

Higher Education in an Increasingly Multicultural Society: The Example of Brazil

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**Wider access, changing national demographics and international mass
migration: implications for higher education reforms and policy**

**Panels: Higher education expansion and aging population in Latin America, and Good
intentions but not reality (yet)? University reforms to embrace lifelong learning (LLL)**

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Objectives

- Discuss an expanded theoretical multicultural concept of immigrant and minority identities for the analysis of higher education policies and cultural diversity
- Analyse how the Brazilian National Plan for Education (PNE-2014-2024) has addressed the role of higher education vis-à-vis minority students and cultural diversity
- Discuss implications of the goals within the National Plan of Education for lifelong learning in a multicultural perspective

Migrations and Diversity: a multicultural argument

- Boosting immigrant identity: enhancing immigrant/minority self-esteem: self-efficacy and success in educational performance.
- Common problems faced by immigrants/minorities in educational settings: linked to the degree those identities feel (or do not feel) represented, valued and recognized in curricular policies and practices.
- an expanded theoretical multicultural concept of immigrant identities: those perceived as “others,” and “not belonging” to what could discursively be constructed as a “real national (Brazilian) identity” (Canen, 2011). aivenicki

Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Brazil

- Brazil: waves of immigration into its territory : Portuguese in 1500, indigenous populations affected by colonialism, forced immigration of African peoples, European and Japanese populations, Jews and other identities, and, more recently, Syrians fleeing from war and Latin American groups.
- Aging students also constitute part of cultural diversity that get into the educational system
- Slowey and Schuetze (2012): global inequalities have been present with reference to access to even basic levels of education, let alone higher education- Latin America

EDUCATIONAL POLICIES FOR GREATER ACCESS

- **Access: ENEM** (national exam for secondary education- most higher education institutions use it)- distribution by HEIs in the whole of Brazil (vacancies and grade)
- **PROUNI**: polemic- tax relief for private HEIs – scholarships for disadvantaged candidates that successfully passed the ENEM
- **Quotas for blacks, indigenous and disadvantaged groups in public HEIs** - more cultural diversity

PNE: Goals for Adult Education

- Goal 8: increase the number of schooling years for the population (18 to 29 years old) for rural and poor groups, and make schooling between blacks and non blacks equal (...).
- Goal 9: increase literacy toll for the population aged 15 or more; 25%, of vacancies for adult education should be in the integrated form with professional education.
- Room for improvement: gender, ethnicity, immigrants and other identities

The PNE (2014-2024)- National Plan for Education(Brazil, 2014)

- General perspective: multicultural, inclusive. Ex: “search for equity and quality of education in such an unequal country as Brazil”; “value access and not dropping out of the system; value diversity and inclusion”.
- Aims referring to higher education: increase the toll to 50% of entrance (12); increase masters and doctors at the higher education level to 75%, minimum of 35% doctors (13); teacher education so that all of the teachers should hold a HEI degree (15) and 50% a post graduate degree (Masters and PhDs) (16); increase the number of students at the Master (60000 per year) and PhD (25000 per year)

The PNE (2014-2024)- National Plan for Education(Brazil, 2014)(2)

- One of the goals: implementing specific teacher continuing education programs geared towards marginalised groups: blacks (“quilombolas”), indigenous and rural populations.(silence in relation to gender etc)
- HEIs with potentials for multicultural adult education: partnerships, extension- undervalued and silenced control (Canen, 2012, In Slowey & Schuetze, 2012)
- Adult education: still geared towards literacy learning, primary and secondary education for adults

CONCLUSIONS

- Higher education and lifelong learning for diversity in Brazil: expansion, but with room for improvement
- Like other countries in Latin America, there is a growing effort towards a more unified approach orienting educational reforms(Álvarez-Mendiola, 2012)
- Multicultural, inclusive perspectives should go beyond young adult learners or specific collective identities; include migrants, gender and other markers; value more flexible courses, extension perspectives and lifelong learning, beyond literacy acquisition
- Thank you!!!! Obrigada!!!!