Globalization, inequality and social injustice: implications on education and adult education

Globalización, desigualdad e injusticia social: implicaciones para la educación y la formación de adultos

Globalização, desigualdade e injustiça social: implicações na educação e na educação de adultos

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Abstract: Inequality and social injustice have destroyed confidence in human nature by creating shameful gaps that touch upon sociocultural, economic, environmental, spiritual, and political aspects that undoubtedly impact learning processes. The aim of this paper is to explore significant aspects of globalization, inequality and social injustice and their impact on education and adult education. Framed within a general qualitative framework, this paper has adopted an exploratory methodology that intends to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. This paper offers a critical and reflexive position aiming at raising a significant level of awareness in an attempt to promote and generate reflection spaces that help in the diminution of social injustices and inequalities in our globalized societies within an educational lens. First, globalization is discussed. Obviously, globalization has brought the world together in a spiral of knowledge, technology, and information. Next, inequality in education is explored: residential schools, the prevalence of racism and the systematic invisibility of minority groups. Additionally, social injustice and movements in adult education are also considered: the Antigonish movement, the frontier college, and the no movement against Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA). It is a foregone conclusion that inequality and social injustice have had a tremendous impact on societies and learning settings as well. Finally, neoliberal policies have promoted a very noticeable savage economic Darwinism that privileges commodification, privatization and a public pedagogy that focuses on entrepreneurial subjects.

Keywords: Globalization, Inequality, Social injustice, Social movements, Education, Learning process

Resumen: La desigualdad y la injusticia social han destruido la confianza en la naturaleza humana creando brechas vergonzosas que afectan a aspectos socioculturales, económicos, medioambientales, espirituales y políticos que, sin duda, repercuten en los procesos de aprendizaje. El objetivo de este trabajo es explorar aspectos significativos de la globalización, la desigualdad y la injusticia social y su impacto en la educación y en la educación de adultos. Enmarcado en un marco cualitativo general, este trabajo ha adoptado una metodología exploratoria que pretende proporcionar una comprensión en profundidad del fenómeno. Este trabajo ofrece una posición crítica y reflexiva con el objetivo de crear un nivel de conciencia significativo en un intento de promover y generar espacios de reflexión que ayuden a la disminución de las injusticias y desigualdades sociales en nuestras sociedades globalizadas desde una perspectiva educativa. En primer lugar, se aborda la globalización. Obviamente, la globalización ha unido al mundo en una espiral de conocimiento, tecnología e información. A continuación, se explora la desigualdad en la educación: las escuelas residenciales, la prevalencia del racismo y la invisibilidad sistemática de los grupos minoritarios. Además, también se consideran la injusticia social y los movimientos en la educación de adultos: el movimiento *Antigonish,* el colegio fronterizo y el movimiento del no contra el Tratado de Libre Comercio de Centro América (TLC). Es una conclusión inevitable que la desigualdad y la injusticia social han tenido un tremendo impacto en las sociedades y también en los entornos de aprendizaje. Por

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último, las políticas neoliberales han promovido un darwinismo económico salvaje muy notorio que privilegia la mercantilización, la privatización y una pedagogía pública centrada en personas emprendedoras.

Palabras claves: Globalización, Desigualdad, Injusticia social, Movimientos sociales, Educación, Proceso de aprendizaje

