Asian Journal *of* Distance Education

http://www.AsianJDE.org

ISSN 1347-9008 Asian J D E 2018 vol 13, no 1, pp 88 - 108

Brazil's Social Justice Policies for Higher Education: What can we learn from Asia?

Matheus Batalha Moreira NERY
Department of Psychology, Business and Education, UNINASSAU, Brazil
160100757@prof.uninassau.edu.br

ABSTRACT :

Brazil tertiary education has evolved substantially in the last 20 years. The policies set up by the Brazilian government aimed at different targets. There were actions to expand the enrollments in the country's public universities, mainly through a program called Reestruturação e Expansão das Universidades Federais (REUNI). The government also invested in increasing the enrollments in private universities and colleges through the government students' loans program, called Programa de Financiamento Estudantil (FIES), and through a grant program, called Programa Universidade para Todos (PROUNI). And finally, the policymakers also encouraged the development of online distance learning programs as a way to compensate for the lack of higher education opportunities in the areas located far away from Brazil's most developed cities. The FIES and PROUNI were implemented as social justice policies to create opportunities for students from lower-income families to pursue a higher education degree. However, There are claims that the social justice subsidy model adopted by the Brazilian government isn't sustainable. On the other side of the world, countries from Asia-Pacific are exploring different strategies to increase both enrollments and quality in tertiary education based on Confucian principles. This Confucian Model led scholars to believe that the Asia-Pacific countries were ready to compete against the tertiary education offered in the western hemisphere. Therefore, firstly, the author's analysis focuses on the pivotal decisions that shaped Brazil's higher education system. In sequence, the author examines some key learning points from the Asia-Pacific countries that adopted a tertiary education strategy based on the Confucian Model. The author proposes that to ensure the Brazilian social justice policies efficacy the country's policymakers should consider developing a more comprehensive rationality involving a long-term thinking strategy for its primary, secondary and tertiary education, mixing government funds and social engagement, in a course of action that can boost academic quality and enrollments. In summary, the author presents recommendations to policymakers, scholars, and HEI administrators regarding the development of Brazilian social justice policies for tertiary education.

Keywords: Brazilian Higher Education; Social Justice Policies; Confucian Model; Asia-Pacific; and Online Distance Learning Programs

INTRODUCTION

The fundamental purpose of higher education is developing a country's youth, and creating paths that can generate opportunities for students to contribute positively to society.

This requires public investments and policies that direct resources to assist student personal, academic and professional success. To date, Brazil has not yet reached its full potential in education, as access to higher education is a challenge.

The goal of the Brazilian government is to achieve 33% higher education enrollment in the 18-24-year-old age group by 2024. However, a national survey conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) showed that among the young people in this age group, only 17.6% are enrolled in undergraduate programs in the country's universities and colleges; 18,697,083 people in this age group are not enrolled in any institution of tertiary education (IBGE, 2016).

To pursue this higher education enrollment goal, the Brazilian government outlined a national plan with three main strategies. The first strategy is to expand the enrollments in the country's public universities, by developing new institutions and by introducing better management strategies, mainly through a program called *Reestruturação e Expansão das Universidades Federais* (REUNI) as well as through new affirmative action programs. The second strategy is to expand the enrollments in private universities and colleges through the government students loans' program, called *Programa de Financiamento Estudantil* (FIES), and through a grant program, called *Programa Universidade para Todos* (PROUNI). And finally, the government also encouraged the development of online distance learning programs, mostly by private institutions, as a way to compensate the lack of higher education opportunities in the areas located far away from Brazil's most developed cities (*Ministério da Educação* [MEC], 2017).

Both FIES and PROUNI were designed to serve as social justice programs, creating opportunities for students from lower-income families to pursue a higher education degree in private institutions. Combined, the FIES and PROUNI budgets grew from R$ 4 billion ($1.3B USD) in 2011 to R$ 16.5 billion ($5.5B USD) in 2015, representing 15% of the annual budget of the Brazilian Ministry of Education.

FIES alone distributed almost R$ 15.5 billion ($5.1B USD) to private institutions at the end of 2015 fiscal year, and another R$ 1 billion ($333M USD) was distributed as tax exemptions to private institutions that accepted students enrolled through PROUNI (MEC, 2017).

However, while FIES and PROUNI were making significant financial investments to help students attain a higher education, Brazil's economy was weakening. Performance indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP) had trended downward since 2010 and in January 2015 Brazilian GDP reached a low of -1%. In July 2015, the government announced that FIES funds had reached the budget limit for that year, R$ 2.5 billion ($833M US). The amount represented 1/6 of the funding private universities and colleges expected for that year. Then, Brazil GDP reached -2.2% and FIES was partially suspended for the second semester of 2015.[i]

Under such fiscal constraint, in 2015 the government imposed new academic and financial rules for private institutions participating in the FIES program. After significant pressure from students and private institutions, the government continued to fund the program, which remained on a growth curve, but at a slower pace.[ii] The FIES new academic and financial rules restricted the number of students that could apply for government student loans because students were required to present a set of minimum scores from the *Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio* (ENEM), Brazil's national higher education entrance examination to universities and colleges. Previously, minimum scores were not required for the FIES's application.

Amid the economic crisis and subsequent funding restrictions for tertiary education, scandal plagued Brazil's government. In August 2016, President Rousseff was impeached.

She was charged with frontloading funds for the government's social programs, including FIES and PROUNI, and for having issued spending budget decrees without having been properly vetted and approved by Brazil's National Congress. Her supporters claim that her predecessors made similar decisions and followed the same procedures, and they accused the Brazilian National Congress of having conducted a *coup d'etat*.[iii]

President Temer succeeded President Rousseff. His first major proposal in office was to ask the Brazilian Senate to approve a constitutional amendment (PEC 241), which was designed to limit the Brazilian government spending for the next 20 years. The amendment stipulated that government expenditures would only be allowed to grow annually in the same proportion of the inflation registered in the country in the previous fiscal year. Popularly known as "*PEC do fim do mundo*" [The End of the World amendment], PEC 241 limited expenditures in government's fundamental areas, such as education and healthcare.[iv]

Beyond its main objective of containing the Brazilian budget deficit, PEC 241 also represents a debate about how the Brazilian government should operate and how the country will pursue important higher education goals in the future. Opting for not increasing investments in education and other areas marks a shift in Brazil's political rationality, after years of expanding social justice expenditures. Moreover, the Brazilian higher education funding crisis and the new constraints for future funding presents itself as a challenge to Brazil's policymakers, HEI administrators, and scholars.

Currently, the strategy of Brazilian higher education private institutions shifted from mostly been focus on the FIES and PROUNI programs and to start scaling up the enrollments in new online distance learning programs.

These programs have a lower cost for the students and have the potential to attract the students that were not granted with loans from the government to enroll in on-campus undergraduate programs. However, the Brazilian government doesn't provide financial aid or loans to students that wish to enroll in online programs. There is an expectation that the number of available placements in online distance learning programs will increase, but actions by the government to pursue quality in higher education are still debatable (Segenreich, 2009).

On the other side of the world, countries from Asia-Pacific are developing a strong higher education system, based on Confucian principles, and are exploring different strategies to increase both enrollments and qualities in tertiary education. The Confucian Model is characterized by strong and centralized nation-states, by a trend for universal participation in higher education, in which the families are taking the state's role as financier of students' tuition and fees, by centralized national exams for accessing universities and colleges, and by the development of research and world-class universities (Marginson, 2011). The Confucian Model led scholars to believe that the Asia-Pacific countries, such as Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong China, Taiwan, and Singapore, were developing a well-established system of tertiary and were ready to compete against the tertiary education offered on the western hemisphere (Altbach, 2013). Brazil has the potential to interact successfully with other countries. Recently initiatives, such as the Science Without Borders program showed that Brazil has a lot to gain by entering in different international cooperation with other nations (Nery, 2017). However, Brazil is still far behind regarding all its international education goals.

To assess the Brazilian higher education challenges, the author's analyses in this article are organized into two sections. In the first section, the author presents an analysis of the pivotal decisions that shaped Brazil's higher education system. The author's objective in the first section is to analyze the available data on Brazil's tertiary education, on the country's social justice policies and on this new trend of developing new online distance learning programs. Moreover, the author's objective is to analyze the available data, balancing it with his direct experience in managing higher education programs.

