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Submetido: Jan. 19, 2024
Aceito: Feb. 21, 2024
Publicado: Apr. 21, 2024

 10.20396/riesup.v11i00.8675564
e-location: e025046

ISSN 2446-9424

Checamo Antiplagiarismo



Distribuído sobre



Factors promoting satisfaction among coordinators of doctoral programs at Portuguese universities: legal bases, contemporary contexts, and regulatory practices in the European context

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Objective: This article aims to reflect on the third cycle of Portuguese postgraduate studies, doctoral programs, to analyze the factors that promote the satisfaction of their coordinators, in the area of Education, in four Portuguese public universities, considering legal requirements, the contemporary European context, and current regulatory practices. **Methodology/Results:** The qualitative-quantitative study, with a bibliographic and documentary review, semi-structured interviews, and content analysis, showed the following results: that the level of satisfaction - moderate, high, or lack thereof - is related to three main dimensions: contextual challenges (COVID-19 pandemic, use of technology, and pressure experienced in the face of economic globalization), personal interests and values and those of the teaching team, and political influences (institutional, governmental, and European). **Conclusion:** The study reinforces that the University, as a legitimate space for the production of knowledge for social transformation, cannot shirk its legitimate function as a society with equality and equity, counterbalancing the effects of the current global economic hegemony.

KEYWORDS

Management satisfaction. Globalisation and education. Portuguese Universities. Higher Education Policies. ICT.

Coreografias didáticas e ensino de Ciências: a etapa da colocação em cena no processo formativo de pedagogos

RESUMO

Introdução/Objetivo: Este artigo trata sobre os fatores promotores de satisfação dos coordenadores, dos cursos do terceiro ciclo da pós-graduação portuguesa, programas de doutoramento, na área da Educação, em quatro universidades públicas portuguesas, tendo em vista as exigências legais, o contexto contemporâneo europeu e as práticas regulatórias vigentes. **Metodologia/Resultados:** O estudo de abordagem quali-quantitativa, com revisão bibliográfica e documental, entrevistas semiestruturadas e análise de conteúdo, sinalizou os seguintes resultados: que o nível de satisfação moderada, elevada, ou ausência dela, expressam relação com três grandes dimensões: desafios contextuais (pandemia do COVID 19, uso de tecnologia e pressão vivida frente à globalização econômica), interesses e valores pessoais e da equipe docente, e, influências políticas (Institucionais, Governamentais e Europeia). **Conclusão:** O estudo reforça que a Universidade, como espaço legítimo de produção de conhecimento para transformação social, não pode se eximir da sua função legítima de uma sociedade com igualdade e equidade, contrabalançando os efeitos da atual hegemonia econômica global.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Satisfação de gestores. Globalização e educação. Universidades portuguesas. Políticas de ensino superior. TIC.

Coreografías Didácticas y Enseñanza de Ciencias: la etapa de la puesta en escena en el proceso formativo de pedagogos

RESUMEN

Introducción/Objetivo: Este artículo pretende reflexionar sobre el tercer ciclo de los estudios de postgrado portugueses, los programas de doctorado, para analizar los factores que promueven la satisfacción de sus coordinadores, en el ámbito de la Educación, en cuatro universidades públicas portuguesas, teniendo en cuenta las exigencias legales, el contexto europeo contemporáneo y las prácticas normativas vigentes. **Metodología/Resultados:** El estudio cualitativo-cuantitativo, con revisión bibliográfica y documental, entrevistas semiestruturadas y análisis de contenido, reveló los siguientes resultados: que el nivel de satisfacción - moderado, alto o ausencia de satisfacción - está relacionado con tres dimensiones principales: desafíos contextuales (la pandemia del COVID-19, el uso de la tecnología y la presión experimentada ante la globalización económica), intereses y valores personales y del equipo docente, e influencias políticas (institucionales, gubernamentales y europeas). **Conclusión:** El estudio refuerza que la Universidad, como espacio legítimo de producción de conocimiento para la transformación social, no puede eludir su legítima función de sociedad con igualdad y equidad, contrarrestando los efectos de la actual hegemonía económica global.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Satisfacción en la gestión. Globalización y educación. Universidades portuguesas. Políticas de Educación Superior. TIC.

CRedit

- **Recognition:** Not applicable.
- **Financing:** Not applicable.
- **Conflicts of interest:** The authors certify that they have no commercial or associative interest that represents a conflict of interest in relation to the manuscript.
- **Ethical approval:** Approved by the Ethics Council of the Institute of Education of the University of Lisbon, under nº BI003107582, dated 10/06/2021.
- **Availability of data and material:** Institutional repository of the IE of ULisboa, at colibri.zoom.us, with videos of the interviews
- **Author contributions:** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project management, Resources, Validation, Visualization, Writing - original draft, Writing - Review & editing, Data curation, Software, Supervision: Gonzaga, K. V. P.; Pedro, N. S. G.
- **Translation:** Silvia Iacovacci - MEI

Section Editor: Andréia Aparecida Simão

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1 Introduction

For a long time, we have witnessed the emergence of a culture influenced by the Enlightenment, thinking that the more rational we are when it comes to understanding ourselves, others, and reality, the better able we will be to construct history according to our needs, freeing ourselves from the habits, values, and preconceptions of the past (Giddens, 2005).

According to this reasoning, the more science and technology developed, the more stable and orderly the world would be. However, what we see is that this hypothesis has not been proven.

