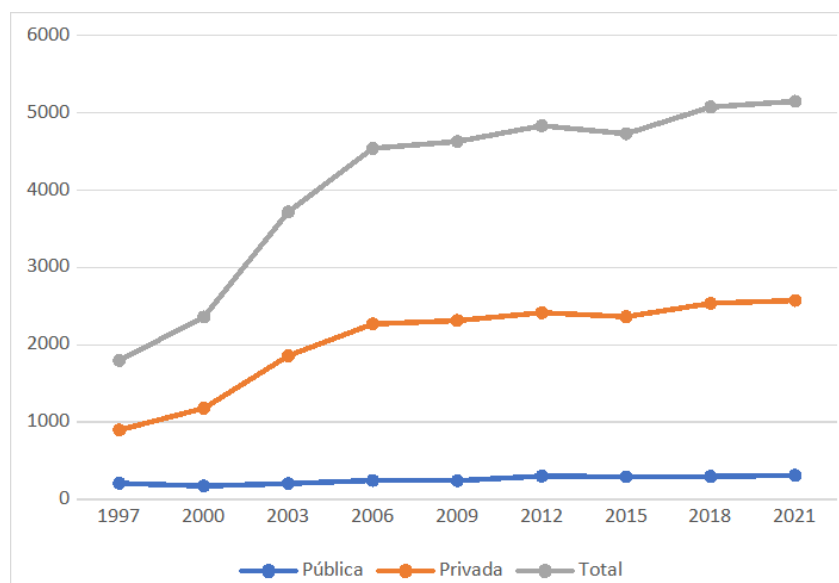
On the other hand, in the same period, throughout the second half of the 1990s and the first years of the new century, there was a wave of growth in higher education with government support. The fact is that Decree no. 2,306, of August 19, 1997, regulated several articles of LDB nº. 9,394 (Brazil, 1996) enabling the academic organization of higher education in five types of HEIs (Brazil, 1997), strengthening the expansion of private institutions, especially non-university ones, and opening up the possibility of diversifying the offer of higher education courses, including distance education modality.

The constitution of two higher education networks, public and private, intensified the fragmentation of education, expanding the duality through the development of the education system that would follow two distinct paths in the education project: one guided by the logic of knowledge production, characterized by public universities that intensified the association between teaching and research; and the other due to market demand, with the growth of isolated private and non-university institutions and the offer of short-term higher education courses aimed at professionalization.

Graph 1 demonstrates the significant increase in the number of private HEIs. In absolute numbers, according to the Higher Education Census (INEP/MEC), 1,572 private HEIs were created between 1997 and 2021, and in the same period public HEIs increased from 211 to 313, an increase of 102 new institutions.

Considering the general proportional picture, in 1997 the percentage ratio was 76.5% private HEIs and 23.5% public ones. In 2021 this proportion increased significantly, rising to 87.8% of private HEIs and 12.2% of public HEIs in Brazil.

Graph 1 – Number of HEIs by nature (Brazil – 1997-2021).



Source: Higher Education Census (Inep, 2022).

It is worth noting that the legal framework that supported this growth emerged as a policy of the FHC government (1995-2002). With a neoliberal bias, access to higher education was centered on private institutions, while the educational policies implemented were aligned with the guidelines of international organizations, following the neoliberal principles of privatization and aiming to maintain the capitalist system and minimize social inequalities (Dourado, 2002; Silva Junior; Sguissardi, 1999).

During this period, the influence of the World Bank and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in Latin American countries aimed to explicitly defend the link between education and productivity, from an economic vision, that is, so that peripheral countries are “competitive in the international market, they need to have talents to disseminate technical progress and incorporate it into the production system” (Altmann, 2002, p. 83). To this end, these institutions argue that the responsibility for offering higher education should be left to the private sector, with the public sector being responsible for prioritizing basic education.

The social transformations that marked the 1990s were associated with a change in the conception of training of working classes, guided by the neoliberal discourse that would affect not only job training, but all education.

