

**EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AS DEMOCRACY
ASSUMPTION AND THE CONFLICTS IN DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT**

***A IGUALDADE DE OPORTUNIDADES EDUCATIVAS COMO PRESSUPOSTO DA
DEMOCRACIA E AS CONTRADIÇÕES NA GESTÃO DEMOCRÁTICA***

***IGUALDAD DE OPORTUNIDADES EDUCATIVAS COMO UN ASUNTO DE
DEMOCRACIA Y CONTRADICIONES EN LA GESTIÓN DEMOCRÁTICA***

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ABSTRACT: Given the important role that school management currently plays, this paper aims to discuss democracy from democratic management perspective in educational institutions. Thus, it focuses on ideas of equal opportunity, freedoms, human and social rights, which are safeguarded by modern democracy, where conflicts in the perpetuation of inequalities and social violence in education occur, prompting the analysis of democracy in the capitalist context. This is an exploratory-bibliographical, qualitative research that is based on documental analysis of publications that are related to literature pertinent to educational policies, democracy, and democratic management. The study found that the democratic management has oscillated between equal management of the School Council and a management that is discretionary, bureaucratic, and that is more tolerant to the perverse logics of control and hierarchy than to the school self-organization which should identify with a participatory democracy.

KEYWORDS: Equality. Education. Participatory democracy. Management. Social rights.

RESUMO: *Pela importância que assume nos tempos atuais a gestão da escola, a pesquisa discute a democracia na perspectiva de uma gestão democrática nas instituições de ensino. Para tanto, o artigo reflete os ideários de igualdade de oportunidades, liberdades, direitos humanos e sociais, defendidos pela democracia moderna, que tem sido palco de contradições na perpetuação de desigualdade e violências sociais em educação, o que implica em analisar democracia no contexto capitalista. É uma pesquisa de cunho qualitativo, do tipo exploratório-bibliográfica. Vale-se da análise documental de publicações relacionadas à literatura inerente às políticas educativas, à democracia, à gestão democrática. Constata que a gestão democrática tem oscilado entre uma gestão paritária do Conselho de Escola e uma gestão discricionária, burocrática, permeável a lógicas mais perversas de controle e hierarquia do que à auto-organização da escola que identifique uma democracia participativa.*

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Igualdade. Educação. Democracia participativa. Gestão. Direitos sociais.*

RESUMEN: *Debido a la importancia que asume hoy la gestión escolar, la investigación discute la democracia desde la perspectiva de la gestión democrática en las intuiciones educativas. Con este fin, el artículo refleja las ideas de igualdad de oportunidades, libertades, derechos humanos y sociales defendidos por la democracia moderna, que ha sido escenario de contradicciones en la perpetuación de la desigualdad y la violencia social en la educación, lo que implica analizar la democracia en el contexto capitalista. Es una investigación cualitativa exploratoria-bibliográfica, que utiliza el análisis documental de publicaciones relacionadas con la literatura inherente a las políticas educativas, la democracia, la gestión democrática. Señala que la gestión democrática ha oscilado entre la gestión equitativa del Consejo Escolar y una gestión discrecional y burocrática que impregna lógicas más perversas de control y jerarquía que la autorganización de la escuela que identifica una democracia participativa.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Igualdad. Educación. Democracia participativa. Gestión. Derechos sociales.*

Introduction

The article takes up the classic debates on the controversy of equality associated with educational opportunities in relation to participatory democracy and the perspectives related to democratic management in the realization of political and social rights. It supports a political and pedagogical practice in which management takes a very structural position, among others, opening the doors of the school to the community, so that, together with the educational authorities, professionals make decisions on matters of a pedagogical and administrative nature in according to the place where the educational institution is located.

Based on a bibliographic and documental study, it emphasizes the democratic management of schools, a constitutional requirement of a modern democratic rule of law in which the separation of powers legally prevails, proposing autonomy as a principle that establishes the accountability of professionals, whether for the State and for society in a dialogue based on the decentralization of competences for the fulfillment of the norms of education for democracy and education for all.

It is observed, in an examination of the educational reality, that the current configurations of the States indicate that since the 1980s different countries have accentuated their policies in a change in the role of the State in the processes of policy and school management. This is the principle of rationality, which in part hinders the free initiative of

educational communities in aspects of the quality of teaching, student learning, differentiated service for students, formation and the concept of school management.

