

Problemy edukacji dorosłych w Polsce i na świecie

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Ibero-American higher education: its development in XX century and new challenges in the third decade of XXI century

Szkolnictwo wyższe iberoamerykańskie: jego rozwój w XX wieku i nowe wyzwania w trzeciej dekadzie XXI wieku

Słowa kluczowe: Iberoamerykańskie szkolnictwo wyższe, rozwój szkolnictwa wyższego w XX wieku i jego nowe wyzwania w trzeciej dekadzie XXI wieku, dokumenty wspierające szkolnictwo wyższe, wskaźniki szkolnictwa wyższego w krajach iberoamerykańskich.

Streszczenie: W artykule przedstawiono wyniki badań naukowo-pedagogicznych, które polegały na identyfikacji głównych cech procesu rozwoju iberoamerykańskiego szkolnictwa wyższego w XX wieku i nowych wyzwań stojących przed nim w trzeciej dekadzie XXI wieku, badając dokumenty, które je wspierają. Autorzy stwierdzili, że w okresie XX wieku – na początku XXI wieku iberoamerykańskie szkolnictwo wyższe charakteryzowało się wysokimi wymaganiami nowoczesnego społeczeństwa wiedzy; tworzeniem warunków, w których duża liczba osób może korzystać ze wszystkich wartości i osiągnięć krajowego szkolenia zawodowego; promowaniem mobilności i współpracy studentów i pracowników akademickich; wprowadzeniem ujednoliconego systemu punktów; współpracą krajowych organów zarządzających szkolnictwem wyższym z międzynarodowymi organizacjami edukacyjnymi. Nowe wyzwania w trzeciej dekadzie XXI wieku to: uznanie każdego poziomu edukacji za organiczną część systemu ustawicznej edukacji publicznej; dywersyfikacja i elastyczność oferty szkolnictwa wyższego, jej funkcjonalny charakter z mikrocertifikatami; humanizacja nauczania, jego zróżnicowanie, demokratyzacja i indywidualizacja; interdyscyplinarna integracja i industrializacja edukacji, promocja wykorzystania ICT; wzrost aktywności intelektualnej w społeczeństwie wiedzy.

Key words: Ibero-American higher education, the development of higher education in XX century and its new challenges in the third decade of XXI century, documents that support higher education, higher education indicators in Ibero-American countries.

Abstract: This article presents the results of scientific-pedagogical research, which consisted in identifying the main characteristics of the process of Ibero-American higher education's development in XX century and new challenges that stand before it in the third decade of XXI

century, studying the documents that support it. Authors found that in XX century – beginning of the XXI century the Ibero-American higher education was characterized by high demands of modern knowledge society; creating conditions in which a large number of people can take advantage of all the values and achievements of the national professional training; promoting mobility and cooperation of students and academics; introduction of a unified system of credits; cooperation of national bodies governing higher education with international educational organizations. Its new challenges in the third decade of XXI century are: the recognition of each educational level as an organic part of the system of continuing public education; the diversification and flexibility of the higher education offer, its functional character with micro-certifications; the humanization of teaching, its differentiation, democratization and individualization; the interdisciplinary integration and industrialization of education, promotion of the ICT's use; increase of intellectual activity in the knowledge society.

Introduction

In the third decade of 21st century the trend of political and economic development of society, which is situated in the precarious health situation, in the state of war in which several countries and regions of the world find themselves (especially the unjust and cruel war that the Russian Federation started against Ukraine and that has already lasted three years without the international organizations that watch over peace being able to stop it), in the deep global economic crisis and deterioration of the environment, means a new understanding of the role of higher education, the priority of the human factor in all the transformations of life. It is important to note that the incorporation into national higher education systems of more functional elements that responds to the needs of lifelong education (for example, microcredentials or microcertifications), is considered desirable.

According to the UNESCO *World Conference on Higher Education (Conferencia Mundial de Educación Superior)* and its *"Ibero-American University 2030" ("Universidad Iberoamérica 2030")* Program presented in May 2022, in Barcelona, Spain, there are outlined new academic, technological, financial, governance, internationalization and mobility challenges for higher education and science in the region. In general, the countries of Ibero-America are unequally prepared to face the challenges of the current moment; institutional heterogeneity is evident; the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of HEIs in managing the crisis determines the ability to manage risk, the use of installed capacities, flexibility, previous experience in virtual education and the availability of technological, human and knowledge capital (OEI, 2022a).

