Access to higher education in the process of expansion of the Universidade do Estado de Mato Grosso – UNEMAT

Acesso à educação superior no processo de expansão da Universidade do Estado de Mato Grosso – UNEMAT

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ABSTRACT
We discussed the process of expansion and democratization at the State University of Mato Grosso - Unemat from the perspective of participatory democracy in Santos (2002). What policies and expansion programs implemented by the IES that contribute to the democratization of access? What is the profile of the Unemat participant? We use the case study as a methodology. We analyzed documents about the trajectory of the IES; we identified Programs and actions for access and we profiled the participants in the period from 2005 to 2011, from the database ENGRESSANTES. The results show that access is being thought of at Unemat, only in terms of the size of the entrance; it can therefore be considered as being democratized, as the IES serves traditional communities and students, most of them from public schools, blacks (colored or black), low income, the unemployed and unmarried. However, we reaffirm the incompleteness
in the analyzes on the democratization of higher education only by the dimension of entry, since we understand access in interdependence, entry, permanence, completion and quality teaching.

**Keywords:** higher education, democratization, access, entrance, entrance profile.

**RESUMO**
Discutimos o processo de expansão e democratização na Universidade do Estado de Mato Grosso - Unemat na perspectiva da democracia participativa de Santos (2002). Quais políticas e programas de expansão implementados pela IES que contribuem para a democratização do acesso? Qual o perfil do ingressante na Unemat? Utilizamos como metodologia o estudo de caso. Analisamos documentos sobre a trajetória da IES; identificamos Programas e ações de acesso e traçamos o perfil dos ingressantes no período de 2005 a 2011, a partir do banco de dados INGRESSANTES. Os resultados evidenciam que o acesso está sendo pensado na Unemat, apenas na dimensão do ingresso e, portanto, pode ser considerado democratizado à medida que a IES atende comunidades tradicionais e alunos, em sua maioria, oriundos de escolas públicas, negros (pardos ou pretos), de baixa renda, desempregados e solteiros. No entanto, reafirmamos a incompletude nas análises sobre democratização da educação superior apenas pela dimensão do ingresso, pois compreendemos o acesso na interdependência ingresso, permanência, conclusão e ensino de qualidade.

**Palavras-chave:** educação superior, democratização, acesso, ingresso, perfil de ingressantes.

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Higher education is being considered, in the context of the knowledge society, as a strategic organizational institution for the economic development of the globalized world. This strategy is justified by the mercantilist world vision of conceiving economic development from the production of knowledge as potential marketable products to compete in the free market, which, in order to be economically viable, must take into account the principles of effectiveness, efficiency and productivity.

In this context, the knowledge society produces knowledge for productive innovation and becomes the magic for economic development. Sabato, in the year 1975, had already explained this phenomenon and stated that "the objetive of modern society, which aims to achieve development, presupposes decisive action in the field of scientific and technological research". Which means to say that scientific-technological research is a powerful tool for transforming a society. The university, as an institution that essentially has the function of producing knowledge, is called to enter into this process, making up part of the scientific-technological infrastructure with the purpose of producing innovation to strengthen the productive structure that uses the
knowledge produced to generate new production systems, new products, new commodities. For Leite (2007, p. 99) "the university is today a fundamental supporting part in the global-world sphere".

This logic constituted in the capitalist mode of production from the neoliberal perspective helps us to understand the history of higher education in Brazil from the 90s onwards 20th century, which went through and, still goes through, a process of accelerated expansion, which induced and, still induces, the policies of access and permanence to higher education. The goal that underpinned the expansion discourse was to enable everyone, regardless of color, race and social class, to have equal opportunities to enter and complete a university degree. The neoliberal logic supports the logic that the greater the access to higher education the more skilled workers with greater conditions to produce innovative knowledge and, as a consequence, more innovative marketable products for the use of the productive structure. This logic induces economic development.