Resumo: A desigualdade e a injustiça social destruíram a confiança na natureza humana, criando lacunas vergonhosas que afetam aspectos socioculturais, econômicos, ambientais, espirituais e políticos que, sem dúvida, afetam os processos de aprendizagem. O objetivo deste artigo é explorar aspectos significativos da globalização, da desigualdade e da injustiça social e o seu impacto na educação e na educação de adultos. Inserido em um quadro qualitativo geral, este artigo adoptou uma metodologia exploratória que pretende proporcionar uma compreensão aprofundada do fenómeno. Este artigo oferece uma posição crítica e reflexiva com o intuito de aumentar a consciência significativamente na tentativa de impulsionar e gerar espaços de reflexão que ajudem na diminuição das injustiças e desigualdades sociais em nossas sociedades globalizadas dentro de uma lente educacional. Primeiro, a globalização é discutida. Obviamente, a globalização uniu o mundo em uma espiral de conhecimento, tecnologia e informação. Em seguida, a desigualdade na educação é analisada: escolas residenciais, a prevalência do racismo e a invisibilidade sistemática dos grupos minoritários. Além disso, também são consideradas a injustiça social e os movimentos na educação de adultos: o movimento Antigonish, o colégio fronteiriço e o movimento NÃO contra o CAFTA. Seria uma conclusão apressada assumir que a desigualdade e a injustiça social não tiveram um impacto significativo nas sociedades e nos ambientes de aprendizagem. Finalmente, as políticas neoliberais promoveram um darwinismo econômico selvagem muito visível que privilegia a mercantilização, a privatização e uma pedagogia pública que se concentra em assuntos empreendedores.

Palavras-chave: globalização, desigualdade, injustiça social, movimentos sociais, educação, processo de aprendizagem

INTRODUCTION

Its inevitability notwithstanding, if we can understand how inequality is generated and how it is socially reproduced, then we can use our knowledge to at least reduce it, even if we cannot eradicate it entirely. As individuals, as members of a group, and as citizens of a state, we can contest acts of social injustice against vulnerable populations, support the civil rights of all peoples of the world, and try to prevent further discrimination against those who are constructed as "other(s)" (Zawilski, 2016, p. 1).

Inequality and social injustice have long prevailed among modern and ancient societies. Indeed, these scourges have literally destroyed confidence in human nature by creating shameful gaps that touch upon sociocultural, economic, environmental, spiritual, and political aspects. It is within educators' purview to foster much-needed discussions to engage in critical analysis and reflection so as to eliminate these aggressions and to reflect on the impact of globalization on education. Bringing to surface hidden biases becomes a must for the different stakeholders within the teaching-learning process. Education, so central to the human nature and yet so intangible to understanding, needs to be the spearhead against intolerance, inequality, and injustice. Clearly, the morphosis starts in the classrooms and the streets with a thought, a feeling, a discrepancy, a rejection, an inspiration, or a belief. Likewise, these insights are heavily rooted in ever-changing societies and social organizations that fight to eradicate dehumanizing practices via manifestations and revolutions. Many parts of the world, especially those with marginalized populations, constitute a framework of reference for these types of social constructs: the Red River Rebellion (Canada), the Xinhai Revolution (China) and the Anti-French Uprising (Algeria) among many others. Finally, these social movements have been tightly related to sociopolitical systems of oppression that suffocate the most basic principles of freedom and peace.

The aim of this paper is to explore significant aspects of globalization, inequality and social injustice and their impact on education and adult education. It has three sections where features of these aspects are considered – that is, a discussion is provided to analyze significant concepts and implications. The sections of this paper can be summarized as follows: globalization, inequality in education and social injustice and movements in adult education. Finally, some insightful and thought-provoking conclusions are also offered. Framed within an overarching qualitative framework, this article is to adopt an exploratory methodology. This methodology intends to provide a full understanding of the topic (Hernández et al., 2010). The methodology incorporated a systematic revision of articles and data on the phenomenon.