During this period, following market logic and guided by quantitative growth, the process of expansion of higher education by the private sector minimized State participation and consolidated the commodification of education. According to data from the Higher

Education Census, presented in Graph 1, between 1995 and 2002, access centered on private institutions represented a growth of 110.8%, while the number of public institutions had a reduction of -7.1%, a scenario that clearly represents the government's policy for higher education.

Due to the limited availability of places for everyone and to counter the current privatization of education, affirmative action policies were created, centered on the discourse of inclusion, during the administration of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (Lula 2003-2010),

The inclusion discourse advocates everyone's access to constitutional rights, assuming that each subject has their own merits that determine their success or failure, without considering that this subject belongs to a certain social class, specific economic condition and that these and other factors interfere with access to their rights and the way they develop their schooling. At the same time, it is necessary to develop actions to promote better conditions for some groups, so that they can exercise their rights, including education. We identify the inclusion discourse amid contradictory aspects, such as formulating policies aimed at specific groups and, at the same time, developing universal policies. One does not exclude the other, however there are differences between defenders of one and the other (Maciel, 2020, p. 52, our translation).

Present in the struggles of social movements to guarantee rights and defended by multilateral organizations, we understand that the term inclusion forms a discourse to support government policies and programs, whose actions are developed in isolation with the aim of meeting some specific needs, of political and economic interest (Maciel, 2020). From this perspective, guided by the discourse of inclusion, different actions, such as policies and programs, were designed to contain conflicts and minimize social disparities.

To counter the privatization of higher education, but without breaking with the policies developed during the FHC government, Lula's administration proposed the prioritization of university autonomy, the guarantee of the inseparability between teaching, research and extension, the expansion of vacancies and the expansion of financing in universities in the public sector (Government Program, 2002). Furthermore, guided by the discourse of inclusion, policies were created aimed at expansion, access and permanence in public universities.

Covering the period from 2003 to 2013, the democratization of access through policies demarcated three cycles of expansion that were highlighted by Silva and Martins (2014). The first cycle was based on the Phase I Expansion Program, whose objective was to reduce regional asymmetries through the expansion of federal higher education, and initiatives that aimed to ensure the permanence of students in undergraduate courses; the second cycle focused on the

expansion and restructuring of public universities, and, finally, the third cycle was aimed at regional and international expansion and integration, aiming at teaching, research and extension in different areas of knowledge.

However, even though their objective is a commitment to minimizing inequalities and social inclusion, higher education policies are characterized by ambiguity. Under the inclusive discourse, palliative actions provided benefits for the continuity of the neoliberal project, but without consolidating the guarantee of access for all to public universities,

The changes that occurred in the PT governments were not structural changes, but, based on their political alliances, the actions could not be more than palliative. This issue implies the ambiguous position of the Workers' Party governments which, on the one hand, due to their origin and militancy, represented popular interests and, on the other, based on their alliances, assumed political practices that continued the neoliberal project established by the previous government. Thus, the expansion of the federal and public higher education system was concomitantly accompanied by the encouragement of private education, intensifying disputes over this market (Schlesener; Pereira, 2016, p. 525, our translation).

In addition to the policies developed through the private sector, such as the creation of the University for All Program (PROUNI), in 2004, and the expansion of the Student Financing Fund (FIES), in 2010, the following were also developed: the change in the functionality of the High School National Exam (ENEM), from 2009; the creation of the Unified Selection System (SISU), in 2010; and the promulgation of Law no. 12,711, in 2012, called Quota Law (Brazil, 2012). Specifically regarding permanence, there is the implementation of the National Student Assistance Program (PNAES), in 2008, and the Permanence Grant Program (PBP), in 2013.

With the aim of granting low-income students full or partial scholarships at private HEIs, PROUNI was created in 2004 and subsequently regulated by Law n°. 11,096, in 2005. FIES, intended to finance the graduation of students also enrolled in private HEIs, “[...] is an agreement between the government and private colleges, in which the State bears the costs of graduation and the student undertakes to reimburse upon completion” (Barbieri; Azevedo, 2017, p. 74).