So the task of national government agencies which run education, NGOs and private institutions, is the development of the principles of higher education to function efficiently in the new socio-economic and political conditions and supply all sectors of the economy with high-level competitive professionals.

Our analysis of scientific-pedagogical works of Ibero-American and other scholars showed that the problems of higher education in this region studied M. Arnold, A. de Alba, P. Beneitone, A. Blandon, A. Diaz-Barriga, P. Ducoing-Watty, M. Fernández-Enguita, J. González, G. Moreno-Bayardo, V. Semionov, C. Tunnermann, V. Volskiy, R. Wagenaar, E. Yermolieva, Yu. Zubrytskiy and others. These authors dedicate their works to the analysis of changes that arise in Ibero-American universities from globalization and new international educational policies (P. Beneitone, J. González, C. Tunnermann, R. Wagenaar, E. Yermolieva), also expose a critical view of the processes taking place in higher education systems from those policies (M. Arnold, A. de Alba, A. Diaz-Barriga, P. Ducoing-Watty, G. Moreno-Bayardo).

The aim of this paper is to report the results of scientific-pedagogical research, which consisted in identify the main characteristics of the process of Ibero-American higher education's development in XX century and new challenges that stand before it in the third decade of XXI century, studying the documents that support it. This work was carried out under the critical-dialectical approach, using the methods of analysis, synthesis, comparison and generalization that were needed for the study of the original texts, official and normative documents (in Spanish); organization of the studied material and its exposure.

Prolegomena of the development of Ibero-American higher education in the 20th century

The development of higher education systems in all countries of the world, including Ibero-American region, is an important global economic growth. It is noteworthy that since the fifties of the XX century began to appear international agreements unifying the standards of professional education. Therefore, in 1958 the countries of the European Common Market (CACM), based on Article 128 of the *Rome Treaty of the European Union about the European Economic Community* (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) (March 1957, signed by West Germany, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands), signed the *Agreement on mutual recognition of professional qualifications, certificates, diplomas and other documents supporting the domain of a profession*, which provides that the common professional training policy should be oriented so as to allow the progressive approximation of the standards of professional qualification.

Since the nineties of the twentieth century, UNESCO has developed a number of programs and projects in which the main lines of development of higher education systems internationally established. One of these documents is the *Convention on the Recognition of Lisbon* (1997), which full name is *Convention on the Recognition of concerning Higher Education Qualifications*. It is an international convention of the Europe Council, developed jointly with UNESCO which has been signed by all 47 members of the Europe Council, except for Greece, Monaco and San Marino, in addition to other countries, not members of the Council of Europe: Australia, Belarus, Canada, the United States, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, New Zealand, The Holy See and Tajikistan.

This agreement stated the importance of the existence of different educational systems and set targets to create the conditions in which many people can take advantage of all the values and achievements of national systems of higher education and science, and demonstrate mobility in the international labor market. It is worth emphasizing that most of the principles of the *Lisbon Convention* formed the basis of the *Bologna Declaration* and *Alta Tuning Latin America Project*, which put the beginning of a profound transformation of education systems in Ibero-America.

The events described above were the prolegomena of the *Sorbonne-Bologna Process*, which normative base made two documents: *Sorbonne Declaration "Joint declaration on harmonization of the design of the European Higher Education System"* signed by the education ministers of France, Germany, Italy and Great Britain (1998, Paris, France) and the *Joint Declaration of the Ministers of Education of European countries on the creation of common European educational space* (1999, Bologna, Italy), which objective was to facilitate the convergence of the various higher education systems towards more transparent systems based on three cycles: Bachelor, Master and PhD (Declaración de Boloña, 1999).

The *Bologna Declaration* launched the process of the same name, which was proposed to create a system of easily recognizable and comparable academic degrees, promote the mobility of students, teachers and researchers, ensure high quality teaching and adopt a European dimension in higher education (Declaración de Boloña, 1999).