Sociological thinking about the loss of control over the world is increasingly proliferating. Examples of crises today are climate problems, the expansion of war and inflationary phenomena that affect everyone, and the impact that the Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) pandemic has had on all human activities, particularly education.

This scenario stems from globalization, a process that has also had a strong impact on science and technology. Globalization has other dimensions, such as increasing inequalities, leading to other forms of risk, and social uncertainty. Even though it seems contradictory, it also brings new ideas. It is restructuring new ways of living, generating tensions that affect traditional ways of life, cultures, and religion, feeding fundamentalism, and resulting in a counterpoint between this and cosmopolitan tolerance, as Giddens (2005) has already stated.

On the other hand, globalization brings the expansion of democracy, the breaking down of geographical boundaries and the loss of the autonomy of parliamentary power.

How can we put this dichotomous world back on track?

Nor can we deny globalization, which is present all over the world and tends to amplify itself. However, we cannot globalize only in the economic sphere, without expanding it to the social sphere because we cannot minimize its power over our lives; it is also present in the political, technological, cultural, and world communication spheres. It is not a simple process; it involves a complex network of processes. And it is not a simple exchange of power or influence from the local to the global level.

This is why we encounter resistance of many kinds because, by globalizing markets and developing them beyond national borders, the nation loses a large part of its sovereignty, which is now shared, and politicians lose a large part of their ability to influence events in their territories. However, they can gain more power if they are committed to working with those who suffer most from the consequences of this type of global policy to find viable alternatives for overcoming its consequences, negatively impacting the lives of this great mass, because added to their power comes the power of those to whom they contribute, and thus have less social loss.

Sharing the ideas of American sociologist Stephen Ball (2001), these contradictions can be explained by the fact that countries become too small to solve the big problems, but too big to solve the small ones.

And considering this line of reasoning, we cannot, at this point, disregard the context in which the policies and practices adopted by Higher Education Institutions are established, the field in which this research falls and develops.

In Portugal, how does this globalization manifest itself? How have public policies in the field of education protected themselves from the damaging influences of economic globalization, and contributed to this social globalization, or not? And how have they materialized in higher education institutions, particularly in advanced postgraduate teaching practices? At this level, how satisfied or not are their managers with their management, with the definition of the course/specialty project, with the curriculum proposal, with the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the use of technologies, and with the requirement for Emergency Remote Education (ERE)? How does the advance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) affect education at the level studied, considered the highest level of training for professionals in this field, and particularly in this pandemic and post-pandemic moment? What are the prospects, or not, for the much-needed expansion of distance education in Portugal, which, despite its small size (92,212km²), and having 123 public institutions and around 60 private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), is unable to reach everyone, for example, those who live in regions far from universities, or those workers who are unable to fit in university time and attend courses in person?

We set out to study the third cycle of postgraduate studies in the field of education at four Portuguese public universities with national and international notoriety in this area, with 10 coordinators of doctoral programs who accepted the invitation to take part in the research in the Portuguese academic year 2021-22. With the study of this first stage, we sought to answer the questions listed above, based on the identification and analysis of the level of satisfaction with course management practices, by the managers themselves.

2 The methodological path

The investigative process of this first stage of the research we are dealing with in this article was built in three stages, to answer the questions raised above. Firstly, theoretical research, through a bibliographic survey of the subject and related concepts, legal, normative, and guidance documents from the Portuguese Ministry of Science and Technology (MCT) and the Higher Education Assessment and Accreditation Agency (A3ES). Moreover, documents from the European Union (EU), related to the policies established by these entities to regulate Portuguese Higher Education, which served to define the context and foundations of the discourse, demonstrating to the reader where we are starting from and where we are going.

Secondly, the empirical part (whose script was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Institute of Education of the University of Lisbon, under No. 3351, dated 06/10/2021), where we collected data, through a semi-structured interview survey, carried out online, using the Zoom tool (except one interviewee, who requested that it be face-to-face, (except for one interviewee, who asked for it to be face-to-face, but this was also recorded), with ten PhD in Education Course/Specialty Coordinators (C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9 and C10), from four Portuguese Public Universities (U1, U2, U3 and U4), who accepted the invitation to take part in the interviews, to measure the satisfaction rates of the practice of managers (Chagas; Pedro, 2017a; 2017b), based on the dimension: Management of the course by the manager, and its respective categories and subcategories, expressed in graphs (using the following categories: “dissatisfaction”, since it is not part of the coordinator's management or does not develop it, “moderate satisfaction” when it meets part of the coordinator's expectations and “high satisfaction” when it meets most or all of the coordinator's expectations.

And in the third stage, we synthesized the data, considering the context built in the first stage and the data collected in the second stage, and then began the process of categorizing and analyzing the content of this data, as proposed by Bardin (2016).

Content analysis consists of three stages: pre-analysis, exploration of the material (from which we categorized the data) and treatment of the results (Bardin, 2016). The research is thus classified as theoretical-empirical, with a qualitative-qualitative approach.

Content analysis helped to gauge the satisfaction rates of managers in relation to the emerging categories of the dimension investigated, indicated in table 1, serving as an instrument to identify the devices and determinants of the context of course management, considering the analysis between HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) for the purposes of this article.

