

School justice concepts in UNDP and UNESCO documents*¹

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Abstract

By reading the UNDP and UNESCO documents, which make up the United Nations system, it is possible to see prospective models - concerning justice, just school, school justice - which are connected to a vast academic literature on education and human rights as well as education and social justice. This is a documentary research which aims to find out in which ways the documents entitled Education for All Global Monitoring Reports (REPTs) of UNESCO and Human Development Reports (RDHs) seek, at the threshold of the 21st century, to certify the effectiveness of education and school as promoters of social, economic and political inclusion of individuals. Their prescriptions are made to States, civil society organizations and political leaders committed to a more just and democratic education. It was emphasized, in the course of the analysis, that the diagnoses and prescriptions, present in the respective documents, as their goal is to reach expressively broad territorial spaces as well as social and political contexts, are not sufficiently concerned with the conflicting processes that can, under specific social, educational and political conditions, make it impossible to expand justice, in general, and school justice, in particular. Due to the diverse nature of the prognoses present in these reports, it is not possible for their formulators to pay attention to the singularities of different societies as a space of innumerable conflicts that tend to increase the difficulties of substantive advances towards increasing school justice.

Keywords

Right to education – Human rights – Just school – Social justice.

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Introduction

In *El impacto de los informes de desarrollo humano del PNUD en Chile*, Claudio Ramos Zincke and Eliane Gonzáles (2006) assess the impact, in the academic world, of the Human Development Reports (RDHs) sponsored by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). They suggest that documents of this nature have also taken on the role of knowledge producers. They are influenced by the academic world but they also produce knowledge that is incorporated to research with the purpose of diagnosing problems in social, political, economic and educational areas and prescribing actions and procedures to solve them.

There is no doubt that not only the RDHs generate ideas and absorb knowledge produced in the academic scope and outside it; the REPTs (Education for All Global Monitoring Reports) of UNESCO (United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization) also do that and they do that in a kind of two-way hermeneutics, as Giddens (1993) suggests, i.e.:

The flow between ideas and concepts coined by diverse Social Sciences and those conveyed by the lay authors themselves, in their discourse, and / or recursively implemented by them as a practical knowledge in the production of actions, is considered a two-way flow... (PETERS, 2014, p. 181).

What do these two document blocks entitled RDHs and REPTs deal with? The former ones (UNDP; RDH, 1990, 2001, 2004) consist of a set of materials commissioned and published annually since 1990 by the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) with the purpose of presenting, to the national and civil society organizations, diagnoses and prognoses concerning advances and non-advances of human development processes, based on three basic axes: education, health and income, or, if nothing happened, what were the reasons for their non-occurrence. The REPTs, commissioned and sponsored by UNESCO, seek to monitor the goals called Education for All agreed between the World Declaration Education for All (1990) and the agreement entitled EDUCATION for All – Dakar's commitment (2000). Not only the RDHs but also the REPTs:

[...] are publications made by countless teams from different [...] organizations, institutions. The positions and approach disclosed [by them] can be studied under the most varied aspects, from the debates on educational quality, competences, budgetary and financial deficit for education, learning inequality, nutrition and difficulty in learning, difficulties of universal teaching for boys and girls, to the discussions on school dropout, education and poverty, the teaching profession, inclusion and exclusion, among others. (REZENDE, 2014, p. 19).

It is clarified that, from the methodological point of view, the documentary analysis needs to take into consideration the social-historical context (QUEIRÓZ, 2008) in which the RDHs and the REPTs are being elaborated. "This demands that an articulation is made between the narratives conveyed in the reports and the social context [...] that generated them." (REZENDE, 2015, p. 35). The unveiling of documents makes it possible to make public their political, social and ideological meanings. In the case of the analyzed

documents, in this article, it is known that they were selected because they have the potential to make explicit:

[...] the relationships between multiple interdependent configurations (states, international organizations, social movements, political parties, governments, professional and economic associations, non-governmental organizations, social and political institutions). (REZENDE, 2015, p. 35).