Ibero-American universities at the beginning of the XXI century

From the *Bologna Declaration*, since 2001, more than 135 European universities are carrying out a hard work led to the creation of the European Higher Education Area. The project was called *Tuning* and involved a great challenge for institutions of higher education, as it allowed the creation of a working environment for scholars to reach benchmarks, understanding and convergence. It was generated a space that allowed "agree", "tuning", "tune" educational structures in terms of qualifications, so that it could be understood, compared and recognized in the common European area (Gonzales, Wagenaar, Beneitone, 2008).

Currently, *Tuning* is an internationally recognized methodology, a tool built by universities for universities, an instrument which allows that the European Higher Education is an ever closer reality.

Other events of the first decade of the XXI century that determined international policy on higher education, were the UNESCO 46th *International Conference on Education (ICE) "Education for all for learning to live together in the twenty-first century: contents and strategies learning problems and solutions"* (Geneva, 2001). The main objective of this event was reflected in the document "*Conclusions from the 46th session of the International Conference on Education (CIE) and proposals for action*": intensifying and strengthening dialogue at the level of educational

policies on the problems and prospects solution in order to improve the quality of education for learning to live together and build educational systems that meet the demands of the XXI century (UNESCO, 2001).

The problems of the development of higher education, was also addressed in the *165 Session of the UN education, science and culture* (Paris, 2002), the *Conference of Ministers of Education on the development of the Bologna Process* (Berlin, 2003), four International Conferences on education aimed at evaluating the implementation process of educational reforms approved by UNESCO in the early nineties of the twentieth century: *48th International Conference on Education "Inclusive Education: the Way the future"* (Geneva, 2008); *International Conference on Education "Education for Sustainable Development"* (DESD) (Bon, 2009); *Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI)* (Belem, Brazil, 2009); *World Conference on Higher Education "The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research"* (Paris, 2009).

The study showed that in Ibero-America, the emergence of educational policies regarding higher level, can be seen from the eighties of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, when several Latin American educational megaprojects born: *Principal Education Project (PEP)*, 1980; *Education for All in the Americas. Regional Framework for Action*, 2000; *Regional Framework of education for young people and adults in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2000–2010), 2000; *Major Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC)*, 2001; *Regional Education Project for Latin America and the Caribbean (PRELAC)*, 2002; *Tuning-Latin America Project for the convergence of Higher Education* (2004–2006), etc.

In 2004 arises the project *Tuning-Latin America 2004–2006* in a context of intense reflection on higher education, both regionally and internationally. The idea of *Tuning-Latin America* get up at the Fourth Meeting of the Joint Monitoring Higher Education in the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean (EU-LAC) in Cordoba (Spain) in October 2002, where representatives of Ibero-America participated in the meeting, after hearing the presentation of the results of the first phase of *Tuning*, they presented the concern of proposing a similar project for Ibero-America. Since then it was began to prepare the initiative, which was presented by a group of European and Ibero-American universities to the European Commission in October 2003. The *Tuning* for Latin America is an intercontinental idea, a project that has been nurtured by the contributions of both European and Latin Americans scholars. In July and August 2004, 18 Latin American countries were visited by *Tuning* coordinators to explain, discuss and adjust the proposal with the ministries of education and/or the conference of presidents of higher education institutions in those countries. The suggestions received were incorporated into the immediate track record in the process *Tuning-Latin America* (González, Wagenaar, Beneitone, 2008).

The starting point of the project was in pursuit of common benchmarks, focusing on competencies and skills (always based on knowledge), with four main areas:

skills (generic and specific subject areas); approaches to teaching, learning and assessment; credits and program quality.

Tuning-Latin America consisted of a joint work seeking systems for transnational and transregional recognition. The incorporation of the countries of Latin America in the *Tuning* was made from their own contexts, since these contexts needed as a natural basis for action. Project implementation began in the 62 universities belonging to the 18 Latin American countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela), which were divided into four working groups: Business Administration, Education, History and Mathematics (González, Wagenaar, Beneitone, 2008).

It's necessary to note that the *Tuning-Latin America*, as well as initiatives that preceded it (PPE-Regional Framework, PRELAC-2001, PRELAC-2002, etc.), is an ambitious program with future vision, however, the objectives set out in the above documents, not yet been achieved for several reasons, in particular by the economic crisis of the years 2008–2009 (UNESCO, 2010).

