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*Scientific articles*

## **Educación, rentabilidad y desarrollo humano**

*Education, profitability and human development*

*Educação, rentabilidade e desenvolvimento humano*

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### **Resumen**

Uno de los grandes problemas de la educación es que su objetivo se ha dividido en dos grandes rubros: *rentabilidad educativa* y *paradigma de desarrollo humano*. El objetivo de este estudio en particular es, analizar cómo la inversión del Estado en asuntos educativos se ha encaminado a cubrir los estándares y exigencias del mercado, donde lo único que importa es la habilidad, utilidad y practicidad del individuo para desempeñar actividades, muchas de las cuales se limitan a reproducir procesos que nada tienen que ver con las capacidades únicas en la naturaleza del ser humano como ser racional.

En este estudio se apunta a la necesidad de que la educación tendría que estar sometida a escrutinio constante; y se muestra cómo es que los actuales modelos buscan la rentabilidad y apuntan solo a la instrumentalización de las personas sin considerar las propuestas del desarrollo humano. Una buena educación debería inspirar el compromiso y la empatía hacia los demás, el verlos como personas con iguales derechos, reconocer que se posee una dignidad inalienable que debe ser respetada, en principio, por los propios seres humanos, por las leyes y las instituciones.

**Palabras clave:** educación, desarrollo humano, rentabilidad educativa.



## Abstract

One of the great problems of education is that its objective has been divided into two main areas: educational profitability and the paradigm of human development. The objective of this particular study is to analyze how the State's investment in educational matters has been directed to meet the trends and demands of the market, where the only thing that matters is the ability, usefulness and practicality of the individual to perform activities, many of which are limited to reproducing processes that have nothing to do with the unique capacities in the nature of the human being as a rational being.

This study points to the need for education to be subject to constant scrutiny; and shows how current models seek profitability and aim only at the instrumentalization of people without considering the proposals of human development. A good education should inspire commitment and empathy towards others, seeing them as people with equal rights, recognizing that one has an inalienable dignity that must be respected, in principle, by human beings themselves, by laws and institutions.

**Keywords:** educations, human development, educational profitability.

## Resumo

Um dos grandes problemas da educação é que o seu objetivo tem sido dividido em duas grandes áreas: rentabilidade educacional e paradigma de desenvolvimento humano. O objetivo deste estudo específico é analisar como o investimento do Estado em matéria educacional tem sido direcionado ao atendimento dos padrões e exigências do mercado, onde o que importa é apenas a capacidade, a utilidade e a praticidade do indivíduo para a realização das atividades, muitos deles que se limitam a reproduzir processos que nada têm a ver com as capacidades únicas da natureza do ser humano como ser racional.

Este estudo aponta a necessidade de a educação estar sujeita a um escrutínio constante; e mostra-se como os modelos atuais buscam a rentabilidade e visam apenas a instrumentalização das pessoas sem considerar as propostas de desenvolvimento humano. Uma boa educação deve inspirar compromisso e empatia para com os outros, vendo-os como pessoas com direitos iguais, reconhecendo que se tem uma dignidade inalienável que deve ser respeitada, em princípio, pelos próprios seres humanos, pelas leis e pelas instituições.

**Palavras-chave:** educação, desenvolvimento humano, rentabilidade educacional.

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## Introduction

Nowadays, the task of *educating*, in the classic sense of *paideia*, seems to forget the essential note that constitutes it and that is none other than the humanization and formation of people through the cultivation of capacities, attitudes and values open to inclusion. However, the new school curricula are increasingly moving away from the ultimate goal of education, With the global urgency to make education *competitive and of quality*, the issue of educational profitability, which has been present for decades, gains strength, especially when it comes to evaluating whether the State's budget allocations bring benefits or not, that is, whether it is profitable. Mesquita (2022) points out that, "the impact of for-profit higher education highlights the shift towards the logic of investment, which could affect social and environmental well-being by prioritizing financial gains over broader social benefits (p. 91).

For the development of this writing, the methodology implemented is, from the bibliographic review that supports the technique and the treatment of information, privileging references to the classic works of economic thought, specifically in what refers to the rates of return on investments in the educational system, from a neoliberal capitalist perspective, which makes it possible to address the topic at hand.