Table 1. Categories of Analysis

DIMENSION/SATISFACTION	CATEGORIES	SUPPORT MATERIALS
How satisfied coordinators are with their management of the course/specialty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Course/Specialty Design, Curriculum, and Practice ❖ Design, Ambience and Technological Training ❖ Acting as Course/Specialty Manager 	Interviews University websites National Normative Documents from the Ministry of Science and Technology (MCT) and A3ES
TRANSVERSAL DIMENSIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Contextual Challenges (Pandemic, use of technology, economic globalization) ❖ Personal and team interests and values ❖ Political influences (institutional, governmental and European) 	

Source: Table drawn up by the authors

We also carried out a dialog between the data on the level of satisfaction of the course/specialty managers and their perceptions of the influences of the university's internal and external context underlying their statements, resulting in the identification of the cross-cutting dimensions shown in Chart I. Both the cross-cutting dimensions and the sub-categories emerged during the content analysis.

3 On the third postgraduate cycle in Portugal and its regulation in the context of Portuguese Higher Education

According to the official website of Portugal's Directorate General for Higher Education (DGES), supported by the Basic Law of the Educational System (Law no. 46/1986), the doctoral degree (3rd cycle of postgraduate studies) is awarded in a branch of knowledge or specialty to those who demonstrate:

- a) Capacity for systematic understanding in a scientific field of study;
- b) Competences, skills, and research methods associated with a scientific field;
- c) Ability to conceive, design, adapt and carry out significant research while respecting the requirements imposed by the standards of academic quality and integrity;
- d) To have carried out a significant body of original research that has contributed to expanding the frontiers of knowledge, part of which merits national or international dissemination in publications with a selection committee;
- e) Be able to critically analyze, evaluate and synthesize new and complex ideas;
- f) Be able to communicate with their peers, the rest of the academic community and society in general about the area in which they specialize;
- g) Be able, in a knowledge-based society, to promote technological, social or cultural progress in an academic or professional context (Portugal/DGES, s.d.a. digital).

Its curricular structure includes

- The preparation of an original thesis, especially for this purpose, appropriate to the nature of the branch of knowledge or specialty, or the compilation of a coherent and relevant set of research works, or, in the field of the arts, a work, or set of works or achievements, accompanied by written reasons.
- The possible completion of curricular units aimed at training for research, the whole of which is called a doctoral course, whenever the respective regulations provide for this (Portugal/DGES, s.d.a., digital).

Thus, the doctoral degree is awarded to those who have passed the public act of defending their thesis. The duration of the study cycle and the number of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits are not defined in advance, and it is up to the competent body of each Higher Education Institution (HEI) to approve the curricular structure and study plan, when the HEIs so define (there are doctorates that do not offer curricular subjects in their study cycles), as well as guidelines on thesis structure, orientation, presentation, defense and jury, based on the relevant legislation. (Portugal/DGES, 1986, 2005, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2008, 2009, 2013, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2021).

However, in order for the course to start operating, it must be registered with the Directorate General for Higher Education (DGES) and receive accreditation from the Agency for Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education (A3ES). The concept of quality expressed by A3ES is based on the principles of Quality Assurance in Higher Education, defined based on standards established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

In the development of Law No. 38/2007 (Portugal/A3ES, 2007a), of August 16, which approves the new legal framework for quality in higher education, it is:

Established by the State through Decree-Law no. 369/2007 (Portugal, 2007), of November 5, the Agency for the Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education (A3ES), is a foundation under private law, constituted for an indefinite period, endowed with legal personality and recognized as being of public utility. It is independent in the exercise of its competences, without prejudice to the guiding principles legally established by the State (Portugal/A3ES, s.d.a, digital).

In addition to the legislation established by the DGES, A3ES also has its own specific regulations and resolutions, per legislative framework (Portugal/DGES, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2009).

The main objective of A3ES (A32ES, 2021-2024) is to improve the quality of the performance of HEIs and their study cycles, and to guarantee compliance with the basic requirements for their official recognition, particularly in the European context. The concept of quality expressed by A3ES is based on the principles of Quality Assurance in Higher Education defined by the European Evaluation Association, based on standards defined by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

The assessment and accreditation of higher education study cycles by A3ES is guided by principles that are valued in the globalization scenario, particularly in Europe, in the following areas:

- a) Quality: guaranteeing the quality of HEI activities according to the aforementioned standards;
- b) Flexibility: respect for the characteristics of each study cycle and each HEI, and the particular way in which it builds its autonomy;
- c) Transparency and simplicity that should result in trust: A3ES decisions need to be clear, transparent, objective, well-founded and pedagogical in nature;
- d) Trust: relations between A3ES and the HEIs need to be based on building mutual trust, guaranteeing balanced and convergent joint performance, respecting the autonomy of the HEI in the pursuit of quality standards, with the Agency only having monitoring functions;
- e) Social Responsibility: a cross-cutting axis that should characterize all the actions of the HEIs as a whole, for the qualification of individuals, for the production of science and for social development.

Through its Studies and Analysis Office, A3ES has focused its attention on several priorities, including mapping the state of doctoral education in Portugal, specifically the configurations assumed by doctoral programs, and integrating the following projects/studies:

What do we talk about when we talk about doctoral education? The perspectives of Portuguese universities and doctoral students: how doctoral education is characterized and what constitutes doctoral education, both from the perspective of universities and doctoral students, in the Portuguese case; Quality of doctoral education in Portugal: analysis and proposed revision of the GAA for the evaluation of Doctoral Study Cycles, in the light of the requirements of Decree-Law 65/2018, of August 16 (identification of research centers associated with doctoral programs and cross-referencing with FCT classification) (Portugal/A3ES, s.d.a, digital).