In 2006 the PREAL (*Partnership for Educational Revitalization in the Americas and the Caribbean*) workgroup in collaboration with the Corporation for Development Research (CINDE) in Santiago, Chile, the Inter-American Dialogue in Washington, DC, and support the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Avina Foundation, the Tinker Foundation, the World Bank, and the GE Foundation, among others, published the document *Quantity without quality. Report on educational progress in Latin America*.

According to this study, the public expenditure on education (average for Latin America), was 16.3 (percentage of total government expenditure) in 1996, and fell to 15 in 2003. For example, in Mexico with GDP per capita (\$ PPP) in 2000 was 36.242, and cumulative expenditure on educational institutions per student (\$ PPP) was 63.599. On the other hand, the average score on the combined reading literacy, mathematics and scientific knowledge of Latin American students was statistically below the minimum score established by the OECD experts. In addition, only 33% of young people reach the level of upper secondary education (compared with the target of PRELAC that was 75%). Similarly, gross enrollment in higher education (average for Latin America) of 19% in 1995 only rose to 25% in 2003 (compare: Korea – 85%, USA – 81%; Spain – 59%) (PREAL, 2006).

So, that the Latin-Caribbean region presented very low education indicators. Because this situation and considering that UNESCO (2009) declare the main purpose of education to prepare the individual to be responsible for their actions in middle life (UNESCO, 2009), the conditions for the emergence of a new initiative were created: the Latin American educational megaproject involving all the countries of Ibero-American region (24 Latin American countries and Equatorial Guinea), as well as Latin-European states (Spain and Portugal). Thus, in 2010 in Buenos

Aires, Argentina, it was carried out the *Ibero-American Conference on Education*, in which more than three thousand people are participated (officials, experts from international organizations, researchers, professors of universities, teachers of basic schools, etc.).

Participants confirmed that the educational problems of the Latin countries, both in the Americas and the European, have many similarities. The Conference also approved the project *"Educational Goals 2021: the education we want for the generation of the Bicentennial"*, which was subsequently endorsed by the Summit of Heads of State and Government held in December 2010 in Mar del Plata (Argentina).

It was an ambitious project that aims to improve quality and equity in education; among its objectives was to improve the quality of higher education and strengthening of science in Ibero-American countries. Its purpose was to overcome educational challenges for Latin America pending before the twentieth century while facing the new challenges of the twenty-first century. To that end corresponded a plan of demanding action and broader perspective (OEI, 2010).

It is important to underline that the realization of the *"Educational Goals 2021"* was conducted under the coordination of Spain that celebrated the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America in the nineties of the twentieth century. One of the actions dedicated to the celebration of this anniversary, was the introduction of policy support to Latin American countries.

Worth mentioning also that for the reason of the unflattering above education indicators in Latin American countries, it was decided to engage in projects to improve the quality of education, different social sectors: not only governmental institutions and NGOs, but also private bodies, including foreigners. So, as a result of decisions taken at the *Sixth Summit of Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union (EU-LAC)*¹ in Madrid (March 2010), it was developed the *Madrid Action Plan 2010–2012 "Towards a new phase of the bi-regional association: innovation and technology for sustainable development and social integration"* (Brussels, March 2010).

This *Action Plan* contained a number of initiatives consistent with the priorities established at the VI EU-LAC Summit and contained in its final declaration; it identifies instruments and activities that should deliver concrete results to ensure involvement and capacity building in areas such as: 1. Science, research, innovation and technology; 2. Sustainable development; environment; climate change; biodiversity; energy; 3. Education and employment to promote social inclusion and cohesion, etc. (Consejo de la Unión Europea, 2010).

¹ This meeting was supported on a bi-regional strategic partnership based on the *Declaration and Plan of Action* adopted at the First Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1999. It evaluated the progress made in the field of economic, combat poverty, equity and social justice in FTA several points vary depending on the region where it is located.