It seeks, through documentary analysis, “to understand and interpret the approaches chosen, by the formulators and sponsors of the reports, to record data, information, diagnoses, prescriptions and proposals” (REZENDE, 2015, p. 36). Such records “express a set of conflicts, agreements, disagreements, consensuses, dissent and disputes” (REZENDE, 2015, p. 36) about concepts of justice, school justice and just school.

However, the reports are also “a form of communication about social problems, at the threshold of the 21st century, inscribed in a certain degree of interaction between the different human groups (ELIAS, 1994) that form humanity today” (REZENDE, 2015, p. 37). It is clarified, then, that one is not looking for just a given argumentative structure, since this could lead to the assumption that there is an “autonomy of the argument in relation to configurational complexities” (REZENDE, 2015, p. 38), an expression used by Norbert Elias (1994).

The documentary analysis carried out in this research does not conceive any autonomy of the argument and the narrative in relation to the social-historical context. Rather, it presupposes the need to consider the social and political context in which textual records are produced and disseminated in the form of diagnoses and prognoses.

Epistemologically, it is believed that the scientificity of documentary research requires that, firstly, an internal analysis of the text be carried out to verify how the arguments are constructed and, secondly, a correlation be established between the text and the social and political context in which it is decided to register both this and that diagnosis about school, justice, education and educational policies, and this one or that set of prescriptions that governments, States, international and civil society organizations should consider in their actions.

The object of this research is the policy prescriptions, suggested by the RDHs and the REPTs (UNESCO; REPTs, 2010, 2011, 2012), to be implemented both in the micro-social and macro-social spheres, so that the poorest can be achieved, in an increasing and continuous way, and they, through schooling, can qualify themselves, politically and professionally, through “the expansion of educational capacities” (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 45) to participate in an increasingly equitable and fair way in social life.

This object unfolds into another, that is, the actions, diagnoses and prognoses about the educational changes suggested in the RDHs and the REPTs and their approximations and distances with some elements of the academic debates about school justice and just school. The documents were selected taking into account their pertinence to the object of study.

These objects led to the constitution of the sociological problems expressed in these questions: What are the micro-social and macro-social policies, in the educational area,

mentioned by the formulators of the RDHs and the REPTs, as capable of producing a more equitable school for the segments that live in extreme poverty? What policies are suggested in the documents to enable them to enjoy a more inclusive and democratic social and political condition? Is it possible to detect, in the diagnoses and prescriptions contained in these reports, approximations and influences of the sociological debates on social justice and school justice?

Social justice and school justice: a fruitful academic and political debate for the analysis of the RDHs and the REPTs

Many academic narratives about school justice, just school, social justice, inclusion, among other themes, dialogue, directly or indirectly, with the educational models that have appeared, in an insistent way, in the most varied documents of international organizations, in which the themes related to economic, social and political development are treated.

One of the models of education and school justice that has been discussed the most in academic debates and in the prescriptions of international organizations, such as UNDP, is the model of capacities that Amartya Sen (2006, 2010, 2011) and Ul Haq (1978, 1995) dealt with in the RDHs . Such a capabilities model was:

[...] renamed by Tikly & Barret (2009), [of] a model of social justice [...] and part of the idea that there will be a need for rights to place themselves more decisively in order to expand educational capabilities. (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 43).

Estevão (2002) talks at length about the different notions of justice and explains how they, depending on the way they are used, have repercussions on the way of conceiving the school in its most diverse and complex relationships.

When the concepts of fair school and school justice are mentioned, what are we talking about? It is essential to clarify that these notions and / or other related ones can be mentioned in an abstract, generic, rhetorical way. In principle, everyone has legal rights to education. This is “the model of education as a right, [...] [he] starts from the idea that every human being must [have], or is entitled to, a decent education, even if [it] is economically and in an immediate way, irrelevant” (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 44).

In an unadvised way, it is possible to imagine that, by assuming that education is a right, it is considered that it identifies itself with an education based on the search for the expansion of capacities, as pointed out by Amartya Sen, who tried to get rid of a generic understanding of education as a right.

Dubet (2004; 2012) and Estevão (2016) teach that a just school is one that:

[...] manages to make explicit the social and cultural sense of education and which responds to social needs and problems, to the improvement of society, politics, economics and culture, not in an erratic sense, but in an emancipatory, dialogued and politicized sense. (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 53).