Throughout this paper, a critical and reflexive position aiming at raising a significant level of awareness in an attempt to promote and generate reflection spaces that help in the diminution of social injustices and inequalities in our societies within a learning lens without any type of romantic nuances whatsoever is assumed. Now, it is relevant to establish what is meant by being critical and reflexive within a learning context. For the author, being critical goes beyond engaging in a simple process of critique and explanation of the situation. It constitutes a process of in-depth analysis in which implications and perspectives are considered by the different stakeholders to promote social change conducive to the betterment of societies and its people. In this regard, Carpenter and Mojab (2013) argued that "rather, critical adult education should explain the source, function, expression, and operation of the contradictions that constitute our social relations" (p. 163). It is fair to say that the word critical has also been widely used as a catch-all construct to symbolize antagonism to established rules and conventionalism (Carpenter & Mojab, 2013); it is not the case in this paper. Additionally, reflexivity and criticality imply an in-depth understanding of the self and the others and all the multifaceted aspects of an entity and how they affect different schemata from a sociocultural perspective. With that in mind, being reflexive and critical indicates a well-balanced and well-thought-out analysis of the circumstances prior to acting and making decisions. Building on this concept, England (1994) argued that "reflexivity is self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as researcher. Indeed, reflexivity is critical to the conduct of fieldwork" (p. 82). From this definition, it can be concluded that there is a relevant process of self-discovery conducive to an emic scaffolding of a sociocultural reality. Due to the nature of the paper, this critical and reflexive position becomes a must for the author in order to problematize concepts and constructions of utmost importance to the analysis.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXPERIENCE

Globalization

Societies are now, more than ever, facing the influence of learning-teaching and technological processes within a globalized world, among other aspects. Indeed, globalization has brought the world together in a spiral of knowledge and information available in synchronous and asynchronous ways through the use of the state-of-the-art wizardry. Globalization can be defined as the ongoing process in which countries, people, economies, cultures, beliefs, and historical backgrounds encounter and integrate for specific purposes. Noticeably, this social, cultural, and economic phenomenon has brought the world together with positive and negative implications.

Perhaps, the most relevant aspect of globalization lies in getting multiple perspectives and diversity from an intercultural stance. Considering different ways of being, knowing and understanding provides a different angle of realities and perceptions that necessarily enrich societies and their citizens' viewpoints. Not only does it broaden established perspectives by offering a different positionality, but it

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also promotes a more global approach so as to raise intercultural awareness to face challenges through a multicultural lens. To illustrate this construct, Knight (2013) mentioned that "internationalisation has been guided by the principles that it must be linked to local context and purpose, that there isn't one way or a right way…" (p. 89-90). Moreover, modern societies value respect and tolerance as paramount tenets of human coexistence. Globalization provides a unique and robust opportunity to enhance tolerance and respect via formal and informal implementation of curricula in different learning contexts. On the whole, cultural diversity creates much-needed spaces for sincere dialogue and exchange of knowledge. A caveat here, when considering possible solutions or ways to perform actions from a specific perspective, other equally important possibilities (or even more valuable ones) might not be considered or simply ignored.

Multicultural or global citizenship represents another important aspect of globalization. Globalization, immigration and technology, terms used to characterize and symbolize transformations around the world, have contributed to establish and expand a more common multicultural and global citizenship. Likewise, economic trends have created new interdependences that diminish political, ideological, and cultural identities, such as GATT and General Agreemen on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and Dominican Republic and Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA).. Kymlicka (as cited in Banks, 2008) offers a very compelling argument by establishing that "the world's 184 independent states contain over 600 living language groups and 5,000 ethnic groups. In very few countries can the citizens be said to share the same language or belong to the same ethnonational group" (p. 131). Undoubtedly, the world has evolved into a cultural melting pot that welcomes and assimilates foreign-born population. This is particularly true in countries like Canada, Costa Rica, Spain, and The United Arab Emirates with strong immigration levels and ethnocultural diversities that foster a new intercultural identity. Interestingly, inward-looking nationalism also runs deep in many societies, especially in those with strong economic systems and commercial revenues. Finally, the construct of a global identity aims at developing a strong sense of international knowledge and a strong degree of responsibility towards worldwide problems; being able to operate accordingly within different cultural realities; and showing acknowledgment of dissimilarities and resemblances (Knight, 2013). Ironically, these two former concepts might also be considered as downsides of globalization depending on the reader's perspective. It becomes relevant to acknowledge this fact here for the sake of fairness.

