



Liberalism/neoliberalism and the Brazilian educational system

Liberalism/neoliberalism and the Brazilian educational system

Liberalism/neoliberalism and the Brazilian educational system

Talita Silva Braga¹

Ione da Silva Cunha Nogueira²

Silvia Adriana Rodrigues³

SUMMARY

This article discusses related neoliberal policies and their impact on national education.

Liberalism is the political bias that gave rise to neoliberalism, although the latter is more strongly influenced by its pursuit of competition. Both embody a rationality focused on efficiency, competitiveness, and market logic. This is compounded by globalization, characterized by diverse relationships between countries, which can have economic, cultural, political, and social origins. This text aims to analyze how liberalism and neoliberalism influence the Brazilian education system, highlighting the impact of these ideologies on education in a capitalist and globalized society. It concludes that education is both a product and a reflection of society and can serve the interests of shaping it, given that it is a far-reaching social environment, subject to hierarchical influence and subject to control tools, management logic, and commodification influenced by the interests of capital and the international relations arising from globalization.

KEYWORDS: neoliberalism, educational policy, globalization.

ABSTRACT

This article discusses related neoliberal policies and their impact on Brazilian education.

Liberalism is the political bias that gave rise to neoliberalism, but the latter has more intense influences regarding the stimulation of competition. Both embody a rationality focused on efficiency, competitiveness, and market logic. Concomitantly, globalization is characterized by the relationship between countries in diverse aspects that can have economic, cultural, political, and social origins. This text aims to analyze how liberalism and neoliberalism influence the Brazilian education system, highlighting the impact of these ideologies on education in a capitalist and globalized society. It concludes that education is both a product and a reflection of society and can serve the interests of shaping it, given that it is a far-reaching social environment, subject to hierarchical influence and subject to control tools, management logic, and commodified influences influenced by the interests of capital and the international relations arising from globalization.

KEYWORDS: neoliberalism, educational policy, globalization.

SUMMARY

This article analyzes related neoliberal policies and their impact on Brazilian education.

Liberalism is the political wisdom that originates from neoliberalism, but the latter has a more intense influence in promoting competence. Both embody a rationality centered on efficiency, competitiveness and market logic. Simultaneously, globalization is characterized by the relationship between countries in different aspects, which can have

¹ Master's degree in Education at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul, Três Lagoas/MS, Brazil.

Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-9212-4464> Email:

² talitabraga2300@gmail.com Master's and PhD in Education. Professor at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul/Tres Lagoas Campus/MS, Brazil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4179-2166>

Email: ione.silva@ufms.br ³ Master's and PhD in Education. Professor at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul/Tres Lagoas Campus/MS, Brazil. Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1249-3976> Email: silvia.rodrigues@ufms.br



economic, cultural, political and social origins. This text seeks to analyze how liberalism and neoliberalism influence the Brazilian educational system, highlighting the impact of these ideologies on education in a capitalist and globalized society. Conclude that education is both a product and a reflection of society and can contribute to its configuration, given that it is a social environment of wide reach, subject to hierarchical influences and control tools, management logics and commodified influences, influenced by the interests of capital and international relationships derived from globalization.

KEYWORDS: neoliberalism, educational policy, globalization.

Introduction

Throughout history, society has undergone many changes in political and educational. Therefore, what we live today was built over many years with counterposition of ideas from different thinkers and is not ready, because history is constructed over time as we live.

We have gone through various forms of organization of society and, currently, we are living in a capitalist system, where priorities are focused on economic issues, with a view to individual acquisitions. Within this context, education becomes an alternative to support maintenance of capitalist interests and has the curricula as well as the forms of assessments influenced by market interest. This system is influenced by issues international and labor market interests and education ends up becoming the place for develop the skills and abilities necessary to form good capital generators.

The central objective of this study is to analyze how liberalism and neoliberalism influenced the Brazilian educational system, highlighting the reflections of these ideologies on education in a capitalist and globalized society. Furthermore, the following are established specific objectives: Discuss the principles of liberalism and neoliberalism; relate the large-scale assessments with neoliberal principles and characteristics of globalization; explain the influence of economic interests and market demands on education; reflect on the impacts of globalization and market logic on the current configuration of education. discussion of this text will be based on bibliographical research and the first section that This introduction will deal with the liberal and neoliberal movements and the relationship they maintain. with the notion of freedom, in this case understood as the freedom to possess material goods without the State interferes in these matters, and the way in which these doctrines conceive the principle of equality.

The following subtitle will address large-scale assessments, the objectives disclosed from these assessments and how they fit into the context of the capitalist market. Finally,



the final considerations where we seek to synthesize the ideas and relate the concepts in order to formulate the conclusion of this study.