The reformulation of ENEM and the implementation of SISU aimed to compete and offer places for undergraduate courses in public HEIs,

As mentioned in Normative Ordinance no. 21, 2012, the form of selection in the Unified Selection System would include: 1. the offer of vacancies by institutions; 2. the candidate's registration on the SISU platform based on the grade obtained in the ENEM carried out in the previous year, specifying in order of preference their alternative vacancies in the different institutions (place of offer, course, shift) and the type of competition, namely: vacancies

reserved as a result of the provisions of Law no. 12,711/2012; to vacancies allocated to other affirmative action policies eventually adopted by the institution in the Term of Adhesion and to vacancies allocated to broad competition; 3. during the registration process, the SISU platform would make available, exclusively for informational purposes, the cut-off score for each HEI, place of offer, course, shift and type of competition; 4. once registration has closed, the candidate will be classified in descending order of grades in the vacancy option for which they applied. It is worth mentioning that the candidate's grade could vary according to the weighting of the weights eventually established by the institution for each of the ENEM tests and according to the bonuses established by the institutions in their affirmative action policies; 5. for the candidate who was not selected, he could show interest in participating in the waiting list in one of the two careers chosen at the time of registration (Cunha Junior, 2021, p. 50, our translation).

The Quota Law aims to establish an affirmative action to reserve places, in all public HEIs, for self-declared black, mixed-race and indigenous students, who come from families with an income equal to or less than one salary -minimum and a half *per capita*, and/or who have completed high school in public schools (Brazil, 2012). Finally, with a focus on permanence, the PNAES and PBP aimed to consolidate the Federal Universities Restructuring and Expansion Program (REUNI) and grant financial aid to students at public HEIs.

Between 2016 and 2022, respectively in the governments of Michel Temer and Jair Bolsonaro, the proposal for PEC do Teto nº. 55/2016, in the Senate, and no. 241/2015, in the Chamber, which were approved and prohibited the State from increasing public investments for 20 years, associated with disastrous management by the MEC, culminated in the scrapping of public HEIs, denialism, the persecution of science and the devaluation of education and research. The profound stagnation in the expansion of public HEIs and the strong wave of acquisitions in private HEIs resulted in social losses, especially for the most vulnerable groups and regions.

Limits between inclusive education and flexible private education

The model of private higher education, which emerged with the 1968 Reform, brings to the field of education the bases that support the logic of productive rationality, that is, that thrives under the sign of flexible accumulation and makes a type of teaching prevail through bias towards meeting the immediate needs of the market, guided by the constant adaptation of worker training. As a trend, it transforms students into consumers and teaching into business, but with the State as the main financier. Its expansion is essentially aimed at making a profit. For Sguissardi (2015, p. 869, our translation),

[...] the presence of investment funds (*private equity*) national and that are associated with large companies in the educational sector, etc., authorize the hypothesis that higher education, in Brazil, is going through an intense process of transformation from a right or “public service” into a “commercial service” or commodity, that is, a process of commodification massification that nullifies the boundaries between the public and the private-mercantile and prevents an effective democratization of the “subsystem”. At least at the undergraduate level.

As shown in Graph 1, this growing dominance of private HEIs can be observed in more detail in Table 1, which demonstrates the expansion of public and private HEIs between 1997 and 2021, by region. It is worth noting that the period analyzed includes the management of governments that implemented, in higher education, policies of different shades, from those with a bias considered neoliberal, through progressive and up to the most conservative shades. However, regardless of these currents, the expansion of private HEIs occurred in all regions of the country:

Table 1 – Distribution of HEIs by nature and region (Brazil – 1997-2021).