There is an intention to know how to evaluate, considering the scientific productivity parameter, also used by the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), an agency of the Ministry of Science and Technology, which is the main funder of scholarships and scientific research units in the country, in the different areas of knowledge.

There is thus evidence that there is a greater interest in looking at the reality of doctoral education in the field of Education in Portugal and verifying the quality expressed in the speeches of the coordinators of doctoral courses at the Portuguese universities participating in the research.

3.1 *The vision of quality in Portuguese literature and legal and regulatory documents*

How have Portuguese universities, as centers for the production of knowledge, and their professionals, as critical mass trainers, received the policies expressed in international agendas, legal texts and guidance documents, laden with this globalizing and standardizing thinking in Portuguese higher education?

The literature has pointed out, in various respects, that this dichotomy between the university as a democratic and autonomous space for the production of knowledge, and standardizing political guidelines, is an issue that is no longer on the agenda. It is an issue that is already overdue, because these global policies, instead of achieving the stated goal of harmoniously integrating economies, politics, culture, and societies around the world, or at least in Europe, with globalization, end up imposing standards and lifestyles that will interfere with overcoming inequality, the search for equity, and social progress.

This phenomenon ends up generating what Boaventura Santos (2002) calls a vast field of conflicts between social groups, the state and hegemonic interests, on the one hand, and social groups, the state and subaltern interests, on the other, thus postponing a model of a more egalitarian, more equitable, and therefore more harmonious and happy society (Morgado, 2009; Moreira, 2019; Anderson-Levitt, 2003; Spring, 2015; Stephen, 2002; Dias Sobrinho, 2005).

And the great project of internationalization of education, in this context, does not happen in isolation, as it presupposes cooperation in different areas and at different levels, but does not come across institutions that enter the process on an equal footing, deepening distances, moving away from establishing South-South cooperation to establishing North-South cooperation (Gonzaga, 2017; 2022).

For the purposes of this article, we are considering the view of Santos and Meneses (2010, op cit Gonzaga, 2017) in relation to the concept of the South, where they explain that these authors: "(...) seek to detach the concept of the South from its geographical character. For them, the South is conceived metaphorically as a field of epistemic challenges that seek to repair the damage and impacts historically caused by capitalism in its colonial relationship with the world" (Gonzaga, 2017, p. 151).

In this colonial relationship, the “excellent” HEIs tend to focus on research, with funding, and the others on teaching, becoming instrumental and unable to compete in the "educational market," since the requirements to compete for funding are so great that only a few universities that have already been able to achieve “excellence” can do so, without having a policy of putting the others in the same position, bringing consequences for those who use one university or another, as Morgado (2009) reflects in relation to the market in general, when he says:

All these facts have contributed to the fact that the announced prosperity, resulting from internationalization, the progressive replacement of the state by the market in the field of social regulation, the free movement of capital and the creation of a global market economy, which together would bring the most disadvantaged closer to the minimum acceptable levels of development, remains far below what would be desirable, serving the interests of certain financial circuits and large multinationals more than the sustained creation of wealth, the dilution of inequalities and the reduction of poverty in the most deprived regions (Morgado, 2009, p.41).

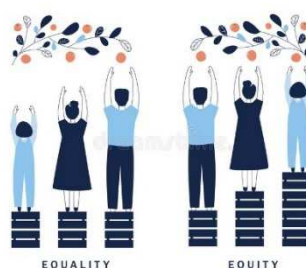
Thus, the wear and tear of the search for the democratization of education as a social right, with public institutions being responsible for its realization, is gradually replaced by the

discourse of quality and excellence, the basis for hegemonic economic modernization, making HEIs entrepreneurial, meritocratic, competitive and exclusionary entities in the academic and market environment, distorting them from one of their main purposes: To transmit a common culture, being a concrete expression of the culture of the society in which it is inserted (in the case of Portugal, of Portuguese knowledge and culture), a function of the university, which does not allow it to turn its back on its people and history, which does not allow it to forget that everything it produces, in the first instance, must serve the social reality, of which it is a part. And by contributing to its reality, it will consequently be able to contribute in solidarity with other similar realities.

Returning to the discussion of higher education in the knowledge society, in the context of globalization, by fulfilling the function of producing and socializing knowledge, it ends up being a fundamental instrument for the development of countries, and internationalization is a privileged means of participating in the international dimension of education and scientific research. And knowing this, with a view to competing in the international market and revitalizing higher education, one of the European Community's first initiatives was to create strategies for defining a common educational area, choosing the path of “standardizing quality” in European higher education, disregarding the differences, mainly cultural and economic, of each country, but also the vocation of each university and locality.

To guarantee equality between them, they must first be differentiated, i.e., differentiated in order to equalize, as shown metaphorically in Figure 1. In other words, in order for equality to occur, equitable strategies are needed.

