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Higher Education: The Learning Developed by Masters and Doctoral Students in Education During the Internationalization Process

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ABSTRACT

In the current situation it is considered necessary to develop practices and initiatives related to internationalization during the educational process of Higher Education, intending to prepare students to act and live in a globalized world. Thus, it becomes relevant that higher education institutions seek to promote activities that provide internationalization to students, covering issues such as academic mobility, interaction with international researchers, participation, and presentation of scientific studies at international events, development of comparative research based on global problems, among others. In this sense, the present study aims to analyze the learning developed by Postgraduate students in Education, through experiences developed in the internationalization process, during their academic. The study is characterized as a qualitative research, with data collection carried out through an online questionnaire, containing multiple answers and dissertative questions, applied to master and doctoral students. The collected data were analyzed using the Discursive Textual Analysis (DTA). The theoretical foundation of this study is developed in the light of authors such as Marília Costa Morosini, Luciane Stallivieri, Jos Beelen, Jane Knight, Betty Leask, among others. In this study, it was possible to realize the relevance of internationalization for graduate students, providing opportunities for the development of international, intercultural knowledge, skills, and values, aligned with the current demands to live and work in an increasingly interconnected world.

KEYWORDS

Internationalization. Learning. Graduate students. Higher education.

Educação Superior: As Aprendizagens Construídas por Mestrandos e Doutorandos em Educação Durante o Processo de internacionalização

RESUMO

Na atual conjuntura, considera-se necessário o desenvolvimento de práticas e iniciativas vinculadas à internacionalização no decorrer do processo educativo da Educação Superior, visando preparar estudantes para atuar e viver em um mundo globalizado. Desse modo, torna-se relevante que as instituições de Educação Superior busquem promover atividades que propiciem a internacionalização aos discentes, contemplando questões como a mobilidade acadêmica, a interação com pesquisadores internacionais, a participação e a apresentação de estudos científicos em eventos internacionais, o desenvolvimento de pesquisas comparativas a partir de problemas globais, entre outros. Neste sentido, o presente estudo visa analisar as aprendizagens construídas pelos estudantes de Pós-graduação em Educação, mediante experiências desenvolvidas no processo de internacionalização, durante os seus percursos de formação acadêmica. O estudo é caracterizado como uma pesquisa qualitativa, com coleta de dados realizada através de questionário *on-line*, contendo questões fechadas e abertas, aplicada junto a mestrandos e doutorandos. Os dados coletados foram analisados por intermédio da Análise Textual Discursiva (ATD). A fundamentação teórica do estudo se desenvolveu à luz de autores como Marília Costa Morosini, Luciane Stallivieri, Jos Beelen, Jane Knight, Betty Leask, dentre outros. Com este estudo, foi possível perceber a relevância da internacionalização para os estudantes de Pós-graduação, oportunizando o desenvolvimento de conhecimentos, habilidades e valores internacionais e interculturais, em consonância com as demandas atuais para viver e trabalhar num mundo cada vez mais interconectado.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Internacionalização. Aprendizagens. Estudantes de pós-graduação. Educação superior.

Educación Superior: El Aprendizaje Construido por Estudiantes de Máster y Doctorado en Educación Durante el Proceso de Internacionalización

RESUMEN

En la actual coyuntura se considera necesario el desarrollo de prácticas e iniciativas vinculadas a la internacionalización en el transcurso del proceso educativo de la Educación Superior, buscando preparar a los estudiantes para actuar y vivir en un mundo globalizado. Por lo tanto, se hace relevante que las instituciones de Educación Superior busquen promover actividades que propicien la internacionalización a los discentes, contemplando cuestiones como la movilidad académica, la interacción con investigadores internacionales, la participación y la presentación de estudios científicos en eventos internacionales, el desarrollo de investigaciones comparativas a partir de problemas globales, entre otros. En este sentido, el presente estudio busca analizar los aprendizajes construidos por los estudiantes de postgrado en Educación, mediante experiencias desarrolladas en el proceso de internacionalización, durante sus itinerarios de formación académica. El estudio se caracteriza como una investigación cualitativa, con recogida de datos realizada por medio de un cuestionario en línea, conteniendo preguntas cerradas y abiertas, aplicada junto a alumnos de máster y doctorado. Los datos recogidos fueron analizados a través del Análisis textual discursivo (ATD). La fundamentación teórica del estudio se desarrolla a la luz de autores como Marília Costa Morosini, Luciane Stallivieri, Jos Beelen, Jane Knight, Betty Leask, entre otros. Con este estudio, fue posible percibir la relevancia de la internacionalización para los estudiantes de postgrado, favoreciendo el desarrollo de conocimientos, habilidades y valores internacionales e interculturales, en consonancia con las demandas actuales de vivir y trabajar en un mundo cada vez más interconectado.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Internacionalización. Aprendizaje. Estudiantes de posgrado. Educación superior.

