

University Extension in Brazil: Conceptions and Influences

ARTICLE

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Abstract

Considering that extension is a crucial academic function for fulfilling the social mission of Brazilian universities, this text addresses its historical evolution in order to understand the present conceptions and contradictions. Based on bibliographic research, it was demonstrated that the historical trajectory of extension in Brazil reflects the country's social, political, and economic challenges and transformations over time. The conception of university extension historically practiced in Brazil has been influenced by both European and North American models, which in turn determined the higher education standards adopted in the country. Contradictorily, with regard to university extension, a model inspired by the ideals of Latin American popular universities has become predominant. This model is evident in the academic conception of extension, characterized by the development of dialogic actions inherent to the formative process and knowledge production, with an emancipatory purpose and transformative practices.

Keywords: University Extension. University. Conceptions. History.

A extensão universitária no Brasil: concepções e influências

Resumo

Considerando que a extensão é uma função acadêmica crucial para a concretização da missão social da universidade brasileira, este texto aborda o seu movimento histórico no intuito de compreender as concepções e contradições presentes. Para tal, a partir de pesquisa bibliográfica, demonstrou-se que o percurso histórico da extensão no Brasil reflete os desafios e as transformações sociais, políticas e econômicas do país ao longo do tempo. A concepção de extensão universitária historicamente praticada no Brasil teve influências tanto europeias, quanto norte-americanas, que por sua vez determinaram o padrão de educação superior adotado no país. De forma contraditória, no que tange à extensão universitária, tem se mostrado predominante uma extensão inspirada nos ideais das universidades populares latino-americanas, evidentes na concepção acadêmica de extensão, marcada pelo desenvolvimento de ações dialógicas, inerentes ao processo formativo e à produção do conhecimento, com propósito emancipatório e práticas transformadoras.

Palavras-chave: Extensão Universitária. Universidade. Concepções. Histórico.

1 Introduction

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According to Michaelis Moderno Dicionário da Língua Portuguesa (2015), “extension” is a feminine noun that indicates the act or effect of extending oneself. The choice of this word to name university or academic extension, especially in Latin America, has its roots in the first records of university extension in the world, when English universities offered continuing education courses in order to “extend” academic knowledge to the external community (Fraga, 2017). Since then, the trajectory of university extension has been marked by contradictions and different theoretical and ideological conceptions, which reflect the social, political and economic context in which it is inserted.

According to Bedrikow (2022), in international literature, the university's relationship with other sectors of society is often referred to as the “third mission”, which has different connotations, from the unilateral dissemination of knowledge to a more dialogical relationship, as seen in Latin America. Thus, in general, extension has been understood as the commitment of higher education institutions to apply their knowledge and resources for the benefit of society, beyond their walls. This understanding, however, has been shaped by different interests and is strongly linked to the contradictions present in the social function of higher education, so that a mutual influence is evident between the conceptions of extension and university.

In Brazil, university institutions have been close to the communities around them since the beginning, so that Brazilian university extension had its first movements at the beginning of the last century, at the Free University of São Paulo (1911 - 1918). The offer of extension courses to bring university knowledge to the lower classes shows the influence of the ideals of European popular universities on the origins of university extension in Brazil (Reis, 1996). Until university extension came to be considered one of the pillars of higher education in Brazil, contributing to student training and social transformation, many changes were needed in the Brazilian political, social and economic context (Derlandes; Arantes, 2017). This movement will be addressed in this text with the aim of understanding the conceptions and contradictions present in the historical path of Brazilian university

extension.

2 Methodology

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This research, which is theoretical in nature, is based on historical-dialectical materialism in order to understand the particularities of the object, in conjunction with the social whole, identifying the contradictions present. The theoretical support for the research was built on authors such as Reis (1996); Jezine (2001; 2004); Bedrikow (2022) and Fraga (2007), among others, with the intention of understanding university extension within the historical movement of Brazilian society, unveiling the conceptions and contradictions present. The bibliographic analysis was based on theses and dissertations, books and articles published in periodicals.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 The welfare concept of extension

Despite its emergence being shaped by influences from popular European universities, the American ideals of cooperative extension already had a notable influence on Brazilian university extension in the 1920s, consolidating its concept of providing services, based on the rural extension experiences of the Land Grant Colleges. It was in this context that the *Escola Superior de Agricultura e Veterinária de Viçosa* operated, offering technical assistance to farmers and ranchers (Reis, 1996; Jezine, 2001). It can be seen that the proposal for extension, until then, was limited to providing services as a way of compensating for the absence of the state, with no effective contribution to the expected social transformation.

