

UNIVERSITY EXTENSION, CURRICULARIZATION AND CURRICULAR FLEXIBILITY: A LITERATURE REVIEW



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This article presents the results of a state-of-the-art research on university extension, focusing on curricularization and curricular flexibility, in the context of Brazilian higher education. From the analysis of the selected academic works, including doctoral theses and master's dissertations, produced between 2007 and 2018, the research sought to understand how university extension has been conceptualized and implemented in the curricula of undergraduate courses. Based on a systematic bibliographic review and guided by authors such as Freire, Sousa Santos and Oliveira & Ferreira, the research shows a growing production marked by critical approaches, which recognize extension as a formative and political space. The results point to both significant advances and challenges, such as curricular fragmentation, the absence of consistent institutional policies, and the need to broaden the debate in underrepresented areas. It is concluded that the curricularization of extension represents an opportunity to resignify the role of the university, as long as it is based on principles of social justice, dialogue of knowledge and commitment to the transformation of reality.

Keywords: University extension. Curriculum. Curricular flexibility. Citizenship training. Higher education.

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INTRODUCTION

University extension has acquired a prominent role in Brazilian higher education, especially from the mandatory nature of its curriculum provided for in the National Education Plan (PNE). In view of this, it is relevant to understand how scientific production has been addressing the developments of extension in the curriculum of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

In recent decades, university extension has come to occupy a prominent place in public policies for higher education in Brazil, especially with the inclusion of goals aimed at its curricularization in the National Education Plan (PNE 2014-2024). Goal 12.7, by establishing that at least 10% of the workload of undergraduate courses should be allocated to extension activities, imposes on HEIs the challenge of integrating extension into curricula in an organic way, recognizing it as an essential and inseparable formative dimension from teaching and research.

However, even with the normative advances, theoretical, political and pedagogical gaps persist on how the insertion of extension in the pedagogical projects of undergraduate courses takes place in practice. The diversity of conceptions, formats and experiences of extension in the Brazilian context shows a multiplicity of meanings attributed to this dimension, which is sometimes seen as an isolated social action, sometimes as a structuring axis of academic training. This ambivalence highlights a central problem: how has university extension been understood and implemented in Brazilian HEIs in the context of their curricularization and curricular flexibility?

In view of this scenario, this article aims to analyze the state of the art on university extension, with emphasis on curricularization and curricular flexibility, based on a systematic review of academic production between the years 2007 and 2018. It is based on the assumption that understanding what has already been produced on the subject in different institutional, theoretical and methodological contexts can contribute to the strengthening of a critical conception of extension, anchored in social justice, inclusion and the transformation of reality.

The research adopted as a methodology the approach of the state of knowledge or state of the art, based on a literature review of a bibliographic nature, as proposed by authors such as Silva and Menezes (2001), Oliveira and Ferreira (2014) and Noronha and Ferreira (2000). The investigation focused on doctoral theses and master's dissertations available at the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD), produced over

12 years. The descriptors used in the searches were: university extension, curriculum, curricularization and curricular flexibility.

The main findings express a growing academic production that is increasingly committed to a broader and critical view of extension, guided by principles of Freirean pedagogy, interdisciplinarity and social commitment. The experiences analyzed indicate that, when properly structured, extension actions are capable of promoting meaningful learning, developing socio-emotional and political skills in students, and bringing the university closer to contemporary social demands. At the same time, the analysis highlights challenges such as curricular fragmentation, the insufficiency of institutional support policies, the absence of evident evaluation criteria and the underrepresentation of areas such as exact and technological sciences in extension studies.

The analysis undertaken dialogues with authors such as Freire (1987), Santos (2010), Schön (2000), Thiollent (2002), Resende (2008) and Oliveira and Ferreira (2014), and allows us to understand university extension as an epistemological, formative and political space as well as a tool for social insertion, but. Thus, it is understood that the accreditation of extension is an opportunity for the reconstruction of the Brazilian university project, based on the dialogue between academic and popular knowledge, the appreciation of diversity and the promotion of cognitive justice.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Historically, university extension is configured as an essential dimension of Brazilian higher education, establishing, in intrinsic and inseparable articulation with teaching and research, the formative basis that sustains the production and socialization of knowledge in higher education institutions. By being inseparably articulated with teaching and research, it emerges as a structuring component of the integral education of students, as recommended by Resolution CNE/CES No. 7/2018 (Brasil, 2018). This academic dimension goes beyond the mere transmission of knowledge, and should promote a praxis that integrates theory and practice, strengthening the social commitment of higher education and the construction of critical subjects engaged with the demands of society. The Federal Constitution of 1988 (Brasil, 1988) and the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education - Law No. 9.394/96 (Brasil, 1996) reaffirm this principle by highlighting the inseparability between these three dimensions, which gives university extension a

formative, political and social role. However, its effective insertion in the curricula of HEIs still faces epistemological, political, and structural challenges.