In the second section of the article, the author presents a benchmark analysis with key learning points from the Asia-Pacific countries that adopted a tertiary education strategy based on the Confucian Model, mainly Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong China, Taiwan, and Singapore. The author's objective in the second section is to analyze some of the best strategies that could have assisted Brazil to achieve a more comprehensive tertiary education strategy.

In the article's final considerations, the author presents recommendations to policymakers, scholars, and HEI administrators regarding the development of a more comprehensive strategy for Brazil's tertiary education. Hence, the major goal of this article is to amplify discussions about the development of academic quality in Brazil's higher education.

BRAZILIAN GOVERNMENT PIVOTAL DECISION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

The King of Portugal, Dom João VI, created the first Brazilian higher education institution in 1808 in Salvador, northeast of Brazil. It was called *Escola de Cirurgia da Bahia* [Bahia Medical School], which served as the basis for the development of the Federal University of Bahia, many years later. Brazil was a colony when the Portuguese royal family arrived in the country, after fleeing the Napoleonic troops' invasion.

However, even with the presence of the King, the country's independence in 1822 and the new republic in 1889, the development of higher education policies, programs, and institutions followed a slow pace (Fávero, 2006).

The first wave of expansion in the number of students' enrolled in tertiary education happened between 1945 and 1965 when the enrollments in public institutions grew from 21,000 students to 182,000. The Brazilian government's rationale was based on the necessity of creating a federal higher education system that could integrate institutions under their control, facilitating the development of new policies (Vasconcelos, 2007; Cunha, 2004). By 1960, the private higher education institution represented 44% of the total enrollments. All the universities and colleges were non-profit institutions (Martins, 2009).

Brazilian Military Regime Policies to Expand Brazilian Higher Education (1965-1985)

The Brazilian military regime (1964-1985) was responsible for promoting the second wave of expansion in Brazil's higher education, especially at private institutions. In 1968, the regime instituted a policy that redirected the surplus of students that had applied to public universities and were unable to secure placements to private institutions. This decision was made with the argument that higher education should not continue to serve a restricted number of students. The rationale was to achieve the maximum demand for the lowest financial cost to the government. As a result, between 1968 and 1972, the Ministry of Education approved 759 requests for higher education new undergraduate programs, 80.9% of all requests. The great majority of the requests also requested to transform private high schools into tertiary education institutions, which would begin to offer undergraduate programs (Horta, 1975).[v]

The private high school owners sought this opportunity as an investment and engaged in developing higher education institutions to fulfill the unmet student demand. In 1965 there were 142,000 students enrolled in private universities and colleges, which represented 44% of the total of students' enrollment. In 1980, this number grew to 885,000 students, representing 64% of the total of students enrolled. One of the political motivations behind this action by the military was to reduce the political influence of public institutions, thus minimizing their strong resistance to the dictatorial regime. The Brazilian Ministry of Education strengthened centralization and the bureaucratic control over public and private institutions. However, no substantial measures or evaluations were instituted regarding the academic quality of the new programs and new institutions (Martins, 2009).

Brazilian Re-democratization Process and Social Justice Policies for Higher Education (1995-2011)

The third wave of expansion in Brazilian tertiary education occurred during the terms of President Cardoso (1995-2002) and President Lula (2003-2010). Although the leaders had divergent political visions, the growth of student enrollments followed a similar pace, and their policies were complimentary. During President Cardoso's two terms, the number of private higher education institutions in the country more than doubled. In 1995 there were 684 private higher education institutions. By the beginning of 2003, when President Lula took office, this number had grown to 1,652 (Caixeta, 2002).

President Cardoso gave autonomy to the Ministry of Education to create a more flexible policy regarding the approval of new programs and institutions.

The Ministry of Education kept its centralization characteristics but facilitated the process for private colleges to become universities, giving them more freedom to create undergraduate programs and to explore the new online distance learning programs' upcoming technology. This strategy allowed more competition among universities and colleges in the private sector. The Brazilian government also began implementing evaluations attempting to ensure some academic quality in institutions and programs (Vieira & Farias, 2007).

In 1999, President Cardoso increased investments in the government student loans program, which was formally created in 1991. In 2001, he signed a new bill to secure a continuous stream of public funds for the coming years for the government student loans program, which was renamed to FIES. He also permitted that private universities and colleges to become for-profit companies managed by individuals or legal entities. This change was fundamental for private institutions, as they initiated a long process of management's professionalization (Corbucci, 2000).

As result of Cardoso's policies, the number of student enrollments between 1995 and 2002 grew 129% in private institutions, compared to 55% on public institutions. The critics argued that President Cardoso's neoliberal agenda focused more on the development of the private sector. The public universities suffered a decrease in public investments, when their annual investment budget was reduced, on average, from R$ 150 million ($50M USD) to R$ 50 million ($17M USD), while at the same time they were pressured to increase their enrollment rates (Corbucci, 2004).

President Lula (2003-2011), however, reversed his predecessor's policy of disinvestment in public universities.

His higher education political agenda focused in continuing the expansion of enrollments in tertiary education, especially through social justice programs. He launched a national plan for public universities called REUNI. The program sought to restructure old campuses and create new federal universities to serve more students. This plan helped the government to increase the number of enrollments in public institutions by 85% (Rossetto & Gonçalves, 2015), and the number of public universities grew from 207 institutions in 2003 to 278 in 2010 (Chaves & Amaral, 2016).

Lula also initiated a major debate about the need for Brazilian universities to adopt affirmative action programs. He argued that tertiary education should be democratized and should value diversity. Thus, he encouraged public institutions to create programs to fill this need. By 2014, at least 10% of the students enrolled in public universities were accepted through affirmative actions programs (*Secretaria de Educação Superior* [SESU], 2014). He also established the PROUNI program, a new grant developed for private higher education institutions focused on social justice, and continued the policy of implementing new technology to online distance learning programs, so students, who lived in areas that didn't have easy access to tertiary education, could have higher education opportunities (Chaves & Amaral, 2016).

During President Lula's two terms (2003-2011), the number of private higher education institutions in the country jumped from 1,652 institutions in 2003 to 2,090 in 2010. Private institutions began organizing themselves as companies listed on the Brazilian stock market, as FIES maintained a growing steady stream of student credit financing, being R$ 1,457 billion ($485M USD) in 2003, and reaching R$ 2,519 billion ($839M USD) in 2010, a growth of 41.1% in 8 years. In 2010, private institutions received also R$ 758 million ($252.6M USD) in tax exemptions through PROUNI.

President Lula's critics argue that his democratized strategy for higher education turned out to be a huge advantage to private colleges and universities. Case in point, in 2006 the for-profit institutions were already responsible for 41% of all students enrolled in undergraduate programs, and by the end of his second term, in 2010, 78% of all Brazilian private universities and colleges were legally transformed into for-profit institutions (Chaves & Amaral, 2016).[vi]