In this study we propose to analyze the process of expansion of higher education at Unemat, seeking to understand not only the entry, but also the permanence and the conclusion, as dimensions of access to this level of education. What is the process of democratization that sustains access to higher education at Unemat and the policies and expansion programs instituted by this HEI that contributed to the process of democratization, were issues that we sought to analyze.

The process of expansion and democratization of higher education is being analyzed from the perspective of participatory democracy taking this concept from Santos (2002). It also takes as its concept equality not only equal opportunities, but also the conditions of possibilities.

Liberal democratic theory was designed to ensure equal rights of subjects before the law. In adopting this concept of equality as a principle, one disregards the individualities that constitute each subject, which is characterized as a way of restricting equality to a mathematical concept that, for its accuracy, requires identical quantities of things, that is, exact correspondences. We advocate equality, as opposed to this conception, to be equal is to be on the same level in terms of position, dignity, power, ability, achievement or excellence, as Scott claims.

[...] but equality as a social concept is less precise. While suggesting a mathematical identity, in practice it means having a similar degree of a specified or implied quality or
attribute; being on the same level in terms of position, dignity, power, ability, achievement or excellence; having the same rights or privileges (SCOTT, 2005, p.16).

The questions raised were analyzed using as a methodology the case study carried out at Unemat starting from the documentary analysis about the institution's trajectory, identifying the Programs and actions for access, and also about the profile of the participants in the period from 2005 to 2011. As there was a great difficulty in obtaining data on the In the profile of the students who join the courses of Unemat, we have developed a Data Bank (called INGRESSANTES) that contains the answers of the Socioeconomic Questionnaires (QSE) answered by the academics at the moment of the registration of the entrance exam held by the institution.

Emphasizing that not all enrollees in the university entrance exams responded to the questions, the analyzes were conducted from the questionnaires in which all questions were answered by the participants, who constituted the sample of this study. Thus, we worked with a sample of 4,853 entrants in a historical series from 2005 to 2011.

2 THE PROCESS OF EXPANDING HIGHER EDUCATION: WHAT DEMOCRATIZATION?

We tried to understand democratization by studying the concept of democracy from Boaventura de Souza Santos. For this author, one cannot speak of democracy but of democracies, since one does not observe in the practices of the countries and of the experiences analyzed by him in six countries, among them Brazil, only a form of democracy, but a diversity of procedures and forms used by the State and/or society for implanting democracy in the decision making.

Democracy took a central place in the political field during the 20th century. This century effectively was one of intense dispute over the democratic question. Santos (2002, p. 39) points out that the debate around democracy in the century. XX was based on the desire for democracy as a form of government, which was solved with the implementation of the democratic regime of government in almost all countries. The conception of democracy of this period was described by Santos as a grammar of the organization of society and of the relationship between the State and society. This author quotes Lefort to conceptualize the democracy of this period:

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1 TICKETS, Database. Socio-economic profile of Unemat students (2005-2011). Prepared by the authors, as a result of the studies carried out by the Research Group PROAPES/Unemat. 2013.
Democracy thus reveals itself to be the historical society par excellence, the society that in its form welcomes and preserves indetermination in a notable contrast to totalitarianism that, building itself under the sign of the creation of the new man, in reality, is acting against this indetermination (LEFORT, 1986, p. 31 apud SANTOS, 2002, p. 51).

The central concern that was at the origin of democracy was to deny the conceptions of reason and the homogenizing forms of organization of society, recognizing human plurality. During this same period, Santos analyzed the non-hegemonic conceptions of democracy that also emerged parallel to the hegemonic conception and he found that the conception of democracy against totalitarianism permeated both hegemonic democracy, which had as its strategy participation by means of voting, and non-hegemonic democracy that looked for forms of greater social participation in decisions. These historical concepts, which began in the south of Europe in the 60s, enter into dispute and reach Latin America in the 80s, now with the debate put on, but the discussion stirs up, starting from the expansion of social participation. Santos discusses the expansion of the forms of collective exercise of political power, the basis of which is a free process of presenting reasons among equals.