It is a foregone conclusion that the process of homogenization constitutes a negative influence, especially for young adults who struggle to maintain their cultural identity traits once immerse in a new culture. This has been the experience of specific ethnic groups in western school systems that pay almost no attention to maintaining a strong sense of identity to students' homelands and sociocultural traditions (Banks, 2008). To exemplify this fact, Banks (2008) pointed out that "schools assumed that assimilation into the mainstream culture was required for citizenship and national belonging and that students could and should surrender commitments to other communities, cultures, and nations" (p. 134). This condition might jeopardize the students' sense of identity when trying to fit into a new culture by considering original ways of being as shameful and replacing them with different schemes of behavior and attitudinal models to function properly with home students and society in general. With that in mind, the author poses the following question: should cultures or nations be considered better just because of their economic systems, historical background, geographical position, or physical features? A thought-provoking question, indeed! Sadly, human history has taught people that there have been several attempts in which countries or cultures have tried to literally eliminate the richness and wisdom of marginalized or minority groups with horrifying and even criminal practices. Truth be told, there is no such thing as a superior country or supreme culture whatsoever. Here, it is also relevant to mention that minority groups tend to experience discrimination and isolation and are perceived as outsiders. Banks (2008) goes around this concept when mentioning that "when ethnic minority students – such as Turkish students in Germany… – are marginalized in school and treated as the 'Other', they tend to

emphasize ethnic identities and to develop weak attachments to the nation-state" (p. 132). Finally, it is part of the educators' responsibility to generate awareness for students to preserve strong identity roots to their homelands.

In addition, it is generally accepted that globalization could be construed as an important downside within educational processes and economic systems. Conceivably, the most obvious downside of globalization is tied to its economic pervasiveness, the audit culture. This financial construct dictates national policies and strategies to make programs profitable – that is, numbers rule. In referring to this market-oriented approach, Weber (2014) asserted that "one downside of globalization is the changed society focused on market values, not human values. The emphasis on economic globalization changes learning experiences to be technical and market driven…" (p. 67). This issue poses tremendous challenges for educational institutions and learning processes. Universities and scholarly programs now have to compete for funding to be able to coexist in the market. Likewise, some programs might be perceived as funds generators with little attention to the academic quality or their real impact for societies. The brain race also constitutes a significant element to consider in this discussion. Based on the financial markets and the adoption of neoliberalism policies for economic efficiency, the world has turned into a super competitive web to recruit the best in their fields no matter where they come from. In this regard, Knight (2013) manifested that "the original goal of helping developing country students to complete a degree in another country and then return home to contribute to a national development is fading fast as nations compete in the twenty-first brain race" (p. 87). Obviously, this reality involves two juxtaposed paradoxes. First, the very same host universities or institutions who are willing to receive students and offer an intercultural and international experience are the ones on the lookout to seduce students with a knack for whatever that is they are interested in or in need of to stay permanently. Second, the student who somehow betrays the sending country when staying in the new nation and abandoning the original project of returning home for the advancement of their society. It can be argued that a certain degree of acculturation is necessary to function properly within a new culture. This does not mean that international students have to give up sociocultural beliefs and traditions, this will clearly create menacing and unpredictable havoc to identity processes and ontological schemata. To illustrate this concept, Banks (2008) stated that "students can become cosmopolitan citizens while maintaining attachments and roots to their family and community cultures" (p. 134). Furthermore, these identities evolve as they intertwine with new cultural patterns creating original identity traits and leading to a sense of belonging. Finally, it is true that students are not *tabula rasa* – they do possess their own beliefs system and axiological framework.

The previous information has clearly established a connection between globalization and education – its impact and influence on educational systems cannot be denied. Societies need to be aware of this connection to promote advantageous situations for their citizens within a humanistic lens. These are significant implications on how globalization impacts societies and their learning organizations and economic models.