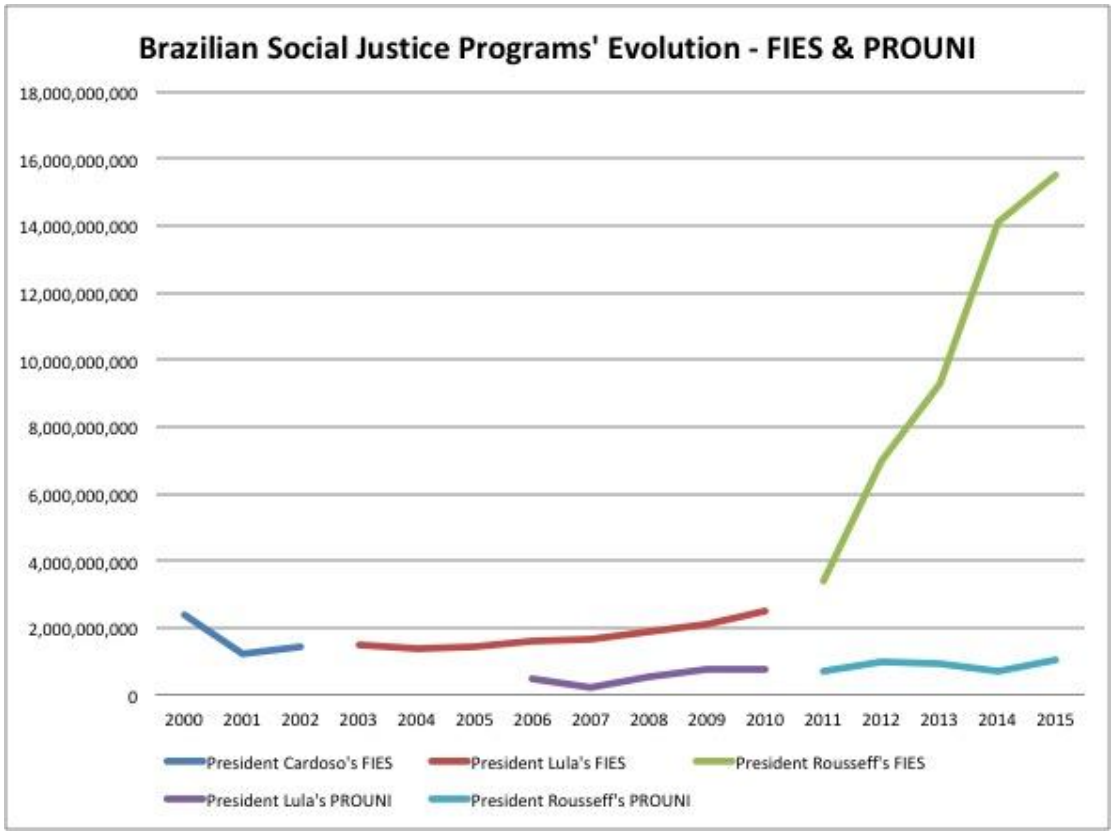
The Last Wave of Higher Education Expansion and the Crash of Social Justice Policies (2011-2016)

Despite the criticisms about the for-profit expansion in tertiary education, President Rousseff, in her first term (2011-2014), promoted an aggressive expansion in the sector, introducing more funds to FIES and PROUNI than her predecessors. She took advantage of the fact that President Lula reduced FIES's interest rate from 6.5% to 3.4% per year in 2010, and injected more funds into the program in order to attract more students. The new FIES rate was below Brazil's economy inflation rate, which reached 5.9% at the end of 2010. As an example, a student who had opted to join FIES at the beginning of that year and had deposited the tuition and fees into his personal saving account would end the year having more money in his or her account that he or she would owe in student loans to the government.[vii]

President Rousseff's government rationale was that it would be very expensive to expand the number of students enrolled in higher education in the country only by means of the federal system of public universities. The government realized that it would only be possible to achieve the higher education goal of 33% of Brazil citizen's age 18 to 24 enrolled in universities and colleges by 2024 if they supported the growth of private institutions through social justice programs.

They estimated that the cost to keep a student enrolled in a public institution was 4.6 times higher than in a private university or college. Therefore, President Rousseff increased the funds for FIES, scaling up from R$ 2,519 billion ($822M USD) in 2010 to R$ 14,103 billion ($4.7B USD) in 2014 (Chaves & Amaral, 2016). Graph 1 presents the evolution of fund in both FIES and PROUNI during President Cardoso, Lula, and Rousseff's terms.

Graph 1 – FIES & PROUNI Funds Evolution during President Cardoso, Lula and Rousseff's Terms



Note: The data was collected on the *Demonstrativos dos Gastos Tributários* [Tax Expenditures Statements] (Ministério da Fazenda [MF], 2016), and on the *Execução Orçamentária da União (2000-2015)* [Brazilian Budgetary Execution] edited by the *Câmara dos Deputados* [Brazilian House of Representatives] (2016), also available in Chaves & Amaral (2016).

The graph 1 shows a substation evolution in the FIES funding during President Rousseff's first term. However, the number of students enrolled in private institutions didn't grow at the same pace. There were 4,736,001 students enrolled in private institutions in 2010, compared to 5,867,001 in 2014, a growth of 19.2%. During President Cardoso and President Lula's terms in office, higher education enrollment growth was 43.5% and 41.7%, respectively (Chaves & Amaral, 2016). FIES increase in loans didn't attract a substantial quantity of new students. Instead, students that were already previously enrolled in private institutions started to take FIES loans. By 2013, FIES accounted for 31% of all the enrollments in private higher education, meaning that these institutions had become dependent on the government funds.[viii]

The most compelling criticism of the government's strategy for private higher education points to the fact that the increase in public spending in these institutions was not necessarily leading to an improvement in the quality of Brazilian higher education (Chaves & Amaral, 2016). The Brazilian Ministry of Education performs a national exam, called *Exame Nacional de Desempenho de Estudantes* (ENADE), to evaluate the knowledge of undergraduate students and the quality of the institutions that they are enrolled. By 2012, 30% of the Brazilian colleges received an unsatisfactory score in ENADE. The ENADE average rating of the public institutions is higher than of the private universities and colleges: 265 and 227 points, respectively, on a scale of 500 points. *Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul* (UFRGS) had the best score in 2012, achieving 428 points.[ix]

In 2015, as President Rousseff started her second term, the Brazilian government higher education strategy started to show its defects and long-term sustainability problems. In the beginning of the year, the Brazilian government decided to modify the FIES application process to include a new academic requirement: the students who wished to apply to the FIES program would have to present their ENEM exam results with a minimum score of 450 points in the general test, on a scale from 0 to 1000 points, and a not failing 0 score in the writing essay test. Students without the minimum scores wouldn't be eligible for FIES in private institutions. Although the Brazilian government was motivated to impose the ENEM results as a requirement for FIES to demonstrate that the application process was transparent, fair, and just, it is reasonable to assume that the decision to push for quality in education was prompted also by the Brazilian economic crisis, which started to show its effects in the same year.[x]

FIES budget proposal for 2016 was R$ 19,9 billion ($6.63B USD) (MEC, 2017). However, after the impeachment of President Rousseff in August 2016, the country's new administrators had difficult to keep the stream of funds to the program, as the economic crisis in Brazil deepened. By the end of 2016, the Brazilian Senate had to approve a supplemental budget of R$ 700 million ($233M USD), so that the Ministry of Education could pay the administrative fees of the loans to the public banks, and, the banks, subsequently, could pay the tuition and fees that the Brazilian government owed to private institutions; an amount of almost R$ 6 billion ($2B USD). Although President Temer kept R$ 19,9 billion ($6.63B USD) for the year of 2017, Brazil is still in a political turmoil and under economic crisis. Therefore, the pace for the release of new FIES contracts, which often cripples student enrollment, and the new academic rules that hamper access to the social justice program have transformed this government budget into a mirage.[xi]

Online Distance Higher Education Programs as a Strategy to get the Sector Out of the Crisis.

As uncertainty about the future of Brazilian social justice programs still remains, the private institutions started to design a new strategy. The plan is to improve investments in the online distance learning programs to attract more students from areas that don't have too many tertiary education opportunities. Tuitions and fees are lower than the on-campus programs, but the government doesn't offer loans and financial aid, such as FIES or PROUNI, to the students enrolled in online programs.

By 2015, there were just over 8 million students enrolled in Brazilian universities. Of these, 82.63% were enrolled in face-to-face higher education programs and 17.37% attended online distance education programs. The profile of the Brazilian undergraduate student in face-to-face on-campus programs can be defined by some specific characteristics. The majority of the students are women (55.55%) that mostly study in private institutions (72.50%). Among the three courses that have the highest number of enrollments from the same gender are Law (55.3%), Business Administration (56.1%) and Pedagogy (92.8%). This trend is also followed in the online distance learning programs where the majority of students are also women (64,66%) that almost in totality are enrolled in private institutions (90,78%). The most desirable online distance learning degree is in Pedagogy and Literature (40,52%), followed by the technology programs (28,17%) (*Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira* [INEP], 2018).

It is undeniable that Brazil has advanced in the enrollments of students in tertiary education. However, the policies adopted by the Brazilian government to increase students' participation in higher education have raised questions about the country's educational future.

Among the most important doubts are whether the government will be able to retain the students that already receive funds from the FIES and PROUNI, and, most importantly, whether shifting strategy to invest more in online distance learning programs will pay off its promised returns to the institutions that are taking this course of action. It is also important to understand how these changes will affect the quality of Brazilian tertiary education and will limit the country's possibilities of having a more comprehensive higher education system. Understanding these changes will be pivotal for Brazil's future.