For Fraga (2017), in addition to European and American inspirations, Latin American ideals also had significant implications for Brazilian university extension, especially since the Cordoba Manifesto in 1918, which defended the university's social commitment. Although it only had a significant impact in Brazil years later, the Cordoba

reform movement is a crucial point in the origin of Brazilian university extension:

[...] it can be said that both the European and American Popular University experiences were based on the transfer of knowledge. In Latin America, on the other hand, the experiences were more contestatory and closer to the workers' struggles, rather than seeking to 'illustrate the masses'. As a differential, they started from the idea of the popular classes as active, rather than passive, subjects in the relationship between university and society (Fraga, 2017, p. 411).

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The initial documentary milestone for university extension in Brazil, however, only came about with Decree No. 19.851 of April 11, 1931, which enacted the Statute of Brazilian Universities (Bedrikow, 2022). Part of the Francisco Campos Reform, which regulated Brazilian education after the 1930 Revolution in the context of the country's political integration, the decree established university extension through courses and events. The aim was to extend the scientific, philosophical and artistic knowledge produced by the academic community to the outside community, in order to contribute to solving social problems, as well as to propagate ideals that safeguarded the interests of the nation (Brasil, 1931a).

The Statute of Brazilian Universities represented an important step in the history of university extension in the country by institutionalizing and minimally regulating it. In the decree's explanatory memorandum, extension is mentioned as a “powerful mechanism of contact between institutes of higher education and society, using university activities for its benefit”, as well as a tool for the university to fully perform its educational function, by “raising the level of the general culture of the people” (Brasil, 1931b).

It should be noted, however, that the Statute does not yet include the idea of extension as a function of the university, nor does it even mention the idea of inseparability from teaching and research, since its creator, the then Minister Francisco Campos, had a limited view of the university, aimed at professional training (Rothen, 2008). As pointed out by Fraga (2017), the text of the Statute shows the North American influence on extension, which materializes in the transfer of knowledge from the university, holder of knowledge, to society, devoid of knowledge.

The following year, in 1932, the Manifesto of the Pioneers of the New School, when

discussing the organization of higher education, defended the realization of what it called the “triple function”, still without mentioning the inseparability of teaching-research-extension. In the document, extension was cited as the vulgarization or popularization of the sciences and arts by universities (Azevedo *et al.*, 2010).

As Bedrikow (2022) points out, from the 1930s to the early 1960s, Brazilian university extension continued to be developed through courses, conferences and rural technical assistance, which did not have the potential to have a significant and lasting impact on the quality of life and political formation of the communities served. This way of understanding and doing extension ended up serving the interests of the ruling class and further reinforcing the social inequality that plagued the population. The paradigm shift and the understanding of the university as a democratic space for critical reflection only came about as a result of social reforms, with a strong contribution from social and student movements (Koglin; Koglin, 2019).

The historic Congress of the National Union of Students (UNE) in Bahia in 1961 is a good example of this contribution. By demanding that the university adapt to the national reality, as well as raising awareness among the population to fight for their rights, it became an important milestone for Brazilian university extension. The welfare bias, however, is present when the Bahia Declaration suggests that extension should be a government instrument to meet the needs of localities in the rural areas. But even though it gave extension the same character of disseminating knowledge, spreading culture and providing services, the congress preceded the first movements towards extension integrated into the undergraduate curriculum, developed in a procedural way. The students also drew attention to the importance of training union leaders in order to strengthen social movements (Reis, 1996).

During the military regime (1964-1985), when there was a strong repression of critical thinking, the expansion of higher education was strongly associated with the training of labor for the country's development, with a special focus on industry. Thus, the dissemination of knowledge to the external community via university extension worked as an instrument to control youth social movements. Assistance actions also played a major

role in this period, with the Rondon Project, started in 1967 by the Ministry of the Interior, standing out. The project recruited university students to work on a voluntary basis in remote and less structured regions, where they provided health care, basic sanitation, literacy, etc. However, there was no room for debate or political and social questions (Bedrikow, 2022).

