

### **Institutional networks in Latin America. Building contemporary social sciences and education**

**Carlos Alberto Torres, José Eustáquio Romão & António Teodoro**

The creation of institutional networks in the recent history of Latin America has played a crucial role in the shaping and consolidation of the Social and Educational Sciences. These processes can be explained within the framework of the so-called knowledge and social reflexivity society. Both the emergence of a networking society and the growing access to information are simultaneously resulting in and the result of knowledge and social networks, which at the same time are reflected in specific experiences in the field of education. Even if they do not cover the whole range of existing networks, some of the most relevant instances of institutional networks within the domain of the educational and social sciences in Latin America are presented. They are all an expression of a collaborative work dynamics and of a dialogic form of knowledge building and management. First, the contribution of three initiatives that began and were developed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, namely, 1) the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (*Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales*, or *CLACSO*) created in Buenos Aires in 1964; 2) the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (*Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales* or *FLACSO*), created in 1957, launched by UNESCO, with the support of several regional governments; and 3) the Latin American Network of Information and Documentation on Education (*Red Latinoamericana*

*de Información y Documentación en Educación, REDUC*), created in 1977 with the aim of keeping a record of educational productions in the region. In addition, the ongoing initiatives of the Iberoamerican Research on Educational Policies Network (*Red Iberoamericana de Investigación en Políticas Educativa RIAIPE*), starting in 2006 with the participation of Higher Education Latin American and European institutions are introduced as an illustration of a singular experience of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Keywords:** institutional networks; education; knowledge society; social sciences; Latin America.

### **University and society: the relevance of higher education towards a full citizenship**

**Betânia Leite Ramalho & José Beltrán Llavador**

The present article underlines the social relevance of higher education institutions at a time of growing uncertainties and unprecedented paradigm shifts. It is necessary to redefine the meaning of the notion of relevance in order to stress the development and social emancipation issues involved in it. At the same time, the intensity and speed of contemporary changes demand a parallel redefinition of the role of universities. Universities are very relevant agents when it comes to design and anticipate alternative scenarios aiming at achieving greater equity and social cohesion.

**Keywords:** social relevance; citizenship; development; justice; common good.

### **The contribution of academic mobility to the construction of an Iberoamerican space for higher education**

**Alejandro Tiana Ferrer**

Higher education has undergone important changes in Ibero-American countries during the last three decades, affecting its quantitative dimension as well as its institutional diversity and including the expansion of the private sector at this level. Despite progress carried out in this period, some outstanding problems continue to appear. One of the decisions taken for giving a response to those challenges has been to reinforce the relationships among countries in the region, impelling initiatives of internationalization. The promotion of an Ibero-American Space of Knowledge by the Summit of Chiefs of State and Prime Ministers should be underlined from this point of view. One of its three pillars is represented by the higher education sector, whose reinforcement is expected to contribute to regional integration. One of the outstanding objectives in this field tends to establish closer links among higher education institutions. In this context, academic mobility, both of students and scholars / researchers, is aimed at doing a decisive contribution. Even if some interesting and promising initiatives have been already promoted, as for instance the Pablo Neruda Program, further steps should be taken in the coming future in that direction.

**Keywords:** academic mobility; ibero-american space of knowledge; Pablo Neruda: program

### **Undergraduate schools: student mobility as a strategy for internationalization in Latin America**

**Alda Araújo Castro & Antônio Cabral Neto**

Among the current policies for undergraduate schools, internationalization has emerged as an important strategy for the integration of countries in the globalized world either from the perspective of solidarity, advocated by UNESCO, either by mercantilist trend, advocated by the World Trade Organization. This article focuses on this theme, analyzing the main characteristics assumed in the process of internationalization of undergraduate schools, with emphasis on student mobility in different regions of the world, explaining how Latin America, and Brazil in particular, falls within that process. The article was based on literature review, documentary analysis and secondary data. The data on student mobility was provided by UNESCO, World Education Textbooks, concerning the years 2006 to 2010, and refer to the regions receiving and sending students abroad. Data analysis shows that the regions that receive more students, in the process of mobility are those where the countries are more developed and better inserted in the new global division of labor. Latin America is part of this process as being a peripheral area with poor reception and high sending students to other regions of the world, especially for the region of North America and Western Europe. This trend is also confirmed for Brazil, although this country stands with one of the best performers on the continent, a trend that was consolidated, as recently, Brazil has adopted strategies to enhance their integration

into the process of student mobility through the implementation of programs and the creation of public universities aimed at regional integration.