The text is structured around a central theme: considerations about the controversy between education and profitability, which are the axes from which human development is outlined, for which, this work is structured as follows: in principle, it starts from the analysis of the concepts of education, quality, competitiveness, with this we can address the thesis of educational profitability, in order to contrast it with the paradigm of human development; the latter will allow us to analytically approach the category of educational profitability policies, and its essential correlate which is the economic investment of the state in educational issues.

To do this, we used the documentary analysis method. Some authors understand this technique as a complement that allows to contrast and validate the information obtained, as Bisquerra points out: "Document analysis is very useful to obtain reference information about a situation, phenomenon or program" (2004, p. 350). The treatment of the information in the list of materials is based on bibliographic reviews, texts by classical theorists, as well as contemporary authors, from a hermeneutic approach, in which databases and primary sources on the study of inclusive education as a fundamental human right are analyzed. As analysis instruments, we worked from the phenomenological and hermeneutic method, whose objectives are the description and interpretation of the essential structures of the discourse.

## Human capital and educational profitability

The issue of educational profitability has to do with studies on investment in “human capital,” which is found in classical authors, such as Adam Smith (2011), who points out that man “who has been educated at the cost of much work and time must be able to perform work that reimburses the cost of his training with, at least, the ordinary benefits of capital of equal value (p. 326).”

Human capital is understood as an intangible set of skills and capabilities that contribute to raising and maintaining quality, productivity, competencies and capacity for innovation, as well as the skills that the subject has to sell his or her labor force in the labor market. However, as Brenner (2021) points out, “Prioritizing for-profit education over social and environmental well-being can lead to the internalization of social costs” (pp. 9-10) that always point to the detriment of society.

The way in which human capital is obtained and increased is through education (formal and informal), but the one that prepares the subject to respond to the demands of contemporary societies is formal education. The recommendation always tends to consider that “education must be technified, which enables a prompt insertion of the individual into the labor market to become part of the active agents of the national economy, that is, it seeks to guarantee the production of *human capital*” (Becker, 1964. p. 11). In this same sense, authors such as Motta and Andrade (2020) point out that : “Educational mercantilism implies the capitalization, the commercialization and the subordination of education to businessmen (p. 65)

Thus, the education and training of individuals has come to be considered in the agendas of states –paraphrasing Becker (1964)– as the investment made in individuals in order to increase their productive efficiency. In this sense, school curricula are currently more inclined towards economic development, which seeks the profitability of human capital, which runs the risk of people being reduced, as Nussbaum (2015) points out, to utilitarian machines, since economic income is put before other skills and attitudes, such as development, the promotion of ideas and the rigor of critical thinking. In this same direction, Parveen (2022) points out that, “giving priority to education for profit neglects social welfare” (p.76).

The constants that accompany the scheme of human profitability in the educational system are: money, success and benefits. The issue would not be so serious if they were accompanied by premises that led to building and strengthening schemes for the development

and promotion of skills and attitudes necessary to create a democratic, tolerant and inclusive society.

By leaving aside the field of humanities and privileging the technical field, and betting largely on economic and technological growth, we have contributed to directly satisfying the demands of national and foreign investors; however, as Nussbaum (2010) states, there is no effective spillover of the results of this growth, since there are no improvements in health or well-being (p. 41). What we do have are climates of intolerance that emerge with increasing power; since we internalize competitiveness in such a way that we place each other as mere means. If education does not attend to its original meaning, we will have increasingly solipsistic *individuals*, as well as social groups that focus on individual rights or, in the best of cases, group rights (I say *group* because the concept of society would no longer make sense).

### Considerations on human development

The paradigm of human development, whose touchstone is the consideration of people as an *end in themselves*, that is, as possessors *a priori* of an inalienable human dignity, is in disuse. Recognition and respect for others and for culture, essential components of human condition and freedom, have been set aside. These categories fall into oblivion and indifference in the models that outline the formation of human beings, because, as Jackson and Marsden (1966) point out, “the system only wants passes, exams all the time, and leaves out teaching methods” (p. 51) “the educational aspect is forgotten, because if a student asks a question, he may raise interesting issues, but a lot of time would be lost, and explaining would be fine, but it is not his style. This situation places us in a crisis in terms of education. It has been forgotten that we are more than functional pieces that fulfill certain activities, we are preparing fertile ground for the instrumentalization of people.