For Silveira and Bianchetti (2016), the most fertile seed of Brazilian university extension was planted during the University Reform, instituted by Law No. 5540 in 1968, in the midst of the civil-military government. Although it may seem contradictory, this period of strong repression of political thought led, as Rocha (1984) points out, to the phase of greater institutionalization of extension (1968-1976). The explanation is simple: in a close relationship with the North American university model, university extension was seen as an instrument to make the military government's development project viable. During this period, extension became a fundamental activity of the university, evidenced by the provision of services, still from a welfare perspective.

The University Reform refers to university extension in articles 20, 32 and 40. Student participation in extension activities is encouraged, but it is not formative, since there is no proposal to integrate it with teaching and research. The inseparability of teaching and research is mentioned in article 40, but the text is clear in maintaining the isolated conception of university functions, in which extension, carried out in the form of courses and services, is seen as a means of extending the results of research to the community (Reis, 1996). By targeting those who did not have access to higher education, offering short courses for improvement, adaptation or updating, it essentially served as a measure to limit the access of the working class to university.

From 1969 onwards, the experiences of the Advanced Campuses and the Rural University Training and Community Action Centers (Crutacs) are considered by Reis (1996) to be the embryo of the concept of procedural and organic extension. In its first version, the character of providing services and disseminating knowledge predominated, but in its reformulation, from the mid-1970s onwards, it is considered the first major government effort to defend extension as a permanent, rather than occasional, action.

In 1975, the University Extension Work Plan, created by the Department of University Affairs of the Ministry of Education and Culture (DAU/MEC), through its Commission for Extension Activities (CODAE), maintained the concept of extension as a service, but introduced a new component: the feedback of teaching and research from this service to organizations, institutions and populations, which would give a new look to Brazilian university extension (Reis, 1996).

Thus, it is clear that from the first university extension movements in 1911 until the mid-1980s, the predominant line of action in Brazilian university extension was what Reis (1996) calls eventist-inorganic, characterized by the provision of assistance services and the holding of isolated events disconnected from the context or the teaching-learning process.

In the eventist-inorganic line of action, the university trains students and produces knowledge in isolation from society, which only receives this knowledge and consumes it, since it is devoid of knowledge. The university, in turn, disseminates this knowledge in the form of knowledge (courses and events), culture (theatrical performances, choirs, orchestras, films, etc.) and the provision of services (legal, educational and health technical assistance, etc.) (Reis, 1996).

Based on the writings of Jezine (2004), it is possible to infer that the eventist-inorganic line of action expresses the ideological perspective characteristic of the welfare conception of extension, under the North American influence of cooperative extension, which in universities is materialized mainly by the provision of services of a welfare nature, when university extension is directed towards meeting the immediate needs of society, through technical assistance, vocational courses and welfare services aimed at people in socio-economic vulnerability.

3.2 Forproex and the academic concept of extension

When analyzing projects and the results of extension activities at Brazilian federal universities, Jezine (2004) observed a clear change in the conception of extension

activities. Although the assistance roots were still present, there was a predominant understanding of extension as an educational process that links the production of knowledge to social reality, interrelating different types of knowledge.

According to Reis (1996), this change in the direction of extension action in Brazil became evident in the mid-1980s, with the creation of the National Forum of Pro-Rectors of Extension of Brazilian Public Higher Education Institutions (Forproex). With the participation of 33 public universities, the First National Meeting of Forproex was held on November 4 and 5, 1987, at the University of Brasilia, in the Federal District. The final document of the meeting established guidelines for the institutionalization and financing of extension activities, as well as the Forum's Rules of Procedure, which were created and implemented on November 6, 1987 (Forproex, 1987). The most important result of the meeting, however, was the concept of university extension, which from then on would guide the extension policies of Brazil's public higher education institutions:

University extension is the educational, cultural and scientific process that links teaching and research inseparably and enables a transformative relationship between the university and society.

