

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AND ITS ROLE IN THE DEFENSE AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

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INTRODUCTION

In a preliminary way, it is important to clarify that the university, especially the Public University, has as its main function the citizen formation directed to the production and dissemination of knowledge and to the social, economic, historical and cultural development of the society in which it is inserted. Therefore for this study, it was important to portray the historical context of its function and concept.

In this sense, the Public University emerged first as a locus of production of co-knowledge and social development, that is, a social institution. Later, with the assumption of neoliberal policies, the idea of the university began to impose the privatization of public space with the withdrawal of state responsibility for providing higher education, a movement that currently intends to conceive of an institutional university as an operational university, in the sense of being an organization guided by the managerial logic of competitive and particular administration of capitalism that envisions knowledge as a commodity (CHAUÍ, 1999, 2003).

Because of this conception, education, so necessary for the consolidation of the State's responsibility, the important constitutional principle of indissociability between teaching, research and extension that should permeate the university's actions, has as its main function the complete formation of the individual, being a means to materialize the university as a social institution.

In this context, extension, as one of the tripods of the University's social function, appears as a way to broaden knowledge in favor of society, with a view to the transformative relationship between university and society. That is why a perspective of learning about rights must be based on practice, in order to raise awareness and incorporate social values such as equality, democracy and social justice, focusing on critical citizen education (MARTINS, GUIMARÃES, 2017) and, consequently, the promotion of human rights.

Thus, this article focuses on the University Extension as an instrument for the defense and realization of human rights. To this end, the actions of extension are identified in the lines related to human rights that are developed by the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT), through the Pro-Rectorate of Extension, Culture and Community Affairs (PRO-EX).

The methodological proposal is based on bibliographic research and documentary research on the role of university extension, with the PROEX/UFT action report as the basis. The way to demonstrate the performance of the Federal University of Tocantins occurs with the cataloguing of extension actions linked to the area of Human Rights, and the filter adopted is the "Thematic Area of Human Rights and Justice"; from the data, another filter is carried out, with a relation to the effective date, cataloguing only the actions in effect from 2018.

The choice of the year resides in the fact of the necessary restructuring of the UFT Human Rights Education Management Committee, established in the second semester of 2017, which, obligatorily, needs data to fulfill its objectives in face of the new political scenario inaugurated with the election of Jair Messias Bolsonaro for the Presidency of the Republic.

With this in mind, it seeks to emphasize the importance of University Extension actions aimed at the realization of Human Rights and the importance of this relationship in the face of the challenges of the contemporary University in a society that witnesses the increase in violations and the growth of the process of disqualification of the defense and promotion of Human Rights in the country.

2 UNIVERSITY EXTENSION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A UNIVERSITY AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION

The university as a social institution is focused on the construction of a democratic society and, by its close connection with society in the social relations of defense and promotion of human rights, is committed to the development and formation of citizens; moreover, its main function is the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge through research, teaching and extension.

In this context, it is of fundamental importance to contextualize the origins and characteristics of the university in order to understand its current role in society and its challenges. To this end, it is important to highlight the evolution of the concept of university.

A expressão universidade relacionada à educação passou a ser utilizada somente a partir do século XII, pois, anteriormente, a palavra universitas (do latim) designava o sentido de associação de ofícios. De acordo com alguns autores a palavra universitas foi originalmente aplicada às sociedades escolásticas (WANDERLEY, 1983, p. 16)

In order to understand the formation process and current situation of the University institution in Brazil, a brief reflection on the university models that have influenced Latin America and, consequently, Brazil, is timely. The Napoleonic model, according to Maciel (2017), implemented during the French Revolution, aimed at politically unifying consciences in order to strengthen the state, and had as its main characteristic a professional education focused on the interests of the new French nation.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the creation of the University of Berlin, in Germany, different from the Napoleonic model, which contributed to a new meaning of the idea of university. According to Maciel (2017), the German university differentiates itself as a socio-cultural institution, directed towards the process of production of knowledge indispensable for the social development of the Nation.