1 Introduction

In the current situation, it is considered necessary the development of practices and initiatives linked to internationalization during the educational process of Higher Education, aiming to prepare students to act and live in a globalized world. According to the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES, 2017), the internationalization process is a relevant issue, which needs to be developed in order for this level of education to effectively contribute to the requirements and challenges of globalised society.

For UNESCO (2016), an increasingly globalized world raises questions about the constitution of meaningful citizenship and its global dimensions. Gradually, throughout history, the understanding of the concept of citizenship was being expanded. Initially, citizenship was restricted to people who owned property. Gradually and especially in the last century, under the influence of the development of civil, political and social rights, the notion of national citizenship was established, with different views from the contexts of each country. Nowadays, with changes in the global context, such as the growth of transnational organizations, the establishment of international conventions and treaties on various themes, and the understanding of universal human rights, discuss citizenship in a global perspective.

Global citizenship corresponds to the feeling of belonging to a wider community and a common humanity. This type of citizenship emphasizes issues related to interdependence and political, economic, social and cultural interconnection between the different levels of coverage: local, national and global. It is noteworthy that the increased interest in global citizenship generated greater attention related to the global dimension of citizenship education, as well as its impact on policies, curricula, the teaching and learning process (UNESCO, 2016).

The internationalization of HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) can promote significant changes in the lives of students and has an increasing role for science through the intense exchange of academic knowledge, thus enabling, the development of social capacities and conditions economic (CAPES, 2017).

It is understood that it is important that students have internationalization experiences in different places and perspectives. Because, through opportunities related to internationalization, students will be able to share ideas and experiences, acquiring diverse learning with people from other countries and other cultures, who can contribute to their personal, academic and professional development.

In this perspective, Brazilian universities have sought to promote activities that further internationalization to students, involving academic mobility, interaction with researchers and participation in international events, development of comparative research from global problems, among others.

In view of the questions presented, it is worth noting that this study aims to analyse the learning stemming from Graduate students in Education, through experiences developed in the internationalization process, during their academic training courses.

2 Higher Education

Brazil (2010) mentions that *stricto sensu* Graduate Studies refer to the last stage of formal education and are linked to other levels of education, since its students come from the stages of education prior to this educational stage.

Morosini (2009) reports that in Brazil, Graduate Studies (GS) are developed through public policies reflecting global and sectorial plans, which began to be developed in 1970. GS is a trainer of human resources considered high level and, therefore, constitutes one of the bases of the National System of Science and Technology (SNC&T), being an indispensable factor for the development of the country.

According to CAPES (2014) there are some fundamental characteristics that should be present in the levels of Graduate Course *stricto sensu* - Masters and Doctorates: being of an academic and research nature, and even when it is focused on sectors professionals should have an essentially scientific objective.

CAPES (2014) also addresses that there are three practical objectives that justify the need to offer efficient and high quality Masters and Doctoral Courses:

1. training of competent teacher to meet the demand at the levels of basic and higher education, ensuring the constant improvement of quality;
2. stimulate the development of scientific research through the proper preparation of researchers;
3. ensure effective training to technicians and intellectual professionals of the highest standard to meet the needs of national development in all sectors.

According to Dellors et al. (1999), for education to respond to its objectives, it must be organized in relation to four fundamental learning's, which will be considered for each individual throughout life, considered as the pillars of knowledge: learning to know, that is, to acquire the instruments of understanding; learn to do, that is, act on the environment involved; learning to live together, which aims to participate and cooperate with others in all human activities; and learn to be, which refers to the essential path that integrates the three precedents. It is worth noting that these four ways of knowledge constitute only one, due to the fact that there are multiple points of contact, relationship and exchange among them.