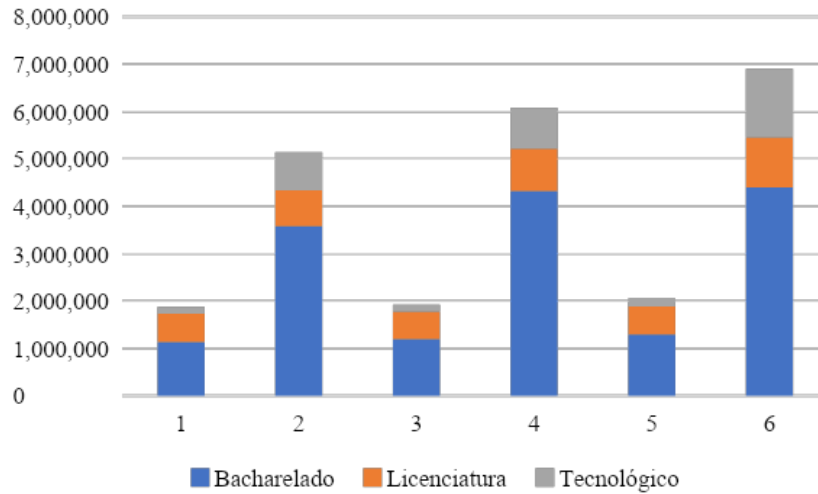
Region	1997		2003		2009		2015		2021	
	Public	Toilet	Public	Toilet	Public	Toilet	Public	Toilet	Public	Toilet
North	12	22	15	86	19	128	24	126	24	174
North East	43	58	52	252	61	387	66	390	66	534
Southeast	85	468	81	857	110	980	151	967	167	933
South	39	81	36	270	39	347	35	370	33	358
Center-West	32	60	23	187	16	227	19	216	23	262

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Observing the growth rate and regional distribution, while public HEIs registered an increase of 48%, with stagnation or losses between 2015 and 2021, as occurred in the South and Central-West regions, private HEIs had an expansion of 228% in the same period, according to data from the INEP/MEC Higher Education Census (Inep, 2022).

Still according to data made available by INEP/MEC (Inep, 2022), Graph 2 demonstrates that this expansion of Brazilian higher education occurs, mainly, under the sign of private education, which draws a flow of enrollments in specific courses – the technological.

Graph 2 – Total number of enrollments in on-site and distance undergraduate courses, according to administrative category and academic degree (Brazil - 2012 - 2015 - 2021).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

While public HEIs have basically shown modest growth in enrollment over the last 10 years, going from 1.87 million to 2.05 million, with a concentration on bachelor's degrees and few demands on technological ones, private HEIs have expanded the number of enrollments from 5.13 million to 6.90 million, demonstrating a certain stabilization in bachelor's and licentiate degrees, but an 80.3% growth in enrollments, going from 803 thousand to 1.44 million, considering the total enrollments in face-to-face teaching and the distance.

From the available data, it is possible to allude that we went from a relationship, in 1997, of one public HEI for every 3.2 private HEIs to the current scenario in which we have one public HEI for 7.2 private HEIs. As a consequence, in 2021, for each student enrolled in public institutions, 3.4 enrollments were recorded in private institutions, but with the potential for this relationship to be expanded in the coming years, as in accordance with the 2021 Higher Education Census (Inep, 2022, p. 20, our translation),

[...] 17.4% of vacancies were filled in 2021, which corresponds to a total of 3,944,897 new entrants for a total of 22,677,486 vacancies. [...] In the public category, vacancy occupancy is 59.5% [...]. In the private category, there is the lowest occupancy percentage, corresponding to 15.8%. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the number of private vacancies (21,850,441) represents 96.4% of total vacancies.

The Census recorded a significant difference in the increase in vacancies between 2012, after the implementation of the quota policy, and 2021. Even with the Quota Law in force, considering face-to-face and distance learning courses, around 261 thousand were created

vacancies in public HEIs in the period, while among private HEIs there was an increase of more than 17.8 million vacancies, that is, an increase of 440% in 10 years. Between 2020 and 2021 alone there was an increase of more than 3 million vacancies, which “is exclusively due to the increase in the supply of private distance learning places” (Inep, 2022, p. 14).