Beforehand, the relationship between education and participation involves income distribution and factors such as social class, intelligence, area of residence, parents' education, in addition to general considerations, such as the realization of social, economic and political rights, as well as Equality of opportunities is an instrument for retraining young people in various subjects in the face of growing population demand. However, education is a right of social accountability, a value in itself, a practice that precedes other social rights and is intrinsic to human dignity which, sociologically, presupposes being considered an act of citizenship, which does not only aim to maximize material consumption.

It also indicates that citizenship is the arbiter of the bourgeois contract, in which equal educational opportunities establish a source of national innovation for the benefit of the development of human resources in the fight against poverty based on local resources, exercised in multiple ways.

In this way, citizenship provides opportunities for the population and young people to progress with education as an affirmative framework policy through the education of the neediest. It promotes human resources in a dependent country where, according to Souza (2009, p. 53, our translation), “[...] the millions who fail are responsible for their failure, which is always individual and of a class”.

Conceptual bases for the analysis of equal educational opportunities

The issue of equal opportunities in the educational system has become a constitutional principle of respect for human rights³ in a Democratic State of Law⁴, where power, authority, obedience, legitimacy, representation and participation are essential instruments in the demand pedagogical and mechanism for achieving the objectives of democratic management.

³ Taking the issue of human rights as an example, the Mozambican State, through Resolutions No. 8/88 of 25 August; 5/91 of 12 December; 6/91 of 12 December and 4/93 of 2 June ratified the following matters in terms of guaranteeing human rights: 1. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights; 2. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 16 December 1966; 3. The second additional protocol on civil and political rights with a view to abolishing the death penalty; and 4. The convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (MOÇAMBIQUE, 1988; 1991a; 1991b; 1993).

⁴ In our understanding, the Democratic State is one that, inspired by the classical liberal ideology, develops democracy and the rights of freedom, with: a) submission to the rule of law; b) division of powers; c) statement and guarantee of individual rights. Under the law, it is recognized in Article 3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique of 2004, based on “[...] pluralism of expression, democratic political organization, respect and guarantee of fundamental rights and freedoms” (MOÇAMBIQUE, 2005, p.2).

Around the 1980s and above all, from the 1990s onwards, a new capitalism of “political demobilization” (ALONSO, 2009, p. 50), with disturbing proportions in terms of social change in terms of the role of the State in providing fundamental rights and, above all, the concept of citizenship.

This policy was the basis for the State reforms modeled by England, Margareth Thatcher and the United States, by Ronald Reagan, between the late 1980s and early 1990s of the 20th century, denominations known as neoliberal reforms that, among other categories of functioning they advocate, above all, the reduction of the role of the State, deregulation of the economy, fight against unionism, privatization and reduction of public spending on social policies.

In this context, democratic management is constituted as an achievement of citizenship and in it political, social and cultural effects are inferred, important focuses of power for the democratization of society, not only “in terms of laws, but of customs” (ALONSO, 2009), p. 61). Thus, we can recognize that the relations between justice and the State are complex since legitimacy is required for the protection of social rights. That is, popular sovereignty for the maintenance of the dignity of the person in governance differs from bureaucratic evaluation where the chief evaluates according to his will.

From the perspective of social justice in education, disadvantaged classes are protected, pondered by public policies of affirmative action on social well-being. In fact, it is important to remember that, with neoliberalism, there is a loss of sovereignty due to the ineffectiveness of public policies, submission to economic power and the idea of formal equality, strategically alienating society.

In this perspective, the dignity of people is rejected by the economic initiative of the private company to face financial cuts and the State is reduced to some minimum services, such as public security, education, health, construction and maintenance of basic social infrastructures, among others.

On the way to legitimacy, we have to say that, at present, it is not so easy to situate the discussions on the emergence of democracy, since the various presumptions taken by neoliberalism do not even give an exact story, referring us to parliamentary representation and classical liberalism. Be that as it may, the magnificent achievements of Greek culture must be highlighted, especially the Athenian culture in the 5th century BC in the Greek city-states that placed great emphasis on individual freedom and stimulated creative thinking. Still in Greece, politics was discovered as an activity and art of deciding through assemblies, or public discussion, and the belief of obeying decisions as a condition for social preservation, which

has become intellectually more fruitful and with great relevance today (BOBBIO, 2000; WOOD, 2005).

According to historical interpretations in that embryonic period of political debate, the most advanced political conception of the state was taken by the democrats in 594 BC, that is, the Athenians with a new statesman, Solon, reformed the constitution of the city. It should be noted that this statesman made an extremely important contribution, including the end of the practice of enslaving debtors, as well as the liberation of many slaves. He divided citizens into four classes, according to wealth, where each class had the right to serve at a certain level of government, or to elect officials. However, another statesman, Cleisthenes, in his government “gave all male citizens the right to work in government and vote on important decisions” (WOOLF, 2014, our translation).