In this perspective, it is perceived that, in the current contemporary moment, it is up to higher education to promote the development of knowledge, skills, competencies, attitudes and values, which are related to the demands imposed by the society of the knowledge. Today's society radically distances itself from industrial society, with the intention of constituting itself as an information society, or more appropriately, in a knowledge society (CAVICHOLI, 2015).

This implies saying that such a society is in the process of being constructed, requiring contextualized and significant changes, in terms of qualitative advances, in the educational sphere. Therefore, Graduate Studies must make a commitment to prepare students for learning that dialogues with local and international contexts. This implies saying that it is essential that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) contemplate internationalization in their curricula.

3 Internationalization

According to Morosini and Ustárroz (2016) the internationalization of education is one of the most relevant impact factors of Higher Education and, especially, of university teaching. In this historical moment, referring to the society of knowledge and globalization, it is perceived that internationalization is inherent to the university institution, being a means for the development of research and the teaching and learning process. This, in turn, can enable the construction of global citizenship, through an internationalized curriculum and development of intercultural skills.

An internationalized curriculum aims to involve students with international research, cultural and linguistic diversity, in order to develop their international and intercultural perspectives as professionals and global citizens (LEASK, 2014).

For Knight (2012) internationalization is a means or a process to improve or achieve goals, not a purpose in it. Internationalization can help to develop knowledge, skills and international and intercultural values among those involved in the educational process – through improvements in teaching and learning, international mobility and a curriculum that includes comparative, international and intercultural elements.

In this sense, it is important to emphasize that, in terms of education, the objective of including internationalization is not only to obtain a more internationalized curriculum, nor to achieve an increase in academic mobility by itself, but it is, fundamentally, to ensure that individuals are prepared to live and work in an increasingly interconnected world. To this end, it is necessary to understand internationalization as a means to achieve a certain aim, and not as an end in itself, ensuring that the international dimension is sustainably integrated into the main functions of teaching and learning in Higher Education, research and knowledge production to better serve the community and society (KNIGHT, 2012).

According to CAPES (2017), internationalization should be encouraged in a broad way, through the mobility of students and teachers, the exchange of ideas, and the integration of the international dimension to teaching, research and extension, functions of Institutions Higher Education.

Internationalization can be understood as a comprehensive and dynamic process, involving teaching, research and the provision of services to society, which is a valuable resource that can favour higher education becoming more intertwined to requirements and challenges of a globalised society.

The interest in internationalizing the curricula of higher education institutions has increased in recent years. The internationalized curriculum should offer international and intercultural knowledge and skills, aiming to prepare students for professional, social and emotional performance in an international and multicultural context (BEELEN, 2007).

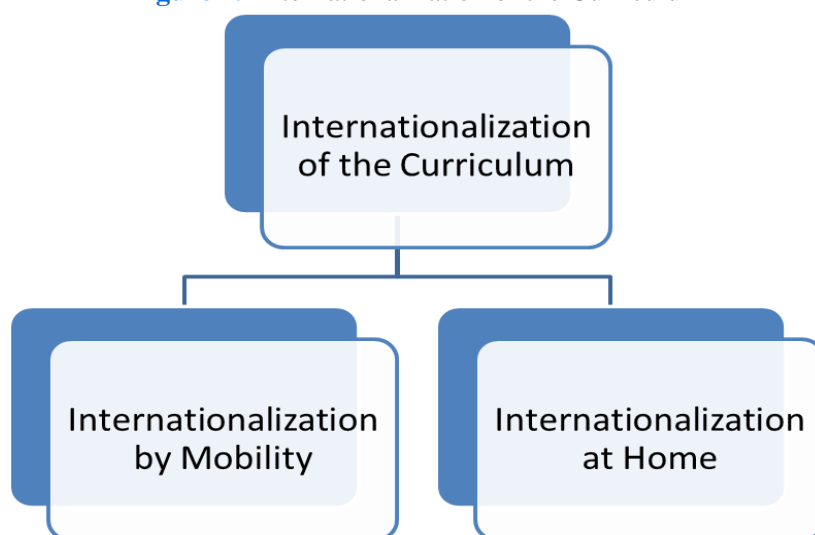
There are different types of internationalization that these institutions can contemplate in their curricula, as well as the internationalization by mobility and internationalization at home.