**Keywords:** undergraduate schools; internationalization; student mobility.

### **A dialogue about gender: justice, equity and equality policies in higher education (Brasil and Spain)**

**Alejandra Montané & Maria Eulina Pessoa de Carvalho**

This text emerges from a personal and academic relationship between two researchers - one from a university in poor Northeastern Brazil, the other from a university in rich Northeastern Spain - around issues of gender, higher education and justice. Without intending to offer a comparative analysis, it exchanges information and views about equality of opportunity policies in Brazil and Spain, and reflects on concerns related to: a) women's and men's presence in the university, regarding access, distribution, and possibilities of academic promotion; b) the production of new knowledge fields linked to the development of gender studies within higher education; c) the distinct conceptions of justice that inform gender policies and gender studies. Such reflections might illuminate similarities and dissimilarities, and deepen the understanding of inequality.

**Keywords:** higher education; equal opportunity; gender policies; gender studies.

### **Higher Education and life transition processes. Contributions of the biographical approach.**

**Adriana Valéria Santos Diniz & Maria Eugenia Cardenal de la Nuez**

The present article has a double goal: first, it contextualizes the increasing legitimacy of biographical research in the current social, ideological and sociological context. Additionally, it supports, in a reflexive way –that is to say, critically– the use of the biographical methodology to analyze the transformations experienced by the Higher Education in Spain and in Latin America. Our purpose is not to develop an exhaustive examination of the situation of the University, but to point out some notable mutations that put in evidence the interest of a longitudinal and biographical perspective.

**Keywords:** biographicity; transitions; paths; university.

### **Relocation pathways at university, more than dropout. Comparative approach to the Spanish and Portuguese cases**

**Alícia Villar Aguilés, Maria Manuel Vieira, Francesc J. Hernández i Dobon & Ana Nunes de Almeida**

The implementation of the European Higher Education Area is coinciding with the current economic crisis, with important effects for universities. The university drop-out is one of the topics in the current debates about the university system efficiency, the achievement of excellence and the educational policies of accountabil-

ity. In this paper we present results of research that explore this topic with a case study of the University of Valencia (Spain) and the University of Lisbon (Portugal). Through the results on drop-out reasons answered by the students, there seems to be a split between the university drop-out and the academic difficulty. In the second part of this article, we question the concept of dropout in their application to university and we propose a new conceptualization more in line with the reality studied.

**Keywords:** university; undergraduate students; drop-out; itineraries training.

### **The Portuguese University: the *open access-closed* - the case for over 23 years.**

**José Viegas Brás, Edineide Jezine, Sofia Fonseca & Maria Neves Gonçalves**

The aim of this study is describe the process of democratization of higher education in Portugal. An historical framework of the foundations and development of the Portuguese university is presented, giving particular emphasis on the changes concerning the duality power/knowledge and the historical elitism associated to higher education. This approach is complemented with an empirical analysis to of the actual situation in the Lusofona University regarding the enrollment of mature students (over 23 years old).

Printed and handwritten references were considered for analysis, which allowed a detailed historical reconstruction of the Portuguese university. This secular corporate body, which in its origin has privileged the education of elites, is now experiencing a global-

ization and expansion of the targeted audiences, and has formally opened access to higher education to mature students (over 23 years old) in 2006.

A sample of 36 mature students ( $32.09 \pm 7.58$  years old) registered on the course of Physical Education and Sports (69.4%) and Educational Sciences (30.6%) at the Lusofona University in 2010/2011 were considered. A questionnaire was applied to understand the motivations of these students for attending a university course, making part of a non-elitist, eclectic and democratized group.

**Keywords:** university; access; elitism; democratization

### **Technological Innovations and Expansion of Higher Education in Brazil**

**Edna G.de G.Brennand & Eládio de Góes Brennand**

This paper discusses the process of technological innovation and expansion of higher education. Summarizes some issues involving learning and interdisciplinary approaches that are related to the processes of knowledge acquisition. Presents some of the data from the expansion of higher education and the creation of the Open University of Brazil showing its links with the process of technological convergence. Through the current data on the Brazilian high education, tries to understand how education mediated by digital technologies (e-learning) restructures forms of access for young adults and adults to the selective world of university culture.

**Keywords:** technological innovation; high education; e-learning

## **Democratization of Brazilian Higher Education. The case of Federal University of Paraíba**

**Emília Maria da Trindade Prestes,  
Edineide Jezine & Afonso Celso Scocuglia**

The article discusses the question of the democratization of access to higher education in the context of the global crisis and of the situation of indefinitions, with special reference to Brazil. On the basis of analytical arguments, empirical data and the Brazilian Programme for the Restructuring and Expansion of Federal Universities (REUNI), it questions if the recent expansion of Brazilian higher education has managed to modify the elitist nature of this level of education, paying specific attention to the case of the Federal University of Paraíba. It considers that in a contradictory way those actions directed at including a greater number of people in higher education can strengthen both the democratic ideals and the processes of economic and social growth and development in Brazil, making possible the construction of new historical reports and transforming the educational institution and society.

**Keywords:** higher education; democratization of access; globalization.