

Internationalization of higher education in Brazil: the CAPES-PrInt program and international academic cooperation¹

*A internacionalização da educação superior no Brasil:
o programa CAPES-PrInt e a cooperação acadêmica internacional*

*La internacionalización de la enseñanza superior en Brasil:
el programa CAPES-PrInt y la cooperación académica internacional*

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyse how the academic cooperation strategies established by universities participating in the CAPES PrInt program can contribute to the consolidation of the internationalization of higher education in Brazil. Analysis of the results shows that cooperation networks with countries in the Global North are prevalent; however, there is already an emphasis on regionalization based on networks among Latin American countries, which favors the dissemination of non-hegemonic knowledge and reaffirms the importance of collective and supportive work to strengthen both research and internationalization in Brazil, thus contributing to reduce the asymmetry of this process in the country.

Keywords: Internationalization of higher education; Collaborative networks; Academic cooperation; CAPES PrInt program.

Resumo: O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar como as estratégias de cooperação acadêmica estabelecidas pelas universidades que participam do programa CAPES PrInt podem contribuir para a consolidação da Internacionalização da Educação Superior no Brasil. A análise dos

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resultados mostra que as redes de cooperação com os países do Norte Global têm maior prevalência; no entanto, já se constata uma nova configuração com ênfase para a regionalização a partir de redes entre países da América Latina, o que favorece a disseminação do conhecimento não hegemônico e reafirma a importância do trabalho coletivo e solidário para o fortalecimento tanto da pesquisa quanto da internacionalização no Brasil, contribuindo, desse modo, para a diminuição da assimetria deste processo no país

Palavras-chave: Internacionalização da educação superior; Redes colaborativas; Cooperação acadêmica; Programa CAPES PrInt.

Resumen: El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar cómo las estrategias de cooperación académica establecidas por las universidades participantes en el programa CAPES PrInt pueden contribuir a la consolidación de la internacionalización de la enseñanza superior en Brasil. El análisis de los resultados muestra que predominan las redes de cooperación con países del Norte Global; sin embargo, ya existe una nueva configuración con énfasis en la regionalización basada en redes entre países latinoamericanos que favorece la difusión de conocimientos no hegemónicos y reafirma la importancia del trabajo colectivo y solidario para el fortalecimiento tanto de la investigación como de la internacionalización en Brasil, contribuyendo así a reducir la asimetría de este proceso en el país..

Palabras clave: Internacionalización de la enseñanza superior; Redes de colaboración; Cooperación académica; Programa CAPES PrInt.

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Introduction

The internationalization of higher education has been constantly debated in the academic context at the global level. Initially, international mobility was the focus of actions developed by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). However, over time, HEIs adopted more comprehensive procedures in developing actions to consolidate this process.

Institutions began to consider strategies that involve all areas of university activity, comprehensive internationalization (Hudzik, 2011) and that can occur within the campus itself, Internationalization at Home (Beelen and Jones, 2015) and Internationalization of the Curriculum - IoC (Leask, 2012). Also, actions of cooperation in research projects between institutions/researchers from different countries have gained greater prominence. However, there are differences between the strategies used in HEIs located in different regions of the world. The Global South seeks to adopt the principle that internationalization must be based “on cooperation, solidarity and exchange of knowledge” with the aim of “strengthening institutions in terms of science and technology and overcoming social inequalities” (Morosini et al., 2018, p. 101). Institutions in the Global North with greater experience of the process and with different geo-economic conditions,

see internationalization as education aimed at citizenship of a country/region, which is related to the training of its actors for work and society.

In this understanding, institutions based in the Global South should not “seek to stimulate only academic mobility”, but also foster the formation of global citizens, thus incorporating the internationalization process into their very nature. It is feasible to add that the difference in perception on this topic between the Global South and the Global North is due to differences in technological and economic development, Anglocentric models of education, the coloniality of knowledge, the linguistic factor, among others, which present themselves differently in these regions.

In this sense, in Latin America, HEIs are faced with major challenges to overcome, one of which is the ability of institutions to adapt to internationalization processes, as the models (concepts and theories) in force tend to be Anglocentric and originate from the Global North (Abba & Corsetti, 2016; Gacel-Ávila & Rodríguez-Rodríguez, 2018) disregarding the characteristics of the region. In Brazil, this scenario is no different. The models used follow international standards that are not always compatible with Brazilian educational standards.