According to Stallivieri (2009), internationalization by academic mobility seeks to ensure that students have direct contact with the international reality, including the constant exchange of information, experiences and livingness, and the development of global competencies for working in multicultural environments, favouring the formation of people sensitive to cultural differences and providing the construction of universal values (flexibility, tolerance, understanding, mutual respect, understanding cultural differences).

For Beelen (2007) internationalization at home refers to several types of activities related at international level, but this type of internationalization does not include the activity focused on the external mobility of students and/or employees. The main component of internationalization at home corresponds to an internationalized curriculum that allows non-mobile students to acquire intercultural and international skills at home.

From this perspective, the internationalization of the curriculum can contemplate the internationalization by mobility and internationalization at home, as can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Internationalization of the Curriculum



Source: Figure elaborated by the authors based on reading sources (2020).

Ramos (2011) approaches that living, working, communicating and educating in a multicultural context requires the development of various competencies, such as individual competencies that enable social interactions in a harmonious way between people and

cultures, avoiding behaviour stemming from intolerance, discrimination and exclusion; intercultural skills, especially focused on linguistic, communicational and pedagogical issues, with a view to facilitating communication and intercultural awareness and also promoting competent and inclusive education and intervention. The development of these competencies contributes to the formation of professionals and citizens who are sensitive, committed and respectful of diversity, thus favouring the democratic functioning of institutions and societies. Language is the main tool for individuals to communicate and access any culture, thus, although not enough, language teaching plays an important role in enabling intercultural communication and citizenship education.

In a comprehensive perspective, the internationalization of the curriculum of higher education institutions should aim to ensure that students develop skills and competencies that enable them to interact as citizens and future professionals in an international and globalized environment.

4 Methodology

According to Moraes and Galiazzi (2011) qualitative research has been widely used in textual analyses, through documents, interviews and observations. This type of research aims to deepen the understanding of the phenomena that investigates through a rigorous and careful analysis. Discursive textual analysis refers to a methodology of data analysis and information of qualitative nature with the purpose of producing new understandings related to phenomena and discourses.

According to these authors, discursive textual analysis is developed through the disassembly of texts (unit process), the establishment of relationships (categorization), the capture of the new emerging (new understanding, called *metatext*) and a process self-organized (analysis cycle). In this process, writing aims to: the production of new understandings and valid and consistent communication.

Thus, the objective was to analyse the learning stemming from master's and doctoral students in Education, through experiences developed in the internationalization process, during their academic training courses. For this, an online questionnaire was used, containing five open and closed questions. The questionnaire was answered by the study participants, who refer to twelve (12) students of a Graduate Program in Education of a community university located in Southern Brazil.

The Graduate Program in Education in which the research took place has approximately 17 teachers, permanent and collaborators, and has around 110 students. The educational institution, through government programs and inter institutional partnerships, has sought to offer opportunities for internationalization by mobility, in addition to participation in collaborative networks and international research. The university provides an International Portal that allows managers, professors, students and servants of the technical-administrative

staff to read various contents, such as information regarding opportunities for academic mobility, international agreements and research, providing reflection on the theme of internationalization and its multiple views. This institution considers that the internationalization process is a means to promote the opening of the university in relation to the challenges presented today, which is an important element to facilitate interactions between different cultures and worldviews.