2 LIBERALISM AND NEOLIBERALISM

Liberal ideals are based on the idea of the right to freedom linked to possessions, that is, having the freedom to own property. Because of this characteristic, they assume an individualistic bias, distancing themselves in the interest of the development of society as a whole and prioritizing the advantages individual.

In liberal doctrine the concept of equality is also addressed, but these are limited to constitutional rights, legal equality where all citizens regardless of race, color, gender or religion must share the same laws.

In this dynamic of protecting the right to possession, liberalism is intertwined with capitalism, each individual taking responsibility for their own earnings, reflecting in a society concerned with accumulating goods and generating its own benefits.

Neoliberalism does not completely break with liberalism. Just as liberalism and neoliberalism are not identical, the relationship between liberalism and neoliberalism is situated in the dynamic of permanence and rupture. Therefore, in the historical movement from liberalism to neoliberalism, from the perspective of the trajectory of capitalism itself, there is a rich opportunity to advance the critical analysis of the current neoliberal context. (Lemos, 2020)

Liberalism and neoliberalism are not very different, since the latter has its origins in the first. Both defend the right to property, but neoliberalism defends that freedom economic freedom is necessary for the existence of other freedoms and that this freedom outweighs in importance, thus being able to even limit other freedoms of some, if they come to harm the sphere economic, as the freedoms of democratic origin.

Dardot and Laval criticize neoliberalism's defense that the ills experienced at the global level economic and social would be caused precisely by social benefits, which aim to balance social differences and support the economically and socially disadvantaged. Including free education



access to education and health. On this premise, welfare programs in various spheres of the individual's life, would only lead to a lack of commitment, disinterest, discouragement to seek improvements and devaluation and neglect in the enjoyment of benefits. In the discussion on the implementation of neoliberalism carried out by the authors, show that its precursors defended in their neoliberal speeches:

[...] the critique of "dependence on assistance" generated by coverage Generous risk-reduction granted by social assistance systems. Neoliberal reformers not only used the argument of effectiveness and cost, but also claimed the moral superiority of solutions provided or inspired by the market. This critique rests on a postulate concerning the individual's relationship with risk. The "welfare state," seeking to promote the well-being of the population through mechanisms of solidarity, exempted individuals from their responsibilities and dissuaded them from seeking work, studying, caring for their children, and preventing diseases caused by harmful practices. The solution, therefore, is to implement, in all domains and at all levels, especially at the microeconomic level of individual behavior, the mechanisms of individual economic calculation. This should have two effects: the moralization of behavior and greater efficiency of social systems. (Dardot; Laval, 2016, p. 211)

Regarding social assistance systems, Paulani (2006) considers that neoliberal policy treats with disregard what is beyond the financial interests of a few. Economic demand of some outweighs the social needs of many. From a neoliberal perspective, the State should save resources and manage in search of profit. As for the other members who were in economic, social and cultural disadvantage, they would be left to fend for themselves, having to manage their lives competitively to achieve benefits in various aspects.

The state's actions are now aimed not at preserving the interests of society as a whole (employment, income, social protection, etc.), but at preserving the interests of a specific group of agents, whose businesses fundamentally depend on these actions. It is the fact that neoliberalism has become a governing practice precisely in this phase of exacerbated financial valorization that explains why this element was added to the neoliberal package. However, there is more to the chapter on managing the state 'as if it were a business.' (Paulani, 2006, p. 79)



Returning to the meaning of economic freedom, neoliberalism asserts that competitions and competition for an evolution of this status generates social development, skills and skills. Based on this idea of acquiring the skills and aptitudes required by the job market, capitalist and globalized work, which education ends up getting involved in, using these influences external to make decisions in the educational field "The neoliberal individual needs to be more effective, more involved in work, more refined, more flexible to market changes work, more entrepreneurial, more competent, with more performance[...]" (Dardot; Laval, 2016 apud Lemos, 2020.)

Following the critical analysis of Dardot and Laval (2016), neoliberalism uses as one of its tools for regulation and evaluation. Organized by positive and negative stimuli that allow shaping the behavior of individuals. This system would guide the choices of individuals to meet the interests of the organizations behind them. Thus, the "opportunity" to make the choices established a propensity of the subject to accept the regencies with less resistance imposed: "the freer to choose the calculating individual is supposedly, the more he must be monitored and evaluated to prevent their intrinsic opportunism and force them to combine their interests to that of the organization that employs him (Dardot; Laval, 2016 p. 217)".

This premise of neoliberal control and management can be found in dimensions educational, employment, economic and cultural aspects. In the educational aspect, the assessments external, both national and state, fulfill this role.

According to Paulani (2006), the neoliberal discourse began in Brazil in 1989 and gained strength in 1990. In that same decade, there were some educational changes in Brazil, starting to large-scale assessments in the national territory to measure the content learned by Brazilian students.