What has been called humanism is nothing other than the absolutely *factual consideration* of the dignity and humanity in the person of each one of us, far from particularisms that tend towards slavery and the idea that men can legitimately reach a kind of moral solipsism, which is the entrance to exclusive and intolerant societies.

The plurality of people, lifestyles and worldviews that give identity to each one of us, while they serve primarily to differentiate us, should also enrich us and provide multiple nuances to our conception of the world and of communities within the framework of respect for each and every one of those who make up society.

The construction of inclusive societies cannot be conceived without humanistic training and education. That is the *crux* of the matter: the configuration of the human being includes an endless number of elements that do not pursue anything other than an integrality that tends to the full development of people's skills and abilities. Education continues to be the center from which the project of societies in formation starts, "it is connected with the interest in the equality of men and women, and this can help to see that, after all, the interest in education is an urgent interest" (Nussbaum, 2002, p. 154). The analysis of the state of education has to do with the demands of current societies, with the active participation of people in the main activities of the economic, political and social spheres.

The position adopted by members of society not only represents their interests, which are generally determined by the requirements of the highest economic and political spheres, and therefore primary and crucial issues, such as the formation of the conscience of individuals, are set aside. The main objective is no longer the development of skills and abilities, and even less the development of critical and reflective consciences, but rather a degree of expertise in the performance of a certain activity, as Dore (1983, p. 25) points out: "the qualification escalation mechanism guarantees that, if one is already within the range of qualifications of the modern sector, one has more opportunities to get a job."

In this context, education is divided into two major areas: the *educational profitability model* and the *human development paradigm*, which articulate the scenarios in which education currently operates, and in which there is enormous pressure to exercise the budgets granted by the government (combined with population growth, attempts to raise quality standards and expand educational opportunities).

Psacharopoulos (1995, p. 56) argues that the return on retained earnings is the starting point for articulating a model of public policies that tend to justify or legitimize four actions in the higher education system of countries with less economic progress: 1) the reduction of the federal subsidy to public higher education, 2) to reduce the participation of the State in the provision of education and, thus, 3) justify the intervention of the private sector in education. To support the three previous points, one must 4) consider education as a commodity subject to market rules. These four actions are also pointed out in the text of Puiggrós (1999, p. 15) and he calls them the four pillars of the "neoliberal pedagogical model."

The neoliberal pedagogical model takes shape in the profitability model in education, understood as an approach whose central point is to verify the economic costs that the free

public educational service has for the State, as well as the registered benefits, which are measured by the contributions that it generates for society, calculating the percentage of the rate of return of the project. Paraphrasing Cohen (2002, p. 109), the comparison between costs and benefits allows to calculate the basis of return on investment, which constitutes a guide for the allocation of resources both at the private level and in global society, and thus, on that basis, establish inter and intra-sectoral priorities that translate into public policies.

The educational profitability model is part of the essential characteristics of the public educational policies designed at the end of the Second World War, later restructured by the guidelines imposed by international organizations, because, in terms of education, the focus is on increasing knowledge and skills to improve productivity at work, as Oliveira and Santos (2022, p. 15) point out. “Programs such as PROUNI and FIES, for example, which arose with the intention of correcting the difficulties of access to higher education ended up serving to turn education into a profitable service, while satisfying the demands of the private sector, compromising the public interest.”

### **Educational profitability and human development**

Educational profitability policies are oriented towards a technical education, in which the skills that individuals must acquire to guarantee the proper functioning of the international financial system are established, criteria imposed by the World Bank (WB), created in July 1944), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), created in 1945 and which has direct jurisdiction in the member countries. These two institutions work together with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), created in 1961 and whose mission is to promote the economic and social well-being of people around the world, mainly in member countries, this, of course, from their particular point of view, which, most of the time does not converge with that of those who make up and sustain societies.