5 Discussion and Results

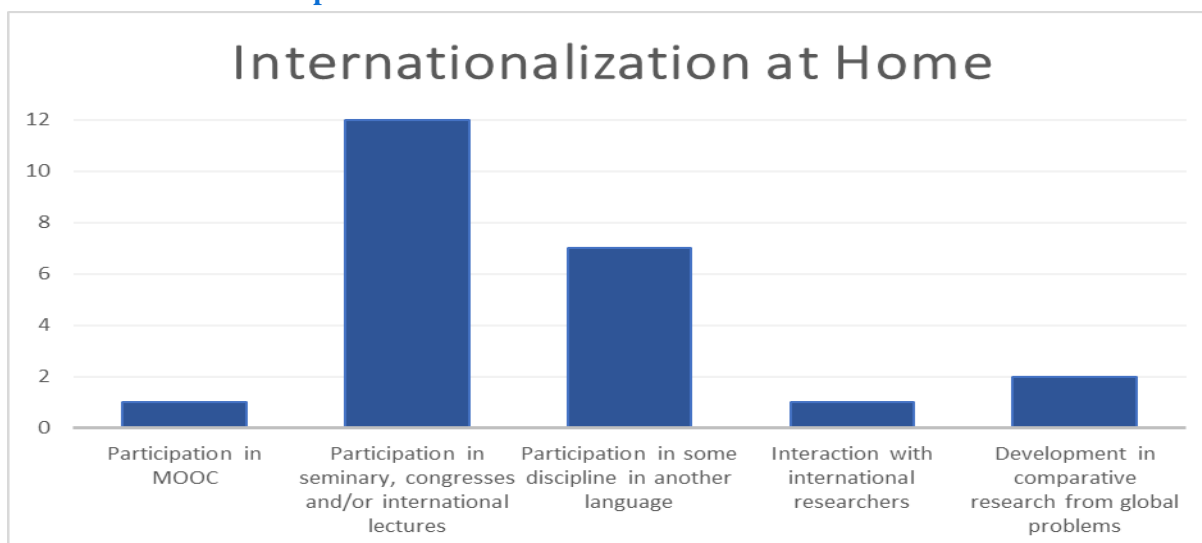
To analyse the responses of the participants of this study, the stages of Discursive Textual Analysis (ATD) were rigorously developed. Through this process, the phase of deconstruction of the corpus was carried out in units of meaning, which were catalogued with a specific code, i.e., E1 - P1 - U1. The code "E" means student and the number "1" represents it as the first, "P" corresponds to the question and the number "1" identifies the question that was answered, and "U" refers to the unit of meaning related to the question asked and the number "1" identifies the first part of such a unit.

From this, the unit process and categorization process were carried out, thus three final categories were constituted, namely: the types of internationalization, the learning developed in the internationalization process and the importance of internationalization of the HEI curriculum. Thus, for the elaboration of this study, these three categories allowed the development of arguments for the research object, that is, to analyse the learning stemming from university students, through experiences developed in the internationalization process, during their periods of academic training.

Next will be presented the *metatext* of Discursive Textual Analysis (ATD), which seeks to explain the relationships, between the categories obtained, in order to constitute a unifying argument and produce new meanings.

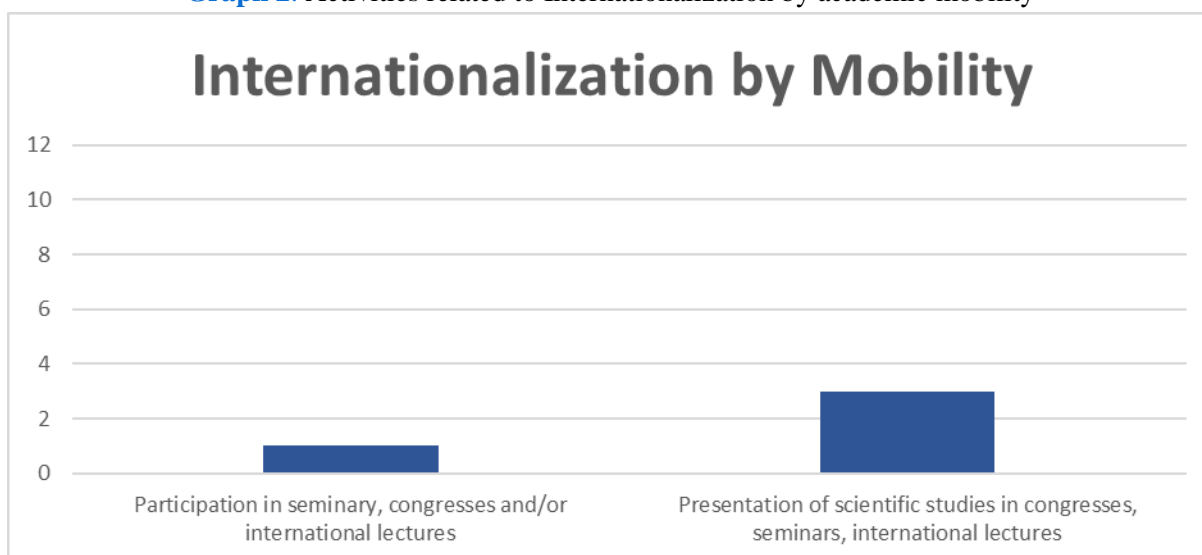
5.1 The types of internationalization

The students highlighted some activities related to internationalization at home and mobility internationalization, which they had the opportunity to experience during the course of the Master's or Doctorate Course in Education, which were promoted by the university in which they study. This can be seen in Graphs 1 and 2.