He also says that the debate on re-democratization has placed new players on the political scene and has started a dispute over the meaning of democracy and the constitution of a new form of social organization that goes beyond representative democracy. In representative democracy, as representation increases, the most socially vulnerable groups, the least favored social sectors and minority ethnicities are unable to have their interests represented in the political system as easily as the most economically prosperous or majority sectors. In the case of Brazil, a very large group did not have its interests represented, which raised the debate from the social movements, especially the fight for democratic participation at the end of the 80s and sparked the debate in the 1990s.

This new way of making democracy effective may make it possible for the classes that remain at the "margins" of social policies to participate more. In this sense, we defend the importance of making participatory democracy effective in the formulation of public policies for access to education. From this perspective, we analyze the democratization and expansion of higher education using the concept of participatory democracy as being the expanded participation of the various actors in social decision-making, taking into consideration global decisions, but the priority must be local and regional decisions.
Supporting this concept of democracy, we question whether the policies of expansion and access to Unemat have met global needs without disregarding diversity and the local context, attending to groups that are not represented politically in the sphere of the state, the most vulnerable groups economically and socially, the least favored social sectors and minority ethnicities.

This concept of democratization leads us to question the concept of access used by public policies as a way of expanding vacancies. The strategy of democratizing higher education has been to expand and make it possible for the majority to join, providing the conditions for differentiated entry into the culturally disadvantaged classes through history, such as Indians, blacks, students coming from public schools. We believe that access should be thought through inclusion in all senses and, in particular, to give conditions of belonging. In this sense, the concept of access that we use is supported in Silva e Veloso (2013, p. 729) that:

 [...] access means "being part", therefore it refers to insertion, participation, reception. However, access can be understood more deeply, in order to transcend the contradiction that emerges from this understanding, which relates to duality "included/excluded", "integrated/not integrated", "part/whole". Access, in a deeper sense, refers to a belonging that is inextricably linked to the sense of collectivity/universality and creative praxis. In other words, it adds to the sense of equality and freedom.

For integration, participation and reception to take place, the perspective of the concept of access must go beyond the dimension of entry. In this sense, we understand, as the authors cited above, that "access implies considering the dimensions of entry, permanence, completion and training/quality of this level of education" (Silva e Nogueira, 2011, p. 14).

3 THE PROCESS OF EXPANSION AND THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF ACCESS TO UNEMAT

The State University of Mato Grosso - Unemat was created in 1978, in the municipality of Cáceres-MT as the Institute of Higher Education (IESC), with the mission of training professionals for the teaching of basic education. According to Rieder (2011, p. 234), at that time the priority was qualification of teachers to solve the chronic lack of them in the educandarians.

In these thirty-six years of existence (1978-2014), Unemat has undergone several structural, nomenclature and academic and legal reformulations, always keeping the perspective of attending to social, local and regional needs and in this trajectory has experienced different
ways of promoting access to higher education of specific communities and populations, besides offering vacancies in demand of wide competition.

The University project of Unemat since its elaboration, as a prospect of expansion was developed to be a University from the interior to the interior. Accordingly, to expand the places of assistance to the population distant from the university campuses, Unemat looked for alternatives that were not to open campuses, and, through its advice and in partnership with the State Board of Education, created what is called temporary structures of pedagogical centers, which are linked to the university campuses.

Even of a temporary nature, the pedagogical centers are extremely important, since they make it possible to offer courses, besides undergraduate courses, in the post-graduate Lato Sensu courses for the population of municipalities where access to Higher Education is restricted.

The different modalities of offering Higher Education is another mark that differentiates Unemat from other HEIs. In this category are the modular courses, by means of the Parceladas Program, and courses for the formation of indigenous professors, offered through the Indigenous Intercultural Faculty. There are also the distance courses which, in their majority, are linked to the Open University of Brazil Program (UAB) and others created and maintained by the IES itself. In all, there are 19 centers, offering bachelor's degree and bachelor's degree and postgraduate courses Lato Sensu.