The Brazilian online distance learning programs as a sector, currently, is dominated by private higher education institutions, which mostly offer commercial or vocational programs.

Table 1 – Enrolments of undergraduate students in Online Distance Learning Programs (ODLP) and On-Campus Programs at Public and Private Higher Education Institutions

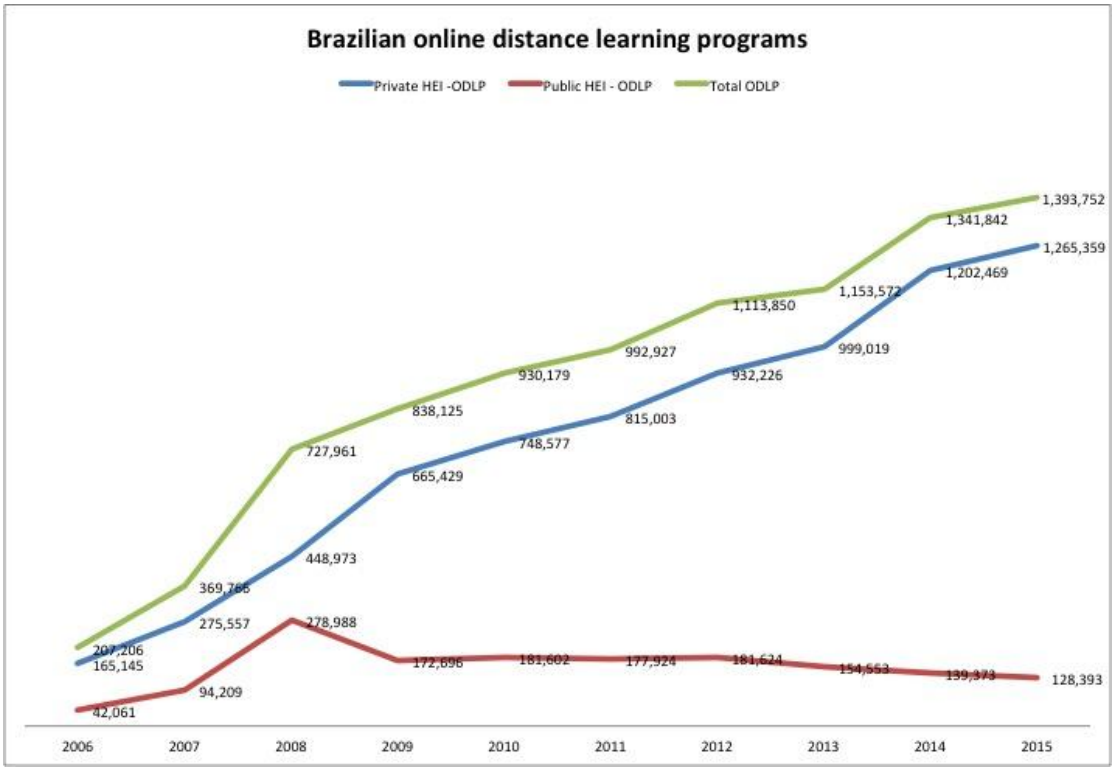
Year	Private HEI -ODLP	Public HEI - ODLP	Total ODLP	Private HEI – On-Campus	Public HEI – On-Campus	Total On-Campus	Total of Students Enrolled
2006	165.145	42.061	207.206	3.467.342	1.209.304	4.676.646	4.883.852
2007	275.557	94.209	369.766	3.639.413	1.240.968	4.880.381	5.250.147
2008	448.973	278.988	727.961	3.806.091	1.273.965	5.080.056	5.808.017
2009	665.429	172.696	838.125	3.764.728	1.351.168	5.115.896	5.954.021
2010	748.577	181.602	930.179	3.987.424	1.461.696	5.449.120	6.379.299
2011	815.003	177.924	992.927	4.151.371	1.595.391	5.746.762	6.739.689
2012	932.226	181.624	1.113.850	4.208.086	1.715.752	5.923.838	7.037.688
2013	999.019	154.553	1.153.572	4.374.431	1.777.974	6.152.405	7.305.977
2014	1.202.469	139.373	1.341.842	4.664.542	1.821.629	6.486.171	7.828.013
2015	1.265.359	128.393	**1.393.752**	4.809.793	1.823.752	**6.633.545**	**8.027.297**

Note: The data was collected on the last Brazilian Ministry of Education *Censo da Educação Superior* [Census of Higher Education], conducted in 2015 (INEP, 2018).

Without improvements, the online distance learning programs can face the same fate of the Brazilian social justice programs, FIES and PROUNI. Brazil has not yet defined clearer rules about how the enrollment evolution will take place and how academic quality in the new online distance education programs will be ensured. Table 1 presents Brazilian students' enrolments evolution in both on-campus programs and online distance learning programs, which shows the number of students enrolled in online distance learning programs at public universities decreased from 2008 onwards and nowadays represents less than 10% of all the students enrolled in these programs.

The Brazilian public universities are research orientated, in contrast with the majority of private institutions that offered commercial focused online program.[xii] They currently are offering the majority of placements on online programs. Due to fact that Brazil's economy is still under constraints, students who are currently enrolled in face-to-face majors, due to financial problems or due to FIES and PROUNI crisis, could end up opting to migrate to online distance learning programs, which has more affordable tuitions and fees. This migration movement can force the private higher educational institutions to rethink their strategy, and, fundamentally, their cost structures. Graph 2 shows Brazil's growth curve of online distance learning programs in public and private institutions.

Graph 2 – Brazilian Online Distance Learning Programs Enrolments' Evolutions



Note: The data was collected on the last Brazilian Ministry of Education *Censo da Educação Superior* [Census of Higher Education], conducted in 2015 (INEP, 2018).

As graph 2 also indicates that Brazilian public universities started to disinvest in online distance learning programs by 2008. Moreover, as the number of students enrolled in on-campus programs grew, the number of students that opted to pursue the government social justice programs also grew, meaning that there were students that were already enrolled when they decided to get financial aid from FIES or PROUNI. Without the support and orientation from the government and from the universities and colleges, Brazilian students can become an easy target for low quality online distance higher education programs. Having already been in contact with tertiary education, they may make this choice to continue their studies without fully understanding the damage in their academic training.

One of the strategies being studied is to explore the possibility of creating hybrid majors. In other words, part of the courses will be offered online and another part on campus. The Brazilian Ministry of Education already authorizes that 20% of the undergraduate courses on campus can be held online, and 30% of the online distance higher education programs are to be held in face-to-face classes in the universities' small branches, called *pólos EAD*, which are mostly located in cities in the interior of the country. The idea now is to have new programs 50% of the classes held in each of the modalities, online and on campus. Nonetheless, this new policy is still under analysis by the Brazilian Ministry of Education.[xiii]

Certainly, expanding the number of students without considering the possibilities for improvement in the higher education system, as a whole, will not lead Brazil to achieve its ambitions for tertiary education. The strategies used to date, while helping to increase the number of students enrolled in tertiary education, have also led to inequality since socioeconomically disadvantaged students only have access to low-quality, online or on-campus courses, which are not highly valued in the labor market.

Access to public universities, which offer fewer placements, is quite competitive. Even with the advent of affirmation action programs, the majority of placements are still occupied by students who have had access to better quality primary and secondary education. In sum, Brazil needs to rethink its strategies in order to advance its ambitions in higher education (McCowan, 2007).

KEY LEARNING LESSONS FROM ASIA-PACIFIC HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

In order for Brazil to make progress in its higher education ambitions, it is important to understand the strategies used by other countries that have succeeded in leveraging both academic quality and access to higher education. This means analyzing some ideas that could have helped Brazil achieve greater success in its tertiary education policies.

The first important notion for more comprehensive tertiary education policies is long-term thinking. Higher education policies take time to implement, to evolve and to deliver results. Therefore, short-term thinking regarding investments would not bring the necessary results faster. The higher education system that a country has adopted is implicated by both objective and subjective factors. The objective factors include important elements such as the country's history and geography, its culture and its language, its economic resources and the transgenerational social skill that are present currently in the country's population. The subjective factors are how the country's policymakers choose to organize a long-term strategy to deal with its challenges. Tertiary education is one of the key elements that can enhance a country to go beyond its original limitations, developing a more prosperous future (Marginson, 2011).

