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INTRODUCTION

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Educational Policies of the Decade of 90 and the Management of Brazilian Education: Conceptions and Principles

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I. INTRODUCTION

The economic, political and social formation of Brazil is based on the organization and expansion of the capitalist system, which is the social division of classes, where the dominant class holds the capital and the means of production, appropriates the workforce of the classes deprived of the means and instruments of production. This domination is not only exercised directly, but consolidated through legal, political, social and cultural structures, which exert influence on the educational reality of the country.

Capitalism in its current phase, disrupts trade barriers through globalization¹ and the

¹ Based on the understanding of François Chesnais (1996, p. 23) "The adjective 'global' emerged in the beginning of the 80s, in the large American Schools of Business Administration, the celebrated business management schools of Harvard, Columbia, Stanford etc. It was popularized in the works and articles of the most skilful strategy and marketing consultants, trained in these schools. He made his world premiere by the bias of the English-speaking economic and financial press, and in very little time invaded the neoliberal

globalization of capital², and has been causing discussions, theories and formulations about the role of the State's action in society, especially in the context of public policies, among them, in educational policies.

The educational policies of Brazil have undergone major transformations in the decade of 90 of the last century, impacted by globalization and productive restructuring³, which affected the

political discourse. In the field of business administration, the term was used having as recipients the large groups, to pass the following message: Everywhere where profits can be generated, the obstacles to the expansion of their activities were raised, thanks to liberalisation and deregulation; Telematics and communications satellites put in their hands formidable communication and control instruments; Reorganize and reformulate, as a consequence, their international strategies".

² Regarding to the world term according to the same author, "This allows to start with much more intensity than the global term, the conception that the economy has become globalized, in this way it states that it would be important to build, the fastest possible, world policies institutions capable of mastering their movement. Now that is what the forces governing the destinies of the world do not want in any way. Among the countries of the Group of Seven, the strongest judge still can ride advantageously the economic and financial forces that liberalization unleashed "(CHESNAIS, 1996, p. 24).

³ Oliveira (2000) highlights the process of restructuring capital by emphasizing in his studies that "[...] These are changes that seek to generalize certain fundamental conditions to capitalist production in its current stage of transnationalization. In order for companies to become increasingly transnational, certain conditions are necessary to ensure the full development of their production anywhere in the world. These conditions have ensured greater mobility of the capital, having as a corollary the fragmentation of workers, as a class "(OLIVEIRA, 2000, p. 48). Thus, the

conception of education that should turn to preparation of the Workforce to meet the demands of the world of work in constant instability.

Thus, the educational reforms that occurred at the end of the twentieth century and which continue to be developed in the 21st century are the results of the transformations of capitalism globally, as the productive restructuring controlled by the *Toyotist* model, under the guidelines of the neoliberal paradigm.

Reforms were proposed for the education of Latin America, so it would become more flexible, competitive in order to adapt the emerging countries to the globalized capital⁴. The

workers were required to have new intellectual skills and capacities considered indispensable, such as: mastery of new technologies, intellectual autonomy to solve problem situations, mastery of different forms of Communication among others. (LOPES and CASTRO 2012, p. 23). Rosar (2008) emphasizes that "[...] During the last years of the decade of 1980 and the years 1990, a strand of sociology was disseminated that placed at the center of the educational debate the need to adapt school to the process of productive restructuring that appeared to be occurring in Brazil, as happened in the hegemonic countries. The concepts of total quality, decentralization, autonomy and evaluation, articulated with the prospect of *Toyotism*, were presented in the official discourse of the MEC and were widely reproduced in the various spaces of performance of educators submitted to a process of qualification programmed according to the official paradigms" (ROSAR, 2008, p. 160).