These challenges and contextual imperatives require the development of flexible internationalization approaches that can be adapted to the territory. One of these approaches is international academic cooperation, which, developed based on inclusive and decentralizing criteria, offers the possibility of contributing to the development of a more symmetrical internationalization between areas of the globe.

As a way of increasing the internationalization of higher education in Brazil, the CAPES PrInt Program was created (Institutional Internationalization Program of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel - CAPES), which is currently the most emblematic support and fostering program for internationalization actions in the country. Therefore, the purpose of this work is to analyze how academic cooperation strategies established by universities that participate in the CAPES PrInt program can contribute to the consolidation of the Internationalization of Higher Education in Brazil.

For organizational reasons, the text is divided into six sections: in addition to the Introduction, the second section is entitled “International academic cooperation in Brazil”, the third, “Academic cooperation and collaborative networks”, the fourth, named “Fostering collaborative networks: an excerpt from CAPES PrInt”, in the fifth section, the methodological path is presented, in the sixth, the analysis and discussion of the results and finally, conclusive notes are laid out.

International academic cooperation in Brazil

Despite the naming and concept of internationalization of higher education beginning to be used in the 1990s, there have been considerable higher education actions and research conducted with an international dimension well before that. Even in Latin America, where wealthier families would historically send students to acquire education in foreign countries as a standard practice, there was an increase in the process of academic exchange movement favored by international organizations during this period (Arana et al., 2021).

It is worth noting that even though there was an increase in these activities, this did not result in a systematization or the centrality of the theme in Brazilian higher education institutions or even in government policies directed to such an end (Aupetit, 2005).

In Brazil, Morosini (2017, p. 7) introduces the concept of Internationalization of Higher Education as a

Process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension into Higher Education, stemming from interactions, supported by collaborative networks, with developed socio-economic blocks and with others that value multiple cultures, differences, and times, strengthening national scientific and technological capacity, connected to the local, with the purpose of being a disseminator of sustainable development.

Although the concept offers a broad vision, internationalization of higher education in the country has been based mainly on mobility actions with an emphasis on sending students and teachers abroad (mainly Europe and North America) as part of the development of human resources and research capabilities (De Wit et al., 2017). Other activities that characterize an internationalized institution are less developed in the region: attracting foreign students and professors, internationalization at home, which would benefit a greater number of students, and projects with foreign institutions (there are numerous agreements signed, but few actually implemented).

In this sense, Abba and Corsetti (2016) argue that, for more productive and effective cooperation, it is necessary to take into account regional characteristics and heterogeneity when choosing countries/institutions to form networks and/or partnerships for the development of joint projects:

- a) location and directionality of internationalization: cooperation closer to the reality of Latin American countries, with a primarily South-South direction;
- b) fundamental values: solidarity, cooperation, reciprocity and complementarity of actions in higher education;
- c) logic of exchange: mutual collaboration, which includes mainly historical, cultural and educational aspects of the process of internationalization and international cooperation of universities in Southern Brazil.

It is worth noting that a model that considers internationalization as a tool for institutional strategic development with the appreciation of all members is solidarity internationalization, defined by Dias Sobrinho (2008, p. 187) as “[...] the set of cooperative actions with institutions from other countries for mutual benefit”, making it possible to increase knowledge and develop other cultures.

Therefore, one of the ways to minimize the differences and problems faced by the countries that make up Latin America, more specifically Brazil with regard to the internationalization of its higher education institutions, would be the organization of collective work at a regional level (Aupetit, 2014). It is noteworthy that a means to achieve this goal is academic cooperation with the purpose of developing collaborative networks, as per the section below.

Academic cooperation and collaborative networks

Academic cooperation plays a critical role in the development of strategic internationalization actions. According to UNESCO (2003), academic cooperation is of fundamental importance for the development of education worldwide. According to Sebastián (2004, p. 20), international academic cooperation is considered:

[...] a set of activities carried out between university institutions that, through multiple modalities, imply association and collaboration on institutional policy and management issues; training, research, extension and linkages for mutual strengthening and institutional projection; improving the quality of teaching; the development and transfer of scientific and technological knowledge; and the contribution to development cooperation.