[...] the school cannot fail to consider justice as the right of all students to a basic knowledge, to a common culture, being, therefore, imperative to demand a minimum education sufficient for all, with the same effectiveness and duration, and equivalent in terms of quality. (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 53-54).

And last but not least, Estevão says:

A just and quality school must mobilize school justice as equal treatment, whether in access, in success, or in the possibility of remaining in the system, never neglecting the promotion of justice as redistribution (which is linked to the justice of grades, evaluations, guidelines, support) with a view to equality among all, but also to differential justice, giving more to those who need it most, namely those who reveal difficulties or special educational needs. They will eventually have to take advantage of compensatory policies measures, in the sense of making them more capable of accomplishing what they really value [as indicated by Amartya Sen. (2011)] (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 53-54).

The discussion about the reasons that may hamper the processes of social and political empowerment is also found in authors such as François Dubet (2012) and Nancy Fraser (2002); who emphasize that the debate on justice and inequality must face, simultaneously, the need for a better distribution of material and immaterial goods. Therefore, any proposal to expand social justice, school justice would be fragile without considering the need for the distribution of income, resources and power.

If, due to extreme poverty, they are unable to compete with other individuals, the poorest will never have the so-called capacities and skills to present themselves in the political arena and sustain their demands. As Dubet (2012, p. 46) points out, it is necessary to fight against poverty and discrimination that “hinder [even] the achievement of merit”. Indeed, far more complex is the realization of capacities and skills that go beyond equal opportunities.

Amartya Sen (1978, 2006, 2010) explains:

[...] the object of a fair process and a fair settlement goes beyond the general advantages of individuals and encompasses other considerations - in particular, procedural ones - that cannot be adequately addressed through exclusive concentration on capabilities. (SEN, 2011, p. 331).

In the book *A ideia de justiça* (The idea of justice), the Indian social scientist seeks to get rid entirely of the understanding that his approach is unified in terms of inequality. In other words, equality of capabilities is not enough when it comes to combating multiple forms of inequalities. See what Giddens says about it:

[...] Amartya Sen’s concept of ‘social capacity’ provides an appropriate starting point. [...] Policies formulated to promote equality must focus on what Sen [...] calls a ‘set of capabilities’ - the general freedom that a person has to pursue his or her well-being. The disadvantage must be similarly defined as the ‘lack of capacity’ - not only the loss of resources, but the loss of freedom

to accomplish. Freedom defined as social capacity does not come close to the self-interested agent presupposed in neoliberal economic theory. (GIDDENS, 2007, p. 255).

The RDHs, the REPTs read in the light of the academic and political debate on social justice, school justice and just school

It is asked: does the theoretical and analytical framework made by the authors of these documents prevent us from understanding or not the school and its difficulties in organizing, implementing and consolidating, in their daily practices, an increasingly fair school interaction? Such documents end up embracing, in theory, the defense of a just school, since they really do not understand the “logics or rationalities [that] confront each other in the school’s daily decisions and structure the school experience of the various educational actors” (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 50). This is due, in part, to the fact that the reports are intended to constitute an extremely broad set of prescriptions for States and organized civil society and not, at least directly, for educators and school administrators.

Amartya Sen (2010, 2011) “starts from the idea that there will be a need for rights to place themselves more decisively at the service of expanding educational capacities” (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p.45). When examining the RDHs and the REPTs it is noticed that their formulators do not go as far as Amartya Sen, since they do not deal with the specificities of many contexts that block the realization of rights and make it impossible for them to, in fact, be put at the service of the expansion of not only professional but also political capacities and skills.

It can be said that the formulators of these documents, which intend to guide the political practices of government officials and civil society organizations, are almost always led to mix a model of education based on the exacerbation of the cognitive element that favors the formation of human capital and the models of education as an abstract law and as a capacity-builder. It is believed that, by placing their diagnoses and prescriptions in these three models at the same time, the teams that formulate these reports build both a corpus of supposedly plausible and socially accepted political strategies, and an ideological *corpus* that makes it difficult to understand how these three models are distinguished with each other with regard to the implementation of educational and school policies and the constitution of demands in these two areas.