Figure 1. Equity



Source: Igualdade Ilustrações, Vetores E Clipart De Stock – (83,490 Stock Illustrations) (dreamstime.com)

Castro (2011) cites another impact caused by globalization, using as a strategy, in the case of Europe, the Bologna Process (intergovernmental reform at European level aimed at achieving the European Higher Education Area), citing Antunes (2008, op cit Castro, 2011):

Analyzing the Bologna Process, and the way it was instituted, Antunes (2008) admits that, we are facing an innovative way of making educational policies, in which governments define commitments in supranational forums, ratified by national institutions, which, on a voluntary basis, give legitimate adherence to the absence of institutionalized processes. The Bologna Process aims to increase productivity and attractiveness, but it also involves continuous learning practices and

overcoming bureaucratic obstacles. From this perspective, we can say that the reflections and evaluations around the processes now being implemented in Europe with the aim of expanding and improving the quality of higher education have prioritized the economic nature of these processes. These initiatives reinforce the elitist nature of higher education, since international education remains an experience accessible to only a few, considering the investment required to carry it out. (Castro, 2011, p. 11)

We really can't deny that the Bologna Process is a step forward in the way education policies are made supra-national, but what needs to be questioned is the interests and values behind it, the strategies used to implement it, who it is for and who it is against, because it is not a neutral process. And if, above all, it will bring benefits for the advancement of the Universities and the Nation of all the countries in the European Union bloc, particularly the Portuguese ones. Let's see how this translates into legal texts in Portugal.

According to Decree-Law no. 74/2006, of March 24, 2006 (Portugal/DGES, 2006), Portugal's entry into the Bologna Process premises in Portuguese higher education is made politically official, and in its introductory document we find:

The Program of the XVII Government was established as one of the essential objectives of the policy for higher education, in the period 2005–2009 to guarantee the qualification of the Portuguese in the European space, making the Bologna Process a unique opportunity to encourage attendance at higher education, improve the quality and relevance of the training offered, foster the mobility of our students and graduates, and the internationalization of our training (Portugal/DGES 2006).

However, by not differentiating between the contexts of each country, disregarding their challenges and especially their economy, Portuguese universities have trained many young people who, on coming into contact with other countries in the European bloc with greater economic and scientific research prospects, through mobility, end up migrating to these countries on completion of their degrees, where the remuneration conditions for the most qualified professional classes are far superior to those in force in Portugal.

Still on the subject of Decree-Law no. 74/2006, of March 24, 2006 (Portugal/DGES, 2006), further on it deals with the restructuring of the curricular organization of higher education, according to standardization (another factor favoring the migration of young graduates), which often does not meet the Portuguese vocation. Let's take a look at some pedagogical premises of the Bologna Process curriculum proposal, announced in this decree-law:

(...) The adoption of the three-cycle model of higher education organization; The transition from a teaching system based on the idea of transmitting knowledge to a system based on developing skills; The adoption of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), based on student work (Portugal/DGES, 2006).

And it announces the following “innovative” initiatives in Chapter VIII:

(...) introduces several innovative provisions, including the obligation to legally deposit digital versions of master's and doctoral dissertations and theses in the National Library and the Observatory of Science and Higher Education, the express permission to use foreign languages in teaching and in the preparation and

discussion of dissertations and theses, and the use of teleconferencing in the preparatory meetings of juries (Portugal/DGES, 2006).

Also in Chapter VIII, Title III, the general principles for the accreditation of study cycles are established, speaking of quality within the framework of the European Quality Assurance System in Higher Education by a non-public agency, referring to the A3ES Agency:

(...) This accreditation will be carried out within the framework of the European quality assurance system in higher education and will be done, as a rule, through the accreditation of educational establishments for certain areas of teaching, being the responsibility of an agency endowed with scientific and technical autonomy to be created and regulated through its diploma. (Portugal/DGES, 2006)

They add:

(...) Adequacy must translate into an appropriate reorganization of higher education with a view to achieving the objectives of the Bologna Process, and can in no way be considered a mere formal change. (...) As agreed at the European Ministerial Conference on the Bologna Agreement, held in Bergen in 2005, the widespread adoption of this model of study cycles should not exceed the year 2010 (Portugal/DGES, 2006).

In addition to rushing to adapt to the new model, it also emphasizes that all universities will have to adhere to standardization, which considers European hegemonic interests and is not limited to formalization.

Although there is nothing new in the proposals for the PhD, which is the subject of our study, both in terms of awarding the degree, defining and opting for the training cycle, and in the requirements for accrediting the course, there are clear demands for universities to be technically equipped to offer the course, such as the demands regarding teaching staff. So much so that many specialties have ceased to be offered as doctorates in Portugal recently, mainly due to the lack of scientifically specialized teachers to attend to this cycle, as seen in the statements of the coordinators interviewed at the four universities investigated, when we contacted the managers of the specialties, inviting them to take part in the research, some of them said that they no longer acted as PhD managers, justifying the fact that in the past two years (2020 and 2021), PhDs in this or that specialty were no longer being offered due to a lack of professors to cover these cycles, who were leaving the system (due to mobility, retirement and other reasons) and new ones were not being hired to replace them.

In 2007, it was published that Decree-Law no. 369/2007 (Portugal/DGES, 2007) of November 5 was published, reaffirming the objectives of higher education policy: guaranteeing the qualification of Portuguese people in the European area, improving the quality and relevance of the training offered, investing in mobility and internationalization, increasing the autonomy of HEIs, a culture of accountability, valuing national and international partnerships, and structuring an internationally recognized quality system. Article 1 establishes the Agency for the Assessment and Accreditation of Higher Education (A3ES). Article 2 deals with its nature: a private law foundation with legal personality and public utility. Article 3 discusses the Agency's powers. Article 4 deals with the Agency's

assets and financial contribution, and finally, Article 5 deals with its independence in carrying out its functions and its fundamental principles.