Large-scale assessments

Large-scale assessments are carried out by agents external to the school institution and the publicly expressed objective would be to generate results on the education of Brazilian students, so that an improvement in the quality of education could be achieved. The National Institute of Studies and Educational Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP), describes that the Basic Assessment System National (SAEB) has the following main objectives:



- Provide support for the formulation, reformulation and monitoring of public policies and intervention programs tailored to the needs diagnosed in the areas and stages of education evaluated;
- Identify problems and regional differences in education;
- Produce information on factors in the socioeconomic context, cultural and academic factors that influence student performance;
- Provide educational agents and society with a clear vision of the results of teaching and learning processes and the conditions in which they are developed and
- Develop technical and scientific expertise in the area of educational assessment, activating exchanges between educational and research institutions. (IBGE, sd)

In order for this improvement in education to actually materialize through the application of these evaluations, there would be a need for an analysis of the results and actions based on them with the aim to fill gaps in knowledge of some content. These actions were discussed in training with managers and teachers in order to effectively include them with students.

It turns out that, many times, assessments and more assessments are repeated, and, in some cases, cases, the results collected by the instrument are not even returned to the teaching units, evaluation becomes an end in itself, serving only as a collection of data that are not used for the benefit of learning.

The Brazilian educational system adopted large-scale assessments as a resource educational data collections under international influence. The Education Assessment System Basic (SAEB) began to be applied in 1990, the same year in which the international body “Programme for International Student Assessment” (PISA) was launched as an instrument international assessment of student performance. The SAEB is held every two years and It consists of assessments that are aimed at students in the 5th, 9th and 3rd years of education. medium, later, from 2007 onwards, the results collected by SAEB also began to compose the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB). According to Santana and Rothen (2014), “a large-scale evaluation will always be external, but not every external evaluation will be large-scale. A large-scale assessment covers all schools in an education system, such as SARESP and Prova Brasil.”

According to the SAEB guidelines of the 2023 edition, the SAEB aims to:



Assess the quality of education, determine whether everyone has equal access to and continued education, and investigate the quality of education in the country; encourage more people to learn about the field of assessment and conduct research on the topic; translate the data into indicators that help understand Brazilian education. [...] Provide data and evidence so that the government can create public policies to improve education. (INEP, MEC, 2023)

He also mentions that INEP and IDEB use their results to generate indexes.

According to Hypólito and Jorge (2020), “as a regulatory instrument, PISA ends up direct expectations about what kind of workforce should exist and for what realities of labor market must be prepared” therefore, national evaluation policies suffer great external influence, and are prepared to meet the demands generated by comparison globalized educational performance, which ends up being directly related to the job market work and the skills expected of the worker, thus linking themselves to the interests of a capitalist society.

As already mentioned, competitiveness is a hallmark of neoliberalism, as according to this design is essential for the development of performance and skills. The results obtained in external assessments are published through the Development Index. of Basic Education (IDEB) which synthesizes the data from the same together with the flow and frequency. This reality generates competitiveness between educational institutions that are arranged in a ranking table where no one wants to be last.

Stimulating competition through ranking is not limited to external evaluations national. States develop their own assessments of the learning performance of their students. These assessments are similar in structure and content to national and also organize the institutions of the educational networks from best to worst performance. Even that the names of institutions that are above or below the position where the school is located do not be revealed, the urgency to gain better positioning is already established just by observing the number of your placement. This is configured as a personal competition for each unit, surrounded by speculation about who are the best and the worst.

In this regard, Amestoy and Tolentino-Neto (2019) state that the processes of education monitoring carried out by the national evaluation system still does not reach the characteristics for an efficient evaluation, which considers the different contexts existing within of each educational institution and in each classroom: social, economic and cultural. But for Furthermore, it also highlights as another possible consequence the segregation and stigma between



educational institutions according to the performance obtained in these tests and the grades generated in the IDEB.

Dadot and Laval (2016) provide an example of neoliberalism reflected in the processes educational activities involving the encouragement of competition as a tool to raise the level of performance occurred in the United States:

One of the exemplary cases of the construction of a market situation for which neoliberals have mobilized greatly in the political arena is that of education. Friedman was also a pioneer in this field. Faced with the degradation of the public education sector in the United States, in the 1950s he proposed the implementation of a system of competition among schools based on the "education voucher." The system consists of ceasing to directly fund schools and giving each family a "check" representing the average cost of schooling; the family is free to use it at the school of their choice and add any amount they wish, according to their schooling priorities. Once again, the reasoning is based on the supposedly rational behavior of the consumer, who should be able to arbitrate between various possibilities and choose the best option. (Dardot; Laval, 2016, p. 224)

The authors point out that this strategy has a negative effect on unevenness social. And it treats education from an administrative perspective similar to a business one. Making schools members of a "school market".

3 Conclusion

Taking into account the previous notes, the historical moment in which the neoliberal proposals gaining strength in Brazil coincide with the changes made to the system Brazilian evaluation system. This system, which has one of its bases in an international system of assessment, PISA, which brings together market and globalization interests.