These entities are tasked with measuring productivity and global investment market flows, as well as analyzing countries' growth data, mainly economic data, in order to make trend forecasts. Based on these observations, international standards are established in a wide range of public policy issues. In the educational field, they are established based on the examination of the information provided by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) test, which is under the supervision of the OECD. This test was carried out for the first time in 1999 at the request of governments, and with the results obtained, an

investment-cost-benefit framework was developed to study how the educational public policies of each country should be oriented and projected.

As it is ultimately a question of establishing international standards that guarantee productivity, organizations directly and indirectly determine the educational, pedagogical and curricular models that must be applied in the countries that are part of these institutions.

The investment that nations allocate to formal education is no longer analyzed in terms of human development according to the classic conception of the term. What is now sought is the implementation of models whose fruit is an education based on practical and useful purposes in order to have what in the field of economics is known as investment return rates: "Education, like any other economic investment, has expected profitability; the magnitude of the private or social rate of return can be calculated under the basic principle of cost-benefit" (Pantoja, 2010, p. 21).

The State's investment in educational matters is now directed towards meeting the demands of the standards set by the market; in this scheme, the only thing that matters is the individual's ability, usefulness and practicality to develop tasks, many of which are limited to mechanical processes that have nothing to do with the capacities that are unique to the nature of the human being as a rational being. "From this perspective, in the representation of the human person considered not as an end, but as a means of production, human capacities are not evaluated by their value, but to the extent to which they are functional to underpin the principles of political domination and economic exploitation" (Rossi, 2013, p. 28). The only thing that is clearly pursued is profitability and production, always justified by the notion of *increasing the quality of life*.

Eager for national profit, nations and their education systems are carelessly discarding skills that are necessary to keep democracies alive. If this trend continues, nations around the world will soon be producing generations of useful machines rather than well-rounded citizens who can think for themselves, critique tradition, and understand the meaning of another person's sufferings and achievements (Nussbaum, 2015).

What does it mean for the leaders of our countries to improve the quality of life? It seems that they are simply referring to increasing (at any cost) the gross domestic product (GDP), a measure used by the World Bank, the IMF and the OECD to calculate development throughout the world, as if the GDP were a good indicator of the quality of life, which, by the way, is arbitrary, since they do not consider the particular characteristics of each country,



the real contexts in which people live and develop. The intention of increasing the quality of life has been left far behind, and even more so that of forming free and autonomous citizens. As Witesman points out, *et al.* (2023). Prioritizing profits in education neglects social welfare (p.18).

In the ideal inherited from the classical Greek tradition, in which education was what truly qualified someone as human – thanks to the fact that it dealt with the formation of people to be free, autonomous and rational beings – educational processes contributed to orienting them towards virtue. In our days, this would be considered as the set of attitudes and actions that make us act as free, civic and critical citizens of the *polis*, with analytical and deliberative capacity, something that has been left aside in modern school projects, which only focus on efficiency and profit.

In this regard, I quote a fragment of Martha Nussbaum's speech (2015):

An education for economic growth will, in the first place, neglect these [humanities and arts] aspects of a child's education, since they do not seem to lead directly to economic growth. For this reason, all over the world, arts and humanities programs, at all levels, are being eliminated in favor of the cultivation of technical programs. But those who educate for profit will do more than ignore the arts, they will fear them, since a cultivated and developed affinity is a particularly dangerous enemy of dullness, and moral dullness is necessary to carry out programs of enrichment that ignore inequality.

The objective of current educational models is to guarantee a rate of return. There is little interest in the development of skills and abilities, and even less concern for the comprehensive training of the individual. What is urgent is that subjects enter the work environment as soon as possible and ensure specialized labor in the short term, since in this way the probability of social success increases, which directs the transition from school to the mere collection of documents that validate or certify the possession of knowledge for the performance of a task. Colclough (1996), among other authors, considers that, given the budget restrictions of developing countries, public spending should be allocated to activities that produce a greater monetary proportion than that invested (p. 598).

The educational system supports specialized labor in the short term with technical secondary schools and reinforces it with a technologically-oriented higher secondary education that grants *specialized technical degrees*. In addition, it encourages an increasingly

smaller percentage of students enrolled in universities, which substantially reduces public spending on higher education institutions.