Extension is a two-way street, with guaranteed transit for the academic community, which will find in society the opportunity to develop the praxis of academic knowledge. On their return to the university, teachers and students will bring learning which, subjected to theoretical reflection, will be added to that knowledge. This flow, which establishes the exchange of systematized/academic and popular knowledge, will result in: the production of knowledge resulting from the confrontation with Brazilian and regional reality; and the democratization of academic knowledge and the effective participation of the community in the work of the university.

In addition to instrumentalizing this dialectical process of theory/practice, extension is an interdisciplinary work that favors an integrated view of society (Forproex, 1987).

The concept of extension defended by Forproex clearly shows the influence of the academic conception of extension, which gives university extension a new dimension, based on a dialogical interaction with the community, which values the relationship between theory and practice and different types of knowledge (Jezine, 2004). This paradigm shift in Brazilian university extension heralded the beginning of the leading role

of the procedural-organic line of action, which came to break with the one-sided interaction between the university and society. In the words of Reis (1996, p. 43), for the processual-organic line of extension “society is now considered by the university as its political, epistemological and pedagogical partner, in a mutually transforming relationship”.

The procedural-organic line of action is characterized by the development of medium to long-term or permanent actions, inherent to teaching and research, in a political-pedagogical partnership with society. The production of knowledge and the training of students take place simultaneously and in partnership with society, which is a component of its transformation and that of the university itself. The university is the *locus* of professional training and the production of knowledge, and society is the *locus* of all this (Reis, 1996).

Thus, university extension has come to be defended as a crucial component of the functions of universities in today's society. From then on, the university institution would no longer be limited to producing and disseminating knowledge, but should also actively intervene in social reality. Furthermore, in affirming that extension is essential to the role of the university, Forproex argues in favour of the need to institutionalize these activities, both in administrative and academic terms. This implies adopting measures and procedures that guide university policies to reflect this social commitment (Forproex, 2001).

In this new perspective, extension ceases to be a secondary function and comes to be seen as an integrated philosophy, a linked action, a strategic and democratizing policy (Forproex, 2001). This approach aims to establish a closer connection between the university and society, using research to find concrete solutions to social problems. This not only enriches the teaching and learning process, but also enables the university to play a more effective role in transforming reality. Thus, by integrating teaching, research and society, university extension not only promotes democratic values and equality, but also plays a significant role in social development, which reinforces the transformative character of universities in contemporary society.

The creation of Forproex and the conceptualization of university extension as an academic function of the university took place in the midst of the country's re-

democratization process after the military regime (1964-1985), which culminated in the promulgation of the 1988 Federal Constitution, known as the Citizen's Constitution, for providing protection of fundamental rights and guarantees to Brazilian citizens. The new Magna Carta brought with it an important historical advance for Brazilian university extension: the enshrinement of the principle of inseparability between teaching, research and extension in article 207: “Universities shall enjoy teaching, scientific, administrative and financial and asset management autonomy and shall obey the principle of inseparability between teaching, research and extension” (Brasil, 1988).

For Bedrikow (2022), the fact that extension is mentioned last in article 207 of the Brazilian Federal Constitution reaffirms the less important status of this dimension in relation to teaching and research, which can be confirmed in university practice, as Colares (2015) points out. However, despite the leading role played by teaching and research, without extension the university is unable to fulfill its social function satisfactorily.

Even without major immediate effects, the consignment of university extension as inseparable from teaching and research in the constitutional text had a positive impact on its institutionalization in universities and, subsequently, on the allocation of federal funds for its implementation, albeit in an incipient way. Part of this recognition was materialized, years later, in the creation of an exclusive funding program for Extension, ProExt, in 1994, as a result of Forproex's work with the MEC's Higher Education Secretariat (Sesu/MEC). According to Reis (1996), the program represents the systematization and organization into guidelines and rules of the proposals defended by Forproex.

In Circular Letter No. 263, dated November 7, 1994, which established the criteria for analyzing proposals to receive funding from ProExt/MEC, the presence of the process-organic line of university extension in the proposed elaboration and evaluation criteria is clear, under the influence of the conception of extension as an academic function of the university. For example, the “academic relevance” criterion assesses whether the proposal is globalizing and organic in its articulation of extension with teaching and research, so that the articulation between curricular content, research results and the demands of society is noted (Reis, 1996).