Dualities of the inclusion process

In capitalist society, the fragmentation of the educational system into schools aimed at different classes is considered by many authors as the way to maintain a continuous dialectical movement, relating the conformation of society with the dynamics imposed by the capitalist mode of production. This movement expands as there is a growth in demand for qualified labor, shaping education into economic development projects, both to produce and to expand production consumption.

The distinction between managers and workers, based on the forms of social and technical division of work, manifests itself in the structural duality of the education system. Therefore, the lower the level of mastery of the knowledge required by the means of production, the fewer the opportunities for formal employment and the more the professional will be exposed to precarious work. Kuenzer (2007, p. 1165, our translation) calls this movement

[...] inclusive exclusion at the end of the market, which excludes to include in precarious jobs along the production chains, dialectically complemented by the exclusionary inclusion at the end of the school, which, by including in unequal and differentiated proposals, contributes to production and to justify the exclusion.

Observing the general education scenario, over the last 4 years, according to data from PNAD 2023 (Ibge, 2023), the percentage of the population with completed higher education jumped from 17.5% in 2019 to 19.2% in 2022. In However, despite having a certain alignment with the goals of the National Education Plan (PNE 2014-2024), the sections by color, race, and region demonstrate different realities. While 60.7% of white people aged at least 25 had completed high school, among black and brown people this rate was 47%. When analyzing regional discrepancies, for example, in the Northeast 11.7% of the population aged 15 or over does not know how to read and write, while in the Southeast the rate, in 2022, was 2.9%.

Data from the INEP/MEC and IBGE Higher Education Census present the characteristics of a country full of contradictions, giving visibility to the presence of inclusive exclusion and exclusionary inclusion (Kuenzer, 2007), elements that pose an additional challenge to obtaining of results in inclusion policies aimed at higher education.

The strong national presence of private HEIs, with a myriad of courses, a wide range of places and public funding, may be another *modus operandi* of capital. The use of strategies to expand access to higher education in Brazil, even when covering the most vulnerable groups in society, can result in the qualification of workers to meet demands for the use of new productive technologies, without the intention of promoting scientific development, technological and critical thinking.

The inclusion policies instituted in 2012 have shown promising results, but it is clear that there is still a long way to go. At the moment, according to INEP/MEC (Inep, 2022), the predominant profile in higher education is student with FIES financing (68.8%), aged between 19 and 24 years old, white (43.8%), female, and enrolled in night shifts.

On the other hand, despite being a minority, the promising results of quota policies were captured by the V National Survey of Socioeconomic and Cultural Profile of IFES undergraduates (2018), carried out by the National Association of Directors of Federal Education Institutions Superior (Andifes, 2019). According to the survey, which involved 65 IFES and around 1.2 million students, the predominant profile in Brazilian IFES is that of a student with a *per capita family income* of up to 1.5 minimum wage (70.2%), who entered the institution in highly competitive vacancies (58.1%), female (54.6%), black (51.1%), who studied only in public schools (60.4%) (Andifes, 2019).

Based on the results of the research, and its historical series, the text of the report indicates that “federal higher education had become more accessible, popular and inclusive” (Andifes, 2019, p. 19). The data also sheds light on the fact that they are “heterogeneous, plural institutions and composed of students from all classes and class fractions” (Andifes, 2019, p. 20), overturning the belief that these institutions are elitist.

However, it is worth highlighting that if it is true that public policies aimed at inclusion in public universities have been producing results, especially following the Quota Law, it is also a fact that the number of students in these institutions is still small, considering the Brazilian population and the total number of people entering higher education. Furthermore, the conditions for remaining until the degree continue to be a challenge, especially for the most vulnerable groups in society. In the general scenario, in an analysis carried out by INEP/MEC (Inep, 2022, p. 33, our translation),

[...] it is observed that entrants from 2012, after ten years of monitoring, total 40%. This percentage is lower than the 59% who, after the same period, dropped out of the course. Residually, 1% of these entrants remain on the

course in 2021. It should be noted that 39% of entrants from 2012 dropped out of their entry course by the end of the 3rd year.