Inequality in Education

This section of the paper provides and analyzes some significant aspects related to inequality and education through an educational learning lens. Sadly, the persistence of inequality in education systems might be considered ubiquitous. It is a must for educators (and all the stakeholders involved in the teaching-learning processes) to fully understand the underlying nature of inequality and how it impacts modern societies – in other words, it is within the professors' and teachers' purview to foster raising-awareness methods to promote the betterment of marginalized minorities and non-integrated groups. Particularly, adult educators, who work and nurture the minds of students who have decided to come

back to different educational systems to receive some sort of formal training, must pay attention to experiences of inequality, tokenism, and social injustice. Given the thrust of international policies, principles, and strategies to eradicate this social affliction, societies must ensure safe spaces for in-depth analysis and critical reflection in order to promote positive transformations accordingly.

Now, there are several examples that illustrate inequality within education. The first example to be considered here is that of the Residential Schools in Canada. Never has the author felt so saddened when reading about social issues and scourges. Basically, First Nations children were immersed in Euro-Canadian school systems in order to assimilate the new culture. For the author, these sickening practices constitute a sociohistorical genocide and an evident example of dehumanizing colonialism. To exemplify this concept, Schissel and Wotherspoon (2016) pointed out that "…the overall impact of residential schooling, hidden until recently in denial, isolation, or sublimated memories, has been highly destructive for individuals, their families, and Aboriginal communities in general" (p. 103). From this idea, one can argue that the negative impact was simply devastating in terms of identity loss and cultural schema. (Re)imagining sociocultural patterns and emic constructs becomes a must so as to reclaim social and historical identities that enhance a much-needed sense of belonging and attachment. Thus, political measures and every-day actions must be taken to guarantee processes of healing conducive to effective forgiveness. The Treaties and the Treaty relationships represent a crucial living context and a significant step to understand Canada today. Hitherto, many wounds are still open among indigenous people and newcomers. Ignoring these voices will only increase the gap of fear, intolerance, and misunderstanding placing individuals in a continuum of social injustice and harmful inequalities for those in the exercise of constructing a modern society.

The prevalence of racism constitutes a paramount issue when dealing with inequality in education. It is evident that racism takes many forms nowadays, such as microaggressions, intersectionality issues, social constructs, race and sexuality matters, disability and ethnocultural rights. When reflecting on these issues, one starts wondering on the motivations of specific groups' perceptions of superiority. What an intriguing and provocative line of inquiry. Naturally, one will have to start searching on the meta-narratives and historical foundations of these cultures as to why they perceive this altered reality. In trying to answer such a question, the author's thoughts incline to an obvious misconception of the ontological beliefs system and axiological framework of values of power groups. When referring to racism in an adult learning milieu, Codjoe (2016) stated that "…structural and institutional dimensions of racism continue to affect adversely the educational achievement of black students in multi-ethnic societies" (p. 120). One might argue that this systematic racism has been affecting students of minority or unprivileged groups negatively in educational systems. For the author, it is shocking that societies are still fighting with different types of racism and their implications in the twenty-first century. Educators must eliminate these attitudinal barriers that foster racism. Bringing these biases to surface and opening a round-table discussion to sincerely debate these implications constitutes a must for those involved in educational contexts. In doing so, non-threatening environments must be promoted in order to secure egalitarian access to education and opportunities for social and economic advancement. Further to this discussion, it is true that microaggressions embody a common type of racism in day-to-day situations. Expressions like: *tell me, where are you really from? and I am not racist whatsoever, I have Latino friends* constitute evident examples of subliminal and sometimes unconscious microaggressions (Fleras, 2016).

Finally, another element to be considered in this section is the systematic invisibility of minority groups. (Re)claiming voice has become a common element to these groups who struggle for recognition and acknowledgment of their achievements in educational and social fields. Nathani (2016) clearly articulated this concept when she pointed out that "while mainstream feminism responds largely to the oppression faced by European middle-class women, its gaze has missed the racial oppression experienced by women of African ancestry" (p. 157). Not only is this minority group not visible to this particular society, but it is also not visible within the same minority group. Indeed, this fact constitutes an ironic paradox.