In this context, the

Active citizenship would be reserved for male landowners and should exclude not only women, but also men who, [...] did not have 'means to live by themselves' - that is, those whose survival depended on the work provided to others. This conception of citizenship had at its core a division between a propertied elite and a working multitude. (WOOD, 2005, p. 179, our translation).

Although the political reforms implemented were not liked by the majority, that is, they were contested, they remain inscribed in the annals of the political history of humanity, constituting the bases of the first humanly democratic government in the world that took effect in 508 BC.

Thus, it is extremely important to bring the conceptual chronology of democracy that lasted in Ancient Greece, considered the original intellectual pivot of Democracy. However, the term is certainly gregarious in two senses:

i) the word Power, or government, implying that autocracy is the government of one man; aristocracy, rule by the *aristoi*, the best, the elite; democracy being government by the *demos*, the people; and, ii) the word Demos, which is also a versatile word with different meanings; between them, that of the people as a whole (or the body of citizens) and the common people (or the lower classes) (FINLEY, 1988, p. 25-26, author's highlights, our translation).

By associating the term democracy with the lower classes of society, the State is required to provide conditions for individuals to improve their capacities, whether in science and technology, or in terms of economic benefits and culture through education. On the contrary, they “represent instruments that impede both the professional autonomy of teachers

and the pedagogical autonomy of schools, with their reflections on the school organization as a whole” (PEREIRA, 2009, p. 78, our translation).

Thus, the true meaning of bourgeois democracy leads us to the recognition that:

Tyranny is the monarchy despotically ruling the political community; there is oligarchy when the control of the government is in the hands of the possessors of wealth; democracy when, on the contrary, power is exercised by those who do not have many assets, that is, by the poor (ARISTÓTELES, 1997, p. 92, our translation).

In this sense, several instruments are used to improve the equality of educational opportunities in the relationship between the State and democracy: universal suffrage, or popular vote, the existence of constitutions that guarantee the individual rights and guarantees of citizens, limitations of the State's action and the impact on the separation of the Legislative, Executive and Judiciary powers, from which legal consequences derive.

In this way, the principle of the democratic social State is inserted in the minimization of conflicts of interest between groups, in a tripod, capitalist State, Labor and Democracy, for the prevalence of the effective functioning of Capitalism, that is, in a combined conjugation between equity with economic rationality, as well as between democracy and capitalism and equality with freedom.

That is, on the one hand, the State reconciles popular demands and, on the other hand, it must meet the demands of capital, which generates a crisis of legitimacy.

The French Revolution managed to spread throughout the world its ideals that remain to this day as the basis of modern democracies.

However, with Napoleon in France, civil and social political rights remained. During his reign he founded public schools and secularized basic education and implemented the French school of normal education to prepare teachers for their role and created the French Civil Code. He developed public policies that boosted technological development by French industry and commerce. Napoleon's government also ratified the redistribution of land promoted by the Revolution and reformed the banking system, creating a national currency with the sole purpose of exercising greater control over tax revenues.

However, although constitutional laws impose the notion of formal equality between people, there is a coexistence of relationships based on hereditary privileges or other favors. Something to highlight is, if liberal constitutions recognize the guarantee of public education by the State, which, among other requirements, has to promote the democratic management of

public education, it means that power emanates from the people, who exercise it through elected representatives or directly.

In this way, the regulations that configure democratic management constitute public mechanisms of a legal and political order, consequently, the two pillars of democracy: participatory representative (indirect) and participatory democracy (direct). And understanding the equality of school opportunities as social and popular participation in the development of citizenship through education, it is a right of all and a duty of the State and the family as a principle inherent to democracy.

Thus, in the correlation between democracy, equal opportunities and the provision of education and, also, the provision of rights, democratic management aims at the full development of the person, their preparation for the exercise of citizenship and their qualification for work. And yet, the poor and others in need also become part of the solutions to their extremely undesirable conditions. In fact, exclusion and school failure are attributed to the lack of skills and abilities of students and their families, as well as to the poor performance of the school and, of course, of its professionals.

This is the managerialism that affects organizations. It is known that its prerogative is the private model in which the market regulates itself, that is, it dictates laws based on the harmony between individualism and the economy. And, as a result, the administrative reform of the State more bureaucratically consolidates the centralist State. That is, "the power of the modern State is nothing more than a committee that manages the common affairs of the bourgeois class as a whole" (MARX; ENGELS, 2010, p. 87, our translation).