As Dore (1983, p. 328) points out, a necessary condition for social efficiency is that it increases the importance of educational achievement, imperceptibly diverts schools from authentic education and leads them into the ritualism of grade-gaining and the personal search for employment (the acquisition of the certificates necessary to obtain a job, rather than the knowledge necessary to perform it), and thus prepares people increasingly for acquisitive rather than productive self-actualization.

This educational system not only inhibits the development of critical human capacities and the deployment of skills and abilities.

Here, too, the importance of political choices is evident. Education is expensive, especially in terms of personnel. An elitist policy, common in poor countries with a liberal tradition, will provide a very extensive education to a small number of people, leaving the great masses without any education at all. The specialization of a few seems to be opposed to basic education for all. It is clear that solutions are not easy to find, given that budgets are not extensible (Charentenay, 1992, p. 97).

The contributions of the current educational system are far from promoting the constitution or knowledge of *oneself*, and are not reflected in the type of social conscience that the subject can develop. This results *in societies of individuals*, as Norbert Elías (1990) called them. The atomization of the beings that make up society means that our social groups are no longer homogeneous, that we do not have common objectives; solidarity and fraternity among us is something that has been forgotten, and not infrequently the school is responsible, as Dore (1983) points out. If the children of merchants are sent to schools where they are taught to be better merchants, and the children of farmers to institutions where they will learn to be better farmers – that is, more diligent, loyal and obedient – the problem of stability has a long way to go towards its solution (p. 318).

We are faced with what Attali (1999) points out as “the implementation of a standardized global model of higher education, in which the State would disappear and the market would determine the courses and careers, and surplus value would prevail over critical and humanistic development.” To avoid this, it is urgent to look at an educational proposal such as the human development paradigm. In this regard, it should be noted that it has not been called *a model*, a word that in its most classic meaning refers to a finished scheme that

will serve as a prototype for other objects. On the other hand, the term *paradigm* refers to a set of theses, axioms or theoretical assumptions adopted by a group of researchers and which will serve as a touchstone for the development of the work, but, unlike the model, the paradigms have as an essential characteristic the change, the dynamism that allows that if some theory or assumption does not respond to the research questions, or to the environment where it is carried out, new paradigms are adopted that allow its successful development, that is, it is not something finished and rigid, but rather it is flexible and adapts to the demands of both the research and the environments in which the study is to be developed.

Various authors have pointed out the urgency of opting for an education that revolves around the paradigm of human development. Nussbaum points out:

How else might we think about the kind of nation and the kind of citizen we are trying to build? The main alternative to the growth-based model in international development circles, and one with which I have been associated, is known as the *human development paradigm*. According to this model, what matters are the opportunities, or “capabilities,” that each person has in key areas ranging from life, health, and physical integrity to political freedom, political participation, and education. This development model recognizes that each person possesses an inalienable dignity that must be respected by laws and institutions (2015).

The human development paradigm proposes that humanity as a whole be part of formative and educational processes in which its essence is safeguarded in such a way that local affiliations, skin color or beliefs are not those that determine the position and being of people in the world, since, as Schettino, (1996), p. 132) points out, “studying is considered a path to social advancement, not just economic, and hence this need to complete professional studies, even if they are not lucrative.” This implies a view totally opposite to that of education for profitability, which is why we are in the midst of an educational crisis of massive proportions and of global importance since its main objective is not training, but the rate of return on investment.

But we cannot speak of development if the vast majority is abandoned. Because the future of an entire country is at stake in the education of the masses. The sense of democracy and adaptation to a modern world in which all regions are integrated depend on it. Lack of education is one of the main causes of social destructuring (Charentenay, 1992, p. 97).

Not only should the epistemic plan and content be indicated, but also a set of ethical values must be explained, as well as the tasks that must be assumed in the project of a humanistic education, so that educational institutions are the ones who prescribe their adoption.

The capacities that should be fostered by the human development model are: critical thinking, analytical disposition, imagination, without forgetting the ability to transcend local loyalties and take on problems as our own, not only as a community, but as humanity in general, that is, we must turn our attention to the issues that call into question the full development and recognition of human beings as such.