With regard to science, research, innovation and technology, the main aim was to develop the *"EU-LAC Knowledge Area"* through: improved cooperation in research and innovation; strengthening the scientific and technological capabilities and infrastructure; the ability to research, innovation and sharing of knowledge in a sustainable manner taking into account the contribution of ancestral and traditional knowledge; developing the use of new technologies and technology transfer to support sustainable socio-economic development; and encouraging cooperation between both regions in terms of the digital economy and reducing the digital divide to improve their competitiveness, while given to the social integration of a transversal nature (Consejo de la Unión Europea, 2010).

The *Action Plan* also contained the area of financial support through which European countries assigned additional subsidies for the development of education in Latin American states. For example, Spain condones the foreign debt of Latin American countries in the debt swap for education (UNESCO, 2006). Furthermore, in Latin American educational projects participated actively Spanish banks (Santander, Banco Bilbao Vizcaya – BBVA, etc.). So, ten years Santander financed the activities of the Inter-University Network UNIVERSIA, which belong 1165 Latin-Caribbean universities. In 2010 OEI and BBVA signed the agreement, according to which for ten years (until 2020) the company paid 400 million euros for the implementation of the project *"Educational Goals 2021"*. This donation was considered as the first contribution to the newly created *Fund of solidarity and cooperation in the area of education* (OEI, 2011).

Another important initiative of the project *"Educational Goals 2021"* was involved in its development specialists and experts in educational issues of all countries not only in the region but worldwide. So the OEI relied on specialists *United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean* (ECLAC) to make the necessary calculations for budgets to achieve the objectives (ECLAC, 2011). On the other hand, experts of the *International Institute of Educational Planning* (UNESCO-IIEP) and *Information System on Educational Trends in Latin America* of the Organization of Ibero-American States (SITEAL), developed the document *"Educational Goals 2021: Challenges and Opportunities"* (SITEAL, 2010).

It is also important to mention the project *"Education EUROsociAL"* which began in 2006 as an inter-agency and international initiative of the *International Centre for Educational Studies* (CIEP, France) and the *International Committee on Population* (CISP, Italy) supported for their activities in a special fund. Its aim was to support the policy of Latin American countries aimed at social integration. Through this project, the European countries supported the technical education in the Latin-Caribbean region (CEPAL, 2011).

Projects and actions described above have contributed significantly to the positive changes in education indicators in the region. Thus, according to the OECD report (2013) entitled *Panorama of education in Mexico*, in Mexico, for example, annual

growth in graduation rates at the level of upper secondary education has been higher than in the OECD countries, for which there information. Between 2000 and 2011, graduation rates at this level grew 3.6% annually. Following this trend, it was estimated that in 2015 49% of young Mexicans completed the top throughout their high school lives. These figures represent a significant change from 2000, when it was estimated that 33% of young Mexicans reach that level of education (OECD, 2013).

These statistics allows us to conclude that in the first decade of the 21th century the younger generation reach higher levels of education than older generations. The percentage of people aged 25-34 years old with a certificate of at least upper secondary education is almost double (44%) than those 55 to 64 years old who have the same level of education (23%). We can observe a similar evolution at the university level. Only 12% of people between 55 and 64 years obtained a college education, while 23% of young people aged 25 to 34 years have done it.

However, the annual expenditure per student (in equivalent US dollars converted using PPPs) in higher education in México in 2010 was 7872 USD, compared with the average of OECD which was 13528 USD, means that in Mexico this spending was two times lower than expected by the OECD.

The new challenges for Ibero-American higher education in the third decade of XXI century

In 2022, according to statistical data, Ibero-America had a higher education enrollment of 32.3 million people (52% of the total population of the region); while worldwide, there are already 235 million students (OEI, 2022a). Hence, it can be said that the "goal of universalization of higher education" was achieved. Likewise, spending on research and development in proportion to GDP in Ibero-America increased steadily until 2016, from which point it decreased, except in Brazil, Spain and Portugal. The number of researchers has increased since 2009 by 37%, and it is estimated that in Ibero-America they already reach one million people, of whom 59% carry out their activities in the university environment, which underlines the strategic importance of HEIs in this field (UNESCO-IE, 2022).

On the other hand, the youth unemployment rate in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) reached 24% in 2021, and in the specific group of 15–24 year-olds, it reached almost 46%. Meanwhile, in some countries, such as Mexico, 79% of young people report difficulty finding work (and 31% of the unemployed have higher education, according to National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Information – INEGI), and globally 69% of employers have problems filling vacancies. In the same way, in 2021, in the scientific production of HEIs globally, LAC represented only 1.1% (OEI, 2022a).