Within the scope of a neoliberal State, the denominations of common good, equality and justice substantively regress, as more expansive market interests are placed on human dignity, in which justice is modified in the freedom of exchange through citizenship, making citizens more interventionist in their rights or needs.

In this context, in the logic of recomposing capitalist hegemony and capital-labor relations, the role of the State is to place freedom from all privations at the epicenter of initiatives and to play a role of support and safeguard of human capabilities and not constitute systems of provision of ready-to-consume services.

That is, although socially, the government uses measures of positive discrimination (such as scholarships, provision of student residences, free material, among others), instead of equality in access, performance and treatment for all, equity is evidenced. There, the school internally reproduces power relations in relation to the popular classes and against participation in decision-making about school management. And democratic management in

terms of general guidelines became a project to regulate the National Education Systems, being promoted and encouraged with the collaboration of society, that is, not practiced and built-in practice by the actors, because, thus, it would demand the autonomous exercise of professionals.

In contrast to the totalitarian experiences in the state public school, Dal Ri (2013, s/p, our translation), suggests another perspective of the pedagogy of social movements of associated work, whose elements are reliable, humanly democratic alternatives that, based on self-education, cooperation and solidarity seek to promote the “democratic organization and management of schools, union of teaching with productive work and transmission of a critical world view linked to the working class”.

Now, work as an essential element for man and society is creative and forging, but in the bourgeoisie it is alienating and “[...] capital is autonomous and personal, while the individual who works has no autonomy” (MARX; ENGELS, 2010, p. 102, our translation).

Regarding the role and place of civil society, it is important to recognize the transformations that took place in the mid-nineteenth century, above all, the Industrial Revolution that gave space to the expansion of bourgeois liberal principles that caused diffuse reactions, becoming a counterpoint to liberalism itself.

Of these transformations, the ideals of socialism deserve to be highlighted, in which the alternative proposal would be achieved by the dictatorship of the proletariat through the appropriation of the means of production. In this perspective, Marx in his early writings manifested a deep commitment to the ideal of direct democracy. That is, the initial conception of this kind of democracy was linked to a Rousseauian critique of the principle of representation and to the conception that true democracy implies the disappearance of the bourgeois State, thus, the end of the separation between the State and civil society, which would occur because society would also become an organism of homogeneous and solidary interests and, consequently, the political sphere distinct from the sphere of general interest, which would disappear along with the division between social classes, that is, between rulers and ruled, or even between planners and executors (BOTTOMORE, 2012, p. 143).

It is the “[...] democratic principle founded on economic equality and the space of freedom originated from intersubjective relationships, which always form the characterizing bases of Marxist ideas” (MAGALHAES, 2014, p. 78, our translation).

Therefore, the rights of individuals as citizens give way to the rights of individuals as consumers, that is, decisions on educational policies may not safeguard the rights of the civic

world, with negative consequences, namely in terms of social justice and the capacity for collective mobilization of the least capable of defending their interests.

The primitive meanings of *civil society*, in the beginnings of England in the 16th and 17th centuries, were taken as synonyms for “political society”, or the State seen as the public thing. However, the modern conception of *civil society* that appears in the 18th century is very different from previous notions of society, due to the emergence of an autonomous economy, as it is separated from the unity of the political and the economic. So,

civil society represents a differentiated sphere of the state, separate from human relations and activities, neither public nor private, or perhaps both at the same time, incorporating a whole range of social interactions outside the private sphere of the home and the sphere of the market, the arena of production, distribution and exchange (WOOD, 2005, p. 206, our translation).

In Souza's observation (2009, p. 41), this distinction makes sense insofar as the community public power is evidenced, in the distinction between the State and social movements, that is, in the rupture with the romantic and naive image of the proletariat, as movements whose collective subject is the class that sells its labor power to survive, which differentiates them from movements identified as social from the point of view of the class that owns the means of production.

In this context, the dualism State and civil society has almost disappeared from the mainstream of political discourse. And, according to Souza (2009, p. 50, our translation), “[...] civil society cannot be thought of separately from political society, unless it wants to mask the real conditions of the class struggle”. And, in compliance with the principle of public action by schools in a political view of school management, we consider that this conception reappears in Marx's texts on the Paris commune.

Where,

Instead of deciding once every three or six years which member of the ruling class should misrepresent the people in parliament, universal suffrage should serve the people, constituted in Communes (*The Civil War in France*). (BOTTOMORE, 2012, p. 143, author's highlights, our translation).