The model of the University of Berlin, also called Humboldtian, due to its idealizer Alexander Von Humboldt, brought significant change in the conception of a university that now considers as such only those places that carry out scientific research oriented by philosophical reflection, in other words, that combine the transference and construction of knowledge.

The University in Brazil has, initially, its origins based on the reported models (French and German). After the 1968 reform, the American model began to influence universities in Brazil, especially in the exact sciences. The Public University then historically went through a moment of rupture and revision of its role in Brazilian society.

O modelo norte-americano tem sua inspiração inicial na universidade inglesa, com ênfase na religião e na literatura, visando o desenvolvimento pessoal do indivíduo, mas vai se diferenciar mediante o rápido crescimento do capitalismo que irá exigir um modelo pragmático e utilitarista como fonte de progresso e desenvolvimento econômico (MACIEL, 2017, p. 24)

According to the philosopher Marilena Chauí (2003), the University, since its origin, has been considered a social institution, in other words, it aims at relating to society, seeking the solution of its problems in order to develop actions that generate its development. Still in the philosopher's understanding, the university as a social institution should be the representation of the society of which it is part, and not be a separate reality.

By focusing on the functions of the University as a social institution, we were able to see the primary role it plays in the relationship between society and the State, and how it acts in the conception of life in society in a democratic way, respecting ethical, humanistic and solidarity principles (FORPROEX, 2012).

By being considered a social institution, the University acquires, as a consequence, a legitimate public recognition, both cultural and ideological and political. In addition, it must be autonomous internally, having management freedom in order to minimize the influence of governments and to fit into a state policy perspective.

The strengthening of neoliberalism in Brazil in the 1990s, as far as education is concerned, is seen in the advance guided by the initiatives of privatization of education and the lack of responsibility of the State for the duty of education, which were marked in the governments of Presidents Fernando

Collor de Melo, Itamar Franco and Fernando Henrique Cardoso. During this period, the University did not occupy the political agenda of valuing and expanding higher education and, fundamentally, it adopted an instrumental perspective of considering it as an organization aimed at supplying the need to professionalize the market, disqualifying the historical characteristic of constituting itself as a critical mass of society.

According to Chauí (2003), the new characteristics of the current conception of University, especially after the advance of neoliberalism, transform the institution into an organization (operational university), which aims to meet the desires of the capitalist market, prioritarily preventing the formation of emancipated citizens. That is why,

Enquanto a universidade clássica estava voltada para o conhecimento e a universidade funcional estava voltada diretamente para o mercado de trabalho, a nova universidade ou universidade operacional, por ser uma organização, está voltada para si mesma enquanto estrutura de gestão e de arbitragem de contratos (CHAUI, 1999, p.7)

In this context, it is worth highlighting the ideals of Darcy Ribeiro (1969), in the defense that there is a standard theoretical model of university, which he calls "necessary university", with specific objectives of acting as a propeller in social transformation, by the evolutionary acceleration.

Tais funções, como se mencionou, são herdar e cultivar com fidelidade os padrões internacionais da ciência e da pesquisa, e o patrimônio do saber humano. E, ainda, capacitar-se para aplicar este saber ao conhecimento da sociedade nacional e a superação de seus problemas; crescer de acordo com um plano, a fim de preparar uma força de trabalho nacional com a magnitude e o grau de qualificação indispensáveis ao progresso autônomo do país (RIBEIRO, 1969, p.167)

Recent movements denounce that the ideology advocated by Bolsonaro government does not prioritize an institutional university focused on universality oriented to public space and diversity, but rather an organization to be guided by the managerial logic of competitive and particular administration of capitalism that envisions knowledge as a commodity.

In Brazil, the Federal Constitution of 1988 brought, in its article 207, the indissociability between teaching, research and extension, in other words, for the Universities to develop their functions, the three axes must be carried out together.