The proposal for accreditation of university extension, reaffirmed by the National Education Plan (PNE 2014-2024), specifically in Goal 12.7, establishes that at least 10% of the workload of undergraduate courses be allocated to extension activities linked to academic training (Brasil, 2015). This requirement gives extension a new curricular status, moving it from a peripheral or extracurricular position to a central and formative function. Such a change has required universities to restructure the Pedagogical Course Projects (PPC), the reconfiguration of the roles of teachers and students and the adoption of a more flexible, integrated curriculum conception committed to social reality.

According to Oliveira and Ferreira (2014), literature review as a scientific method contributes to the construction of a solid knowledge base on the topic under analysis, allowing the identification of advances, gaps and contradictions present in academic productions. In the case of university extension, this critical review makes it possible to understand the various conceptions that inform extension practices and their impacts on student education. For the authors, the review is not restricted to the accumulation of data, but should promote an analysis that articulates the theoretical references to concrete experiences, revealing trends and transformations in the field investigated.

The literature analyzed shows a diversity of approaches and conceptions about university extension. In some productions, a technician and welfare view of extension predominates, which reduces its function to specific actions of providing services to the community. In others, a critical and emancipatory conception is observed, anchored in Freire's pedagogy and popular education, which understands extension as a space for dialogue of knowledge, collective construction of knowledge and social transformation. In this sense, Paulo Freire constitutes a fundamental theoretical framework for thinking about extension as a liberating educational practice, based on the problematization of reality and the active participation of the historical subjects involved.

In Freire's perspective, the university must assume its social function as a promoter of pedagogical practices committed to social justice, equity and human rights (Freire, 1987). Extension, in this scope, is a field of knowledge production and mutual transformation between university and society. The extension practice, according to this logic, should be dialogical, critical, supportive and participatory, enabling students and teachers to learn from the community, and not only about it. This conception appears repeatedly in the

studies analyzed, especially those that deal with the curricularization of extension through the Curricular Activities of Integration Teaching, Research and Extension (ACIEPEs) of the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar) or the Curricular Activities in Community (ACCs) of the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA).

Santos (2010) expands this reflection by proposing the "ecology of knowledges" as an epistemological horizon for the contemporary university. For the author, the university of the twenty-first century must overcome the monopoly of scientific knowledge and incorporate other modes of knowledge, such as popular, indigenous, quilombola, traditional, religious and artistic knowledge. University extension, in this context, becomes the privileged space for this epistemological exchange, promoting an active coexistence of knowledge that feeds cognitive justice and the recognition of diversity. By articulating with social movements, local communities and diverse collectives, the university expands its public function and positions itself as a space for listening, welcoming and transformation.

The notion of "cognitive justice", proposed by Santos (2010), complements the argument that academic knowledge should not be hierarchically superior to other knowledge, but rather dialogue with them in conditions of horizontality. This principle has direct implications for university curricula, which need to open up to epistemological and cultural diversity, decolonizing their practices and contents. The accreditation of extension, if guided by this perspective, can contribute to the construction of a more plural, democratic and inclusive curriculum, sensitive to the demands of historically marginalized subjects.

Another key concept in this theoretical framework is that of curricular flexibility. This refers to the ability of the university curriculum to adapt to the specificities of the contexts, communities and subjects involved in the training process. Flexibility is opposed to rigid, content-based, and homogenizing curricular models, while proposing the valorization of experience, interdisciplinarity, theory-practice articulation, and student autonomy. For Resende (2008), a flexible curriculum must be able to integrate issues of gender, sexuality, race, religiosity, territoriality, among others, becoming a space for disputes, resistance and social transformation. It is in this sense that university extension can act as an engine of pedagogical innovation, by incorporating socially relevant themes and active, collaborative and contextual methodologies.