One of the reasons is that the structure, orientation, quality and duration of a traditional university program or the relevance of the scientific research carried out by HEIs, require a higher level of demand to respond to the changing needs

of a more complex and diversified economy such as the one already present in several Ibero-American countries, or to contribute to the solution of the problems now called supercomplex: climate change, cities, energy, gender equality or health and life sciences (as established in the UN *Sustainable Development Goals 2030* (SDG) (ONU, 2015), and thus produce positive consequences on real growth and the improvement of living conditions (UNESCO, 2022).

These topics were the subject of the *Diagnostic Report on Higher Education and Science Post-COVID19 in Ibero-America* by the *Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture* (OEI) that was promoted within the framework of the *UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education in 2020* and its "*Universidad Iberoamericana 2030*" Program presented in May 2022, in Barcelona, Spain.

The *Report* brought together the most up-to-date information on the subject, incorporated a vision of the effects of the pandemic, offered some policy responses and put forward various recommendations to address (with an inclusive and representative view) the new academic, technological, financial, governance, internationalization and mobility challenges for higher education and science in the region (OEI, 2022a).

This document calls for improving the design, formulation and execution of public policies by ministries of education and specialized international organizations, with the aim of increasing access, diversity and quality of higher education; progressing in the relevance and excellence of research; innovation and knowledge generated and transferred from higher education institutions and, consequently, contributing to increasing the growth, well-being and productivity of all countries (OEI, 2022a).

The *Report* highlights that the pandemic and political-economic crisis exposed the previous deficiencies and inequities of each system: the Ibero-American countries were unequally prepared for the emergency; institutional heterogeneity, the ability to manage risk, the use of installed capacities, flexibility, previous experience/not experience in virtual education became evident (Granados, 2022).

The purpose of the diagnosis presented by OEI is to promote a sensible and realistic, but also innovative and visionary conversation on how to build a better model for higher education and science in Ibero-America that responds to the diverse needs of countries in the 21st century. The recommendations included are based on four fundamental premises.

The first is that the sustained growth of the economy will depend on the increase in the added value of national production and the greater competitiveness that countries achieve in the generation of goods and services. The second is that this growth will force and, in turn, will be driven by the transition towards an economy based on knowledge and innovation, incorporating technological advances to transform the way we generate wealth, growth, equity and productive inclusion.

The third is that to advance towards that economy, the development of talent will be the critical factor. And the fourth is that the construction of a new virtuous circle between higher education, society and economy will depend on promoting a disruption in the current educational model (OEI, 2022a).

It is important to note that the first of these recommendations is related to the conclusion of the UNESCO *World Conference on Higher Education WHEC2022 Reinventing Higher Education for a Sustainable Future* related to the need to re-imagine and re-invent higher education and design an *Agenda for higher education and science in Ibero-America 2030*, calling for a dialogue between educational and university authorities, the private sector, teachers, students, academics, parents and civil society that allows defining a new route based on trust, communication, coordination, cooperation and credibility (5C) among all the actors involved, creating an appropriate framework for decision-making and the establishment of a shared agenda (UNESCO, 2022).

The second refers to working on the comprehensive redesign of the regulatory and operational framework of the governance systems of HEIs that facilitate healthy and sustainable growth and respond to present and future changes and needs. This involves modernization that promotes a new notion of management autonomy, with greater transparency, independent and external evaluation, quality and accountability, as well as more efficient, flexible and agile management mechanisms and procedures for complex systems such as those established in the HEIs of the region (OEI, 2022b).

The third part proposes that the design, allocation and execution of educational expenditure change, on the one hand, its structure based on the growth of enrollment and staff and on macroeconomic indicators and, on the other hand, that it includes a set of goals and results that are intended to be achieved, agreed with the HEIs and associated with multiannual and specific objectives based on criteria of quality, relevance, efficiency, inclusion, equity and alignment with the SDGs. Greater and better investment in education must consider the creation of incentives to direct fiscal and private resources exclusively destined for capital investment measured through international standards. A new model will not be sustainable without a reengineering of the public and private financing system for higher education and science (UNESCO, 2022).