Unemat's vocation is to be an institution focused on the interior. In this sense, the expansion of the HEI occurred in the form of a network, creating campuses, pedagogical centers and poles in remote locations of the state, with the objective of reaching the largest number of people, with actions on the various municipalities. It expands into a network, both territorially and in the formation and qualification of the population, in such a way as to produce forms of life that boost the development of the State and improve the living conditions of Mato Grosso. All the campuses, centers and pedagogical centers are connected to the administrative headquarters of Unemat, in Cáceres, where the expansion started.

Unemat's expansion can also be observed in Graphic 1, which shows that the effervescence of the expansion of this HEI occurs from the 2000s onwards, not following the national trend in which the expansion occurred in the 90s.
We can observe that between 1999 and 2001, Unemat took a leap in the number of regular courses, going from 20 in 2000 to 35 in 2001, an increase of 175% in the number of courses. The differentiated modalities also accompany this trend, going from 13 courses in 1999 to 42 in 2001.

In Graph 2, below, we can see how Unemat has been increasing the number of students attended at the undergraduate level, as well as the expansion of places. It should be noted that the variation in the number of places and enrollments occurs due to the creation and/or extinction of courses in the differentiated modalities, which impacts on the final quantitative.

We can affirm that Unemat's *boom* occurred in the 2000s, different from the national trend whose visible expansion occurred in the 1990s, as well as, we can affirm that the expansion of this HEI focused on democratization. Its history proves that, in relation to entry, the HEI has fulfilled its mission of being democratic, as it prioritizes in its policies, different modalities of
offer of higher education that differentiates it, compared to the trajectory of the other Brazilian universities.

4 PROFILE OF UNEMAT UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT

This case study cuts out the very broad database (ENTRANTS), created by the authors, and analyzes relevant aspects of students from Unemat's in-person undergraduate courses in the historical series from 2005 to 2011. We consider, as a percentage, data from the academics of the in-person bachelor's and bachelor's courses, day, night and full courses, from different campuses of Unemat, which allowed a representative analysis of this sample.

The graphs below represent in percentages the predominant responses in questions raised about students based on the indicators: gender, color, marital status, age, school origin, family income and type of activity they perform.

4.1 INDICATOR 1: GENDER

The results shown in Graph 3 show the evolution of the gender of Unemat undergraduate students. The question asked the candidates in QSE was “What is your gender?” and the proportions obtained were:

![Graph 3 - Gender declared by students](source: INGRESSANTES database)

We observed that from 2005 to 2011, there is a balance between the enrollment of male and female students in the undergraduate courses, but we can see a trend of gradual increase of female students from 2007, where we also observe the peak male prevalence and, in 2011, we reach the highest index of female incidence. In the year 2007 the predominance of male students
came close to 60% and in the year 2011 we observed an inversion with predominance of the female sex, also close to 60%.

Based on information from the 2010 Census (IBGE), Schwartzman (2012, p. 03) points out that "[...] increasingly, it is women, more than men, who seek university education, with 58% of the total." Also, according to the author, in the age group from 21 to 25 years old, the participation of women, in 2010, was already 62% of the total.

In relation to the total enrollments, entrants and graduates of the undergraduate courses by sex, the data of the Higher Education Census 2011/INEP, indicate a majority female participation, being 56.9% of enrollments, 55.8% of the entrants and 61.1% of the concluders.

This difference is not unique to Brazil. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2012) this characteristic also appears on the international stage and, as the data show, it is also repeated at Unemat.

4.2 INDICATOR 2: MARITAL STATUS

In this indicator, the data reveals that the majority of the undergraduate students in person at Unemat are unmarried. We can see in Graph 4 that the variation in the indices is small. In the case of the "single" category, it ranges from 75% in 2005 (lower index) to 88% in 2009 (higher index). The indices in the other categories show little variation, maintaining a proportion of "married" students and a percentage almost inexpressive of "separated" and "widowed".