The current scenario in public HEIs, especially federal ones, indicates that access policies have had a positive impact on changing the socioeconomic profile of students on undergraduate courses at federal universities (Andifes, 2019), but the high dropout rates demonstrate that other demands arise for HEIs. Thus, society's expectation is for internal restructuring of universities, aiming to meet the new profile of students who have entered, directing their efforts towards breaking down barriers that impede and/or hinder the inclusion process, investing in institutional policies and projects, also aimed at the retention and success of these students.

Final remarks

In recent years, both the expansion of public institutions and the increased participation of private institutions in offering higher education courses have benefited from public resources. The big difference to be observed, as Mancebo (2008, p. 63-64) highlights, is the fact that public higher education institutions in Brazil maintain leadership in “offering quality training and producing knowledge in the various areas of knowledge”, while a large part of private institutions seek to expand, with smaller curricula, by “absorbing student training, offering careers in high demand and low operating costs”.

It is also worth emphasizing that free public higher education is considered an achievement of society for Brazilian education, as it gives the character of a *public institution* the status of a social value, transforming it into an appropriate locus for debate and the democratic construction of knowledge. The expansion and consolidation of this achievement, in the country's educational context, has mobilized academics and scientific institutions to maintain a permanent agenda in defense of free, inclusive, and quality public education on the political agenda. This defense is justified, mainly, by the results achieved by these institutions.

However, we draw attention to the contradiction and duality developed in a capitalist system in which a policy of expanding higher education, at the same time as expanding access to education, with affirmative actions aimed at quotas for vacancies and the expansion of public institutions from the perspective of inclusive education, allocates public resources to finance courses in private institutions that, for the most part, do not offer initiatives for oppressed groups and put students in debt, selling education as a commodity.

REFERENCES

- ALTMANN, H. Influências do Banco Mundial no projeto educacional brasileiro. **Educação e Pesquisa**, v. 28, n. 1, p. 77-89, jan. 2002.
- ANDIFES. **V Pesquisa Nacional de Perfil Socioeconômico e Cultural dos (as) graduandos (as) das IFES – 2018**. Brasília, DF: Associação Nacional dos Dirigentes das Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior, 2019. Available in: <https://www.andifes.org.br/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/V-Pesquisa-Nacional-de-Perfil-Socioeconomico-e-Cultural-dos-as-Graduandos-as-das-IFES-2018.pdf>. Access: 22 Mar. 2024.
- BARBIERI, A. F.; AZEVEDO, M. L. N. A mercadorização da educação superior no Brasil: reflexões e apontamentos a partir de Albert Hirschman - saída, voz e lealdade. *In*: AZEVEDO, M. L. N.; VOLSI, M. E. F.; MIRANDA, P. R. (org.). **Educação superior: as diversas faces da expansão**. Maringá, PR: Eduem, 2017.
- BOANAFINA, A.; OTRANTO, C. **Da consciência à docência: desafios da educação profissional no Brasil**. Curitiba: Appris, 2022.
- BRASIL. **Lei nº. 5.540, de 28 de novembro de 1968**. Fixa normas de organização e funcionamento do ensino superior e sua articulação com a escola média, e dá outras providências. Brasília, DF: Presidência da República, 28 Nov. 1968. Available in: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/15540.htm. Access: 11 Sept. 2023.
- BRASIL. **Lei nº. 5.692, de 11 de agosto de 1971**. Fixa as Diretrizes e Bases de 1^{os} 2^{os} graus, e dá outras providências. Brasília, DF: Presidência da República, 12 ago. 1971. Available in: <http://www2.camara.leg.br/legin/fed/lei/1970-1979/lei-5692-11-agosto-1971-357752-publicacaooriginal-1-pl.html>. Access: 11 Sept. 2023.
- BRASIL. [Constituição (1988)]. **Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil de 1988**. Brasília, DF: Presidência da República, 2016. Available in: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/constituicao/constituicao.htm. Access: 07 Dec. 2023.
- BRASIL. Lei nº. 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996. Estabelece as diretrizes e bases da educação nacional. **Diário Oficial da União**: seção 1, Brasília, DF, 1996, p. 27833. Available in: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/19394.htm. Access: 03 Oct. 2023.
- BRASIL. **Decreto n. 2.306, de 19 de agosto de 1997**. Regulamenta, para o Sistema Federal de Ensino, as disposições contidas no art. 10 da Medida Provisória nº 1.477-39, de 8 de agosto de 1997, e nos arts. 16, 19, 20, 45, 46 e § 1º, 52, parágrafo único, 54 e 88 da Lei nº 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996, e dá outras providências. Brasília, DF: Presidência da República, 19 ago. 1997. Available in: http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/decreto/d2306.htm. Access: 11 Sept. 2023.
- BRASIL. **Lei nº 11.096 de 13 de janeiro de 2005**. Institui o programa universidade para todos - PROUNI, regula a atuação de entidades beneficentes de assistência social no ensino superior, altera a Lei nº 10.891, de 9 de julho de 2004, e dá outras providências. Brasília, DF: MF, MEC, 2005. Available in: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2004-2006/2005/lei/111096.htm. Access: 22 Mar. 2024.