⁴ Chesnais (1996, p. 25) emphasizes that "globalization is almost invariably presented as a beneficial and necessary process. The official reports admit that globalization certainly has some disadvantages, accompanied by advantages that have difficulty in defining. Even so, society needs to adapt (this is the keyword, which today is worth the word-of-order) to the new demands and obligations, and above all to discard any idea of seeking to guide, dominate, control, channel this new process. In fact, globalization is the expression of market forces, finally released (at least partially, because the great task of liberalization is far from complete) of the harmful obstacles erected during half a century. Moreover, for the sycophants of globalization, the necessary adaptation presupposes that liberalization and deregulation are carried out, so companies have absolute freedom of movement and that all fields of social life, without exception, are subdued to the valuation of private capital".

international organizations⁵, among them the World Bank (WB)⁶, was one of the main formulators and financiers of these reforms, because in addition to funding them, it also provided assistance to the countries. As Torres well pointed out (2009, p. 126):

The World Bank does not present isolated ideas, but an articulated proposal, an ideology and a package of measures to improve access, fairness and quality of school systems, particularly first-degree education, in developing countries. While it is recognised that each country and every concrete situation requires specificity, it is indeed a proposed reform package for developing countries that encompasses a wide range of aspects linked to education, from macro-policies to the classroom.

Based on Torres' thinking (2009), we understand that the World Bank was concerned with the standardization of an educational model that would provide the access and quality of educational systems, but which provoked the exact opposite, since it has reinforced specific conditions so that low quality in education and inequality within school institutions is

⁵ On the International Organisms Neves and Pronko (2008, p. 100) emphasize that "[...] In general, the trajectory of the educational policies of the international Organizations for Latin America and the Caribbean follows the same historical trajectory of the political guidelines globally, especially those destined for developing countries. Their interventions in the educational area are also initiated in the region around the 60s, focused primarily on technical-professional training and, later, for the expansion of elementary education. Until the initial years of the 80s, they are directed towards the development of programs and projects of education and health, with a view to increasing the work productivity and to form favourable attitudes to the capitalist bloc, although, in an incipient way, they also have aimed at fostering the expansion of superior education, with the aim of forming the organic intellectuals of the process of regional capitalist modernization, under the ideology of Developmentalism and Americanism".

⁶ For Torres (2009) The World Bank has become the international body with the most influence in the educational sector, it is important to emphasize that funding is not the only function that it plays in education, because in addition to funding provides technical advice in Education mainly for developing countries, developing educational policies that meet an ideology and a package of measures in order to improve the quality and efficiency of basic education.

perpetuated in the name of meritocracy. Everything contributed to the education to be delineated according to the new demands of the adjustments commanded by capitalism, globally. The main recommendations of these organisms were subsidized in some principles such as decentralization, autonomy, participation and co-management involving civil society and school community in the management of educational policies.

Neto and Rodriguez (2007, p. 14), when analyzing the educational reforms emphasize that:

It is in this process that current educational reforms are inserted in the Latin American continent. They are results of policies that apparently have a national profile, but they have, in fact, a regional base. The reforms occur within a certain historical period and are sustained by systems of ideas common to the same region and circulate in several areas and in some more perceptible (as currently in the economy). However, it is in culture, especially in education, that its permeability and circulation become more evident in the process of regionalization. The logic of constructing regional orientations materializes in the formulation of policies with common objectives and strategies for the entire Latin American continent.

In this analysis, one question deserves to be emphasized, that it is the fact that these international bodies establish common orientations, so we can call it homogeneous, standardized orientations of education for all countries of the continent. It is observed in this standardization the creation of classificatory evaluations by performance, both from students and teachers; curricula that meet the needs of market's training labour, and new forms of management of schools, based on Managerial conception, because many are the impacts this new international configuration of capitalism has brought to education and, more specifically, to the management of schools.

Corroborating the considerations listed above, Sander (1995, p. 128) points out that:

It is certain that in the field of education's administration, the traditional models and the old hypotheses rooted in the techno bureaucratic and functionalist theories of organization and management do not offer the solutions required in a world in a dizzying process of change, new development patterns and new forms of social and educational organization. The new reality puts us in the face of a conceptual and praxiological challenge of enormous proportions. To face it, it is necessary to concentrate efforts aiming at the creation of forms of organization and management of education that favours the insertion of school and university in the global context of modern society in transformation.