This idea of objective and subjective factors can be summarized in an analogy of a card game, in which the policymakers of each country receive a specific set of

cards and they have to draw a strategy from it. In that sense, Asia countries aren't different from other countries located in distinct parts of the world. They all have their own background, history, and challenges that compose their objective set of factors. However, a specific group of countries in Asia-Pacific, including Japan, South Korea, China, Hong Kong China, Taiwan and Singapore, developed a well-established system of tertiary education known as the Confucian Model, which is considered more effective, in some levels, than the traditional European or the North American system (Marginson, 2011).

The Rise of the Eastern Hemisphere Higher Education System

This new trend in higher education started in Japan in the 1970s. Subsequently, in the 1990s, other East Asia and Singapore followed Japan's lead and also substantially increased their tertiary education efforts. The core element of this trend is a growing desire, all through the whole population, for quality in higher education, aided by increasing householders' participation in the payment of universities' tuition and fees, a role that previously was occupied by the state. Important indicators, such as the gross enrolments rate (GER) for higher education is very high in the countries that adopted the Confucian Model. South Korea (96%), Taiwan (87%) and Japan (58%), for example, are among the countries that have the higher GER in Asian countries (Marginson, 2011). In contrast, Brazil only has 17,6% of its youth population enrolled in universities and colleges (IBGE, 2016).

Beyond that, the number of international scholarly papers published in peer review journals grew 141,8% from 1995 to 2007 in Asia, representing 22,1% of the world science papers (Marginson, 2011). In Scimago world journal ranking Brazil only appears in 15th position, behind important Asia-Pacific countries that developed a Confucian Model, such as China (2sd position), Japan (5th position), and South Korea (12th position) (Scimago Journal & Country Rank [SJR], 2018). Combined, the growth of students' participation and investments in research, as well as dynamic changes in higher education policies made by some Asia-Pacific countries had lead scholars to believe that eastern hemisphere was rising to compete against the tertiary education of the western part of the world (Altbach, 2013).

It is important to notice that tertiary education isn't a zero-sum game, where the rise of a specific country or a particular higher education system will lead to a decline in other countries' universities. It is notable the effort that some Asia-Pacific countries made to develop a higher education system that can compete with North America and Europe universities. Until recently, they were the world's traditional academic quality powerhouses. Nowadays, there are important Japanese and Chinese universities that are highly ranked internationally, and China Hong Kong, South Korea and Taiwan are also developing world-class universities (Altbach, 2013).

This was not a one-day work. The Asia-Pacific countries had to develop sophisticated strategies to achieve academic quality. China, for example, adopted for years a strategy focused on soft power. It is China aspiration to be a major focal point in tertiary education, especially considering its research efforts (Yang, 2015). China strategy for higher education is combining funds to institutions that are considered top performers that are able to achieve both high academic quality and to scale up the students' enrollments. They are also focusing their efforts on creating an academic atmosphere focused on rewarding performance and productivity (Altbach, 2013). Considering all that happened in the last 30 years, the Asia-Pacific countries that established a Confucian Model for higher education are benefitted and have managed to advance its ambitions in tertiary education.

The Confucian Model's Principles and the Brazilian Higher Education System

The Confucian Model for higher education encompasses four core elements: (a) Strong and centralized nation-state, especially regarding educational policies; (b) a trend for universal participation in tertiary education, over 50% of the population, with a vision based on private duty and Confucian values that are driving families to take the state's role as financier of students' tuitions and fees; (c) national exams for access to higher education as a form of social competition and university's hierarchy, which also acts as promoters of the families' commitment to education; (d) accelerated public investment in key areas of higher education, such as research, while world-class universities are developed (Marginson, 2011).

The Nation-state Role

The Asia-Pacific countries that developed a Confucian Model have a strong ability to direct how resources in tertiary education must be used. They are constantly evaluating institutions' performance and its cleverness in developing capacity building strategies. The fundamental element of this first core principle is the state ability to translate the families' commitment with academic quality in higher education into a system that enables them to have a chance to enroll their descendants in world-class universities (Marginson, 2011). This cannot be mistaken with a simple political rhetoric that only enables the policymakers to create a fictional discuss distinct of what results are actually achieving (Nery, 2017). That was the case of Brazilian President Rousseff second term's political slogan: *Brasil, Pátria Educadora* [Brazil, Homeland Educator].

As discussed, in 2015, while President Rousseff was speaking broadly about the country's necessity of developing a comprehensive strategy for higher education, Brazil social justice programs, FIES and PROUNI, were experiencing funding problems.

Centralization of higher education activities is key for Asia-Pacific countries that adopted the Confucian Model, as research and tertiary education goals are a fundamental part of these countries global strategy. This course of action is different from the U.S., where universities and the colleges have more autonomy to develop academic programs and research agendas. A pivotal issue related to nation-state centralization is the ability not to confuse control with unnecessary bureaucracy, which burden the administrative processes of universities and slow down the development of higher education institutions. The nation-state is the driving force behind higher education, as the countries' policymakers are responsible to direct its funding efforts and also plays a major role in proposing new policies (Marginson, 2011). However, its participation is also a major concern, as the state can direct efforts to create unstable policies or programs, such as FIES and PROUNI, which raised expectations of access to higher education, without necessarily guaranteeing the academic quality or securing a continuous stream of public funds for the upcoming years.

Families Engagement with Tertiary Education

The second major core element for the Confucian Model is to increase access and participation in higher education while also increasing families' participation as the financier of students' tuitions and fees. In mature countries, such as Japan, the number of students that don't receive any support from the state to be enrolled in tertiary education is very high.

The majority of the Japanese students, 72% of the whole cohort, are enrolled in the country's universities and colleges without receiving funds from the government (Marginson, 2011). From 2010 to 2016, 2.390.000 Brazilian students were granted with FIES loans, representing 36,02% of the total of students enrolled in the country undergraduates' on-campus programs (Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento da Educação [FNDE], 2018). If one considers that another 1.823.752 students were enrolled in public universities, which can't charge tuitions and fees and are managed with state funds, the total amount of students supported by the Brazilian government through FIES and public institutions is 63,52% of the on-campus student population. Therefore, Brazil adopted a policy that is in the opposite direction of the Asia-Pacific countries that implemented the Confucian Model.

The main problem with the Brazilian strategy was to scale up the social justice programs funds, without creating also a sense of responsibility for families and institutions regarding academic quality. As discussed previously, scaling up funds for these programs also has not necessarily led to greater participation of the population in higher education programs. One of the most important lessons of the Confucian Model for higher educations is the notion spread in each country society that one generation must be better educated than the previous one. Education is seen as a family duty, which must respect, morally, its ancestral lineage, by continually developing the family's descendants. By respecting this moral rule, the families' puts education in the core of the countries' culture and the government creates the links between the families and social order by a competitive admission exam (Marginson, 2011).

National Higher Education Entrance Examination

The higher education entrance examination is another important element that keeps the Confucian Model's academic hierarchy organized. The key social element is students' hope that by doing an excellent academic work and by developing the necessary skills they will be able to get good jobs or prestige positions helping them to move forward in their countries' social hierarchy. The universities entrance exams are organized in a "one-chance" exam that allows the student to be accepted, by his own merit, in a variety of institutions that are distributed hierarchically by its academic quality. An important element is the families' commitment to academic excellence and with the universal mechanism for being accepted in universities and colleges. They are aware that their decedents' fates could be impacted favorably after they have been accepted to a high-ranked institution (Marginson, 2011).

Brazil has been for a long time trying to leverage the potential of the country's ENEM, which was designed to serve as the national higher education entrance examination. Several problems have happened so far. Among the principals is the fact that the ENEM isn't universally accepted by all Brazilian universities (Barros, 2014). By 2015, only 27,8% of the students that were accepted by Brazilian universities and colleges earned their placement through ENEM. Brazil's federal public universities, where 76,6% of all the students got their placements after taking the ENEM exam, mostly adopted the ENEM national examination (INEP, 2018).

Another serious problem is that the Brazilian government is trying to raise the importance of meritocracy through the ENEM without considering the impact of this action in students' lives and universities' management (Barros, 2014). Though the government's motivation for increasing meritocracy is admirable, the timing is questionable. The ENEM should have been transformed into Brazil's national higher education entrance examination at the same time that country adopted the social justice policies. This would have helped in the development of a more meritocratic distribution of student

financial aid or government loans through the social justice programs. Moreover, it would have directed a substantial amount of students to institutions that had a track of good academic quality performance.