However, the notion of equal opportunities in the democratic aspect of the school goes beyond technocratic conceptions and fiscal rationality, covering dialogist, critical and emancipatory dimensions. However, equality in the post-revolutionary Martian molds, according to Bottomore (2012, p. 275), differs in two totally antagonistic perspectives:

1) distribution, whose approach is to each according to his ability, that is, to each according to the work done. And, bearing in mind that differences in individual accomplishments are, at least in part, a result of differences in talent and ability that are either innate or a product of environmental conditions, and, as the family situations and living conditions of different individuals are very (from differences in physique and the corresponding needs for clothing and food, to the different responsibilities imposed by differences in family size, etc.), this principle of distribution does not yet equate to fair equality (equal treatment), for although abstract equality is formally applied to all individuals, they actually receive materially unequal treatment.

2) the principle of 'to everyone according their own ability, to everyone according their needs' corresponds to the higher communist phase of post-revolutionary society. That is, only in communism as a form of workers' state would unequal human beings, with all their necessarily unequal needs, be accorded truly equal treatment. That is, the basic counterpoint to consider is that it is “a society that ensures adequate livelihoods for all and in which there are no longer hierarchies of power and prestige” (BOTTOMORE, 2012, p. 275, our translation).

The two arguments along the lines of equal educational opportunities in the right to education tend to be understood as formation for citizens to participate in the destinies of their country, as an actor with political, social and environmental responsibilities, or ecological responsibilities of modern society, under the criterion of direct democracy in which school self-organization is an essential necessity for improving the quality of education.

That is, the school, on the one hand, defines its educational policies and, on the other hand, the school organization is intrinsically linked to the creation of spaces for collective deliberation where democratic management takes place at two levels: the education system and schools, in particular, they are one of the great dimensions that allow greater access to educational purposes in which the quality of education and the improvement of teaching constitute primacy of universal law.

Still on democracy today, a notable fact, both in democratic public schools, and in terms of participatory or direct democracy in the educational system, is summarized in the representation of professionals in traditional school bodies, the School Councils. These, in part, in practice, contribute nothing or little to the deliberative pedagogical political project, that is, they do not favor the effective participation of the community in school affairs in general and, in particular, for a progressive pedagogical, administrative and financial

management autonomy for solving teaching and management problems inherent to improving the quality of education, inexorable conditions for a conscious and critical education.

Therefore, in the words of Bobbio (2000, p. 69, our translation),

We can, therefore, consider the democratic reform that instituted school councils with the participation of parents. [...]. It is useless to hide that this is a process that has just begun, of which we are not yet in a position to know either the stages or the duration. [...]. There are some encouraging symptoms and others not so much. [...]. Multidirectional participation has its downside, which is political apathy. The cost that must be paid for the efforts of a few is often the indifference of the many.

The genesis of the equality contradictions is found in Liberalism as an ideology of thought that strives for the moral, political and economic autonomy of civil society as opposed to the concentration of political power. It is in this order of preconceived ideas that liberalism gained modern expression with its intellectualized adherents such as John Locke (1632-1704) and Adam Smith (1723-1790), among others.

Thus, among its principles of the reign of freedom are its major concepts of performativity, individualism, the right to private property and limited government. Among others, liberalism also defends the inviolability of civil and market liberties, condemning excessive state interference in the economy. That is, in the sequence, currently, “[...] the neoliberal model cannot promote faith, hope, solidarity, peace or concepts such as citizenship and social equity, as they are self-excluding” (GALVÃO *et al.*, 2012, p. 245, our translation).

In this conception, with the advent of war and other world calamities, or economic depressions, global crises and other proverbs of sentence of the public thing, educational resources are not made available, as they tend to decrease in order to fulfill these purposes perpetrated by the cult of efficiency, manifests restraint in public expenditure. But this is not all that is important in our intention, because modern democracy ignores the economic sphere as belonging to the public sphere, that is, “modern liberal democracy has in common with ancient Greek democracy the dissociation between civic identity and socioeconomic status that allows the coexistence of formal political equality with class inequality” (WOOD, 2005, p. 183, our translation).

From this last point of view, bourgeois representative democracy increasingly favors the propertied classes and brings with it an idea of a more expansive and inclusive citizenship, but also more abstract and with a connotation of passivity. Similarly, popular power is no longer the main criterion in the democratic values of a free, fair and solidary society that

precisely changes bringing constitutional, procedural rights and the privacy of the individual citizen.