For Reis (1996, p. 45), one of the practical effects of the process-organic conception of extension in higher education institutions is the idea of changing the concept of the classroom:

In addition to being a place located geographically in a certain physical area, the classroom and the lesson are now understood as the various places and situations where the various actors (teachers, students, university staff and organized sectors of society) are in a relationship of reciprocal development and learning.

In this sense, Jezine (2004) points out that one of the great challenges for university extension, as an academic function, is to also take on the role of teaching and research, since the student's experience allows them to learn from the dialogicity that permeates the extension action, as well as requiring research to find the theoretical foundations that can contribute to solving the problems that afflict the community targeted by the action. Thus, in the author's words, "the teaching-research-extension interaction is the pillar that underpins human/professional training" in the university's relationship with its surroundings in order to effectively fulfill its social function. This approach seeks to train individuals with a broad and multidimensional vision, including political, social and human aspects, enabling them to intervene in society in a transformative way and promoting the autonomy of individuals and social groups.

The 1996 National Education Guidelines and Bases Law (LDB) notably reaffirms that the university's social function goes beyond mere professional training, when it lists among the purposes of higher education in Brazil the encouragement of a relationship of reciprocity between higher education institutions and the community, with a view to gaining knowledge of regional and national problems. Extension also appears among the objectives of higher education set out in the LDB, when it states that the results of research and cultural creation should effectively benefit the population (Brasil, 1996).

Despite the importance of the legal provision for extension as one of the purposes of higher education, the reading of items VI and VII of Art. 43 of the LDB must be done with due care to disassociate university extension from an approach that provides services of a welfare nature, in order to understand it as a mechanism that enhances the political

formation and autonomy of needy communities. In this vision, as Jezine (2004) argues, university extension is no longer understood as a redeemer of society, but as an instrument to promote the political, social and cultural organization of marginalized groups, integrating academic knowledge with practical reality. The relationship of reciprocity provided for in item VI reflects a stance of active intervention in reality, encouraging the critical and constructive participation of communities in the formation of new forms of organization and citizenship.

In continuity with Forproex's active struggle for Brazilian university extension as an academic function, on May 8, 1998, during the XIV National Meeting of Forproex, the National Plan for University Extension was presented to society, drawn up in partnership with the Higher Education Secretariat of the Ministry of Education and Sports. Constructed from debates held with the participation of the vast majority of public higher education institutions, the Plan took as its starting point the Citizen University Program, in which universities had already been working from eight thematic axes focused on strategic areas of action for the needs of society at that time.

The document set 14 goals, all to be achieved within four years of 1998. Of these, ten were aimed at organizing university extension, such as including public higher education institutions in the National Extension Network (Renex), consolidating the Information System on university extension, and setting up a National Programme to Support Extension, Funding and Extension Grants. The other four goals were aimed at linking the university with society, which would be done through extension programs and projects in strategic areas such as basic education, health, the environment, culture, work and agrarian reform (Forproex, 2001).

The National Extension Plan reaffirmed university extension as an essential academic process, aligned with the demands of society and crucial for the training of students, as well as for the relationship between university and society, meeting emerging social needs, interdisciplinarity and interprofessionalism, cultural and artistic development, sustainable development, articulation with public policies and technological innovation (Forproex, 2001). In short, the Plan was drawn up with the aim of strengthening the role of

the university as a transforming agent in society, promoting the integral and sustainable development of the country.

An important consequence of all this effort by Forproex in conjunction with the MEC was the provision in the National Education Plan (PNE) 2001-2010 that 10% of the total curricular credits required for graduation in higher education should be directed towards extension work (Brasil, 2001). Although it has not been effectively fulfilled, the provision contained in goal 23 of the 2001 PNE represented a new step in recognizing extension as an academic action, inherent to the curriculum and essential to the training of undergraduate students, in line with Jezine's (2004, p. 3) thinking:

The concept of extension as an academic function opposes the idea that it is a minor activity in the university structure, to be carried out by untenured professors in the spare time available, and that working with communities in need is an individual solidarity. Given this new vision of university extension, it becomes an integral part of the pedagogical dynamics of the curriculum in the process of training and producing knowledge, involving teachers and students in a dialogical way, promoting a change from the rigid structure of courses to a flexible curriculum that enables critical training.