One may ask: How is it possible to decipher the model of education proposed in the RDHs and the REPTs? Is it really possible to see approximations and distances with the assumptions concerning a just school and school justice? The first step is to compare their diagnoses and prognoses, in the educational field, with a key notion of a just school.

It is detected that some of the elements referring to differential justice, of giving “more to those who need it most” (ESTEVÃO, 2016, p. 54), are present, in one way or another, in the analyzed reports. However, the prescription of actions and procedures to reach those who are in a situation of greater social and educational difficulty appears adjusted - politically and ideologically - to what seems to be, in some way, feasible in a more immediate plan.

For the RDHs and the REPTs, the central nucleus is the fact that education has become a means of improving society not only because individuals can gradually overcome social problems, but also because it allows the student to equip himself / herself with emancipatory qualities capable of consistently expand his / her political performance in society.

These two documents deal with several themes that pervade the academic debate about just school and school justice. Due to the many questions related to these discussions, Dionísio (2010) carefully examines issues related to the effectiveness of the debate about school justice. In public discussion, the idea that the school must be effective is recurrent. It is observed that this ideal of effectiveness ends up imposing, in the way one tries to add to the idea of effectiveness and the ideal of school justice, several dilemmas, which are present in the social practices of the different school agents. Observe these excerpts from the reports:

A system of education demonstrates its effectiveness when it is able to fulfill its essential objective: to provide young people with the skills they need to find safe means of subsistence to participate actively in the social, economic and political life of their communities. (UNESCO; REPTs, 2011, p. 11).

Language, cognitive and social skills acquired in early childhood are the basis for learning throughout their lives. If they are not acquired due to insufficient nutrition, lack of stimuli, affective stress or other factors, they are a great cost, personal and social, and undermine the effectiveness and equity of the educational system. (UNESCO; REPTs, 2011, p. 33).

Among the many prescriptions raised by this debate, it is often mentioned the idea insisting that education has to prepare student agents so that they are able to intervene in the civic world and to settle in the world of work (ESTEVÃO, 2002, 2016; BOLTANSKI, 1982, 2009; BOLTANSKI; THÉVENOT, 1991; RESENDE; DIONÍSIO, 2005; DIONÍSIO, 2010) .

Managing these two worlds (civic and work) requires, as the formulators of these reports understand, an expansion of the educational process so that all individuals, including the poorest, can be professionally and politically trained. See what the respective documents expose: “It is evident that there is a correlation between adult literacy programs and increased participation in union and community activities” (UNESCO; REPTs, 2006, p. 148). The 1993 HDR states that “participation [is] a global development strategy, focusing on the fundamental role that people in all areas of life must play” (UNDP; RDH, 1993, p. 25).

In the documents now analyzed, there are constant references to the need to make education a factor par excellence for the improvement of society, since it should aim, as constant goal, to the solution of social problems. Such a solution is always thought, within these materials from UNDP and UNESCO, taking individuals not only as agents capable of intervening in the civic world and in the world of material subsistence, but also as beings capable of participating in political strife and generation of means of survival.

What is the biggest problem with this type of understanding? It is to be the individuals, as stated by Bauman (2001), in charge of solving major problems. “In other words, it

consists of establishing *de jure* autonomy (regardless of whether *de facto* autonomy has also been established)” (BAUMAN, 2001, p. 41).

There are two intriguing aspects both in the diagnoses and prescriptions in the UNDP and UNESCO documents analyzed and in the assumptions that fuel the debate on school justice and just school, namely, one is the idea of political empowerment and the other is the idea of justice. Both are challenged by ideals, such as the system of ideas and values, the builders of documents and, also, the movements of ideals that guide the search for school justice and a just school.

In view of the many ambiguous and even ambivalent narratives about the various understandings concerning justice, one can ask: Which one or which ideas of justice guide the RDHs and the REPTs? Is there a clear line of reasoning in them about what their formulators mean by justice? There is not. However, it can be said that, in many moments, they allow us to understand that justice is thought without the sophistication of the theoretical and philosophical debate raised by Rawls (1992) and Sen (2011), as a synonym for equity.