The different types of international collaboration include (Gacel-Ávila et al., 2005, Knight, 2005, Pretto et al., 2015): a) simple student exchange programs (sandwich undergraduate degree): where the student takes part of the credits of their degree at a partner university abroad; b) joint degree program: where a qualification (diploma) is awarded jointly

by the cooperating institutions; c) double diploma program: where two individual qualifications (diploma) are awarded at equivalent levels by the two partner institutions; d) co-supervision: allows the student to carry out their dissertation or thesis under the responsibility of two supervisors, one from each partner institution; e) partnerships for joint research. It is still possible to classify academic cooperations as horizontal and vertical. The vertical ones are characterized by the donor-recipient relationship oriented towards aid or assistance, while the horizontal ones reflect a mutual benefit and a partnership relationship between the cooperating institutions (Knight, 2005)

One of the characteristics of academic cooperation in Latin America is the prioritization of agreements with the Global North (mainly the USA and Europe), according to Wyne (2015, p. 3) “the demand for these researchers is justified by the fact that there are more research opportunities in developed countries, as well as because researchers have access to greater financial resources, superior technical resources and infrastructure”.

The author also emphasizes other reasons for seeking partners in developed countries, especially in the area of research, such as: greater visibility and recognition among peers, increased impact of joint publications and the search for technological expertise, characterized by Eurocentric standards of power, imposed way back in the colonial period (Quijano, 2005) characterize the search for these partnerships.

Leal and Moraes (2018) believe that enabling the insertion of a decolonial perspective in the internationalization of higher education in Latin America enables a “project of criticism/resistance” to Eurocentric epistemologies. The authors consider decoloniality as an epistemology capable of supporting a critical vision of internationalization, breaking with patterns pre-established by the hegemonic power of knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary to produce studies that “consider broader historical-social issues, such as the inequalities underlying North-South relations and the reproduction of colonial and neocolonial relations in higher education” (Leal & Moares, 2018, p.18), as well as favoring the recognition of cultural plurality, spaces and struggles of “colonized peoples in search of emancipation”.

Still referring to the search for counter-hegemonic institutional relations, in the “CRES 2018 Declaration” prepared at the Regional Conference on Higher Education for Latin America and the Caribbean (CRES 2018), held in Córdoba, Argentina, academic cooperation is presented as “an interinstitutional cooperation based on a supportive relationship between equals,” (IESALC, 2018, p. 66). The Declaration also states that for the countries in the region, cooperation “will promote the circulation and appropriation of knowledge as a strategic social good, in favor of the sustainable development of the region and its countries” (IESALC, 2018,

p. 66). The need for public policies that support this process is also highlighted, through the definition of organizational frameworks that facilitate academic integration in the region, the mobility of teachers and students, as well as the recognition of teaching programs and collaboration in research.

It is clear that collaboration between researchers and/or institutions gives rise to the opportunity to form cooperation networks. The concept of network is broad and differs according to situations, but in general “refers to interrelationships, associations, interactions and links, all involving communication and exchange of information” (Nez, 2014, p, 59). The author also considers “that a network can be understood as an interconnection structure, comprised of interacting elements and which works under operating rules” (p. 60).

For Sebastián (2000, p. 97), collaboration networks can be defined as “associations of interested parties whose purpose is to obtain jointly agreed results through participation and mutual collaboration”. In education, Morosini et al. (2020, p. 337-338) consider networks as “the social space where researchers' interactions take place, and which facilitate the processes of sharing, acquisition and co-creation of knowledge”.

Castells (2020) highlights the rapid transformation that society has undergone, especially in recent decades, emphasizing that in the current context, collaboration, structured on common goals between institutions, is a determining factor in facing scenarios and challenges. In this sense, collaborative networks in the academic field are structured based on agreements on common future horizons, with the main element being collaboration between network members for certain goals. Thus, positive elements are added to the institutions, providing strength, impact, capacity to offer services and projects within the scope of teaching and research, which would probably not be possible if the university acted in isolation. Balestrin and Verschoore (2016, p. 14) state:

The moment two or more organizations realize the possibility of jointly achieving their goals and obtaining mutual gains, cooperation between them develops. Therefore, it can be stated that inter-organizational cooperation occurs through the deliberate development of relationships between autonomous organizations to achieve individual and collective goals.

It is worth highlighting that networking enables teaching innovations and the opening of new spaces to increase teaching and research internationally, which provides visibility for groups and institutions. Also, in the case of research, the heterogeneity of group components makes the research process challenging and provides originality and solidity in the results and allows monitoring to detect errors or inconsistencies in the

data found. In the case of undergraduate and postgraduate students, networks provide access to different approaches to knowledge and specificities from other territories regarding a specific topic (Pastor & Torres, 2018).

But the benefits go beyond teaching and research. The benefits of structuring collaborative networks favor the internationalization of the "corpus" of the entire university, adding elements that favor governance and management itself, in addition to any academic bias. This institutional linkage through collaboration can promote the sharing of methods, knowledge, skills, awakening practices and processes of entrepreneurship and innovation. Networks promote discoveries and contribute to problem solving, deconstruction and reconstruction, as by their nature and form of organization, they are oriented towards adaptability and flexibility.