Curricular flexibility is also closely linked to the inseparability between teaching, research and extension. It is a constitutional and ethical-political principle of the Brazilian university, which seeks to break with the fragmentation of academic activities and promote

an integral, critical and situated education. This conception of inseparability implies recognizing university extension as a structuring component of the curriculum, not as an appendix or complementary activity, but as a legitimate field of knowledge and learning. The studies analyzed in the literature review indicate that the effective integration between the three dimensions of the university tripod is still a challenge for many institutions, whether due to bureaucratic barriers, institutional resistance or lack of knowledge of the formative nature of extension.

Thiollent (2002) contributes to this discussion by highlighting the role of extension in the promotion of emancipatory educational practices. For the author, extension should be conceived as a space for action-reflection-action, in which those involved build knowledge based on concrete reality and in dialogue with different social subjects. This approach requires breaking with the model of unidirectional transmission of knowledge and valuing the community experience as a legitimate source of knowledge. The extension practice, in this model, is necessarily participatory, critical and committed to social transformation.

Schön (2000) inserts this idea when proposing the notion of "reflective professional". For him, university education should stimulate students' ability to reflect in and on practice, in order to promote meaningful and contextualized learning. University extension, in this sense, is configured as a privileged field for the exercise of critical reflection, as it places students in front of real, complex and challenging situations, which require decision-making, empathy, active listening and social responsibility.

University extension, understood as a dialogical, democratic and formative pedagogical practice, should contribute to the development of ethical, social, political and communicative skills of students. It must also foster critical awareness, community engagement, and the ability to act in diverse and adverse contexts. To this end, it is necessary that extension actions be planned with intentionality, monitored and evaluated based on pedagogical criteria and not merely administrative or quantitative. The challenge of extension evaluation, as demonstrated in some of the theses analyzed, involves the construction of instruments that consider the formative, social and epistemological impacts of extension activities, and not only their numerical scope.

In this context, the concept of "citizenship education" emerges as a central dimension of the extension curriculum. The university must train autonomous, critical subjects committed to the transformation of reality. Extension, by promoting contact with different realities and knowledge, contributes to the construction of this active citizenship

committed to social justice. Citizenship education, therefore, is not restricted to the technical-scientific domain, but encompasses ethical, political, cultural and affective dimensions of the human experience.

In this sense, it should be noted that the implementation of the extension curriculum in Brazilian HEIs must be accompanied by institutional policies that guarantee resources, teacher training, appreciation of extension practices and academic recognition of productions arising from extension. Without these structural and symbolic conditions, there is a risk that the accreditation of extension will be reduced to a bureaucratic requirement or a mere transposition of curricular contents, emptying its transformative potential.

Thus, the conceptual framework that underlies this study articulates the following axes: university extension as a critical educational practice; curricularization of extension as a formative and transformative policy; curricular flexibility as a strategy for valuing diversity and interdisciplinarity; inseparability teaching-research-extension as an organizing principle of academic life; and ecology of knowledge as an epistemological and political horizon of the contemporary public university. These concepts, in their interdependence, outline a broader and emancipatory understanding of university extension, capable of contributing to the construction of a fairer, more inclusive university committed to human rights and the common good.

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation is characterized as a state-of-the-art research, also known as state of knowledge. It is a modality of literature review, whose main objective is to map, organize and critically analyze the existing academic production on a given theme, in a previously defined time and thematic frame (Silva and Menezes, 2001). This approach has gained increasing recognition in the Brazilian scientific field since the end of the twentieth century, being especially used in the area of education and in the human sciences as a way to understand the evolution of certain fields of knowledge, their gaps and tensions, as well as to identify authors, institutions, theoretical trends and predominant methodological approaches.

The state of the art allows us to draw an overview of "who has already written and what has already been written" on a research theme or problem (Silva and Menezes, 2001, p. 37). This form of systematization and analysis of existing knowledge is particularly useful in studies that propose to deepen the understanding of complex objects, such as university

extension and its curricular integration, whose approach demands a plural, transversal and critical reading of the different practices and conceptions in dispute.

In order to ensure consistency of the investigative process, this research followed four fundamental methodological steps: (1) the definition of keywords and descriptors; (2) the delimitation of the time frame and the databases used; (3) the selection and organization of academic productions; and (4) the critical and interpretative analysis of the collected material. In each of these stages, specific criteria were mobilized to ensure the validity, reliability and relevance of the data obtained.