Research and World-class Universities

By developing a sense of responsibility regarding higher education tuitions and fees in Asia-Pacific countries' families, the nation-states also achieved a more mature level of investment in research, as funds that would be usually used to pay tuitions and fees were redirected to fund research projects. All of the countries that adopted the Confucian Model kept a growing pace of investment in research. Japan, in particular, developed a very sophisticated system to fund university research and kept a continuous stream of funds for research for more than 30 years. Funds and high-quality infrastructure to research, alongside professors committed to academic excellence, are fundamental elements for the development of world-class universities (Marginson, 2011).

Asia-Pacific countries' families value these investments and they drive their descendants to compete for placements in the high-ranked institutions. This is no different in Brazil, where most middle-class families also try to direct their children education efforts to achieve a placement in one of the countries federal universities. These institutions are research orientated, don't charge tuition fees, offer fewer placements and are quite competitive. Therefore, Brazilian families, in order to secure placements for their children in the public universities, enroll them in private secondary education schools because they offer a high-quality education and better security than public high schools (Brum & Knobel, 2017). By not investing in increasing the academic quality in the country's primary and secondary education, Brazil continues to maintain inequality in its social system (McCowan, 2007).

However, Brazilian public universities also suffered from Brazil's educational funding crisis. Since 2015, they had to restructure their budget and had to cut back previous activities that were supported in an attempt to keep those institutions functioning and serving their students. As they don't charge tuition and fees, their budget depends integrally from the government. The problem is that public universities had to continue to support the government goals of student' enrollments, depending less of their resources. The Brazilian government couldn't cut back the number of students enrolled in public universities, so they imposed substantial cuts in researches project and graduate programs activities. The Brazilian science budget was reduced in almost 40% in three years, from R$ 7 billion ($2.3B US) in 2014 to R$ 4,6 billion ($1.5B US) in 2016. These cuts affect directly professors and students, which now have more limit funds to carry on their research and to continue their studies.[xiv]

The key element for the growth in research quality in Asia-Pacific countries was an accelerated pace in transforming funds into research results. The number of scientific papers has been growing steadily in countries like China, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan (Marginson, 2011). The Leiden University ranking, which show the scientific impact of universities professors' publications, is an example of this accelerated pace. Eight Chinese universities, one Japanese and one South Korean institution are present in the top 25 universities ranking. This scientific publication raking is led by Harvard University, and the U.S. has nine universities in the top 25. Brazil has one institution, which appears in the eighth position in the overall ranking: *Universidade de São Paulo* (USP) (Centre for Science and Technology Studies, Leiden University [CWTS], 2018). The USP is a distinct academic project in the Brazilian higher education scenario.

Although it is a public university, it has been, since its foundation, a flagship university focused on research known for its excellence (Silva, 2013). However, being in a top ten positions in Leiden University rankings is something that other Brazilian universities should be inspired by.

The Confucian Model Limitations

It is important to understand that the Confucian Model has limitations, as almost all higher education systems around the world. One of the most important challenges to the Asia-Pacific countries that adopted the Confucian Model is to try to elevate the academic quality of private higher education institutions. They are continuing to expand its participation in the enrollments, but are still on the bottom of the educational hierarchy. Inequality is still present in the system, as low-income families' decedents are mostly enrolled in non-selective or vocational institutions (Altbach, 2013). Brazil hasn't a different scenario, and it is a challenge for the country to improve the quality of its universities, especially those that have a commercial or vocational focus and that are responsible for a large cohort of students.

Meritocracy and hierarchy are important characteristics of the Confucian Model. However, this can also lead to a more formal interaction, especially between students and professors, or even peer professors. Senior professors hold most of the decision-making power in academic affairs, so junior professors and students rely on their wise decisions to advance their studies or careers. Brazil is no different in this sense, as social relations play an important role in the decision-making process of universities, both in public and in the private sector (Altbach, 2013).

Academic corruption is present in Asian-Pacific countries, as it is present also in other countries and in Brazil. The most concern problems are related to plagiarism in scientific publication. The challenge to the Confucian Model countries, especially to China, is to control academic fraud in a way that the unnecessary cases of academic corruption can't damage the image and the principles of the Confucian Model. The absence of democratic principles in Asia-Pacific countries, such as China, is also a major concern. World-class universities are mostly established under the academic freedom concept. Therefore, with limited freedom, universities can encounter obstacles to develop a world-class scientific and academic agenda that could lead to the development of more world-class universities (Altbach, 2013; Yang, 2015).

Although tertiary education has been an important part of the rhetoric adopted by the Asia-Pacific countries, these countries are still dealing with challenges regarding internationalization. The balance between local language and English is still controversial. The higher education institutions that adopted the Confucian Model are among the countries that send most students abroad. China, in particular, sent 274,439 students to the U.S. in 2014 (Nery, 2017). However, many students don't have the desire to come back to their countries to contribute to its long-term development (Altbach, 2013). Brazil, still lags behind in these international initiatives, as only a few universities offer classes in English, and the country's major international initiative, Science Without Borders, was almost completely shut down after 2016 (Nery, 2017). It is critical for Brazilian universities to realize that higher education is now a global enterprise. Colleges and universities are working hard to prepare their students for a highly competitive and interconnected world (Helms & Rumbley, 2014).

It is undeniable that the Confucian Model brought progress to tertiary education in the Asia-Pacific countries. Nevertheless, there are still obstacles that need to be overcome in other to this system could be fully considered as a world-class. Continuing building world-class universities is a step forward, but also assisting in the improvement of the academic quality in the commercial focused institutions is a challenge (Altbach, 2013). Brazil has a different set of challenges to overcome. The country's social justice programs strategy needs to be rethought in order to offer the students and the institutions that compose the higher education system some stability, so they can develop long-term projects. The continuous change of regulations and improvisation is only weakening the system (Salto, 2018).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Rethinking Brazil's higher education strategy, changing the country's rationality, it will not be an easy task. It will require a lot of efforts from different segments of society and also focus and determination from the policymakers and HEI administrators. Currently, Brazilian GPD is reaching 1,3%, showing that the country's economy is presenting signs of recovery (IBGE, 2018).

However, by June 2018, President Temer announced the withdrawal of 1 Billion Reais ($333M USD) from the FIES program, in order to defray expenses with public security in states where violence is critical, as is the case in Rio de Janeiro.[xv] For 2018, the policymakers divided the FIES into three student's loans categories. In the first category 100,000 loans contracts were offered at zero interest rates. Another 210,000 loans contracts were offered at 3% or plus interest rates into the second and the third categories, depending on the student residence' State or family income. The academic rules including minimal scores for ENEM exam were kept.[xvi]

The Brazilian government decision to protect its citizens is admirable, but, again, the timing and the reallocation of funds are questionable. Increasing funds for public security by decreasing funds for education may allow the problems generated by violence to diminish in the short-term, but, in the long run, the population will feel the effects of lack of investment in education. Beyond that, the constant change in academic rules and in the funding process in the FIES program creates instability for students, professors, and universities. It is extremely important that the Brazilian government sets a long-term vision for its social justice policies, instead of constantly muddling through the whole process.

Brazil can definitely perform better in tertiary education. If the question is how Brazil should proceed, the Confucian Model can offer a few good insights that can illuminate the path for new policies. In summary, Brazil should consider adopting a more comprehensive rationality involving a long-term thinking strategy for its primary, secondary and tertiary education. It is important that any new strategy consider a long-term agenda, mixing government funds and social engagement, in a course of action that can booster academic quality and leads to opportunities internationally. The Brazilian government should not treat policies as transient, constantly making changes to it, as was the case with FIES and PROUNI. A set of rules and a funding streaming should be thought as a state policy with long-term commitment. However, the dependence on government funds also creates a challenge to Brazilian policymakers, as it makes the system inefficient and not innovative.