The integration of teaching, research and extension, for Maciel (2017), is based on the search for quality in academic performance, favoring a theoretical and practical emancipation of the subjects, as well as developing the meaning of social responsibility, which brings the University closer to society.

Historically, the University Extension appeared discreetly in Brazil, in the 1930s, by the Statute of the Brazilian University (Decree-Law No. 19.851, 1931), in the Vargas Government, having as its main characteristic the production of courses and conferences aimed at solving social problems and with principles linked to national interests.

In this way, the function of the University Extension emerges, which has as its premise a space within the University in which the participative subject is built, with actions focused on citizenship. Through the actions, in the area of extension, the subject in formation within the University can interact in order to modify and assist the world outside the University.

After the legal and constitutional recognition of the University Extension, the creation of the National Meeting of Pro-Readers of Extension consolidates, in this way, the Extension as a means of citizen formation, thus, "the University Extension is the educational, cultural and scientific process that articulates Teaching and Research in an inseparable way and makes possible the transforming relationship between University and Society" (FORPROEX, 2012, p. 15).

Then, the extension begins to act in an inseparable way with teaching and research, in order to link its activities with society. According to the orientation of the documents linked to the National Plan of University Extension, the function of Extension is not to substitute state functions, but to produce, to know in a practical way, making the University and society relationship more dynamic and active by listening to social desires through the groups with which it integrates. Therefore,

"The University must participate in all social movements, prioritizing actions aimed at overcoming the current conditions of inequality and exclusion that exist in Brazil" (FORPROEX, 2001, p. 01).

The legislation in force shows the promotion of extension actions that promote and defend human rights, as is the example of the Resolution of the Ministry of Education No. 01, 2012, which establishes the National Guidelines for Education on Human Rights in its article 12.

As Instituições de Educação Superior estimularão ações de extensão voltadas para a promoção de Direitos Humanos, em diálogo com os segmentos sociais em situação de exclusão social e violação de direitos, assim como com os movimentos sociais e a gestão pública (BRASIL, 2012)

Faced with this panorama, the current existence of a duality in the University is highlighted, the former sees it as a social institution, with its role of citizen formation in a complete way, otherwise, there is the position that sees the University as a means to achieve certain ends, in other words, a University that prioritizes the market, because it seeks only the formation of a product. In this context, the search for the integral University, which has as its objective the citizen formation of the subject, should be prioritized, mainly strengthening the role of the Extension, which consonates this social function.

No momento em que o capitalismo global pretende funcionalizar a Universidade e, de fato, transformá-la numa vasta agência de extensão ao seu serviço, a reforma da Universidade deve conferir uma nova centralidade às atividades de extensão (com implicações no currículo e nas carreiras dos docentes) e concebê-las de modo alternativo ao capitalismo global, atribuindo às Universidades uma participação ativa na construção da coesão social, no aprofundamento da democracia, na luta contra a exclusão social e a degradação ambiental, na defesa da diversidade cultural (SANTOS, 2004, p. 53-54).

The role of Universities as knowledge producers should not be restricted to economic function. To this end, it is essential to strengthen extensionist actions at the university level as a way of capturing social values and interests and, through this knowledge, offering solutions that lead to the sustainable and ethical development of the Nation.

By assuming the role of systemic formation of society, the Federal University occupies a very important role in the process of growth and development and, especially, in the actions and programs related to the defense and consolidation of Human Rights in the state of Tocantins.

Thus, the idea is defended that the Public University should not be held hostage to the mercantilization imposed by neoliberal policies and, consequently, the University Extension cannot be reduced to a business counter to maximize the profit of powerful economic groups, since it is a social institution driven by thinking and acting that must be conceived as strategic for social and economic development, as well as for the defense of national sovereignty.

3 THE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION FOR THE FORMATION OF EMANCIPATED CITIZENS AND A LESS UNEQUAL SOCIETY

The purpose of the university extension is to promote actions aimed at integrating the relationship between the University and society, with emphasis on academic training and the demands of society. From this perspective, the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s witnessed numerous national and international events with intense discussions on the concept of university extension linked to the idea of social mission.