Bringing these narratives to the public eye represents a required act of academic activism on behalf of teachers and professors. To this end, much research and meta-narratives are needed to document and inform the sociocultural context of such groups. Moreover, power structures tend to reproduce themselves to guarantee mainstream and established conceptions. With that in mind, minority groups must struggle and resist but more importantly, they must generate and take political and social action to go beyond historical accounts. In that sense, the author does agree with Nathani (2016) when she manifested that "women of African ancestry must take up their pens and start documenting their stories" (p. 165). To that, the author would add and engage in discussions to raise awareness conducive to political and social action to be effectively included in the cultural, educational, and political scenario. These are some significant considerations of inequality in education from a learning perspective.

Social injustice and movements in adult education

In this part of the paper, some pivotal aspects of social injustice in popular movements and their connection to adult education are contemplated. Specifically, the author draws on social movements that served as basis to overcome inequality and injustice. Interestingly, social injustices and inequalities have always been the starting point to generate reflective thinking on the policies, implications and practices that negatively affect a specific society or group. Moreover, this act of reflective thinking has turned into some kind of social revolution or movement to improve life conditions in general.

The Antigonish Movement in Canada is the first example to be examined. After harsh conditions that affected the economy in Nova Scotia, James Tompkins, a Catholic priest, established an extension department at Saint Francis University aiming at providing basic education tools to adult members of the community in order to improve the quality of life. This educational endeavor had a strong socialist ideology and principles (MacKeracher, 2009). When describing the nature of the movement, MacKeracher (2009) asserted "the Antigonish movement presented itself to the world as the middle way between the extremities of collectivism and individualism" (p. 30). Based on this scenario, the impact of social movements needs to be measured in relation to two aspects: the potential benefits and transformations for the community and perseverance in time leading to new transformations. It is evident that The Antigonish Movement fulfills both. MacKeracher (2009) offered a compelling argument when she stated that "today the institute trains workers from developing countries and focuses its programs on asset-based community development, microfinance, peace building, community-based resource management, advocacy, and the development of knowledge networks" (p. 31).

The second movement to be analyzed is the Frontier College in Canada. This social movement was initiated by Alfred Fitzpatrick, a pastor, who established learning sessions to improve the working conditions of unskilled manual workers and bring the social gospel via Bible study (MacKeracher, 2009). Building on the previous comment that social movements require to be measured by the benefits they offer to societies and perseverance over time, this is again established when MacKeracher (2009) pointed out that "today Frontier College continues to take education to marginalized men and women but has shifted its major attention to the needs of such persons in urban centers" (p. 27). Interestingly, the two last movements have a strong basis on religious principles, such as love, equality, education, and progression. Likewise, social movements possess a can-do attitude based on a burning desire to promote change for the advancement of societies.

The last example to be considered is the social movement against the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) in Costa Rica in 2007. This movement contained a political element that triggered a national referendum process where the NO movement was created. Because of political upheavals around the country, the NO movement was established to create consciousness against the implementation of CAFTA and its economic and social consequences. The dimensions of the shared beliefs

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constituted a main concern for participants and their rights, and how these were claimed and exercised. In explaining the relevance of the movement, Álvarez (2011) asserted that "this participation has an important cultural dimension since it challenges both, in discourse and in practice, hegemonic notions of democracy and development" (p. 202). Having been a direct witness of the circumstance, the author can provide a more diverse and overarching perspective of the phenomenon (the author has been living in Costa Rica since 1990). For the author, this event definitely contributed to provide alternative ways of practicing, understanding, and experiencing politics, a sort of disguised empowerment – it is true that the event raised new levels of awareness in relation to consciousness acquisition on behalf of citizens and active participation in political and social matters. Likewise, it challenged established notions of democracy conceptions on how the country was supposed to and should be operating.