This is how A3ES operates, structuring its statute, regulations, and procedures for authorizing and accrediting Portuguese higher education courses (Portugal/DGES, 2008, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2021).

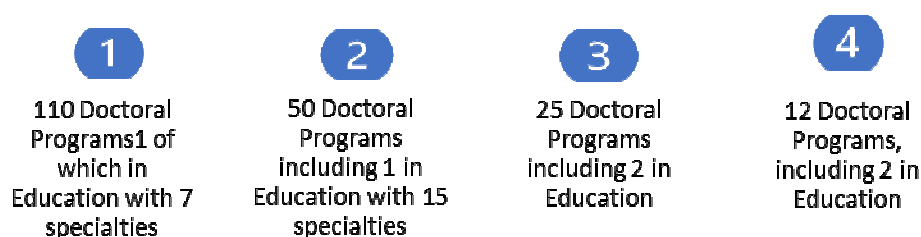
What we see in these guiding and normative legal texts, as well as the strategic plans aimed at implementing them, is that they are all in some way the result of clashes between different actors, in a territory of power struggles, in multiple fields, in different fields, in contact with each other, and in objective relations that can either impose needs or trigger confrontations between them. Seeking a quality that may not be of interest to all hegemonic and counter-hegemonic groups. And this movement will affect how these policies are conceived and implemented in the different Portuguese HEIs. And that's what we're going to talk about next.

4 Management and practices in doctoral courses in education, from the point of view of their managers

In this second moment, we intend to analyze the satisfaction of the managers investigated, to identify the extent to which current higher education educational policies aimed at the third cycle of postgraduate studies in education, the doctorate, their underlying norms and ideologies and the practices required as a result, are present in the practice of course management, in the view of the managers of the respective courses/specialties themselves, and the extent to which these contexts influence their satisfaction or lack of it. First, however, we will characterize the locus and subjects of the research, using data collected in the empirical part, and presented in tables, figures and graphs, to better highlight them. We have used letters and numbers to identify the institutions and subjects of the research in order to preserve their identities, a commitment made to them at the time of the interviews.

4.1 Locus, research subjects and their characterization

We collected data from four Portuguese public HEIs of national and international prominence in the field of education: U1, U2, U3 and U4. Information on the doctoral programs offered at each of them is shown in Figure 2:

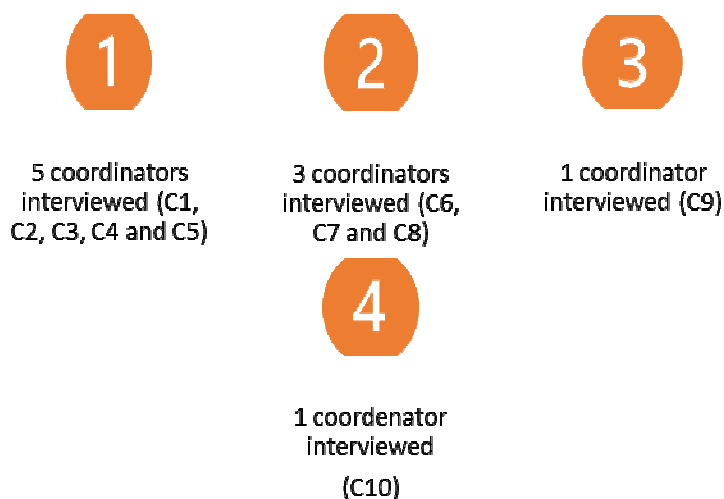
Figure 2. PhD offer by HEI

Source: Website of Universities U1, U2, U3 and U4, prepared by the authors

Figure III shows the distribution of the research subjects among the universities:

Figure 3. The research subjects

The research subjects were distributed as follows in relation to the four universities:

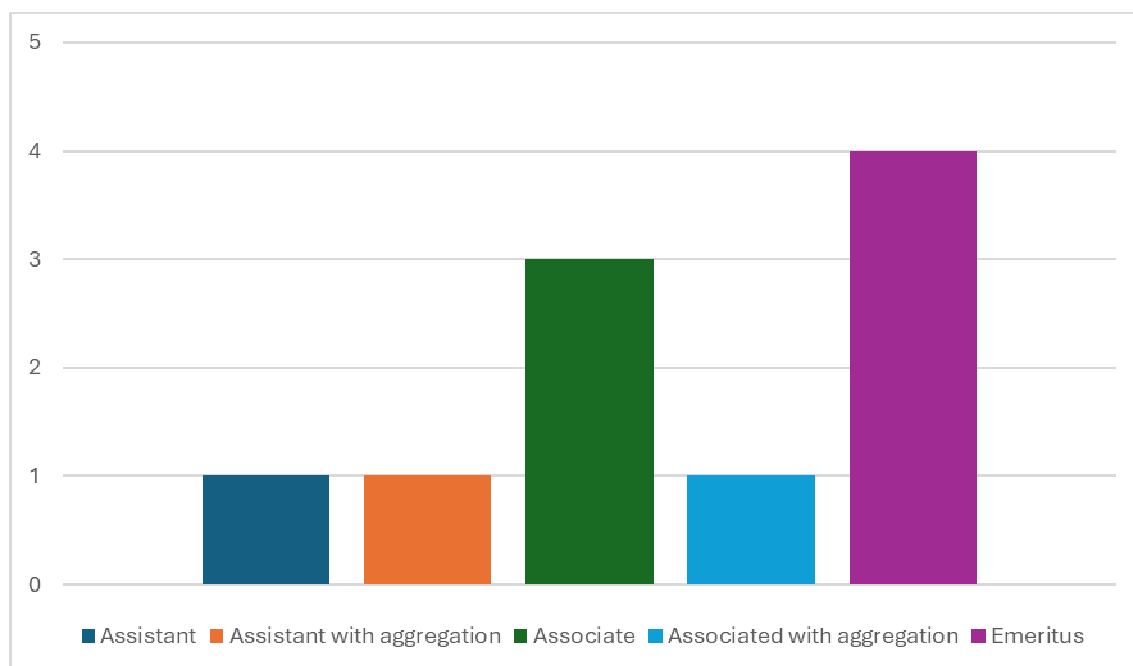


Source: Prepared by the authors

Regarding the training of the coordinators interviewed:

Of the 10 coordinators, 7 have a doctorate in education, and 3 have obtained a doctorate in areas related to education.

And regarding the professional background of the Coordinators, as teachers at the IES, see the data shown in Graph 1:

Graph 1. Professional Background of Coordinators interviewed as teachers

Source: prepared by the authors with data from field research.

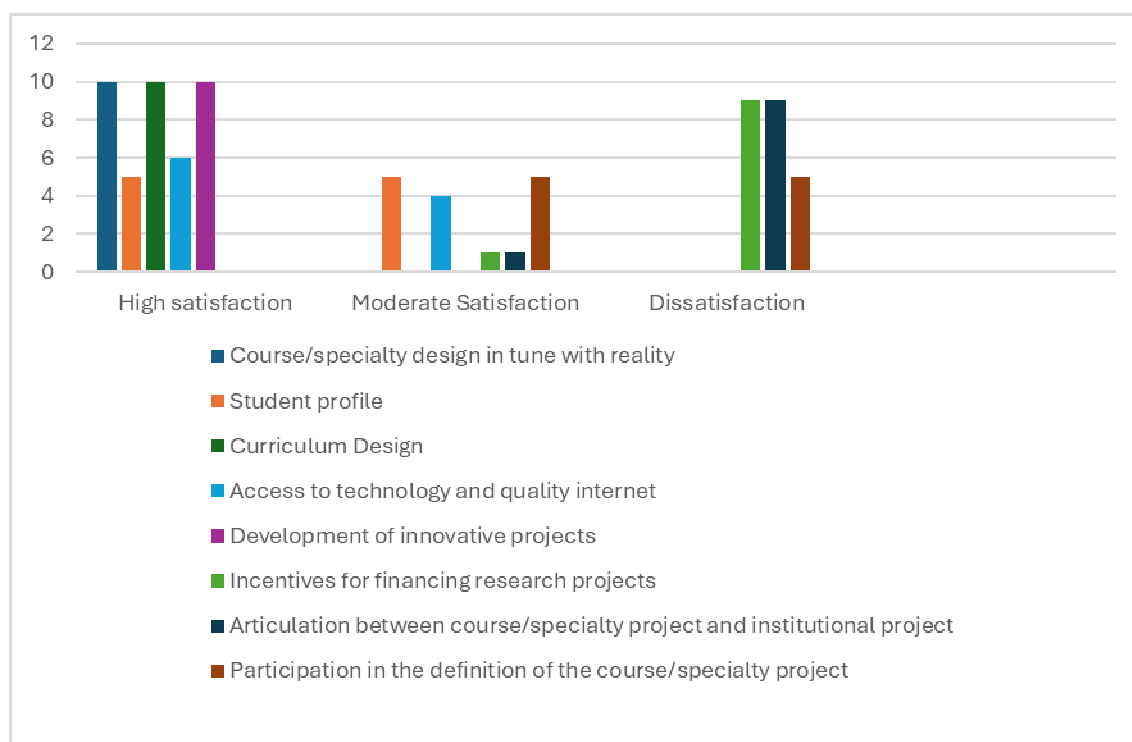
We move on to presenting the data, analysis, and results found.