The end of the Civil-Military Dictatorship in 1988, with the promulgation of the Federal Constitution, marks the beginning of a new political conjuncture that impacts the Public University and clearly shows the adoption of different postures on the conception of extensionist activities, because with a focus on the construction of citizenship, they assume a close relationship between theory and practice.

And, precisely in this sense, the university extension is also understood as an institutionalized norm by the Federal Constitution from 1988.

Art. 207. As universidades gozam de autonomia didático-científica, administrativa e de gestão financeira e patrimonial, e obedecerão ao princípio de indissociabilidade entre ensino, pesquisa e extensão.

Art. 211. A União, os Estados, o Distrito Federal e os Municípios organizarão em regime de colaboração seus sistemas de

ensino.

§ 1º A União organizará o sistema federal de ensino e o dos Territórios, financiará as instituições de ensino públicas federais e exercerá, em matéria educacional, função redistributiva e supletiva, de forma a garantir equalização de oportunidades educacionais e padrão mínimo de qualidade do ensino mediante assistência técnica e financeira aos Estados, ao Distrito Federal e aos Municípios; (nosso grifo)

Therefore, it is the duty of the State to maintain federal institutions of higher education that operate in accordance with the principle of indissociability between teaching, research and extension. In this way, it is possible to allow citizens in more vulnerable situations, for example, to overcome "the obstacles and limitations they find in their social, cultural and professional life" (THIOLLENT, 2002, p. 9). This is a crucial link to relate theoretical and practical knowledge, allowing the promotion of citizenship and, consequently, citizen emancipation.

The exercise of an emancipated citizenship results from the education that the subject acquires from a critical perspective that allows him/her to understand his/her duties, but aware of his/her rights he/she struggles to keep and expand them under the aegis of the dignity of the human person.

For Santos (2004), the crisis of the Public University, provoked by the neoliberal political current, reveals the challenge of overcoming three major crises, namely: the crisis of hegemony, with questions about the role of the university entity in generating knowledge and its application according to standards demanded by contemporary capitalism; the crisis of legitimacy, due to disagreements about the social role of the university in the context of social and political demands of democratization with a focus on the demands around equal opportunity for the less favored classes; and the institutional crisis, resulting from capitalism's pressure for efficiency and productivity criteria in the face of university autonomy.

That is why, as Botomé (1996) puts it, the "University without collective identity is very difficult to manage", in this sense, the university crisis is also an identity crisis, which includes extension as an integrant, and, as inadequate practices intensify, University becomes more uncharacterized.

In face of this scenario, it is important to remember that the university extension plays an important role in the fight for the realization of Human Rights, in view of the University's performance as an important agent for the construction of citizenship. In this perspective, in order to strengthen the university extension, in face of the contemporary challenges for the promotion of human rights in relation to the articulation of the university extension with public policies, political actions have been defined in axes/ integrating areas, such as, for example, actions focused on Human Rights and Justice (FOR-PROEX, 2012).

It is also noted, in accordance with Resolution No. 1 from May 30th 2012 on the National Guidelines for Human Rights Education, that extension actions aimed at promoting human rights should be encouraged within the Universities.

It is also interesting to note Fagundes' statement (1986, p. 157) when he records that "in this line of thinking, what justifies the presence of the extension in the university is no longer its inherence, but its social relevance. And, extension will only have relevance as long as it makes the university itself relevant to society as a whole".

As we can see, nowadays a new posture of the university is being taken in face of social problems, even of the State and of the productive sectors themselves, this means, therefore, that the extension actions, aligned with the social commitment, face conflicts with private interests in dispute in society. It is important to emphasize that the transformations suffered by education, as a result of the neoliberal agenda, were architected by various orientations of multi-lateral organizations, such as the World Bank, and the Washington Consensus booklet, including, among other measures, that the State should stop maintaining higher education (Freire, 2008).