The Unemat data, with regard to the marital status of the students, indicate a divergence in relation to that of the Brazilian population. The profile of students in Unemat's classroom-
based undergraduate courses is formed predominantly by single people, while the national indices presented by the IBGE/Pnad/2011 show that 39.9% of the Brazilian population is married.

4.3 INDICATOR 3: COLOR

The IBGE Census 2011 data regarding the color declared by the Brazilian population, which show that blacks and mulattoes form the majority group of the population, with 51.3% while 47.8% declare that they are white.

In QSE the question asked students about color/race was: "How do you consider yourself?" Five options were available: white; brown; mulatto (including a person who has declared himself to be a cabocla, cafuza, mameluca or mestiça); black; yellow (including a person who has declared himself to be of Asian origin); and indigenous.

We observed in Graph 5 that in spite of the implementation of the Ethnic-racial Inclusion and Integration Program at Unemat in 2005, with the objetive of assigning 25% of the places offered in the undergraduate courses to self-declared black candidates, the proportions of they remain almost unchanged with small changes in the indices in a few years. However, there is a slight increase in the percentage of "whites" and a stabilization in the percentage of "blacks".

![Graph 5 - Color of students](image)

Source: INGRESSANTES database.

Analyzing the data from Unemat with the Brazilian ones, we found that the Brazilian population shows a greater proportion of "whites" (47.8%), followed by "mulattoes" (43.1%) and "blacks" (8.2%). At Unemat, we can see an inversion of this profile, since the majority of students, approximately 50%, consider themselves as being "brown". However, if we compare the percentages of each one of the groups in the Midwest Region, we find that the majority of
those who attend Unemat's in-person undergraduate courses follow the same proportion of the regional population, which shows the majority (48.2%) of "mulattoes", followed by 43.1% "whites" and 7.8% who declare themselves "blacks".

4.4 INDICATOR 4: AGE

Another question answered by the students in the QSE was "How old are you?" Six options were presented: "(1) up to 18 years; (2) 19 to 21 years; (3) 22 to 24 years; (4) 25 to 27 years; 5) 28 to 30 years; 6) more than 30 years. In the historical series constructed in this study, as of 2009, we noticed a change in the profile of students in the Unemat classroom courses.

In Graph 6, we can see that from 2005 to 2008 there was a continuous increase in the enrollment of students "from 19 to 21 years old", with a lower percentage in 2009, unlike the other age groups that suffered in the same period a decrease in their rates.

As of 2009, we showed an increase in the entry of students of the lower age group "up to 18 years", which was less than 5% of the students in 2009 became 45% of the entrants in the year 2011. On the other hand, we observe the decrease in the rates of entry of other age groups, highlighting the age group "from 19 to 21 years" that decreased from over 40% in 2009 to less than 20% in 2011 and the age group "from 22 to 24 years" that represented just over 40% in 2006 and decreased sharply to 12% in 2011.
4.5 INDICATOR 5: SCHOOL ORIGIN

Regarding school background, the question presented in the QSE presented to students was: "How did you do your high school studies?" with the following alternatives: "1) all in public school; 2) all in private school; 3) most in public school; and 4) most in private school." In this indicator, we can see that the Unemat students who attended the public school during all of high school represent the great majority with a rate above 80%, coming close to 90% in the years 2005, 2007 and 2008. Chart 7 below shows the development of these indices over the period under review.

We can observe that students coming from private schools, or who attended part of the high school in these schools, represent a very small portion in the classroom courses of Unemat, not reaching even 20% of the total.