Collaborative networks between Higher Education Institutions promote innovation, transforming knowledge into generating value for society, especially through teaching and research. For Souza (2013, p. 21), "[...] once intellectual capital becomes a productive force, the university gains central stage in the new economy [...]"

Despite all the benefits arising from a cooperation network, it can pose a series of challenges in achieving it that must be taken into account during its organizational stage. Sebastián (2000) lists some issues that must be observed for the success of cooperation networks: a) specificity in defining the network's goals – elaboration of a focused action plan that identifies products and results; b) suitable selection of participants – the capacity, motivation and commitment of participants constitute the fundamental elements to guarantee a cooperation culture; c) sharing and consensus in network planning – to ensure a sense of belonging; d) existence of an action plan – which must clearly state the responsibilities and tasks of each partner, both in execution and coordination; e) efficient coordination of the network complemented by effective joint management – the balance between leadership and joint management facilitates a favorable climate and understanding within the network; f) proactive attitude and fulfillment of commitments – an essential condition for maintaining the working environment, collaboration and mutual trust, as well as for achieving the network's goals and objectives; g) prior agreement on the use of results – participants must have clear rules regarding the ownership and use of results generated by the collaboration; h) a feeling benefits shared – the existence of this feeling is probably the engine that guarantees the proactive participation of actors; i) willingness to deal with cultural differences – cultural differences must be accepted with tolerance and used to expand the scope of personal and institutional experiences.

Some obstacles present themselves as limiting factors and must be overcome for the sustainability of networking - these include the need for members to have a deep understanding of the historical and sociocultural traditions of the partner university in order to understand cultural differences and how they can impact the success and sustainability of such international collaborations; the difference in the academic calendar (vacation or recess periods) must also be observed, as well as the difference in time zones between the countries of the cooperating institutions (Wyne, 2015).

It must be noted that creating networks includes the limits of mastering another language. Fluency in a foreign language is essential for partnerships to come to fruition and generate visible results such as intellectual production from the projects developed. According to Finardi (2022), language can limit the visibility and circulation of the generated production. Mastery of the English language, considered a common language for international publications, is still an obstacle to be overcome by Brazilian researchers.

Fostering collaborative networks: an excerpt from CAPES PrInt

Currently, the main support for the internationalization of Brazilian Higher Education is the government program called CAPES PrInt - CAPES (Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel) Institutional Internationalization Program. The program was established in 2017 with an annual budget forecast of up to 300 million reais, with a duration from 2018 to 2023. The program's goal is:

Promote the construction, implementation and consolidation of strategic internationalization plans for the institutions covered in the areas of knowledge prioritized by them; encourage the creation of international research networks to improve the quality of academic production linked to postgraduate studies; expand actions to support internationalization in postgraduate studies at the institutions covered; promote the mobility of professors and students, with an emphasis on doctoral students, post-doctoral students and professors abroad and from abroad to Brazil, linked to *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs with international cooperation; encourage the transformation of participating institutions in an international environment and integrate other CAPES promotion actions into the internationalization effort. (CAPES, 2017, p.1-2)

In total, thirty-six Brazilian Higher Education Institutions were included in this program. In the selection process, institutions needed to meet the following criteria: have four postgraduate programs, at least two with doctoral courses, all evaluated with at least a grade

4 in the Quadrennial Assessment⁶ for 2017 (CAPES, 2017). Institutions were also asked to present an Institutional Internationalization Plan and draft an Institutional Internationalization Project, where they should “indicate their priority themes for internationalization actions to be developed in accordance with the competencies and priority areas defined by the proposing Institution” (CAPES, 2017, p. 3).

Actions encouraged by the program include work missions abroad, resources for maintaining research projects in international cooperation, scholarships abroad for sandwich doctorates, senior visiting professors for internships abroad, junior visiting professors (post-doctorate) abroad, training in short-term courses or summer/winter schools, scholarships in the country to attract foreign professors, young talents and foreign and Brazilian post-doctoral students with experience abroad (CAPES, 2017).

The scope of the program highlights international cooperation as a way of qualifying both human resources and national scientific research.