With the crisis of the institutional university configured from the end of the 1960s and in the very context of the productive restructuring of capitalism in the 1970s and 1980s, driven by the neoliberal discourse paradigm that sees knowledge as a commodity, a new perspective of higher education was installed in Brazil, the one with lucrative possibilities, with which it is possible to see a movement tensioning the sense of university extension to a singular vision of the market.

Therefore, considering the public university as the critical mass of society and an important agent of social transformation for the realization of human rights, the university extension plays an important role in building a culture of respect for human rights and citizenship. Faced with such a scenario, the hegemony of a capitalism that transforms knowledge into merchandise and of a world with recurrent violations of human rights, it is evident, therefore, the relevance of university extension for the democratization of access to higher education in the face of a social framework in which few people, especially those from the most humble strata of the working class, have access to the Public University. Therefore, the development of extensionist activities that broaden the possibilities for the University to welcome citizens who have historically been excluded from the University is indispensable for the fulfillment of the social function of the Public University and, therefore, essential for the promotion of the human rights to education.

4 EXTENSION ACTIONS LINKED TO THE REALIZATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

In this context, it is important to highlight the actions aimed at the community, or also telling, services provided to society through the university extension that within the Federal University of Tocantins are coordinated by the Pro-Rector of Extension, Culture and Community Affairs (PROEX). The actions are framed as programs, projects and activities, according to the institutional regulation.

In order to consolidate its extension policy with a focus on building a more just, democratic, and solidary society, the Federal University of Tocantins seeks to build relationships with the various social groups, based on the following priority axes: a) citizenship; b) support for ethnic-cultural diversity; and c) promotion of art and culture.

Thus, PROEX's mission is to "provide conditions for the community to have access to scientific, technological and cultural information, cooperating with the construction of new knowledge and integration of the University with society in general" (UFT, 2018).

Table 1 below shows the list of extension actions in the Human Rights and Justice thematic area in regular progress for all units of the Federal University of Tocantins, according to information from PROEX/UFT.

Table 1: Actions according to respective extension lines

EXTENSION LINES	QUANTITY OF ACTIONS/TITLES
Individual and collective rights	30
People with disabilities, impairments or special needs	2
Rural development and the agrarian question	1
Urban development	4
Civil society organizations and social and popular movements	5
Infancy and Adolescence	3
Food safety	1
Professional Education	3
Specific Themes	2
Vulnerable social groups	6
Development of products	1
Drugs and Medicines	2
Cultural, historical, natural and material Patrimony	1
Teaching-learning methodologies and strategies	1
Third Age	1
Public Management	1

Source: PROEX (UFT, 2018) Report/Elaboration of the authors

According to the PROEX/UFT report, the investigation is carried out in relation to the registered actions in the main thematic area informed as Human Rights and, considering the focus of this work, the secondary thematic area called Human Rights and Justice received special attention for analysis.

It is important to note that of the 64 shares and 16 extension lines in progress at the Federal University of Tocantins, the largest quantity refers to Individual and Collective Rights, which accounts for 47% of the total number of titles per extension line.

Of the total number of actions registered by PROEX/UFT in the main thematic area in Human Rights, Table 2 was prepared with a breakdown of the number of extension lines and modalities of action registered in the secondary thematic area Human Rights and Justice. According to this Table, of the total number of extension actions it is possible to identify only 4 extension lines and 7 actions distributed in the modalities program, project, event and course regarding the sub-thematic area - Human Rights and Justice. As can be seen, this may signal the trend of extension University at the Federal University of the State of Tocantins in giving less preference to actions in the mentioned secondary thematic area.