To conclude this section, the author would like to go over distinctive features of social movements. Porta and Diani (as cited in Hall, 2006) defined four relevant features of social movements "…informal interaction networks… shared beliefs and solidarity… collective action focusing on conflict… use of protest" (p. 231). Likewise, Mckay (2017) stated that "social movements are increasingly becoming more global or transnational, merging issues of both class and identity politics and making demands for redistribution and recognition" (p. 4). From these characteristics, one can deduce that social networks and global conflicts can become pivotal for the genesis and evolution of social movements. These are three significant examples of social injustice and how they are intertwined with popular movements with an adult education lens.

SYNTHESIS AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Finally, some conclusions are offered in this section. Inequality and social justice have had a tremendous impact on societies and learning settings as well. On the whole, residential schools, racism and the systematic invisibility of minority groups constitute despicable examples of inequalities within educational systems. Added to that is the fact that social movements are generally ignited by social injustices and strong inequalities. The Antigonish movement, the Frontier College, both in Canada, and the NO movement against CAFTA in Costa Rica are examples of the connection between social movements, inequality, and injustice.

Given the fact that adult education is perceived and regarded as second-chance education because of the initial failure in formal education contexts (Lee, 2018), policymakers and adult educators need to go beyond classes to foster real and authentic social change within the core of societies. This is paramount to achieve authentic transformations that seek to go beyond social injustices and inequalities among members of established groups. Adult learning goes beyond everyday and informal learning; it includes a combination of learning processes blended with environmental, spiritual, physical, biological and economic features placing individuals in a continuum of possibilities.

There is no such thing as learning in isolation whatsoever – that is, learning is the result of multifaceted elements and globalized tenets. Indeed, there is a myriad of sociohistorical, economic, familial, communal, and political components that shape what, when, how, where, and even whether something is worth learning or acquiring. When referring to learning in contemporary societies, Merriam et al., (2007) pointed out that "it is indeed an interactive process between the learner and the social context" (p. 1). Obviously, the social context plays a pivotal role in learning-teaching processes.

The audit culture and the sickening – sorry, worrying – neoliberalist policies have promoted funding cuts and set up dehumanizing systems that have virtually forced educational institutions to compete for funding, creating new vistas and perceptions. Evidently, neoliberal policies have promoted a very noticeable savage economic Darwinism that privileges commodification and privatization (Giroux, 2014).

Additionally, neoliberal fundamentalism favors a public pedagogy that focuses on entrepreneurial subjects (Giroux, 2014). Another example of the harshness and savagery of neoliberal policies is the simplification and reduction of social, complex issues to individual flaws. In order to illustrate this reality, Giroux (2014) has stated that "neoliberalism as a form of economic Darwinism attempts to undermine all forms of solidarity capable of challenging market-driven values and social relations, promoting the virtues of an unbridled individualism almost pathological in its disdain for community, social responsibility…" (p. 2). Freire (2018) goes beyond this concept to establish a relationship of oppression, materialism, false generosity and control on a domination system: "humanity is a 'thing' and they possess it as an exclusive right, as inherited property. To the oppressor consciousness, the humanization of the 'others', of the people, appears not as the pursuit of full humanity, but as subversion" (p. 59). It is evident that globalization has brought complex and elaborated implications that imply negative and positive considerations to educational settings and economic models.

It had long come to the author's attention that humanism must remain as the 'entrance door' to the implementation of national policies and learning outcomes that promote equality and social justice in education systems. As human beings, people need to move away from the mentality that 'some are better than others' just because of their race, background, skin color, gender, or beliefs in order to improve our collective mindset. No more 'why don't you people just get over it?' or 'sitting at the back of the bus'! Tolerance and respect constitute a must in modern societies, especially when it comes to educational processes and its impact on the quality of life. If societies truly want to advance, they can no longer ignore intolerance, fear, injustices, inequalities, and disruptions in all the fields. Teachers and educators must continue to institute inclusive mechanisms that foster resistance, analysis, and discussion in order to take a course of social and transformative action: "education is suffering from narration sickness" (Freire, 2018, p. 71).

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