In the first stage, the selection of descriptors was guided by the central categories of the object of study: *university extension*, *curricularization*, *curricular flexibility* and *curriculum*. These terms were used as keywords in the searches carried out in the digital databases of scientific data, especially in the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD), as it is a national repository that brings together *stricto sensu* productions (master's dissertations and doctoral theses) defended in graduate programs of several Brazilian higher education institutions. The choice of descriptors sought to contemplate both conceptual and operational aspects of extension practices, allowing the mapping of studies that approach extension from different perspectives, namely: theoretical, political, pedagogical, institutional and epistemological.

The second stage corresponds to the definition of the time frame of the analysis, between the years 2007 and 2018. The choice of this twelve-year interval is justified by its relevance in terms of legal and political frameworks in the Brazilian higher education scenario, especially after the enactment of the National Education Plan of 2001 and, later, the guidelines and goals reaffirmed in the PNE of 2014, which institutionalized the mandatory crediting of 10% of the workload of undergraduate courses in extension activities. This period also encompasses significant transformations in the curricular models of universities, driven by policies of expansion, democratization and restructuring of higher education, such as the Program for the Restructuring and Expansion of Federal Universities (REUNI)⁴ and the debates on university reform. In this way, the excerpt allows us to analyze both the context of implementation and the academic and formative developments of the extension curriculum in Brazil.

⁴ Established by Decree 6.096, of April 24, 2007, REUNI aimed to increase the access and permanence of students in higher education, in addition to promoting innovation and academic adequacy.

In the third methodological stage, the identification, collection and organization of the documentary corpus was carried out. The systematic search in the databases resulted in the selection of 77 academic productions, 26 doctoral theses and 51 master's dissertations, as shown in Table 1. The works were organized by year of defense and type of production, allowing the construction of a timeline and the identification of trends, thematic recurrences and relevant discursive milestones. It was decided to prioritize theses and dissertations to the detriment of scientific articles, as they are more in-depth, consistent and contextualized studies, which offer greater analytical density and scope in the treatment of the investigated object. This choice is also in line with the conception of the state of the art, which aims to map and interpret the systematic and accumulated production of knowledge in a given area.

The fourth and last stage corresponds to the critical and interpretative analysis of the collected material. This analysis was guided by the assumptions of the qualitative approach, being guided by thematic categories that emerged throughout the reading of the texts. From an active and problematizing reading, it was sought to identify the main conceptions of university extension present in the works, the ways of its articulation with the curricula of undergraduate courses, the challenges faced in the implementation of curricularization and curricular flexibility, as well as the experiences and pedagogical practices that stood out as innovative and transformative. The analysis also sought to identify the most recurrent theoretical references, highlighting the centrality of authors who support a critical and emancipatory understanding of extension.

In the process of reading and analysis, aspects such as the objectives and problematizations of the works, the methodologies used, the conclusions presented and the contributions to the field of higher education were considered. Emphasis was also given to productions that address extension from the perspective of interdisciplinarity, social justice, popular education, the relationship with social movements and the appreciation of cultural diversity. The thematic categorization allowed to highlight the main trends and gaps in the literature, as well as the challenges faced by HEIs in consolidating extension as a curricular formative practice.

It is worth noting that the methodology adopted did not intend to exhaust all academic production on the subject, but to build a representative, consistent and significant panorama of the production available in the period analyzed. As Oliveira and Ferreira (2014) rightly observe, the literature review does not need to be exhaustive, but it does

need to be sufficiently broad and critical to enable the construction of a solid framework that is articulated with the objectives of the research that is intended to be achieved.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The analysis of the data obtained through state-of-the-art research allowed to map and systematize an expressive set of 77 academic productions, 26 doctoral theses and 51 master's dissertations, which directly or indirectly address the theme of university extension, its curricularization and curricular flexibility.

The established time frame, between the years 2007 and 2018, made it possible to identify relevant trends and transformations in the way extension has been conceived and implemented in Brazilian HEIs, especially in view of the legal requirements instituted by the National Education Plan (PNE 2014-2024). Table 1 presents the quantitative synthesis of the state of knowledge in the period analyzed.

Table 1: Synthesis of the state of knowledge, in the period from 2007 to 2018			
PERIOD	Doctoral Thesis	Master's Thesis	TOTAL
2007 to 2012	10	21	31
2013 to 2018	16	30	46
TOTAL	26	51	77

Source: The authors, 2019.

From the quantitative analysis, a significant growth in academic production on the subject can be observed. Between 2007 and 2012, 31 productions were identified, a number that almost doubled in the subsequent period (2013 to 2018), totaling 46 works. This growth can be understood as a reflection of the strengthening of the extension agenda in the educational scenario, driven by legal frameworks such as Goal 12.7 of the PNE, which made the incorporation of extension in undergraduate curricula mandatory, in addition to the institutional maturation of several public universities.