Despite the achievements, Forproex's journey towards the institutionalization, regulation, evaluation, curricularization and funding of extension continued to bear fruit. In 2012, the Forum presented society with the National University Extension Policy, which gave substance to universities' commitment to social change in the direction of justice, solidarity and democracy (Forproex, 2012).

Among the main contributions of the National Extension Policy are the establishment of priority objectives and basic guiding principles for extension activities; the definition of priority areas of action in the articulation of University Extension with public policies; the establishment of parameters for the consolidation of a national system for monitoring and evaluating University Extension and the reaffirmation of the guidelines that should guide the formulation and implementation of University Extension actions, namely: Dialogical Interaction, Interdisciplinarity and Interprofessionality, Indissociability of Teaching-Research-Extension, Impact on Student Training and Impact and Social

Transformation (Forproex, 2012).

Without effective compliance in the previous PNE, the purpose of curricularizing extension remained in the 2014-2024 National Education Plan, in Goal 12, Strategy 7, which provided for “ensuring at least 10% (ten percent) of the total curricular credits required for graduation in university extension programs and projects, directing their action, as a priority, to areas of great social relevance” (Brasil, 2014).

Although the goal of 10% of the academic workload of undergraduate courses for university extension has been maintained, two important innovations can be seen in the PNE 2014-2024: the targeting of activities to areas of great social relevance and the definition that students' activities must take place within the scope of extension programs and projects. This was not done for nothing. It is a clear result of Forproex's tireless advocacy for an extension guided by an academic concept, or, in the definition of Reis (1996), a procedural-organic concept, since the link to medium and long-term systematic actions, such as programs and projects, makes it possible to establish a more solid link with the community. This provision aims, above all, to discourage the hours set aside for extension in curricula from being used to carry out isolated, disjointed and sporadic actions.

3.3. The mercantilist conception: extension as a product

The 2014-2024 PNE's guidelines for extension work in areas of great social relevance move in the direction of academic extension by enabling the training of students who are aware of the social reality in which they are inserted, as well as the social transformation expected from extension. This is an effort to direct university extension towards the interests of society and not the market. In this vein, Jezine (2004) draws attention to a conception of extension that is present in Brazilian universities at the same time as the others, and which has gained strength with the opening up of markets and the globalization of the economy, evidenced by the implementation of neoliberal policies in the 1990s, especially in the Fernando Henrique Cardoso government (1995-2002): the mercantilist conception.

The mercantilist conception of extension, as Jezine (2004) points out, goes in the opposite direction to the integration of teaching, research and extension in order to train students who are critical and aware of their reality, and does not take place dialogically. This conception leaves aside concern for the problems that plague society, especially people in vulnerable situations, by considering everyone as potential consumers of the products generated at the university, which are treated as merchandise. In the mercantilist conception, which has as its backdrop the strengthening of the university privatization project, extension is one of the main means of raising funds and establishing university partnerships with private companies (**Chart 1**).

Unlike the 2001 PNE, Goal 12.7 of the 2014-2024 PNE led to important repercussions in the history of Brazilian university extension, as it enabled significant progress towards the curricularization or accreditation of extension, or simply the inclusion of extension in curricula. CNE/CES Resolution No. 07/2018, which establishes the Guidelines for Extension in Brazilian higher education, had the main objective of regulating the provisions of the national plan, by defining criteria and deadlines for higher education institutions to comply with the goal and establishing parameters for registering curricular credits and for the institution's continuous self-assessment of its extension actions. Furthermore, with the Resolution, only interventions that involve the active participation of students and target the community outside the higher education institution are legally recognized as extension activities (Brasil, 2018).

The demarcation of the external community as the target audience for university extension, despite seeming obvious, is a reaffirmation of the very definition of extension as a function that enables the university to relate to society. This definition still needs to be reiterated today by Forproex at its meetings, in the face of tireless attempts by the university itself to classify everything that is neither teaching nor research as extension. You only have to go to the website of the Dean of Extension or equivalent at any university to easily find a project institutionalized as extension, which is in fact aimed only at its undergraduate students. At most, it is mentioned that the action is “open to the community”.