It is perfectly understandable that, without any feeling of exacerbated nationalism, across borders, the civic rights evoked are “the rights of selfish, individualistic Man, motivated only by his private interests” (DORNELLES, 2005, p. 132, our translation).

Today, more than yesterday, the same questions continue to be asked, “public equality [...] *represents* little or nothing in the real space of existence that would be the private space, or the market, where in practice there is the reproduction of the differences, inequalities, oppression and exploitation, based on these differences” (DORNELLES, 2005, p. 132, our translation).

This public engagement in the individualistic molds qualifies an education militancy that neutralizes human values and makes the social secondary in educational policy, dedicating itself only to technocratic or authoritarian education, an insufficient thread to evoke the democratic management of the school, as it was previously demonstrated that a education of human and popular participation, must be coherent with a conception of democracy that emancipates through education by its organization.

Without prejudice to the quantitative logic in education and to the detriment of human action, participation is a key element in the development of public policies, that is, in their elaboration and implementation, as it constitutes a mechanism for social control of forms of organization, supervision, as well as for the exercise and improvement of dialogue and a more democratic institutional relationship between the actions of public managers and citizens, on behalf of civil society.

Hence the vicious circle as Macpherson points out (1978, p. 103, our translation):

We cannot achieve more democratic participation without a prior change in social inequality and its consciousness, but we cannot achieve changes in social inequality and consciousness without a prior increase in democratic participation.

Thus, spaces for participation would be constituted by formal and informal environments, manifesting themselves in conferences, such as school councils, ombudsmen, public hearings, public consultations and the promotion of loosely hierarchical, open and flexible collegiate bodies considered as monitoring fields of government action.

In the theory of participation, it is a complement between direct and representative democracies, phenomena that strengthen formal equality, especially legal equality, which is not substantive, given that it is insufficient without economic equality, but compensatorily bringing

the citizen closer to the State. And in terms of civil liberties, of expression, of the press and of assembly, it promotes tolerance, the defense of the individual and civil society against the State, but it also leaves, untouched, a new sphere of domination and coercion created by capitalism, with the separation and isolation of the economic sphere and its invulnerability to democratic power.

Capitalism is constituted by class exploitation, submitting all social life to market demands, through work, leisure, consumption, organization of time. The flags on democratic management raised in causes of participatory democracy or small groups such as school councils bring the weakening of the class struggle, dressed in a discourse on autonomy, freedom of choice and democratic self-government.

For this purpose, capital assumed private control over matters in the public domain, while transferring social and political responsibilities to the state. Therefore, the identities that emerged with the postmodern advent do not dilute extra-economic, political or legal inequalities or differences. Thus, the extraction of surplus value from salaried workers takes place in a relationship between formally equal and free individuals, because, as previously exposed, capitalism does not promote freedom for world peace, on the contrary, it uses multiple identities, racial issues, from ecological and gender issues to greater human exploitation.

In this regard, the authors of the Communist Manifesto understood the modern State as the executive that is nothing more than “a committee that manages the common affairs of the bourgeois class as a whole” (MARX; ENGELS, 2010, p. 87, our translation). Paradigmically, it means that the history of capitalism has given rise to social segregation, social inequalities and racism of various origins. That is, working and living conditions, under capitalism, are the privileges of a brilliant few. And with the stagnation of the decline in the illiteracy rate, they do not guarantee social justice, as the problem of poor distribution of wealth and lack of political participation of citizens persists, facts that affect education systems.

However, the most independent aged forms of participation in the social fabric would consist of autonomous forms of organization, management and political action of groups, in the popular and working classes, and even of union groups that would constitute social movements and residents' associations. They would promote union struggles, marches and community struggles (demonstrations, or demands for better working conditions and not just wages), that is, to promote dialogue, in the interest of emancipatory public policies. This is the form of direct democracy in the face of externally regulated formal participation, through impositions, cooptation, subordination, fragmentation and dissolution of popular struggles.

Naturally,

For direct democracy to exist in the proper sense of the word, that is, in the sense in which direct means that the individual himself participates in the deliberations that concern him, it is necessary that between the deliberating individuals and the deliberation that concerns them, there is no intermediary (BOBBIO, 2000, p. 62, our translation).

This quote translates the idea that democratic management denies the depoliticization of education and school, and also of society and citizens, caused by the ideology of competence, meritocracy and performativity that separates leaders and executors. It means that, in essence, it is a political act of participation in itself, and of autonomy in the educational system that, among other ways, advocates the election of school directors, the constitution of school councils with a more democratic functioning on management, in which all school segments must participate: parents, teachers, students, employees and the entire educational community.