If the goal is to understand reality, not to adapt to it passively - but to discuss it critically, to act differently from what is imposed on us by the capitalist system, because we cannot literally follow the recommendations without contend them, it is necessary that both school and the university monitor the constant transformations of the economic sphere, by proposing changes, participating and engaging with the construction of new social relations beyond the interests of the capitalism. To do so, we need to understand other forms of management beyond the capital, with emphasis on an effective participation of our students, through a practice that provides us an environment of collective construction and autonomy to promote quality in learning process. We need to see beyond a formation that meets only the market in favour of surplus-profit, it is necessary to educate for critical and participatory citizenship. This is our role as intellectuals and researchers who struggle for social transformation and a fairer and more democratic school.

One must bear in mind, that many are the conflicts around the realization of new theories for the studies of the management of education in a perspective that respects the economic, cultural, social conditions of each reality and country. Most of the time the models are imposed by developed countries, to be implemented in emerging countries, which can be called a type of

modernization that does not escape the conservative interests.

Thus, it is necessary to transpose the traditional conceptions of education and social and cultural reproduction. New possibilities and practices will be realized through new studies and researches that take into account the reality and the needs of specific contexts. We can emphasize that for the realization of different proposals from the conservative and bureaucratic conceptions in the management of educational systems, the participation⁷ of the subjects involved in the educational processes is a *sine qua non* condition for its realization. We consider that the great challenge lies in thinking ways of understanding education and management that respond to the needs of our country, without forgetting the international context, but considering the national peculiarities.

These reforms that were imposed during the 90s to Latin America and, specifically to Brazil, had as main foundations the decentralization, the autonomy of the school, the co-management of the school and local community, among other aspects, which lead us to understand that these orientations, even with the progressive sectors' discourse, are directly articulated with the neoliberal education project, aiming at a new paradigm of state and public sector organization to meet the requirements of the capital. Education was highlighted in these reforms because it was understood as a key to social progress, having undergone external classificatory assessments, in order to measure results based on quality

⁷ According to Paro (2005, p. 16) "Democratic management must necessarily imply the participation of the community, there seems to be a greater accuracy of the concept of participation. In this respect, when I use that term, I am concerned, at the limit, with participation in decisions. This does not, of course, eliminate participation in execution; But it is also not the end of it, but as a means, when necessary, for the participation itself, which is sharing of power, participation in decision-making. It is important to always present this aspect so that it does not become the participation in execution as an end in itself, either as a successor to participation in decisions, or as a way of scalping the absence of the latter in the process."

standards established as minimums for Teaching. In this context, Brazil has followed the reforms proposed globally through decentralizing and regulatory measures.

Thus, from the twentieth century, the conception of management by results was strengthened in Brazil, based on the modernization of educational processes, through decentralised and shared management processes, through the participation of users, now called Customers, following the determinations of international bodies, companies and market ideology.

In this sense, Lopes and Castro (2012, p. 34) highlight that:

Nowadays, it can be said that different management models live in the school, but it is, in managerialism, that official programs in implementation are supported throughout the national system. The administrative managerialism theory resulting from the articulation between participation and control, which provides, in its theoretical framework, a set of measures applicable from the central administrative structure to its various agencies, became incorporated by companies as an ideal model of organization and management of work and, subsequently, was used by public policies as the way to modernize the public administration, and, therefore, to adapt to contemporary demands.

It is understood, from the above, that the characteristics of a management based on managerialism, guided by the pillars of neoliberalism, are present within the school, through the discourse of decentralization, the accountability of directors and teachers for possible failures and successes of actions taken, focusing on new strategies for the public service, with the aim of making the school more efficient, agile, competitive and productive.

It is observed that the neoliberal precepts for the management of education are directed towards proposing the decentralization of the Brazilian

educational system, highlighting the municipalization of teaching, like one of the forms of decentralization, presenting as indispensable to the "new" paradigms of the school administration. It is important to emphasize that decentralization is linked to the aspects of the democratization desired by the popular layers, as well as the neoliberal strategies supported by the discourse of modernization, the efficiency and efficacy of educational systems and schools.

Based on the above, we emphasize that the determinations suggested by the central entities of Brazilian's education management, postulate a distorted conception of democratic management through shared management, which emphasizes the search for partnerships to solve, in a superficial and immediate way, problems and difficulties encountered in management and school, which weakens the proposal of an articulated educational project (HORA 2010).

II. DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT IN LEGISLATION: LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL

The conception and practice of democratic school management should be concerns of educational policies, not only in theory, but in their effectiveness within and outside the school environment. These policies are geared towards the construction of human training processes as an active and participative subject, and not for their alienation, guaranteeing possibilities to transform reality.