Graph 1. Activities related to Internationalization at Home

Source: prepared by the authors (2019).

Graph 1 shows that only 1 (8.3%) student participated in Massive and Open *Online* Courses (MOOC), interacting with international teachers and colleagues; 1 (8,3%) student interacted with international researchers; 2 (16,7%) students developed comparative research based on general problems; 8 (66,7%) students participated in a discipline in another language developed by a foreign professor at the university in which he/she studies; all students (100%) participated in international congresses, seminars and/or lectures, which were held at the university where they study.

Graph 2. Activities related to Internationalization by academic mobility

Source: Prepared by the authors (2019).

Graph 2 shows that only 1 (8.3 %) of the students participated in congresses, seminars and/or international lectures, and 3 (25%) presented scientific studies at conferences, seminars and/or international lectures.

For Beelen (2007) the traditional forms of internationalization do not reach a significant number of students, because it is clear that only a minority of higher education students can go abroad. Thus, it's understood that, in order to reach the majority of students, it's necessary to internationalize the curricula for all students.

In this sense, it can be observed in the graphs presented that higher education institutions have sought to contemplate in their curricula different types of activities linked to internationalization by mobility and internationalization at home. It is noticed that internationalization at home included a greater number of activities and participation of students.

That is, when the students were asked about the reason that led them to develop this type/s of internationalization, student 1 reported the following:

"Qualify my career." (E1- P2 - U1)

For student 4, the purpose of this process is to:

"Share knowledge with people trained in other contexts. Train foreign language." (E4 - P2 - U1)

Student 7 addressed that such immersion occurred:

"Resulting to knowledge and professional improvement." (E7 - P2 - U1)

Student 8 revealed that the:

"Internationalization activities at home are more accessible." (E8 - P2 - U1)

Finally, student 12 points out that his experience in the internationalization process occurs:

"Since graduation I have invested in events inside and outside Brazil and in these other tools, in order to improve my knowledge and have new experiences and differentials in my career." (E12 - P2 - U1)

In view of the issues mentioned, it is understood that internationalization at home and that performed by mobility can provide students with the acquisition of international skills (foreign language skills and knowledge on issues political, cultural, social and economic aspects of different countries) and intercultural (appreciation and respect for people from different countries and cultures). Thus, it is necessary to be analysed by universities if the learning objectives, referring to the internationalization process, were achieved by the students.

5.2 Learning developed in the internationalization process

According to Stallivieri (2017) the possibility of learning and acquiring knowledge from different perspectives, through opinions, other cultural manifestations and enriching linguistic capacity, makes a difference in the potential for knowledge, acquiring a higher

value. It is relevant in present time that students have the opportunity to interact with citizens from other cultures, who have other ways of understanding the same phenomena, speaking other languages and manifesting feelings and emotions in different ways. This opportunity is a unique moment, with great impact on the academic life of a university student, and should be valued and legitimized as an educational manifestation of high relevance.

The students highlighted that the internationalization process contributed to the development of their learning and presented some reports about the learning acquired through experiences developed during the process of internationalization at home and/or internationalization by mobility.

Regarding internationalization at home, student 3 addressed that:

"It contributed to the development of my learning, especially by the great experience that has the teacher who taught the discipline. The opportunity to know the reality of another country (USA) is very significant, to be able to compare with the Brazilian reality." (E3 - P3 - U1)

Student 5 mentioned that this type of internationalization provided to know other realities and what international researchers are studying. Student 9 adds that internationalization at home favoured the expansion of knowledge about different cultures. Regarding academic mobility, the student 10 points out that this process made it possible to experience courses abroad and contact with colleagues from other nationalities.