BRASIL. **Lei nº. 12.711, de 29 de agosto de 2012**. Brasília, DF: Presidência da República, 2012. Available in: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2011-2014/2012/lei/112711.htm. Access: 22 Mar. 2024.

BRASIL. **Lei nº. 13.146, de 6 de julho de 2015**. Brasília, DF: Presidência da República, 2015. Available in: https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_ato2015-2018/2015/lei/113146.htm. Access: 22 Mar. 2024.

CUNHA, L. **A universidade reformada: o golpe de 1964 e a modernização do ensino superior**. 2. ed. São Paulo: Editora Unesp, 2007.

CUNHA JUNIOR, M. **Evasão e permanência de estudantes em cursos de graduação da Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul (2008-2012)**. 2021. 157 f. Dissertação (Mestrado em Educação) – Faculdade de Educação, Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul, Campo Grande, MS, 2021. Available in: <https://posgraduacao.ufms.br/portal/trabalho-arquivos/download/8363>. Access: 25 Oct. 2023.

DOURADO, L. F. Reforma do Estado e as políticas para a educação superior no Brasil nos anos 90. **Educação & Sociedade**, Campinas, SP, v. 23, n. 80, p. 235-253, 2002. Available in: <https://www.scielo.br/j/es/a/XyLXN7mtdPGgnScr5MgYbHK/?lang=pt>. Access: 25 Oct. 2023.

FERNANDES, F. **Universidade brasileira: reforma ou revolução?** 2. ed. São Paulo: Expressão Popular, 2020.

FERNANDES, O. Ações afirmativas na pós-graduação brasileira: percursos e reflexões preliminares a partir da experiência da UFRRJ. *In*: SISS, A. (org.). **As comissões de heteroidentificação étnico-racial no sistema de cotas no acesso às instituições de ensino superior públicas federais: implementação e atuação**. Nova Iguaçu, RJ: OPAAS, v. 1, p. 176-208, 2022.

IBGE. Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística. **Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios (Pnad Contínua) 2016/2022**. Rio de Janeiro. 2023. Available in: https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/media/com_mediaibge/arquivos/8100b5c6e47300b5b9596ced07156eda.pdf. Access: 17 Oct. 2023.

INEP. Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira. **Resumo técnico do Censo da Educação Superior 2022**. Brasília, DF: INEP, 2022. Available in: <https://www.gov.br/inep/pt-br/areas-de-atuacao/pesquisas-estatisticas-e-indicadores/censo-da-educacao-superior/resultados>. Access: 27 Oct. 2023.