It is not possible to enter Sen’s (2011) debate with John Rawls’s (1992) theses on justice as equity. The RDHs are closer to Sen’s approach that wants to move away from “a viewpoint of justice focused on arrangements” (SEN, 2011, p. 50) and closer to an “understanding of justice focused on achievements” (SEN, 2011, p. 40). But due to the very nature of these documents, RDHs and REPTs, it is noted that they are committed to extolling the public reasons that justify the pursuit of justice as equity (RAWLS, 1992) or the realization of justice as a capacity. In this regard, the formulators of these documents have an interface with the two thinkers.

In such documents, a society is more just when individuals, even in very different situations, are endowed with capacity and skills and have more equitable opportunities. Or rather, there is more justice when it comes to individuals, even in situations of extreme poverty and belonging to specific racial, ethnic or religious groups, it is possible to achieve social, educational and political participation improvements.

There is a very fruitful reflection by Celso Furtado (2002) on the approach to capacities and skills formation that is out of line with Amartya Sen’s perspective. First, for the Brazilian social scientist, there is a need for a historical contextualization of the structural parameters (concentration of power, income, resources, heritage, schooling) that cause the blockages that prevent the expansion of both professional and political skills as well as of the capacities to understand and intervene in the functioning (in values, norms, rules, representations, perceptions, motivation, dispositions, expectations, perspectives) that could boost social justice.

With regard to countries, such as Brazil, and many others, Furtado (2002) warns against the risk of talking about social justice without overcoming the many obstacles that have been preventing any and all professional and political qualification process.

This is because, to participate in the distribution of income, the population needs to be qualified by a title deed or by qualified insertion in the productive system. Now, there are societies in which this qualification process is blocked. [...] In order for the poor to achieve the qualification

mentioned by Sen (2010; 2006; 2011), they need to have access to means that guarantee them [...] a certain income. (FURTADO, 2002, p. 16-7).

Dialoguing with Amartya Sen's theses and with the prescriptions of international organizations influenced by his propositions, Celso Furtado added: "For the poor to reach the qualification that Sen talks about, they need to have access to means that guarantee them a certain income" (FURTADO, 2002, p. 17). And why does the Brazilian social scientist raise this type of problem? Because Sen (2008, 2010), at various times, insists that the inadequacy of capacities can block even the expectations, the perspective, the motivation and the willingness of the poorest individuals to believe in the feasibility and reasonableness of their children's schooling.

Celso Furtado considers that this type of position, although correct, can lead to the deviation of something that has prevalence in the organization of social life: without reducing extreme inequalities and extreme poverty and without people having an income capable of enabling them to survive within minimally reasonable standards, any professional or political qualifications are blocked. There is no adequacy of capacity if the person is plunged into misery. However, there is no way to advance in the fight against poverty and inequality without investing in the human factor (FURTADO, 1999). Education, in this case, is only fair if it turns out to be something that allows individuals to actually participate in the strife in the world of employment and politics.

Social and political capacities as guiding elements of school justice

The formulators of the 2010 REPT, entitled *Reaching the marginalized*, debate at length about how to direct public spending so that the education of the marginalized, of those living in extreme poverty, is able to expand their capacities, even those aimed at obtaining political resources (UNESCO; REPTs, 2010).

The school, as a space for conflicts, gains expressiveness when it is intended to discuss school justice and a just school. Generic diagnoses and prescriptions, such as those of the RDHs and the REPTs, usually avoid the conflictive processes, which can hinder, in the school context, the expansion of school justice.

Conflicts at school are multiple and complex, as are those in the society in which it is immersed: an institution surrounded by debates about what, how, for whom to teach. Who can teach, who can guide, who can coordinate, who can direct? It is a disputed institution, with its meaning always questioned. (SCHILLING; ANGELUCCI, 2016, p. 701).

The diagnoses and prescriptions of RDHs and REPTs become too generic and abstract because they are speaking to the whole world and in a diffuse way. The consequence is that the particularities of countries and regions related to structural blocks that hinder the formation of capacities and skills capable of leading to an effective understanding of the functions that govern social life are not apprehended.