It is also important that the government acts effectively to reduce Brazil' social inequality so that families can be encouraged to finance their descendant's tuitions and fees. Increasing the engagement, across the whole society,

of Brazilian families in the educational process is of fundamental importance. They are one of the main driving forces, alongside with the policymakers and HEI administrators that are responsible for implementing the necessary changes in the systems. The changes should always consider leveraging both academic quality and enrollments in tertiary education. The Brazilian government could also consider transforming the ENEM into Brazil's national higher education entrance examination, accepted by all Brazilian universities. This course of action should include a wide negotiation involving representatives of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Brazil would benefit from a national competition that can allocate the top students nationally into the country's top universities.

The Brazilian Ministry of Education evaluation of universities and colleges is still centered on feedbacks about the academic activities developed by colleges and universities or on the punishment of institutions that persist in having unsatisfactory academic performance. There isn't yet a more comprehensive culture regarding higher education ranking, and only a few institutions are present, in prominent positions, in the international rankings. The Brazilian government should consider using the ENADE exam results, which evaluate the performance of undergraduate students, to create a widely publicized higher education national ranking based on student performance. This course of action could increase the academic competition among students and institutions, highlighting the benefits of academic meritocracy. While funding is a significant part of the discussions about the Brazilian social justice policies, there is little scientific research on the impact of the FIES and PROUNI programs. Basic questions about the outcomes of the student recipients are still unanswered.[xvii]

There are claims that the social justice subsidy model adopted by the Brazilian government isn't sustainable and that government funds would be better invested through a distinct strategy. However, a sudden and radical change of direction can cause problems as well. The Brazilian policymakers should consider that high impact policies are thought with long-term vision and commitment to all stakeholders. The policies modifications should be gradually implemented so that all stakeholders can assimilate the new strategy and work hard to generate results. Brazil has the potential to develop world-class university. But, this effort should not only be carried out by public universities, as the country's higher education system benefit with the presence of more world-class institutions, both from the private and the public sector.

If the question is why Brazil should strive for a better higher education system, the answer is basically that the country will benefit as whole if more people have access to high-quality education. The development of a new system of higher education should be marked by a collective effort. Families, students, and HEI administrators, from both public and private institutions, should strive to ensure that the next generations of Brazilian students receive better primary, secondary and tertiary education, and that the country universities and colleges' GER is close to the rates experienced in the Asia-Pacific countries that adopted the Confucian Model.

Finally, Brazilian policymakers and HEI administrators need to better understand the other nations' tertiary education strategy. Shifting the strategy to scale up enrollments only on online distance learning programs could not pay its promises results in the long run for the country's institutions.

Policymakers and HEI administrators should understand that higher education is now a global enterprise. And by understanding that, they will be able to move beyond the traditional strategies for tertiary education, and contribute to the development of a more comprehensive and innovative higher education system.

REFERENCES

Altbach P.G. (2013). The Asian Higher Education Century?. In: The International Imperative in Higher Education. Global Perspectives on Higher Education. Sense Publishers, Rotterdam

Barros, A. S. X. (2014). Vestibular e Enem: Um debate contemporâneo [University's entrance exam and Enem: A contemporary debate]. Ensaio: Avaliação e Políticas Públicas em Educação, 22, 1057-1090.

BRASIL. Ministério da Fazenda (MF). (2016) Receita Federal do Brasil (RFB). Demonstrativos dos Gastos Tributários – DGT [Tax Expenditures Statements]. Brasília: MF: RFB. Available on: http://idg.receita.fazenda.gov.br/dados/receitadata/renuncia-fiscal/previsoes-ploa/arquivos-e-imagens/demonstrativos-dos-gastos-tributarios-dgt. Accessed May 31, 2018.

BRASIL. Câmara dos Deputados. (2016) Execução Orçamentária da União [Brazilian Budgetary Execution] (2000-2015). Available on: http://www2.camara.leg.br/orcamento-da-uniao/orcamento-da-uniao-em-foco/web_orcamento_uniao_em_foco_ano-2016. Accessed May 31, 2018.

Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). (2016). Indicadores PIB. Retrieved in August 31, 2016, from http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/

Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). (2018). Indicadores PIB. Retrieved in May 31, 2018, from http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/

Brum, J. A. & Knobel, M. (2017). The International Dimension of the Brazilian Higher Education System Through the Prism of South-South Cooperation. *International Journal of African Higher Education*. Vol 4, N. 2.

Caixeta, N. Educação. In: Lamounier, B., & Figueiredo, R. (Org.) (2002). A era FHC: um balance [The FHC era: an analysis]. São Paulo: Cultura.

Centre for Science and Technology Studies, Leiden University (CWTS) (2018). The Leiden ranking. Accessed May 31, 2018 from: http://www.cwts.nl/cwts/LeidenRankingWebSite.html

Chaves, V. L. J., & Amaral, N. C. (2016). Política de expansão da educação superior no Brasil - O Prouni e o FIES como financiadores do setor privado [Policy of expansion of higher education in Brazil - Prouni and FIES as private sector financiers] . *Educação em Revista*, 32(4), 49-72.

Corbucci, P. R. (2000) As universidades federais: gastos, desempenho, eficiência e produtividade [The federal universities: spending, performance, efficiency and productivity]. Brasília: DF: IPEA.

Corbucci, P. R. (2004). Financiamento e democratização do acesso à educação superior no Brasil: da desserção do Estado ao projeto de reforma [Financing and democratization of access to higher education in Brazil: from the desertion of the State to the reform project]. *Educação & Sociedade, Campinas*, v. 25, n. 88, p. 677-701.

Cunha, L. A. (2004) Desenvolvimento desigual e combinado no ensino superior: Estado e Mercado [Unequal and combined development in higher education: State and market]. *Educação & Sociedade*, Campinas, v. 25, n. 88, p. 795-817, out.

Deming, D. J., Goldin, C & Katz. L. F. (2012). The For-Profit Postsecondary School Sector: Nimble Critters or Agile Predators? *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26 (1): 139-64.

Fávero, M. de L. de A. (2006). A universidade no Brasil: das origens à reforma universitária de 1968 [The university in Brazil: from the origins to the university reform of 1968]. *Educar*. Curitiba, n 25, p. 17-36, Editora UFPR.

Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento da Educação (FNDE). (2018). Financiamentos Concedidos [Granted funding]. Retrieved in May 31, 2018, from http://www.fnde.gov.br/financiamento/fies-graduacao/mantenedora-e-ies/financiamentos-concedidos

Helms R. M., & Rumbley L. E. (2014) A "Primer" for Global Engagement. In: Rumbley L.E., Helms R.M., Peterson P.M., Altbach P.G. (eds) Global Opportunities and Challenges for Higher Education Leaders. Global Perspectives on Higher Education. SensePublishers, Rotterdam

Horta, J. S. (1975). A expansão do ensino superior no Brasil [The expansion of higher education in Brazil]. Vozes, Petrópolis, v. 69, n. 6.

Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (INEP). (2018). Resumo Técnico - Censo da Educação Superior 2015 [Technical Summary - Census of Higher Education 2015]. Available on: www.inep.gov.br.

Marginson, S. (2011) Higher education in East Asia and Singapore: rise of the Confucian Model. *High Educ*. 61: 587. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-010-9384-9

Martins, C. B. (2009). A reforma universitária de 1968 e a abertura para o ensino superior privado no Brasil [The university reform of 1968 and the opening to private higher education in Brazil]. *Educação & Sociedade*, 30(106), 15-35.

McCowan, T. (2007) Expansion without equity: An analysis of current policy on access to higher education in Brazil. *High Educ*. 53: 579. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-005-0097-4

Ministério da Educação (MEC). (2017). MEC Transparência [MEC Transparency]. Available on: http://portal.mec.gov.br/secretaria-de-regulacao-e-supervisao-da-educacao-superior-seres/transparencia/30000-uncategorised

Nery, M. B. M. (2017). Science Without Borders' Contributions to Internationalization of Brazilian Higher Education. *Journal of Studies in International Education* 0(0): DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315317748526

Rossetto, C. B. de S., & Gonçalves, F. de O. (2015). Equidade na Educação Superior no Brasil: Uma Análise Multinomial das Políticas Públicas de Acesso [Equity in Higher Education in Brazil: A Multinomial Analysis of Public Access Policies]. *Dados*, 58(3), 791-824.