Table 2 - Modalities and extension lines in the thematic sub-area Human Rights and Justice

MODALITY	EXTENSION LINE
Project	Individual and collective rights
Program	Urban Development
Program	Urban Development
Project	Urban Development
Event	Rural development and the agrarian question
Event	Teaching/learning methodologies and strategies
Course	Urban development

Source: PROEX (UFT, 2018) Report/Personal elaboration

In spite of having previously mentioned that all the extension actions under analysis in this study are in the main thematic area "Human Rights", it is urgent to emphasize the importance of actions, with their respective modalities and extension lines, in the secondary thematic area "Human Rights and Justice", in view of the guidelines and specific objectives of this area of action that must be present in the debates that are increasingly closer to the relationship between the University and Society.

There is no doubt, therefore, that this situation corroborates the visible scenario that is approaching the accentuation of the crisis of the Public University and, consequently, of a difficult scenario for the promotion of Human Rights. This increases the challenge of the university to reduce social inequalities, which is also aggravated by the political exhaustion of representative democracy.

Unquestionably, in this context, that the university cannot be responsible only for the co-knowledge and qualification of labor for the market, the extension actions, besides the assistance to excluded communities, should also enable the emancipation of citizens through the improvement of the quality of life and the strengthening of the capacity of organization and social participation.

The lack of educational practices in human rights, whether for awareness, incorporation of values such as equality, social justice and democracy, becomes a harmful factor for the promotion of fundamental human rights, individual and collective, and may also diminish the social engagement of the University and hinder the strengthening of culture in human rights.

For this reason, in Chauí (2003), the Public University must be an autonomous social institution, linked to the idea of democracy and democratization of knowledge (CHAUÍ, 2003), thus preserved from sporadic and eventual governmental policies that do not include the development of research and extensionist actions. The Public University, under the scope of State Politics, makes it difficult for the discontinuity; for example, of project funding to negatively impact the fulfillment of its institutional mission. Therefore, in relation to the protection of Human Rights, this situation also reveals the necessary care of the space for articulation between the academic community and civil society.

In this case, a greater social participation of the Public University in themes related to Human Rights and Justice is advocated, in order to improve the proposition of policies for guarantee of citizen rights and of a democratic, fair and less unequal society.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In Brazil, the historical context of the struggle for democracy registers the engagement of the university community through social movements referenced in different issues. In this direction, the evocation about the extension actions developed by the Federal University of the State of Tocantins may reveal the institution's sensitivity to its responsibility to promote human rights, justice and a less unequal society. And, consequently, it is possible to perceive the relevant role of the University in the fight for the defense of human rights, and, at this point, the university extension actions assume a significant role.

Therefore, it is important to highlight that the University plays an important role in articulating with society in the face of political and economic movements that threaten human dignity, citizenship and the fulfillment of citizens' rights. The university extension, combined with teaching and research, contributes to building a more citizen-friendly society. For this reason, it is argued that the university should listen and plan its extensionist actions based on the needs of its social environment, which, in many cases, is historically characterized by social and economic inequalities and different forms of social exclusion.

In the case of the Federal University of Tocantins, the actions are directed, with greater emphasis on the promotion of individual and collective rights, emphasizing the extensionist policy of this University concerned with issues related to human rights and emancipation of citizens. Hence the essential importance of strengthening the university as a social institution (universal institution), moving away from the position of mere trainer of professionals in a particular field (operational university).

And this being the context, it is recognized the importance of university extension actions for the realization of human rights in the face of the challenges of university management in contemporary times through a disturbing and threatening scenario inspired by neoliberal precepts that produce the reduction of the public sphere and the violation of human rights to become viable as an alternative in order to maximize profit through policies that among other consequences deepen social inequality.

Finally, unquestionable is the verification of the various extension actions, such as the programs, projects, courses and events developed at the Federal University of Tocantins, directed to the promotion of human rights and citizenship. Otherwise, it seems that the thematic delineation and the characterization of the problems are conceptually distant from what ends up being registered in the project system of PROEX/UFT, because it draws attention to the low rate of registered actions in the secondary thematic area "Human Rights and Justice". Thus, a better characterization of the mentioned secondary thematic area is necessary, in view of the guidelines and specific objectives necessary for the debate on Human Rights.