On the qualitative level, the works were grouped into four major thematic axes: (1) theoretical-methodological conceptions of university extension; (2) articulation between extension, teaching and research; (3) curricularization processes and curricular flexibility; and (4) formative and social impacts of extension actions. This categorization allowed the identification of analytical and theoretical convergences, as well as gaps still present in academic production, as indicated in Chart 1.

Chart 1 – Synthesis of the research findings and theoretical foundations of analysis

Thematic Axis	Research Findings
1. Conceptions of University Extension	Assistentialist conceptions (punctual actions) coexist with critical conceptions (dialogical and transformative action). Most of the productions value extension as a pedagogical and social practice, of approximation between university and society.
2. Inseparability between Teaching, Research and Extension	The integration between the three dimensions is still partial in HEIs. Structural, curricular and cultural barriers hinder effective articulation. Projects such as ACIEPEs and ACCs are examples of concrete institutional advances.
3. Curricularization and Curricular Flexibility	Most HEIs are in the process of adapting to the legal guidelines (PNE, 2014). Flexibility appears as a means to integrate knowledge and respect local contexts. Some institutions still do not have clear parameters for evaluating extension actions.
4. Formative and Social Impacts of Extension Actions	Extension projects promote the development of skills such as empathy, citizenship, collective work and critical thinking. Students report expansion of human formation. Extension is perceived as a way of social transformation and approximation with vulnerable communities.

Source: Source: The authors, 2019.

In axis 1, the conceptions of extension identified vary between assistentialist approaches, which reduce extension to the provision of services, and critical practices, anchored in Freire's pedagogy. Most of the works adopt a dialogical and emancipatory perspective of extension, understanding it as a formative and political field. According to Freire (1987), education should be an act of liberation, mediated by dialogue, active listening and the problematization of reality. In this logic, university extension becomes a space for the shared construction of knowledge and for overcoming the dichotomy between academic knowledge and popular knowledge, bringing university and society together in a horizontal way.

Axis 2 emphasizes the inseparability between teaching, research and extension, a constitutional principle that, in practice, still faces institutional, cultural and pedagogical barriers. Even though it is a principle provided for in the Federal Constitution of 1988 and in the LDB (Law No. 9,394/96), studies reveal that this articulation still faces practical and epistemological obstacles. Curricular fragmentation and hierarchical academic structures make it difficult to integrate these dimensions. On the other hand, successful experiences, such as ACIEPEs, developed at UFSCar, and ACCs, at UFBA, show the pedagogical power of proposals that connect theory, practice, and social commitment. Schön (2000) reinforces this conception by defending a reflective education, in which subjects learn in situated action, interacting with real contexts.

Axis 3 specifically addresses the processes of curricularization and curricular flexibility, identifying advances and obstacles. The analysis of the Pedagogical Course

Projects (PPCs), carried out in several dissertations, shows that many institutions are still in the process of adapting to the new legal requirements, with difficulties in redefining workload, evaluation methodologies and forms of registration of extension activities. On the other hand, some studies highlight that curricular flexibility (Resende, 2008), when well oriented, enables the valorization of local knowledge, interdisciplinary practices and personalized training trajectories, promoting a more integral and humanizing education (Freire, 1987).

Axis 4 addresses the formative and social impacts of extension actions, which were strongly highlighted in the dissertations and theses analyzed. Students report the development of socio-emotional and political skills, such as empathy, teamwork, social responsibility, and critical thinking. Thiollent (2002) argues that practices such as extension promote the emancipation of the subjects involved, as they create opportunities for transformative action on reality. The analyzed works also show that extension has the potential to democratize access to knowledge and foster lasting links between universities and historically excluded communities.

From these axes, it is possible to highlight some trends present in the literature. The first concerns the centrality of Freire's pedagogy as the theoretical basis of extension practices. The second, the valorization of interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity as training strategies. The third, the growing concern with the evaluation of extension actions, not only in quantitative terms, but also qualitatively, considering the formative, social and institutional impacts. And, finally, extension stands out as a field of pedagogical and curricular innovation, capable of tensioning and resignifying traditional practices in higher education.