In summary, in the mind of the student 7, both types of internationalization promote the development of knowledge and professional improvement. In student 4's conception, both internationalization at home and internationalization by mobility favour the sharing of knowledge with people trained in other contexts, foreign language training, comprehension about the multicultural aspect and pluralism of perspectives. However, this participant adds that, in his perception, academic mobility "allows the activation of a greater number of senses, has much deeper impacts than internationalization at home". (E4 - P4 - U1)

Also with reference to the internationalization by mobility, student 10 reports:

"I had the opportunity to experience the mobility process by participating in courses at the French School of the Judiciary in Paris and Bordeaux and it was highly positive, especially, the contact with colleagues from other nationalities."

According to Beelen (2007), students usually leave classes at the end of the day to return to their homes and their families do not speak a second language all the time, as they would if they were abroad, as well as end up not dealing with unknown circumstances. Thus, it can be affirmed that outbound mobility, immersion in a university located in another country, is a very valuable experience.

For Stallivieri (2017) the training at graduate level with complementation abroad has become highly valued, due to the new professional profile that is required by the labour market. This professional, in order to obtain a better placement in the professional environment, needs to qualify his/her curriculum, develop the skills related to his/her area of knowledge, have excellent mastery of foreign languages, ability to adapt in other contexts, good coexistence with people from different places/countries, understanding and acceptance of other cultural manifestations.

To do so, it is necessary for universities give opportunity all students an internationalized curriculum, so that they can broaden their worldview and develop the intercultural skills necessary for the globalized world.

5.3 The importance of internationalizing the HEI curriculum

Stallivieri (2017) addresses, that curricular internationalization is one of the most important elements of internationalization. But this element has still been little explored in Brazil, which requires immediate attention from institutional leaders and teachers. The internationalization process can generate benefits for each student, as well as the growth at the scientific, personal and professional level that each one can acquire with an international experience, whether lived abroad, whether living with several people from other countries on the university campus itself.

Thus, it is worth mentioning that the participants of this study consider it important that the Institution of Higher Education provide internationalization experiences to graduate students. Therefore, the student 12 justifies that cultural exchanges, the constructions of knowledge about different realities, the network of influences and inspirations that arise from dialogue and exchanges, inside and outside the university, are of great importance.

Regarding this subject, student 6 highlights the relevance of having the possibility of having access to what is being developed in other countries. In this bias, student 4 reports that "an internationalized education is the way to the integral formation of individuals in the globalized world" (E4 - P5 - U1). Thus, it becomes evident that the opportunity of internationalization experiences enriches the formation of students, which was mentioned by the student 8.

Stallivieri (2017) states that society expects Higher Education Institutions to act proactively in relation to internationalization, aiming to enable the preparation of qualified people for new professional needs, making them more qualified. To do so, it is necessary to prepare them with foreign language knowledge and with understanding about various countries and cultures, with greater breadth in the fields of knowledge and information mastery, with good relationship of cooperation and academic exchanges, with a clear understanding of the need to share scientific and technological advances with the various world societies, and to become protagonists of a new international education.

6 Final Considerations

With this study, it was possible to perceive the relevance of internationalization for graduate students, providing opportunities for the development of international and intercultural knowledge, skills and values, in line with current demands to live and work in an increasingly interconnected world.

In addition to the experiences of academic mobility, the opportunities for internationalization at home, through an internationalized curriculum and interaction in projects and events with international researchers, among other possibilities, bring, according to the authors Beelen (2007) and Stallivieri (2017) and the subjects surveyed, great differential to academic education. Such opportunities, especially integrated with Graduate Programs, allow simultaneously accessing knowledge and scientific methodologies used in research groups from various locations around the world, as well as developing skills and broader perspectives of action, whether in local or global contexts, with significant impacts on the personal and professional development of students.

In this scenario, some points require attention. The distribution of resources to promote internationalization in Brazil is limited and, from an investment optimization perspective, ends up focusing on universities that are already recognized for their levels of excellence. Thus, teachers and students from most of the national HEIs who are not in this list compete for scarce edicts to promote research projects and mobility grants. With the logic established, centres of excellence are created in the country, but with limited impact on the national reality. In a global scenario, internationalization often becomes an instrument to rank universities and attract students and investments, not necessarily linked to the principles of formation of a global citizen aware of their actions and impact on the world.

Therefore, it is understood that it is essential that higher education institutions oppose internationalization experiences to all students, having as one of the strategies the internationalization at home, as well as that the national agencies and international research promotion summing up their policies, considering the radiated and comprehensive formative impact on society.

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