These events began in 1990, it is true that discussions for implementation of large-scale evaluations in Brazil began before the date they actually entered into force. in validity, in the same way that the neoliberal movement already had its roots in liberalism.



The global movement that encompasses our society does not refrain from connections with the processes, goals, organization and management of the national education system. Likewise, the roots of mercantile and neoliberal logics do not stray from the education system. Education, more specifically public education, covers a considerable part of the national population and any advent that causes social, economic and political changes is likely to be reinforced or suppressed in an environment with such reach. In this sense, Amestoy and Tolentino-Neto bring that:

The advent of a global economy has brought about changes in social, economic, and political contexts, giving rise to a new configuration of the State, as the boundaries between national, international, and transnational spheres have become less clear due to the breakdown of borders and the growth of global networks of interdependence. In the educational landscape, globalization has operationalized significant changes in education systems. [...] (Amestoy; Tolentino-Neto, 2019 p.3)

It is also concluded that society is transforming over the years and the school as a social environment, it accompanies these changes. At the same time that the institutions of teaching are modified by political changes in society as a whole, the school also maintains these transformations. Furthermore, it is understood that competition and management of education governed by business principles brings negative consequences in relation to maintenance of differences between social classes.

Therefore, the aspects of this globalized world governed by neoliberalism and the desire for profits and market relations are inserted into educational institutions so that this maintenance takes place and that the people trained are able to meet the interests of capital, have sufficient training and instruction to enter the world of work and keep the wheel of capital rotate. However, this demand and interest in training and instruction ends up focusing primarily operational or technical, which leaves us with a deficit in terms of comprehensive training interested in the critical and reflective growth of each student.

It is not just the form of application or political and commercial objectives of the assessments external issues that need to be rethought, educational impasses are broad and complex. Both that it is not feasible to try to discuss and problematize all of them. Education needs to be carefully discussed and reflected upon to achieve the best possible version, however it is utopian to think that it is possible to solve educational issues without first addressing deficiencies pre-existing cultural and social factors.



As already mentioned, education is a reflection of society and can be transformed by it. School is not a world apart from society and cannot be otherwise it would run the risk of becoming one. meaningless, incoherent and unimportant environment for those who are part of it. However, surround it with objectives related to productivity, profit and globalization when comparing indicators with international ones, it is not the answer and as well argued by the authors cited here, it can further mitigate social issues.

REFERENCES

AMESTOY, MB; TOLENTINO-NETO, LCB Public policies and the influence of international organizations: basic education in the focus of the debate. Research, Society and Development, v. 9, n. 2, e152922189, 2019. DOI: 10.33448/rsd-v9i2.2189.

BRAZIL. Guidelines for the 2023 edition. SAEB. Available at: 2023.pdf (inep.gov.br) accessed on: 02/07/2023.

DARDOT, Pierre; LAVAL, Christian. The New Reason of the World: Essay on Neoliberal Society. Translated by Mariana Echalar. Available at: Christian-Laval_-Pierre-Dardot-A-Nova-Razao-do-Mundo_-Ensaio-Sobre-a-Sociedade-Neoliberal-Colecao-Estado-de-Sitio-Boitempo-2016.pdf accessed on: July 3, 2023

HYPOLITO, Álvaro; JORGE, Thiago. OECD, PISA and Large-Scale Assessment in Brazil: Some Implications. University of Lisbon. Sisyphus — Journal of Education, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 10-27, 2020. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.25749/sis.18980> accessed on: 02/07/20223.

LEMONS, AG de S. FROM LIBERALISM TO NEOLIBERALISM: FREEDOM, INDIVIDUAL AND EQUALITY. Inter Ação Journal, Goiânia, v. 45, n. 1, p. 108–122, 2020. DOI: 10.5216/ia.v45i1.61148. Available at: <https://revistas.ufg.br/interacao/article/view/61148>. Accessed on: July 4, 2023.

PAULANI, LM The neoliberal project for Brazilian society: its dynamics and impasses. In: LIMA, JCF, and NEVES, LMW, ed. Fundamentals of school education in contemporary Brazil [online]. Rio de Janeiro: Editora FIOCRUZ, 2006, pp. 67-107. ISBN: 978-85-7541-612-9. Available at: <http://books.scielo.org/id/j5cv4/epub/lima-9788575416129.epub>. Accessed on: 02/07/2023

SANTANA, Andréia da Cunha Malheiros; ROTHEN, José Carlos. External evaluations within the neoliberal model: the case of saresp. Journal of Education and Policies in Debate, Uberlândia, v. 3, p. 383-401, Aug/Dec. 2014. Available at: <https://seer.ufu.br/index.php/revistaeducapoliticas/article/view/30285>. Accessed on 07/03/2023.