The analysis also highlighted important gaps, such as the scarcity of studies that address extension in courses in the areas of exact and technological sciences, which suggests the need to broaden the debate beyond the human and social sciences. Another gap refers to the absence of intersectional approaches that consider race, gender, sexuality and disability as constitutive dimensions of the extension experience. There is still a limited discussion about the material and structural conditions for the implementation of the curriculum, such as teacher training, financing and institutional recognition.

In general, the results show that university extension, when thought of from a critical and emancipatory perspective, has the potential to consolidate itself as a structuring axis of the curriculum, contributing to the formation of ethical subjects, committed to human rights, social justice and the transformation of reality, as Freire (1987) points out. However, this

consolidation requires curricular changes associated with a profound cultural transformation in universities, capable of breaking with technicist and hierarchical paradigms and assuming diversity, dialogue and participation as founding principles of academic practice. It is in this sense "[...] that we need, increasingly, to have other dimensions associated, in particular, with criticism, reflexivity and emancipation", as Thiollent (2002, p. 67) points out, in the relations of interactive practices.

Thus, throughout the analysis of the selected works, it was possible to perceive that university extension is in a process of theoretical, political and pedagogical strengthening, driven by a growing academic production that recognizes its value as a space for learning, experimentation and social commitment. Curriculum, in this context, goes from a bureaucratic imposition to a historical opportunity to rethink the role of the university and to build curricula that are more alive, democratic and connected with the demands of the contemporary world.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study, based on a state-of-the-art literature review, aimed to map, systematize and critically analyze the academic production on university extension in Brazil, with emphasis on its curricularization and curricular flexibility. The analysis of academic works, including theses and dissertations, produced between 2007 and 2018, allowed the identification of theoretical trends, institutional challenges, and formative experiences that have configured this field of study in Brazilian higher education.

The results show a significant growth in scientific production on the subject, which shows the strengthening of university extension as an object of investigation. This movement is directly related to public policies, especially the National Education Plan (PNE 2014–2024), which establishes the mandatory inclusion of at least 10% of the workload of undergraduate courses in extension activities. This guideline has driven HEIs to reconfigure their curricula, seeking to integrate teaching, research and extension in a more organic and articulated way.

The analyses made it possible to identify four major axes that structure the contemporary debate on extension, namely: the theoretical-methodological conceptions of university extension; the articulation between teaching, research and extension; the processes of curricularization and curricular flexibility; and the formative and social impacts of extension actions. Although assistentialist practices still coexist, marked by the view of

university extension as a simple provision of services, most of the productions analyzed adopt a critical, dialogical and transformative approach, influenced by the assumptions of Freire's pedagogy and by emancipatory conceptions of the university.

The inseparability between teaching, research and extension, even though it is a constitutional principle, still finds practical difficulties to be effective, especially in contexts marked by curricular fragmentation. Curricular flexibility, in this scenario, emerges as a strategic device for the incorporation of extension in the Pedagogical Course Projects (PPCs), favoring the recognition of diversity, the appreciation of local knowledge and the construction of more integrative and meaningful training itineraries.

The studies also highlight the formative potential of university extension, which, when integrated into the curriculum in a structured way, contributes to the development of ethical, social, and political skills, such as empathy, social responsibility, active listening, collaborative work, and critical awareness. Extension is configured, therefore, as a privileged space for citizenship education and the exercise of intellectual and political autonomy of students.

However, important shortcomings have also been identified. There is a scarcity of research aimed at extension in courses in the areas of exact and technological sciences, which indicates the need to broaden the debate beyond the human and social sciences. There is also little presence of intersectional approaches that contemplate, in an articulated way, issues of race, gender, disability and sexuality, which limits a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of extension practices.

As Santos (2010) argues, a university committed to social emancipation needs to promote an ecology of knowledge, which values the knowledge produced by traditional communities, social movements and historically marginalized territories. The curricularization of extension, in this sense, represents a historic opportunity to resignify the role of the university, making it more open, plural and socially referenced. To this end, it is essential that extension is not reduced to a bureaucratic imperative, but understood as an essential formative dimension of the university's public mission.

It is reaffirmed, therefore, that the consolidation of the extension curriculum requires normative adjustments, and, above all, a profound cultural and epistemological change in higher education institutions. This change requires the repositioning of the university as a dialogical space, committed to cognitive justice, human rights and the transformation of social reality.

It is hoped that the findings presented in this article can support professors, managers, researchers and students in the construction of curricula that are more alive, democratic and committed to the realities of the subjects, contributing to an effectively critical, inclusive and transformative university education.

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