

Editorial Introduction

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The confluence of educational programs and provisions and related social contexts are important in locating and explaining the importance as well as the effectiveness of learning possibilities that advance the needs of people. In speaking about the needs of people, that story and its probable outcomes are of course, more complex than all the conceptual and theoretical explanations we can harness. Certainly though, any attempts we propose to make sense of this multi-frontal and multi-relational situation is worth all our efforts and energies. To be clear, we live today in a world that may be seen as more advanced in its knowledge, economic and technological terms than ever, but for whom do these systems of life work for, and who has been continuously placed outside the zones of social development and meaningful livelihood realities. Indeed, this is perhaps the most important question for today's educational researchers: how should we make sure that education (at all levels) and specific contexts of schooling serve the learning and social development needs of all.

There is, by and large, a widely diffused consensus that education enhances the social, cultural, economic, political, economic and technological lives of people. Indeed, this description, despite its unqualified importance in today's selectively post-industrial, selectively industrializing, and certainly selectively pre-industrial realities, can sometimes sound rhetorical, even hollow as its application probabilities fail in the immediacies of so many people in many parts of the world. What we should know by now is that in more instances than we are willing to count, education and schooling have not met the needs of those who need them the most, i.e., the working class, the underclass and those who are minoritized for one reason or another. Indeed, the still important, early exhortations of dependency theory, with its centre-periphery dichotomization is still as essential for our educational analysis and criticisms as ever. While the focus here started with general global analysis with attachments to colonial relationships and attached schemes of marginalization, we can certainly bring such analysis to national or even regional contexts where people in specific locations of the country, the city, even the neighborhood, are epistemically and developmentally exiled, so to say, from the harnessable components of viable learning platforms.

Indeed, the current market-driven commercialization of education does not help at all. Certainly a type of education that is available only to those that can buy it is not conducive to the promotion of citizenship rights and related human rights issues that should be protected through the learning schemes in place and the social development possibilities that could result from it. It is also the case that global policies have a direct impact on the learning, teaching and overall professional lives that define the lives of the learning community at all levels, but especially at the higher education level where as things are now, it is so important for the well-being of societies and the individuals that inhabit in these societies. Here again, the project seems to have been significantly influenced by the neoliberal marketization where higher education personnel are slowly becoming endangered wage earners without the professional security they need and deserve in order to ensure their social well-being and that of their communities and countries.

It is with these realities in mind that the three articles in this special issue, which are all translations from Portuguese, are critically analyzing such contexts, and are suggesting possibilities for improvement. In the first article is entitled, *Participative management in a public school of the periphery in Distrito Federal: A Good Way?* Here, Magali Fátima Evangelista Machado, Olzeni Leite Costa Ribeiro and Marcelino Tameirão-Machado, aim to assess the data of a school based on the periphery area in Distrito Federal and that has been obtaining, according to the results of the National System of Basic Education Assessment (SAEB) and Prova Brasil, successive increase in the rank of the Index of Development of Basic Education (IDEB) in these years: 2005, 2007 and 2009. The school uses the participative management by means of discussions among the head of the school, teachers, students and their parents. The IDEB refers to the quality indicator, created by the federal government that integrates the aims of the Development Plan of Education (PDE). The IDEB is calculated based on the performance of students in institutional evaluations of Portuguese and Mathematics, failure levels, school dropout and rates of the students passing in examinations. As a main objective, the article has as a proposal to present these results and discuss the proposed actions by the head of the school with the parents' participation, and teachers, staff and students.

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

Educational policies and its effects on the academic profession in Brazil, José Ronaipe Machado discusses the relationships between the current situation of professors of higher education institutions in Brazil and the changes that have come about in the Brazilian educational system as it has been affected and guided by neoliberal ideology principles through influence of International Organizations such as the World Bank and the IMF.

In the author's understanding, concepts like globalization, global governance and neocolonialism in the field of educational policy making achieve strong relevance as one intends to understand and explain the roots that are in the origins of the situation which the academic professorate faces in countries like Brazil as well as in many places across the world. As part of this broader world and global context, Brazilian professors have to face similar and sometimes even tougher challenges, as educational policies regulated by a new educational act have been implemented in the country throughout the last fifteen years. Under the influence of neoliberal ideas, massification and diversification in the higher education system have led to what many scholars call a state of fragmentation of the academic profession, which is characterized by increasing bureaucratization, heavy accountability requirements, inadequate remuneration and insufficient intellectual preparation to meet academic demands. The development with the greatest impact on the academic profession is the growing amount of professors with unstable and part-time appointments. As an apparent symptom of the decline of the status of the professoriate, they are paid a low salary to teach a few courses. In such a context, the value of academics is declining and new generations have been unwilling to embrace the academic career. Having well-trained, fairly paid and academically engaged faculty members is as crucial as ever, since countries count on good professors to prepare and form young people to be actively involved in the knowledge-based economy and in the information society.

Besides the three articles, there are also two book reviews in this issue. The first is a review of Ranilce Guimaraes-Iosif's *Política e Governança Educacional: Contradições e desafios na promoção da cidadania* [Educational Policy and Governance: Contradictions and challenges in promoting citizenship] (2012) by Kleber Pina. The second is a review of Rebecca Raby's *School Rules: Obedience, Discipline and Elusive Democracy* (2012) by Tatiana Gounko.

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