KUENZER, A. Da dualidade assumida à dualidade negada: o discurso da flexibilização justifica a inclusão excludente. **Educação & Sociedade**, v. 28, p. 1153-1178, 2007.

MACIEL, C. E. **Inclusão e educação: ambiguidades de um discurso**. Curitiba: Appris, 2020.

MANCEBO, D. Reforma da Educação Superior: o debate sobre a igualdade no acesso. *In*: BITTAR, M; OLIVEIRA, J.; MOROSINI, M. (org.). **Educação Superior no Brasil - 10**

Anos Pós-LDB, Brasília, DF: Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira, 2008, v. 2. p. 55-70.

MARTINS, C. B. A reforma universitária de 1968 e a abertura para o ensino superior privado no Brasil. **Educação & Sociedade**, v. 30, n. 106, p. 15–35, jan. 2009. Available in: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0101-73302009000100002>. Access: 18 Nov. 2023.

MARTINS, C. B.; VIEIRA, M. M. **Educação superior e os desafios no novo século: contextos e diálogos Brasil-Portugal**. Brasília, DF: Editora da UnB, 2014.

PROGRAMA DE GOVERNO. **Um Brasil para todos: crescimento, emprego e inclusão social**. [S. l.: s. n.], 2002. Available in: <https://www1.uol.com.br/fernandorodrigues/arquivos/eleicoes02/plano2002-lula.pdf>. Access: 25 Oct. 2023.

ROMANELLI, O. O. **História da educação no Brasil**. 13. ed. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2001.

SAMPAIO, H. **Evolução do ensino superior brasileiro, 1808-1990**. Documento de Trabalho NUPES/USP, n. 8, 1991.

SCHLESENER, A. H.; PEREIRA, M. F. R. Expansão do ensino superior: notas sobre seus limites e possibilidades. **Revista Internacional de Educação Superior**, Campinas, SP, v. 2, n. 3, p. 518-531, 2016. Available in: <https://periodicos.sbu.unicamp.br/ojs/index.php/riesup/article/view/8650565>. Access: 25 Oct. 2023.

SGUISSARDI, V. Reforma universitária no Brasil, 1995-2006: precária trajetória e incerto futuro. **Educação & Sociedade**, v. 27, n. 96, p. 1021-1056, 2006.

SGUISSARDI, V. Educação superior no Brasil: democratização ou massificação mercantil? **Educação & Sociedade**, v. 36, n. 133, p. 867-889, 2015.

SILVA, A. F.; MARTINS, T. C. O REUNI no contexto de expansão das universidades federais (2007-2012). In: COLÓQUIO INTERNACIONAL DE GESTÃO UNIVERSITÁRIA, 14., 2014. **Anais [...]**. Florianópolis: CIGU/UFSC, 2014. p. 1-14. Available in: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/30408035.pdf>. Access: 25 Oct. 2023.

SILVA JUNIOR, J. R.; SGUISSARDI, V. Novas faces da educação superior brasileira: reforma do Estado e mudança na produção. **Quaestio: Revista de Estudos em Educação**, [S. l.], v. 1, n. 2, 1999. Available in: <https://periodicos.uniso.br/quaestio/article/view/1482>. Access: 25 Oct. 2023.

UNESCO. Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura. **Declaração mundial sobre educação para todos: satisfação das necessidades básicas de aprendizagem**. Jomtien, Tailândia: Unesco, 1990.

UNESCO. Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura. **Declaração de Salamanca sobre princípios, política e prática em educação especial**. Salamanca, Espanha: Unesco, 1994.

CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgments: Not applicable.

Financing: Casa de Oswaldo Cruz/Fiocruz.

Conflicts of interest: There is no conflict of interest identified.

Ethical approval: Not applicable.

Availability of data and material: Publicly accessible documents and data, available through the References links.

Author contributions: The three authors carried out: bibliographic/documentary research, survey, data processing and analysis and text composition.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Review, formatting, standardization, and translation.