An analytical framework derives from this - in view of the breadth of these materials that prescribe actions and procedures in very different social and political contexts - responsible for making us think about education, school, social justice and freedom, without discussing the school routine and the other daily activities that block the formation of such social and political skills.

It is not assumed that it would be up to this type of prescriptive guidance from the RDHs and REPTs to arrive at the particularities of the school routine, but that, if this is not done, the guidance of these documents will lead us to think that school justice and social justice are, through education, much more easily achievable than they actually are.

Thus, as Norbert Elias (1994, 2001) would say, there is a process of ideologization, in which the idealizable is confused with the realizable. There is an analytical framework in which the prescription of an education that generates social justice, through the expansion of skills and capacities, becomes an undisputed belief that leads to many other idealizations.

See the type of analytical framework made by the RDH of 1997 about poverty and its possible overcoming:

[The phenomenon of] poverty is too complex to be reduced to a single dimension of human life. [Overcoming poverty lies in] the possibility for people to expand their options, have an education and enjoy a long, healthy and decent life. Additional options include political freedom [and] the guarantee of other human rights. (UNDP; RDH, 1997, p.17).

While the reports do not satisfactorily address the questions posed by Therborn (2001), it can be said that many academics who have problematized the theme of school justice have dedicated themselves to this:

Inequality in capabilities, or in life opportunities, [...] can be considered as a sum of resources and environments. Both are pertinent to the ability to conquer achievements and accomplishments that have reasons to be valued. But, while resources can be distributed individually, environments indicate the absence or presence of contexts of access and choice possibilities. (THERBORN, 2001, p. 131).

However, it is evident that the RDHs are inspired by Sen's approach to capabilities, but because they are only an inspiration, their prospects do not fully match their perspectives; however, they continually insist that the adequacy of capacities is a factor par excellence in combating inequalities, since it leads to improved income, nutrition and schooling.

Sen (2008) distinguishes between equal opportunities and equal capacities, a distinction that the formulators of the UNDP and UNESCO documents, worked on here, do not do that sufficiently. Often, these two notions seem similar and have few distinctive elements. Sen teaches (2008, p. 37): "the most appropriate way to appreciate real equality of opportunities must be through equality of capacities".

To the RDHs and REPTs, that are betting on greater equality of opportunities through education as a solution to the various problems linked to inequalities, it is worth saying that this type of equality (that of opportunities): "does not say anything about the distances that separate social conditions, [which] can be so big that individuals never [manage to] cross them, with the exception of some heroes [...]" (DUBET, 2012, p. 49). In

fact, the international documents, dealt with here and which are dedicated to the topic of education, build many strategies to avoid dealing with long social distances and are fixed on distances of much less reach within the same groups.

Farmers in the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Thailand, using modern technology, produced 3% more for each additional year of education received. And the highest level of education for Hindu Punjab farmers explains, in part, why their productivity is higher than that of Pakistani Punjab farmers. (UNDP; RDH, 1990, p. 68).

It should be noted that, in Latin America, there are many scholars (ZICCARDI, 2002; CORAGGIO, 1998; QUINTI, 1997) dedicated to themes that dialogue with the issues raised by the literature on school justice and just school. These scholars also seek to understand, among other things, the extent to which schooling, if it managed to become ever more inclusive, would have the possibility of combating poverty, miserability, on the continent.

Would a more equitable distribution of knowledge, skill, and capacity actually decrease exclusions, poverty, deprivation and the feeling of powerlessness? Gabriele Quinti (1997, p. 74) answers affirmatively, since extreme poverty coupled with the lack of schooling would be the basis of “direct social exclusion”. Note that, in a two-way hermeneutics (PETERS, 2014), these debates appear strongly in the REPTs.

Many of the measures needed to overcome marginalization in education are at the point of intersection between education policy and broader reform strategies. The redistribution of public spending is one of the essential elements for extending rights and expanding the supply of opportunities. As marginalization in education is linked to poverty, the poorest regions are often the least capable of mobilizing resources. (UNESCO; REPTs, 2010, p. 14).