When considering the human development model, we must avoid the local to become citizens of the world, opt for an attitude that considers the characteristics of others and takes seriously the tasks of recognition that tend to vindicate people as an end and not merely as a means.

Reaffirming the position and characteristic of humanity is one of the principles of the Kantian cosmopolitan proposal (2004, p. 18), which states that people must be educated so that they can function as citizens of the world with sensitivity and the ability to understand others, so that they can complement and, at the same time, differentiate themselves. It does not ask people to abandon local loyalties, but it does demand that they transcend them to enter into dialogical relationships with others.

For Nussbaum, “each of us inhabits two communities: the local community of our birth and the community of human reasoning and aspirations, which is truly large and truly ‘common’” (Nussbaum, 2012, p. 78). It is not that loyalties are divided or that we appeal to people’s uprootedness by suggesting that they disassociate themselves from their places of origin in order to displace feelings of belonging to a much broader sphere; rather, what cosmopolitanism proposes is that we form a common front to the tasks and challenges that human beings face, such as the problems of migration, human rights, and ethnic minorities, to name a few.

The possibility of transcending these conflicts is found in educational institutions, as they constitute the first real public sphere in which human beings confront each other . It is here that dialogical relations manifest themselves in their maximum expression. The spheres of formation and social conformation are developing to show that we must find the right medium in which the particularities of each one are shown without detriment to the other. In the words of Nussbaum:

Education should be directed towards the development of the human personality and towards a sense of personal dignity; it should also aim at strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and at promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among nations (2012, p. 95).

Moving away from educational models oriented towards profitability aims to seek the formation and constitution of citizens committed to full human development, but not only their own, but also that of humanity, since one cannot aspire to the realization of a kingdom of ends in a particularized way; on the contrary, one has to work with a view to transcending local barriers, both geographical and ideological, in order to think of ourselves as part of the same collective. Transcending group interests is presented as one of the main challenges of *all* spheres in which humanity and the recognition of the other are at stake, since what is sought is to influence (and, why not, create and transform) consciousness through the social praxis that is had in relations with the other, and one of the most effective ways to do so is through education. Hence the urgency of changing the educational approach, since, Beaver (2012) states, “The for-profit higher education sector faces accusations of fraud because it prioritizes profits, which leads to questionable practices and regulatory challenges, which affects social and educational integrity” (p. 274).

In this sense, it is necessary, Ellyatt (2022, p. 1) points out, “to emphasize the need to shift the focus from personal benefit to human flourishing in sustainable contexts, highlighting the negative impact of prioritizing profits over social and environmental well-being in education.”

One of the main educational assumptions is based on creating democratic societies and countries, which presupposes that citizens have behaviors that tend towards the realization of democracy, which implies at least freedom, analytical, rational and deliberative capacity that would facilitate them to read their own horizon of intellection without falling into a reductionism of the categories of the world to their environment.

The possibility of inclusive societies cannot be left to chance; rather, it must be one of the most urgent projects that humanity must undertake if it wants them to be *effectively* democratic and plural. We must think of educational projects such as cosmopolitanism, which has human development among its main objectives:

Citizens who cultivate their humanity also need the ability to see themselves not only as citizens belonging to a region or group, but also and, above all, as human beings linked to other human beings by ties of recognition and mutual concern (Nussbaum, 2012, p. 29).

Human freedom cannot be taken for granted without an educational project that tends to consider human beings as ends in themselves. Likewise, current societies are characterized by being highly plural, which inevitably brings with it reconfigurations within countries and in relations with the outside world, which places humanity in front of serious problems that threaten life as a whole, as in the cases of migration, famines and civil wars. This forces democracy to urgently reorient its educational work. “Democracy is not complete, it is not substantial, if it does not allow all possible human actions to exist and to be able to ‘speak’ to others” (Rossi, 2013, p. 29).

The restructuring of our societies demands an urgent look and actions that contribute, in principle, to the truly integral human development of people, without detriment to the particularities of each one of them, which would be possible in democratic societies or, as Elster (2001, p. 332) calls them, well-ordered societies.