The fourth challenge concerns the construction, in a transparent manner and in agreement with HEIs, of a new generation of indicators that now, in addition to the usual items of access, permanence, degree and graduation from HEIs or the impact factor of research based on the number of citations and publications, include variables such as insertion and career and salary of graduates; reduction of skills and competency gaps; generation of patents, brands and designs; transfer and application of knowledge or solutions to specific problems, among others, which

are gradually associated with new incentives and formulas for allocating budgetary resources that reward HEIs with the best performance in these criteria (OEI, 2022b).

Finally, the fifth has to do with the relevance of promoting short programs and professional training with greater energy. That is to say, both HEIs and governments and companies must stimulate, through the expansion and diversification of these programs (2–3 years), an academic offer with greater flexibility and attention to the personal characteristics of the student, which promotes skills and competencies, recognizes the changing physiognomy of the world of economy and employment, incorporates more functional microcredentials or microcertifications and responds to the needs of lifelong education (OEI, 2022b).

Conclusions

Summarizing it can be said that in XX century – beginning of the XXI century, the development of the Ibero-American higher education was passing by prioritizing the following action:

- Understanding of the new role of education in which the human factor is a priority in all the transformations of life; high demands of modern knowledge society, including professional development in future not only of practical knowledge and professional skills, but also the ability to research, theoretical and methodological evaluative criticism; emphasis on flexibility, openness, lifelong learning.
- Development of the ideology of higher education in the new socio-economic and political conditions; creating conditions in which a large number of people can take advantage of all the values and achievements of the national vocational training; promoting mobility and cooperation of students and academics; introduction of a unified system of credits.
- Modernization of higher education systems taking into account the diversity of professional services and characteristics of each of them, the range of professions requiring the labor market and employers, and other parameters that influence the quality of the higher professional education.
- Creation of a system of easily recognizable and comparable degrees.
- Reform of national higher education systems based on skills, having four main areas: skills (generic and specific subject areas); approaches to teaching, learning and assessment; credits; and quality of programs.
- Cooperation of national bodies governing higher education (governmental, private and NGOs) with international educational organizations.

Likewise, in the third decade of XXI century, the health, political, economic, environmental, etc. crises confirmed the obsolete nature of Ibero-American higher education systems and the imperative need to promote deep structural and systemic changes by and in HEIs to survive and navigate successfully in such a challenging 21st century, to insert themselves and compete in the future society, which will be a knowledge society.

In order for Ibero-American educational systems to participate in a more powerful, productive, fair, inclusive and competitive way in the global economy, they must do so with a more sophisticated structure that generates goods and services with much greater added value, technological and scientific content and knowledge-based innovation capacity, in which higher education, science and its natural space, HEIs, can play a central role with high-quality education, the training of specialized talent and the generation of knowledge. Thus, at the beginning of the third decade of the 21st century, the following challenges are being sought for the development of higher education as a social institution in Ibero-American region:

- The recognition of each educational level as an organic part of the system of continuing public education, which would allow solving the problem of succession between primary school and upper secondary and higher education and, in addition, the problem of professional students' training and their future incursion into professional activity, which is resolved through the use of models of real work situations in the teaching process (contextual teaching); the diversification and flexibility of the higher education offer, its functional character with microcertifications.
- The integration of all educational forces in society, union of HEIs with other social institutions.
- The humanization of teaching, individualized attention to the development, mainly, of the student's personality.
- The differentiation and individualization of teaching, creation of appropriate conditions so that each student can develop his/her abilities and talents.
- The democratization and promotion of collaboration between students and teachers, their participation in the direction and administration of the educational system; promotion of initiative and creativity.
- The interdisciplinary integration and industrialization of education, promotion of the ICT's use; increase of intellectual activity in the knowledge society.
- The transition from receptive teaching to reflective teaching; use of teaching methods with elements of problematization, scientific research, autonomous student's work.
- The organization of the educational process and its direction as a collective and joint activity of the teacher and the student where the learning of the student, his/her motivation, expectations, interests are emphasized using playful means that contribute to student's integral development, activation and intensification of his/her cognitive and creative reserves.

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