Early childhood care and education, in the case of Brazil it is considered that the expansion of primary schooling (which improved the education of mothers), maternal and child health services and, to a lesser extent, the improvement of water supply systems and sanitation are the main reasons for this impressive result, coupled with equitable growth. (UNESCO; REPTs, 2012, p. 52).

Among the countless criticisms that fall on these materials are those that say that such documents are devoted more to thinking about educational marginalization and less to systemic marginalization.

Final considerations

Finally, it can be said that the political and prescriptive nature of RDHs and REPTs, tends to make us believe that realizing justice is the same as empowering and giving opportunity. For Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (2002), who served as director of the RDHs, Sen’s capabilities approach works as a kind of conceptual framework for the documents. This means that the formulators of UNDP documents do not fully use Amartya Sen’s perspective, but operate, in a way, with his ideas about the notion of poverty, capacities and functioning.

Society, as a whole, and schooling, in particular, become more just if not sporadic or erratic processes for understanding the functioning of social life occur. By functioning, as already pointed out by Durkheim (1984), it is understood: values, rules, norms and collective representations. As in this case, justice (social and school) is realized only if individuals (in all spheres of social life - the school sphere is exalted here) adhere to “universes of justice” (RESENDE; DIONÍSIO, 2005, p. 678) widely shared.

Often, in general, citizenship education is seen as a synonym for schooling capable of leading student agents to understand the operations that can make a society more just, more equal. This would make them, supposedly, have greater social and political participation.

Thus, it makes perfect sense to speak of ‘political’ if that means understanding the way in which agreements on ‘shared values’ are produced by expressing, in student experiences, permanent denunciations and criticisms, which truly manifest adhesions to universes of justice. (RESENDE; DIONÍSIO, 2005, p. 678).

It is evident that analyses of this magnitude presuppose a rigorous understanding of the social contexts that are being talked about. In which social and school contexts does it seem plausible a citizen formation focused on an ever better understanding of the need to build more just relationships in all social spheres?

RDHs and REPTs often miss the peculiarities that challenge their diagnoses and prescriptions. They seem, at many times, interested in pointing out, in general, that “social inequality in education” (UNESCO; REPTs, 2009, p. 153) must be combated through a better distribution of resources and / or “a redirection of public funds” (UNDP; RDH, 2001, p. 86).

It was not possible, within the scope of this discussion, to analyze the many intentions of these two international organizations to boost the many models of education, pedagogical practices and schooling, which are supposed to be capable of promoting individual and collective improvements. Only a few prescriptions present in the RDHs and the REPTs were analyzed, which indicate the need to combat the many educational inequalities.

One may ask: why are positions in the discussion about social justice, fair school and school justice relevant to bodies linked to the United Nations, such as UNDP and UNESCO? Stephen Castles (2002) says that studying social transformations today, or the possibilities for them to occur, requires understanding the actions and the procedures of intergovernmental organizations (among many others are the United Nations and its agencies, programs, funds, technical committees, regional committees).

According to Castles, attention should be paid to the way in which international organizations are currently dealing with the concrete and / or idealized possibilities (by the Social Sciences and / or by civil society organizations) for social changes. Part of this deal is a broad process of construction, by international organizations, of theoretical and analytical frameworks on various themes, issues and debates (CASTLES, 2002). Among the most refined themes, in search of this theoretical and analytical framework, are: education, development, participation, democracy (CASTLES, 2002).

The analytical and theoretical frameworks anchored in solutions that articulate a multiplicity of actors, in the so-called governance processes (WAHL, 2010), so strongly suggested by UNDP and UNESCO, come up against, in the specific contexts of each

country, State and region, in the concentration forms of power, wealth and resources (schooling, means of political participation and intervention in the public debate). Such singularities must be considered in the processes that generate the many obstacles to the advances of social and school justice.

If the democratic deficit is brutal, as well as the power imbalances, in the institutional spheres (in many countries), what are the possibilities of constituting permanent actions and procedures of search for social justice, for school justice and for schools more and more just? The answer to this type of inquiry demands many further research.

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