In short, this cultural episode of political pedagogy on the oppressed contributes to participatory planning through the construction of the Political-Pedagogical Project, in which school management priorities are discussed, information on available public resources to, finally, list budget distribution and execution criteria, as counterpoints to the pedagogy of the oppressor.

Given that democracy and capitalism are not compatible, the capitalist system is a terrain of domination and coercion, which makes “citizens without rights and workers to a large extent, become subjects of a power that is exercised by multiple networks of capitalist rationality” (SOUZA, 2009, p. 53, our translation).

In this way, the economic category needs to be rethought, given that human capitalism, truly democratic, fair and egalitarian is impossible in a capitalist system and becomes absolutely more utopian than in socialism (WOOD, 2005). Socialism, by itself, may not be a range of guarantees for the complete conquest of extra-economic goods, it may not solve the problems of racism, of female exploitation, but it will allow the revaluation of extra-economic goods, whose value has been deteriorated by the capitalist economy (WOOD, 2005), surely, constituting an alternative of balanced administration, because as described, legal and formal political equality, that is, of opportunities, in the capitalist system, accommodates class inequalities.

The contradictions concerning democratic management and social rights

The contradictions related to democratic management and social rights are triggered by the nature of the political system in management trends and there are variations in definitions that could be considered qualitative:

A-in relation to biological factors of beings, race, culture of different elements of the population,

B-geographical and environmental factors, or ecological and school locations changes.

In any case, culture reveals itself as a guideline for social change of certain trends. And schools as social and power instances do not only exist as intermediaries of the cultural heritage of a society and of the mechanistic transformations imposed by the fiscal crisis of the States, they also exist to help in the perpetuation and promotion of social change and reform.

Here, decentralization and local planning constitute administrative mechanisms of popular participation on the cultural gap of the authorities in relation to student learning. Participation itself brings numerous advantages in relation to the way education is perceived as a family and socially collective responsibility, as it indicates how teachers are prepared for the profession, translating into a social education that is concerned with the development of mental, playful, aesthetic and ethical capacities of the student and, among others, it is not limited only to fulfilling marketing objectives of external rewards, which are limited to external evaluation, which move towards the mobilization of accounting interests, such as grades, awards, classifications, in the duty of parents on educational issues in relation to the rights and freedoms to choose the type of education and school to be followed.

An education of equal access and student success that promotes democracy and development implies compensatory mechanisms for working with difference, in serving the real student and not just the ideal one, that is, giving more to those who have less. Unequivocally, it translates into a management in which the actors are participatory.

The educational communities, teachers, students, parents and the community in general are democratically involved in the definition of school priorities, whose focus is on financial management as a source of application of resources in and about the school. Furthermore, democracy, justice and personal development in the education system need a flexible and inclusive system, more focused on students and their work, less on topical and hierarchical classifications, which allow different paths, while promoting interclass and intercultural integration as the ultimate objective of the democratic and fair school.

However, the establishment of educational systems and schools in the capitalist system of bourgeois inspiration pursues capitalist interests of consolidation of ideals and performances of domination. Educational practices are not always conscious on the part of school actors. But, in all cases, the political, organizational and even theoretical-methodological options of school and classroom management, many times, legitimize and consolidate social inequalities, not guaranteeing the right, legally foreseen in the Constitution, of a democratic education, equal and of quality for all. Another contradiction regarding the establishment of constitutional norms, which is worth retaining, is the subsidy given by Losurdo (2006, p. 18, our translation), that “[...] every law is made by its owners, who will never let an unfavorable measure to them pass”.

In these terms, it is worth noting the contribution that the awareness of the right to basic education has advanced, but we have not managed to get the school structured to guarantee this right, and it continues as a selective and excluding institution in its organization. That is,

The dream of a rational administration of the public seemed to bring the long-awaited autonomy of the school and its administrator. The position would be occupied by qualified professionals and supposedly neutral and apolitical professionals. We have seen the naivety of this alleged apoliticality of public administration. We believe that to continue dreaming of an apolitical school administration practice, occupied by qualified professionals, is to spend efforts in an unrealistic struggle, based on a naive vision of society, the state, the school and its own function (ARROYO, 1992, p. 128, our translation).