Methodological Path

This research is part of a study on internationalization actions developed by Brazilian higher education institutions selected in the CAPES PrInt program. It is characterized as qualitative research, conducted based on the analysis of the internationalization plans of the thirty-six higher education institutions participating in the program. Content Analysis (Bardin, 2016) was used to process and analyze the data that makes up the corpus of this research. The author organizes data analysis into three distinct phases: pre-analysis; the exploration of the material; the treatment of results, inference, and interpretation.

The pre-analysis was characterized by reading the HEI documents, from which a table was created with the strategies of each institution. For ethical reasons, the name of the institutions was coded, being presented as HEI 1, HEI 2 and so on according to the order of analysis in this work.

The material exploration phase took place based on the classification of data by areas of coverage. As part of the study, in this work, the category called “strategies to establish and/or reinforce international collaborative networks” was analyzed.

⁶ The Quadrennial Assessment is the Assessment System developed by CAPES that can be divided into two distinct processes that refer to the entry and permanence of master's and doctorate courses in the National Postgraduate System. Its main purpose is to contribute to guaranteeing the quality of Brazilian postgraduate studies by identifying programs that meet the minimum quality standard required for each course level and which, as a result, will have their recognition renewed recommended by the CAPES to the National Education Council. <https://www.gov.br/capes/pt-br/aceso-a-informacao/acoes-e-programas/avaliacao/avaliacao-quadrinial>

The evidence found in the results treatment phase and the inferences will be presented in the following section.

Analysis and Discussion of the Results

When examining the data obtained in the category “strategies to establish and/or reinforce collaborative networks” (Table 1), it was found, as a rule, that “outgoing” based cooperation, characterized by the departure of members of the academic community to the exterior, is the most performed action. For Stallivieri (2017), the strong investment of HEIs in international academic mobility is based on the constant need for qualification of professionals in the area. Thus, with the purpose of improving its teaching and technical staff, opportunities for technical visits and missions are offered in the strategies category to establish work in institutions with which they have some type of agreement and/or partnership. These missions and/or visits also aim to expand or reinforce the links between researchers and/or professors, in an attempt to facilitate interactions between the components of the research groups.

Table 1 – Strategies of HEIs participating in the CAPES PrInt Program to consolidate and/or reinforce collaborative networks

STRATEGY	NUMBER OF HEIS
Promote technical visits/missions to international institutions	11
Encourage the attraction of international researchers	10
Encourage participation in internationally renowned research groups	9
Promote the creation of projects with the participation of international professors and researchers	6
Establish or strengthen the Chairs Program	4

Source: Drafted by the authors based on research data.

The second most frequent strategy reflects one of the greatest challenges in cooperation processes in the global south, that is, attracting international researchers to the country. The ability to attract qualified researchers, generally from the Global North, unfamiliar with the local language and culture, in broad terms, is one of the major limitations of this action. This finding meets the conditions listed by Sebastián (2000) for the success of networks. The author highlights the willingness of participants to deal with cultural differences as one of the success factors in collaborative work.

Furthermore, funding for scholarships or funding for international researchers in the country is characterized as a limitation, which in general do not present attractive values (Seanger and Teixeira, 2018).

After that, the action of encouraging participation in internationally renowned research groups, followed by encouraging the creation of projects with the participation of international professors and researchers. One of the results of these actions is international collaborative scientific productions. International co-authored works give prominence and visibility to research, increasing the impact and dissemination of its results internationally. Thus, contributing to increasing the quality of research generated in networks (RYCIT, 2007).

In order to strengthen relationships between researchers/professors, post-doctoral internships and participation in events abroad are encouraged. These actions can be observed in the following strategy highlighted in the Institutional Project of one of the institutions analyzed: “[...] by prioritizing the fostering of the participation of the academic community in international networks, the institution highlights that the process of internationalization of research becomes faster, considering that this process advances more quickly when there are technical and relationship affinities between the researchers involved” (IES 25, Institutional project for postgraduate internationalization, 2018). That conclusion also corroborates Sebastián (2000) when he highlights the importance of suitable selection of participants in terms of their capacity, motivation and commitment for the success of cooperation networks.

The Chairs program has its relevance highlighted in the following statement contained in the Institutional Internationalization Plan of one of the institutions analyzed: “The strategy of establishing or promoting Chair Programs is relevant for the internationalization of research and the strengthening of collaborative networks with international partners, considering that among its results are shared scientific production and the establishment of long-term cooperation” (IES 12, 2018). The UNESCO Chairs Program (2008) is an instrument that aims at improving capabilities and exchange knowledge in the spirit of solidarity, promoting North-South and South-South cooperation as a means of fostering the development of participating institutions.