Relying on the normative guidelines of the 1988's *Magna Charta Libertatum*, art. 206, subsection VI, provides that teaching will be taught on the basis of the principle of "Democratic Management of Public Education in the form of the law". Likewise the text of Law No. 9.394/96, which establishes the Guidelines and Bases of National Education in its art. 3rd, Subsection VIII, expresses the form of "Democratic Management of Public Education, in the form of this law and the legislation of Education Systems", reiterating in articles 14 and 56, the constitutional principle

of democratic management of education, recommending the Institution of School or equivalent councils and the collective construction of the pedagogical political project, in the latter, including also the public institutions of Superior Education.

Democratic Management is a legal principle that has taken place in academic productions and critical reflection by researchers, educators and intellectuals in Brazil and all around the world, because this understanding seeks to give clarity to the teleological⁸ vision of education, analyzing and discussing the type of society and professionals we aim to form and, more specifically, what kind of school and men we seek to conceptualize, men here understood as integral human beings, thinkers, actors and builders of their historical-social reality. Under this perspective, education should not be limited only to the preparation of a qualified workforce, nor should it be understood in a decontextualized manner. In this sense, it is important to emphasize the conception of Veiga (2006, p. 48):

Education is an ethical commitment of Brazilians to other Brazilians. Ethical and non-economic commitment. Production should grow yes, but with social goals. It is true that the education of the people also brings economic benefits, but the goal is dignity.

This way, education must be integral, and yet it must be grounded on the foundations of social transformation, the construction of a better world and a more humane man. In this sense, Frigotto (et al, 2005, p. 85) emphasizes that:

The idea of integrated training suggests overcoming the human being divided historically by the social division of work between the action of executing and the action of thinking, directing or planning. It is about overcoming the reduction

⁸ Teleological in the etymological sense of the word *telos*, which in the words of Oliveira (2004, p. 7) "is the Greek word meaning end, scope, which refers to the ultimate purpose". Thus, we identified search for the purpose of education, in other words, the reason for this was created.

of work preparation to its operational, simplified aspect, the knowledge that is in its scientific-technological genesis and its historical-social appropriation, human formation, what is sought is to guarantee the adolescent, the young and the adult worker the right of a complete training for the world's interpretation and for acting as a citizen belonging to a country, integrated worthily in its political society. Formation that, in this sense, presupposes the understanding of the social relations underlying all phenomena.

In this perspective, the work of the school manager may represent a perspective of change, transformation, commitment, realization of a participatory, autonomous, democratic and decentralizing school, which is worth respecting the professionals and students, in which the pedagogical political project (PPP)⁹ can be built by all and reflects the identity, needs and objectives of the school to be achieved in a constant process of dialogical reflection, in which the pedagogical praxis happens in action-reflection-action. In this process, it is hoped that the school board can be constituted as a space for collective discussions, breaking with centralizing practices rooted for years within our public schools. Discussing these concepts is something relevant to understanding the role of the school nowadays, as well as understanding the importance that the school manager occupies in this scenario.

On this question, Lacerda (2004, p. 49) points out that:

⁹ In the opinion of Veiga (2006) "The Political Pedagogical Project is the construction of the meaning of the words that compose it, namely: project comes from the Latin *projectu*, past participle of the verb *projicere*, which means to cast forward; Commitment to citizen training for a type of society; Educational actions and the necessary characteristics to the school and its intentionality. Therefore, the political Pedagogical Project constitutes a democratic process of decisions, seeking the elimination of competitive, authoritarian and arbitrary relations, and establishing the relationship of cooperation at the levels of the school and Classroom Organization, including the relationship with the immediate social context, therefore seeks the organization of pedagogical work in its entirety" (VEIGA, 2006, p. 14).

The construction of the political-pedagogical project by the school is the possibility of creating its identity in the search for its directions, and must be grounded by the democratic relations among its actors. It provides a permanent participation in the reflection and discussion of the school's problems, in the face of the intentionality of the Education Act. This means rescuing the role of the school as a place of action reflection, debate and collective dialogue.