Undoubtedly, public schools in bourgeois molds are precarious and more palpable in the absence of financial resources, which make working conditions increasingly precarious, with a lack of teaching materials, buildings, low salary for its professionals and overcrowding of classes. It teaches students the minimum requirements of culture and democracy, avoiding the struggle to overcome this same society. It is more concerned with what makes it possible to perform the functions of production with perfection, considering itself as a place for the preparation of human resources for the jobs existing in society.

The current practice of schools is based on the principle that the mission of schools and teachers is to pass, that is, to “give the subject”, preconceived. That is, understood as the transmission of a prescriptive set of atypical, uniform, decontextualized and indisputable contents, without respect for plural societies and in transformation where respect for difference prevails.

In a fair school, school curricula would be more flexible and open to meet democracy and development, without intersecting local, national and international conjunctures. Assumptions and guarantee of obtaining participative, reflective, creative, autonomous citizens and workers committed to social transformation, denouncing intolerance, because in the words of Souza (2009, p. 52, our translation), “[...] if at the beginning citizenship intended expansive, now it is necessarily restrictive.

Dal Ri (2013, s/p), argues that the self-organization of workers as active subjects in the control of the labor process until the beginning of the 19th century showed that “[...] the professionals were the repositories of the technical knowledge of the process of production”. This in full allusion to the autonomy in which workers held significant decision-making power over convenient options and mastery over work processes.

The author adds that they preserved the ability to admit apprentices and regulate their professional progress, and also, allied to the democratic management of their actions and given the technical dependence on the skills of the workers, they had great bargaining power. Thus, in political terms, democratic management is substantially an integral part of the school's political-pedagogical project, as an expression of its autonomy and its own identity. It democratizes access and success, knowledge and relationships, in addition to ensuring student success, therefore, it covers pedagogical, administrative and financial aspects. It evokes the participation of everyone who makes up the school in decision-making: principals, teachers, technicians, employees, parents and students. It encourages the educational perspective of democracy, implies awareness of learning for the participatory and purposeful exercise of citizenship, because democracy is only learned, being democratic, through forms of organization and implementation of reflection structures and collective decision-making, in forums community participation for the choice of directors with the predominance of general assemblies of the school community (school deliberative councils, parents associations, student organizations and conscientious teachers focused on the success of their work).

All in a perspective that aims to fulfill the role of the school in the socialization of knowledge historically accumulated by humanity and in the formation of values and attitudes aimed at the full exercise of citizenship, tolerance and spirit of commitment, and also, in the establishment of mechanisms of circulation and sharing of information between the various social segments, with the encouragement of periodic meetings, bulletin boards and bulletins, dissemination of minutes and reports on the efforts achieved in humanized management through a climate of democratic coexistence and leadership that encourages participation.

A management that creatively solves problems, contributing to the generation of internal consensus through dialogue on different positions. Also, decisions are taken collectively and never by one person, or small group of people, it is a management based on participation and also on the training of all segments for participation, which consists of the formation of directors, councils or members of associations for the knowledge of national and local legislation so that there is no inhibition of the voice of those considered less educated on school issues, such as parents, employees and students.

When making decisions, processes must be respected, avoiding bureaucratization and routine management, which prioritize deadlines, procedural rules, minutes and other documents to the detriment of collective thinking and acting. This so that the central criterion of collective decisions is the quality of the public school and not the elitist or excluding interest, uncommitted to education and not emphasizing social transformation, a basic principle of equality of educational opportunities.

Final considerations

When choosing the study of educational policies, we found that there are still several clashes to be overcome. The promises of equal educational opportunities in education systems are far from offering a public provision of education and quality teaching, resulting in a paradoxical result.

The education system uses a small proportion of society's scarce resources, and investments are smaller, both in buildings and school furniture, unfortunately less equipped, simplifying the relationship between education, economy and society. From the school's commodification policy, there is a growing social, cultural and ethnic fragmentation of the education systems and families, which is added to a degradation of the quality and procedural results of the educational systems.

Although social rights are enshrined in the Constitutions, they can only be guaranteed when there is an economic guarantee, for example, increasing funding for public education.

The neoliberal policy in education, its materialization does not reach everyone, this is because it promotes students and teachers, curricula and school knowledge, as tradable goods, whose purpose is to reinforce a school (re)producer and legitimizer of the social order and pre-defined social hierarchies depending on the status of belonging, in short, presupposing resources and the mobilization of people and entities for their realization through participatory democracy. Because effective equality of educational opportunities leads to the right to peace, the right to development, the right to self-determination of peoples, the right to a healthy and

ecologically balanced environment, the right to the common heritage of humanity and the right to information, basic principles formally defended by representative democracy

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