The data allowed us to identify that actions to increase collaborative networks is a premise that affects the majority (75%) of the internationalization plans analyzed. It was observed that it is through this network model that internationalized technical-scientific production is consolidated in Brazilian HEIs that participate in the Program.

However, it is noteworthy that 25% of the internationalization plans analyzed still do not provide for collaborative networks as a strategy for consolidating the internationalization of higher education.

The HEIs analyzed that maintain international collaboration projects opted for institutions located in the following countries: USA, Canada, Portugal, Germany, France, United Kingdom, Spain, Sweden, Italy, Israel, China, Japan, Australia, South Africa, Mozambique, India, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, and Uruguay (Woicolesco et al., 2022). The data indicate that cooperation networks with countries in the Global North are more prevalent, but there is a new emphasis on regionalization, based on the construction of networks with Latin America and Africa. This trend is made clear in the actions contained in the Internationalization Plan of two of the institutions analyzed: “maintain South-South relations financed by agencies and universities in this region, based on the protagonism of researchers in Latin America” (IES 2, Internationalization Plan, 2017) and “It is worth highlighting that the institution continues to consolidate its historical partnerships with institutions in Latin America, within the scope of international networks.” (IES 36, Internationalization Plan, 2018).

It is important to highlight that throughout history, Universities have been established and developed, following the challenges of each era. When the first university was founded in Bologna at the end of the 11th century, its primary mission was teaching. In the mid-19th century, especially in Germany, England and France, a secondary mission rose - research. “[...] At that moment, the inclusion of research in the mission and the creation of research centers were disruptive changes in the institutions.” (AUDY, 2017, p. 80). And at the end of the last century, with a strong role especially from the United States, a third mission emerged - innovation as a vector of social and economic development and generation of value for society. For Masetto (2004, p. 197), innovation in higher education refers to “[...] a set of changes that affect key points and constitutive axes of the organization of academic education caused by changes in society or by reflections on concepts intrinsic to the mission of Higher Education.”

Collaborative networks play an important and leading role in institutions, spanning different missions, especially promoting the training of undergraduate and postgraduate students, which is still the main focus today, but there are still paths to be discovered from the perspective of innovation. Many Universities today have technology parks and are fully linked to the quadruple helix concept, which aims to articulate processes, projects and actions with their reality and surroundings, considering the following agents: companies, government, society, and university (Lombardi, 2012). In this sense, collaborative networks, with different natures and goals, promote interactive paths between people and different institutions, promoting an impact on the lives of students, professors, and researchers, but also generating impact and value for society.

It can be seen that, although the cooperation movement with the Global South is still limited, it demonstrates the interest of Brazilian institutions in establishing partnerships with institutions from countries historically excluded from Eurocentric standards of knowledge formation.

Concluding notes

The purpose of this study was to analyze how international academic cooperation strategies established by universities that participate in the CAPES PrInt program can contribute to the consolidation of the Internationalization of Education in the country. Considerations were outlined regarding academic cooperation and collaborative networks.

The research has shown that one of the challenges encountered in the search for the implementation of collaborative networks is the adaptation of a model that takes into account the characteristics of the region. The desired model must contribute to minimizing the effects of hegemonic rationality as the dominant mode of knowledge production. Collaboration that is supportive and equitable is one of the ways to disseminate the knowledge produced in the region, also strengthening South-South relations. Opportunities arise from these collaborations to form cooperation networks that enable innovations in teaching and research, providing greater visibility for research groups and institutions in the region.

When analyzing the data, it becomes clear that this strategy, although present in many of the institutions analyzed, is not fully adopted by others. It is also clear that despite still being a timid movement, the HEIs that present international cooperation in their strategies are already concerned with establishing relationships with institutions in the Global South. This movement favors the development of partnerships with people historically deprived of access to higher education. These new voices arising from the model of institutional relations that has been emerging in the region, contribute to the purpose of decentralizing knowledge. Therefore, there is a clear opportunity for institutions that do not leverage this strategy to begin building relationships between institutions in the global south, which are closer in terms of regional, cultural, and social characteristics.

It should be noted that by encouraging articulations between institutions in Latin America, networks contribute to the dissemination of non-hegemonic knowledge, considering researchers and research from the region itself that take into account the specificities of the territory, in the search for solutions to problems and difficulties encountered there. It also allows for the development of the internationalization of

higher education, shifting interactions from South/North to South/South. In this way, the importance of collective and solidarity work is reaffirmed to strengthen both research and internationalization in Latin America, thus contributing to reducing the asymmetry of this process in the region.

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