One way of responding to and solving the problems that people face individually, as well as in general, as a human race, is found in humanistic education for human development, because this commitment to highly inclusive societies, in which plurality and multiculturalism are expressed within a framework, and at the same time are capable of respecting the characteristics of each of the components of society, will contribute to the development of the human being by moving away from particularistic attitudes and actions that have little to do with the recognition of the dignity and humanity of people.

## Discussion

The results of this research show a tendency of international organizations towards educational profitability. The importance given to the economic scenario has led to people being reduced to mere objects capable of operating production processes in terms of speed and efficiency, where what matters is the development and growth of the economic sphere, capable of subordinating both the mission and objectives of education. In a critical analysis, the importance of education is highlighted with an approach from the human development paradigm, and emphasis is placed on the need for current public institutions to commit to humanistic education. Wall et al. (2024, p. 27), points out “the need to shift the focus towards

the impact of social value in business education to address the limited consideration of sustainability, and urges the adoption of a more holistic approach.”

The relevance of this topic is such that the United Nations (UN) addressed it in its human development report on work (UNDP, 2015, p. 4), where it considers that "a fundamental human deprivation consists of not using the deep potential of people for work that stimulates human development, or making improper or insufficient use of it." Frejeiro Varela, (2008), following Amartya's thinking, points out that: "a State will be fair if it guarantees individuals substantial freedom of well-being, that is, if it ensures that each person can freely choose what kind of functioning they wish to achieve" (p. 175).

Therefore, the urgent need for current education to look back at its original position of shaping human character is pointed out here, to be that tool that has the characteristic of humanizing us and making us feel empathy for others, to truly commit to human development and not only focus on those areas with profitable and productive economic potential. Following the argument of Martha Nussbaum (2010, 2012, 2015), the education that can provide the necessary elements to confront these evils is that which is based on the principles of the human development paradigm, where citizen formation is a central concept, which shows the importance and attractiveness of this study; however, it is not an easy task, since the subject has many facets, among which the analysis from the fields of ethics, justice and the common good stands out.

## Conclusions

Current analytical standards regarding the use, focus and orientation of new educational systems and environments must be urgently reviewed due to the importance of education and its specialization processes in the world of scientific knowledge and, above all, technology, since they are limited to schemes imposed by international organizations, which forces us to look back at the central objective of education.

Education and the training of human beings should not be reduced to terms of human capital, as that would imply thinking about its instrumentalization. If we accept the premise that maintains that the guiding axis of education should be human profitability, we run the risk, as Nussbaum warns, of attacking democracy by neglecting the cultivation of virtues and values and, above all, the consideration of human rights in their most objective and pure sense.

In order to move away from this system that reduces people to mere links in a chain of production and profits, through standards, goals and percentages to be achieved, we must promote educational projects that encourage the development of skills and values: freedom, autonomy, critical and analytical capacity, in a world where the differences of others are fully recognized. This possibility is found in what current educational theorists call the human development paradigm.

The construction of societies that aim to safeguard the plurality and interculturality of their members is threatened by educational projects such as the profit model. Current educational systems should give greater importance to education for society than to education for the economy.

The thesis points out that if we only think of educational models that involve a rate of return, concepts such as justice, freedom, solidarity and fraternity are left out of teaching and the Hobbesian statement that man is wolf to man would return to the public sphere. It is unrealistic to think of highly differentiated and inclusive societies if it is not done from a perspective of comprehensive education oriented towards human development.

### **Future lines of research**

The study of curricular restructuring must be approached from educational paradigms that respond to the problems of our times, which emerge from the contradictions that confront us with the current ways of life. We urgently need educational policies to stop considering the subjects of education as mere instruments of reproduction and capital gain, that our human interactions are no longer limited to mere acts of transactional selfishness, but that we combine efforts to create societies that are empathetic and sensitive to the problems of others, but the efforts must be supported by the different control structures that the State has over education, for which studies on distributive justice should be carried out. In addition, it is crucial to approach the approach of the different educational systems from a critical perspective that includes the critical analysis of the study plans and programs, of the educational materials, of the pedagogical processes and of the performance of the teachers. Delving into the perspective of the educational paradigms and models is fundamental to better understand how they influence the formation and development of the future citizens of the world.



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