Salto, D. J. (2018) To profit or not to profit: the private higher education sector in Brazil. *High Educ.* 75: 809. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-017-0171-8

Secretaria de Educação Superior [SESU]. (2014). A democratização e Expansão da educação superior no país 2003-2014 [The democratization and expansion of higher education in the country 2003-2014]. (1º Ed.). Brasília: Ministério da Educação.

Segenreich, S. C. D. (2009). ProUni e UAB como estratégias de EAD na expansão do ensino superior [ProUni and UAB as ODL strategies in the expansion of higher education]. *Pro-Posições*, 20(2), 205-222.

Silva, A. F. C. (2013). The diplomacy of professorships: German cultural foreign policy and higher education in São Paulo: The cases of the University of São Paulo and Escola Paulista de Medicina (1934-1942). História, 32(1), 401-431.

Scimago Journal & Country Rank (SJR). (2018). Country ranking. Accessed May 31, 2018 from: https://www.scimagojr.com/countryrank.php

Vasconcelos, I. M. (2007). A federalização do ensino superior no Brasil [Federalization of higher education in Brazil]. Dissertação (Mestrado) – Departamento de Sociologia, Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, DF.

Vieira, S. L., & Farias, I. M. S. (2007). Política educacional no Brasil [Educational policy in Brazil]. Brasília, DF: Líber Livro.

Yang, R. (2015). China's Soft Power Projection in Higher Education. *International Higher Education*. No. 46.

Wainer, J., & Melguizo, T. (2017). Políticas de inclusão no ensino superior: avaliação do desempenho dos alunos baseado no Enade de 2012 a 2014 [Social justice policies in higher education: performance evaluation of students based on ENADE exams results from 2012 to 2014. *Educação e Pesquisa*, Epub 12 de janeiro de 2017.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests
The views expressed in this article are those of the author with no potential conflicts of interest.

Funding
The author received no financial support for the research and publication of this article.

Acknowledgments
The author wishes to thank Ramesh C Sharma and Vinod Kumar Kanvaria for opening the doors of Asia-Pacific universities and to thank Schuyler S. Korban, Alexander Keyssar, Doris Sommer and Allen Gontz for continuing encouraging the debate about Brazilian higher education. The author wishes to express his gratitude to Larissa Fawkner, who has tirelessly helped him to edit and proofread the manuscript during all stages of this article's publication, to the anonymous reviewers and AsianJDE's editors whose suggestions helped evolve it, and to Claudio de Moura Castro, Hélio Barros, Marlton Mota and James Ito-Adler for the inspiring conversations about the future of Brazilian higher education. Finally, but not lastly, the author thanks, all policymakers, professors, students and stakeholders thatbelieve in academic quality in tertiary education as a way of changing lives.

Matheus Batalha Moreira NERY is a Psychology, Business Administration and Education Professor at *Uninassau* and a former Dean of the International Relations Office at *Universidade Tiradentes*, northeast of Brazil. A Psychologist by training, his research interests include educational psychology, international education, and higher education. During the last five years, he led the *Universidade Tiradentes* efforts in international education, managing and participating in different international programs. He also led the *Universidade Tiradentes* efforts that resulted in the creation and development of the Tiradentes Institute at University of Massachusetts, Boston.

Corresponding Address:
Matheus Batalha Moreira NERY, Uninassau, Av. Augusto Franco, 2340 - Siqueira Campos, Aracaju - SE, 49075-470, BRAZIL.
Email: 160100757@prof.uninassau.edu.br ; mbmnery@gmail.com

[i] See "*MEC diz que esgotou a verba para novos contratos do FIES em 2015* [MEC says it has exhausted funding for new FIES contracts in 2015]", in Globo.com, accessed in January 05th, 2017.
[ii] See "*Parece que Morri na Praia* [Looks like I died at the beach]", in Globo.com, accessed in January 05th, 2017.
[iii] See "Dilma Rousseff Is Ousted as Brazil's President in Impeachment Vote", in nytimes.com, accessed in January 05th, 2017.
[iv] A popular poll conducted the day before the Senate vote, December 12th, 2016, showed that 60% of Brazilians opposed the proposed amendment to the constitution. Despite the protests and discontent of the

Brazilian population, the PEC 241 was approved and is scheduled to become operational in 2018. See "The End of the World? In Brazil, It's Already Here", in nytimes.com, accessed in January 05, 2017, and "*Senado aprova PEC do teto, que limita gastos do governo por até 20 anos* [Senate Approves PEC, limiting government expenditures for up to 20 years]", in folha.uol.com.br , accessed in December 14th, 2016.

[v] Most of these Brazilian high schools were managed as family businesses and were transformed into private higher education non-profit institutions, as Brazilian law at the time prohibited the existence of for-profit higher education institutions in the country.

[vi] Deming et al. (2012) researched the outcomes of the first-time undergraduates that were enrolled in the U.S. for-profit institutions, comparing them with students enrolled in community colleges, public universities, and non-profit higher education institutions. The research results indicated that private for-profit institutions are able to retain students, mostly during the first year, and are able to lead them to complete short-term programs. Unfortunately, the results also indicated that the students who attend the U.S. for-profit universities have higher unemployment and "idleness" rates than their peers in public universities, community colleges or non-profit institutions. Student loans default rates are also greater among the for-profit students' population.

[vii] See "*Um intruso entre os maiores* [An intruder among the greatest]", in exame.abril.com.br, accessed in January 05th, 2017.

[viii] Although there isn't research data yet about the tuitions and fees increases in Brazilian private universities and colleges, it is reasonable to assume that since the number of new students did not grow as expected, it is highly likely that private institutions took advantage of this scenario by increasing their tuitions and fees in undergraduate programs that had the majority of students enrolled through FIES. In response, in 2017, the Brazilian Ministry of Education established a monthly ceiling of R$ 5,000,00 (1,600,00 USD) for FIES-funded tuition and fees. See "*FIES Reduz Limite Mensal de Financiamento para R$ 5 mil* [FIES Reduces Monthly Financing Limit to R$ 5,000,00 thousand]", in Globo.com, accessed in February 06th, 2017.

[ix] Data available in the magazine article "*Um intruso entre os maiore*s [An intruder among the greatest]", in exame.abril.com.br, accessed on January 05th, 2017. The data was verified by the *Associação Nacional dos Dirigentes das Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior* (ANDIFES) and by the *Sindicato Sindicato das Entidades Mantenedoras de Estabelecimentos de Ensino Superior no Estado de São Paulo* (SEMESP), representatives from Brazilian public and private higher education sector.

[x] See "*Novas Regras do Fies Passam a Valer a Partir desta Segunda-Feira - Notícias em Educação* [New FIES' Rules Will Be Implemented this Monday - News in Education]", in Globo.com, accessed in January 05th, 2017.

[xi] See "*Fies Recebe Crédito Extra e Abre Inscrições Para Renovar Contratos* [Fies Receives Extra Credit and Opens Applications to Renew Contracts]", in Globo.com, accessed in January 05th, 2017.

[xii] Brazilian public and private universities differs regarding research strategies. While there is a substantial number of professors in public universities with doctorates degrees, 55,8% of the total cohort, in the for-profit private universities and colleges this percentage is only 16.2% (Salto, 2018).

[xiii] See "*Empresas de Educação Apostam em Misto de Aulas Presenciais e a Distância* [Education Companies Bet on Classes Mixing Online Distance Learning and On-Campus Programs]", in correiobraziliense.com.br, accessed in June 12th, 2018.

[xiv] See "Brazilian scientists reeling as federal funds slashed by nearly half", in nature.com, accessed in June 21st, 2018.

[xv] See "*Temer prevê tirar R$ 1 bi do Fies para financiar Segurança Pública* [Temer Expects to Take R$ 1 billion from FIES to finance Public Security]", in folha.uol.com.br, accessed in June 21st, 2018.

[xvi] See "Temer sanciona novas regras do Fies, que terá 3 modalidades em 2018 [Temer sanctions new FIES rules, which will have 3 modalities in 2018]", in g1.globo.com, accessed in June 21st, 2018.

[xvii] Wainer & Melguiso (2017) conducted a research compeering FIES' students ENADE exam results, with their non-beneficiary peers and PROUNI beneficiary students. The results demonstrated that students who paid full tuition and fees and those who were enrolled through FIES had similar academic performance in ENADE exam, and those who enrolled through PROUNI had a slightly better result. However, no explanation was offered regarding why this difference occurred among students in the exam results.