In this context, the educator needs to reflect, understand and act in the educational process, feeling part of it, of the participation in the broad in the sense of the word, of the collective discussion of the school's problems, of the democratic management through debate and collective dialogue, are some issues that contribute to the realization of a space of power with their own identity.

So, we advocate a model of democratic school management, contrary to the managerial model imposed by international bodies, which, as already emphasized above, objectifies¹⁰ men. We aim for management as a form of human participation and training for citizenship, since it is essential to insert the conception of school management supported by democracy as a foundation for humanization and for the formation of a more just and egalitarian society.

Thus, Paro (2002, p. 2), highlights:

Worrying about the administrative practice of our schools involves taking into account the coherence between means and objectives in the realization of the educational activity. Education, understood as human emancipation, needs to take into account the condition of subjects, both educated and educators. Hence it can only take place in a democratic way, which means that the

¹⁰ In the view of Vaz (2004, p. 120), explaining Marx's theory, "Objectification (*Verdinglichung*, *reification*, *réification*) represents two types of alienation: the spiritual, being the deficiency of being that it supervenes on the man for not achieving his self-realization; And the social deficiency represented by the product domain about its creator. "

administration that gives it support must be necessarily democratic. Considering the educational policies in their relations with the practice of school management means, therefore, to take into account the democratization of the management of our schools.

It is necessary to reflect on what kind of education we aim for within the capitalist system and its contradictions. Is this education - and more specifically - is school contributing to social transformation or to perpetuate the conditions imposed by the capital? What conception of administration or school management are we developing in our schools? Certainly, we will not find ready and finished propositions, but the reflection on a topic of relevance for educational studies in our reality cannot refrain from considering the contradictions and possibilities of a democratic and transforming education.

The conception of democratic management brings the concept of participation in a broad way, both in the decision making and in the collective construction of the Pedagogical Political Project. Based on Castro (2007), we can emphasize that the democratization of education management aims at the participation of all, as in the formulation, evaluation, supervision and execution of educational policies. In the context of the school, it is necessary to include the entire school community (parents, students, staff and teachers) and place in the decisions, which will consequently reflect on the quality of education offered to students. On the other hand, it is considered a great challenge to achieve effective participation in our public schools, because corporate and clientelist power relations are still very strong, in addition to the lack of culture of the school's participation and place in the definition and control of educational policies, among other issues that hinder their achievement in the school space.

IV. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

As the political history of Brazil was not founded on a citizen participation tradition, people were

not formed to engage in organizations and movements of collective struggles, many expect the state to offer services in its benefits. Such posture is reflected in the lack or minimum conscious participation of the majority of the Brazilian population in flags of struggles and claims against the dictates of capital and the expansion of social and political rights. In this sense, the role of education is fundamental in the change of attitudes, the construction of values and practices that contribute so that citizens can participate in the decisions. This should not be restricted exclusively to the school scope, but must reach other spaces and institutions.

Within the public school, we consider that the educational process requires the development of a culture of participation involving the school and local community. This is not an easy task, on the contrary, it requires committed educators who believe in human emancipation, and that education can and should be one of the pathways to social transformation, collaborating to overcome the oppressive logic of the market. In other words, it is essential to fight for Democratic Management within the school and society so that we can build social relations beyond the capital.

Another issue that cannot be explained is that the principle of democratic management is defended under different perspectives. However, this defence occurs in different ways. On the one hand, we have the defenders of a democracy in favour of a more solid, committed social project to the construction of free, emancipatory and qualitative education for all; On the other hand, there are the advocates of the neoliberal paradigm, where education and school management are ways to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and productivity of the pedagogical process. The school is compared to a company, producing educational services.

The management we advocate is the one that contributes to the formation of critical and participatory citizens who are trained in schools in an emancipating dimension, which is responsible for the coherence between discourse and democratic practices, in the relationship

between theory and practice and especially with content that values scientific knowledge and not the superficial and lighted information.

In this context, it is evident the importance of democratic management in the process of constructing an education of social quality and a fairer and egalitarian society, where everyone can and should choose their leaders consciously, follow the process of management, as well as proposing alternatives, changes and solutions for the construction of a single school for all, without discrimination and prejudice, without distinction of race, gender and social origin.

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