It is worth mentioning that since 1999 State Law No. 7244 provides for the reservation of vacancies at Unemat and determines that 50% of the vacancies, at the minimum, are filled by students coming from the public school system. However, as the data show, the number of students at Unemat coming from public schools has always been higher than the percentage set aside by the Law.
4.6 INDICATOR 6: TYPE OF ACTIVITY YOU CARRY OUT

Another QSE question sought to portray the reality of students in-person undergraduate courses as to family income, seeking to identify whether students can devote themselves exclusively to studies or whether they need to pursue paid activities.

The data collected reveal a growing and marked percentage of students who declared that they did not carry out any paid activity and who, probably, have their expenses financed by the family. We observed, in Graph 8, that in 2010 students with this profile were already in the majority, surpassing 50%, reaching the index of almost 60% in 2011. On the other hand, the percentage of students who declared that they were working full-time and in occasional work decreased.

We highlight the drop in the proportion of students who declared that they were engaged in paid full-time work, which was 42% in 2005 and fell to less than 22% in 2011, and that of students who declared that they were engaged in paid part-time work, which decreased from 26% in 2005 to approximately 12% in 2011. However, the percentage of students who declared that they were doing occasional work has hardly changed.

The change in the profile of undergraduate students may be justified by the expansion, during the period analyzed, of the number of bachelor's courses implanted in morning and full shifts, which shows that a larger number of younger students and those who do not exercise paid activity are joining Unemat.
4.7 INDICATOR 7: FAMILY INCOME

According to data from the National Household Sample Survey (PNAD/IBGE/2011), more than one third (34%) of students and 52% of Brazilian families have a monthly family income of up to three minimum wages. If we take into account the monthly income per capita this rate rises to 82.2%. In contrast, only 7% of Brazilian families have a monthly family income that exceeds ten minimum wages.

At Unemat, as shown in Figure 9, the majority of students stated that they come from families with monthly income of "up to 2 minimum wages" followed by those who declared that they come from families with monthly income of "up to 3 minimum wages" and those who have family income of "up to 1 minimum wage". We also observed a reversal of these percentages in 2007 and 2011.

The QSE data also revealed that in 2011, approximately 73% of the students in Unemat's in-person undergraduate courses stated that they came from families with monthly income of up to 03 minimum salaries and that less than 3% of the students came from families with monthly income of over 10 minimum salaries, percentages that do not differ much from those found in Brazilian society.
5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

When we analyzed the expansion of Unemat, as a state HEI with the characteristic of having its origin in the interior and expanding to the interior, we observed that the different forms of expansion of the entrance implanted by this HEI as from the 2000s, were related to the local specificities and repressed demand in the interior of the state of Mato Grosso, mainly in relation to the training of teachers of basic education.

The expansion of the admission to the undergraduate courses in the presence of UNEMAT reached different social layers (blacks, Indians, whites, students coming from public schools) which was found in the analysis on the profile of the participant of broad competition cut from the database (INGRESSANTES) and analyzed from the historical series 2005/2011.

By considering, in percentage, the data of the academics from the in-person bachelor's and bachelor's courses, day, night and integral courses from different campus, it was possible to perform a representative analysis of this sample. Thus the analysis of the historical series allowed to trace the profile of the students which tends to be formed of young people up to 18 years; of the female sex; mulatto or mulatto; single; coming from high school public school; who does not exercise paid activity; and belongs to the family with income of up to 3 minimum wages.

Taking as a reference the data on the profile of the students, we can say that in this period of expansion of Unemat there was a process of entry that can be considered democratized, even if the bias of democratization was not in focus, which happened naturally due to the regional, historical, cultural and political context of the IES and the state of Mato Grosso.

From this study, a question arises that should be considered in the policies of access to higher education, which is: it is not enough to make access possible as an entry/entry; it is necessary to create accompanying policies, leveling out; one needs to think about the didactic/pedagogical quality developed by the universities, among others. We believe that guaranteeing access/entry is necessary and fundamental, but thinking in a fragmented way of permanence does not guarantee democratization. We advocate the importance of thinking about participatory democracy in the formulation of public policies for access to higher education.
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