Chart 1 - Lines of action and conceptions of extension in Brazil: characteristics and historical influences.

Lines of action and concepts of extension	Main features	Influences and milestones
<p>Inorganic-eventual line of action (Reis, 1996)</p> <p>Welfare concept (Jezine, 2004)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities train students and produce knowledge in isolation from society, which only receives and consumes knowledge; • Knowledge disseminated through courses and events that are isolated and decontextualized from the teaching and learning process; • Provision of services of a welfare nature, based on legal, educational and health technical assistance, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of the French and North American conceptions of university and cooperative extension; • Present since 1911, with the courses offered by the Free University of São Paulo; • Predominant until the mid-1980s.
<p>Organic-procedural line of action (Reis, 1996)</p> <p>Academic or social-academic conception (Jezine, 2004)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities train students and produce knowledge in an integrated way with society, in a dialogical relationship; • Actions have a lasting character and are inherent to the training process and the production of knowledge; • It is committed to promoting critical awareness and intervention in reality from a transformative and emancipatory perspective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of the Cordoba reform movement and Latin American universities; • Predominant in Brazil since the creation of Forproex in 1987; • It is the concept currently defended by Forproex and present in most of the regulations on the subject.
<p>Mercantilist conception (Jezine, 2004)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension acts as a fundraiser and partner; • Extension's target audience is any potential consumer of its products (merchandise); • It is part of the project to privatize higher education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of the North American university model; • Gained strength in the 1990s with neoliberal policies; • It is currently competing for space in university practice with the academic concept of extension.

Source: Elaborated by the authors, based on Reis (1996) and Jezine (2004).

4 Conclusions

The history of university extension in Brazil is marked by a process of evolution

and maturation, reflecting the country's social, political and economic challenges and transformations over time. The conception of university extension historically practiced in Brazil has had influences from both Europe, through the French or Napoleonic university model (conception of welfare extension), and the United States, through the Anglo-Saxon university model practiced in the United States (conception of service-providing and mercantilist extension), which currently determines the standard of Brazilian higher education.

However, in a contradictory way, with regard to university extension, extension inspired by the ideals of popular Latin American universities has been predominant in Brazil today, evident in the academic conception of extension, along the lines of procedural-organic action. This perspective, which is currently competing for space with the mercantilist conception of extension, is marked by the development of dialogical actions, of a procedural nature, inherent to the training process and the production of knowledge, with an emancipatory purpose and transformative practices.

Considering that the University, as a social institution, is an expression of the society in which it is inserted (Chauí, 2003), the Brazilian historical context imposed an education focused on training labor for work, as required by a capitalist state. University extension was therefore conceived and developed as an extracurricular activity. However, the effective work of Forproex has made it possible for the state to recognize extension as a practice that is essential to the student's comprehensive education, since it enables the development of praxis based on dialogical interaction, resulting in the perception of local knowledge and realities.

In the words of Fraga (2017, p. 415), extension is “a mirror that reflects the contradictions of society and also acts on them [...] as a historical space of resistance and dispute”. In other words, although the hegemonic project of capital in a society ravaged by class struggle is increasingly imposing the American model on the Brazilian university, which has historically been geared towards the interests of the elites, the trajectory of university extension shows that this academic function can and should be understood as an instrument of counter-hegemony within the institution, in the sense of bringing together

progressive forces in favor of a fairer society that is attentive to the interests of the working class. For this to be possible, like Jezine (2004), we consider it essential that extension, as a function of the university, is increasingly strengthened in its academic conception.

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Responsible publisher: Francisca Genifer Andrade de Sousa.

Ad hoc expert: Charliton José dos Santos Machado e José Gerardo Vasconcelos.

How to cite this article (ABNT):

BEZERRA, Adrielle Nara Serra.; COLARES, Anselmo Alencar. A extensão universitária no Brasil: concepções e influências. **Rev. Pemo**, Fortaleza, v. 6, n. e10985, 2024. Available at: <https://revistas.uece.br/index.php/revpemo/article/view/14257>

Received on May 6, 2024.

Accepted on August 14, 2024.

Published on October 17, 2024.