4.2 Data presentation, analysis, results

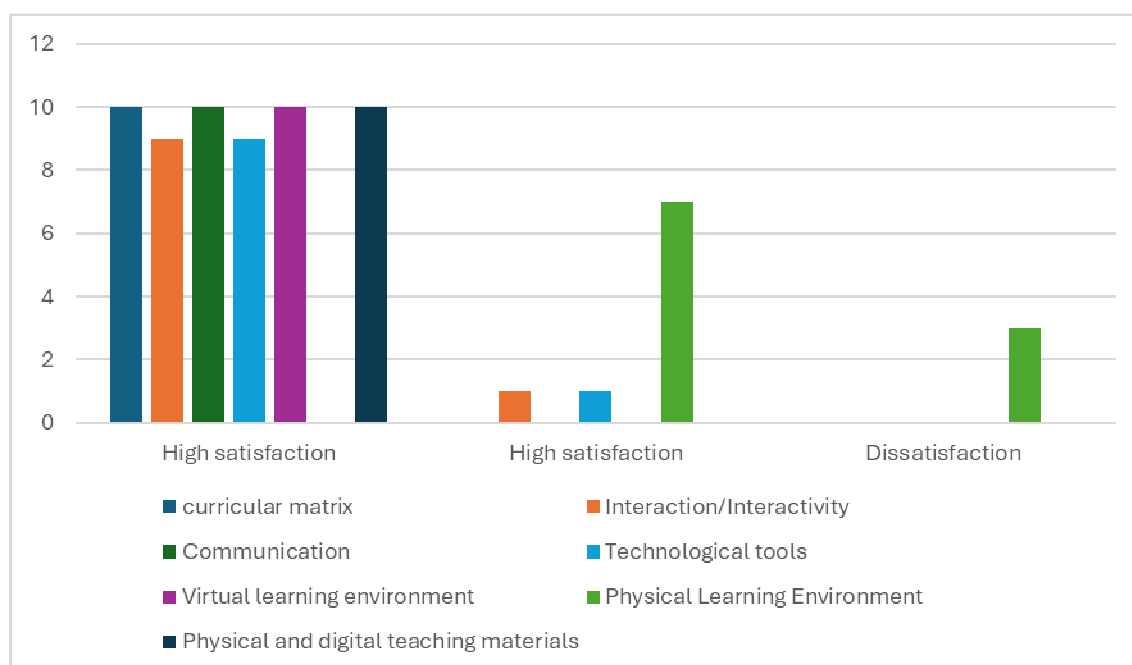
Let's look at the level of satisfaction of Coordinators C1, C2, C3, C4 and C5 (of U1), C6, C7, C8 (of U2), C9 (of U3) and C10 (of U4) in relation to the categories: Project/Course Curriculum/Specialty ; Course/Specialty Design and use of Technology; Acting as manager of the Course/Specialty/Relationship with teachers, students and other professionals/sectors of institutional, normative/regulatory support; the dimension relating to personal and team interests, systematized based on contextual challenges and political influences.

We remind you that we consider: “high satisfaction”, “moderate satisfaction” and “dissatisfaction” in relation to each category and subcategories, as presented in the research methodological procedures.

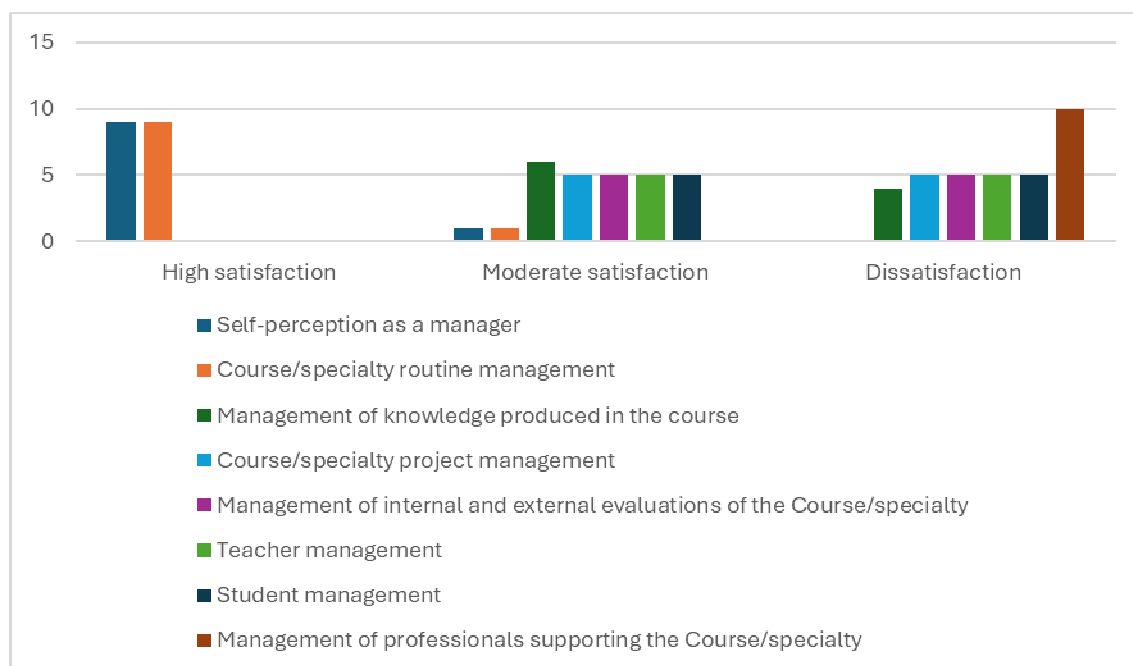
We present below the level of satisfaction of the 10 coordinators interviewed, by category and their respective subcategories, in graphs 2, 3, and 4 below:

Graph 2. Category: Project, Curriculum and practice of the Course/Specialty

Source: prepared by the authors with data from field research.

Graph 3. Category: Design, Ambience and Technological Training

Source: prepared by the authors with data from field research.

Graph 4. Category: Acting as course/specialty manager

Source: prepared by the authors with data from field research.

By identifying and analyzing the content of the course/specialty coordinators' satisfaction responses, presented in the previous graphs, and the context expressed by them, explicitly or between the lines of their speeches, during the interview, we concluded that the levels of satisfaction found, express themselves in relation to three large transversal categories. Namely: Contextual Challenges (COVID-19 pandemic, use of technology during social isolation, Economic globalization); Personal interests and values, those of the teaching and student teams, and support for the course; and Political Influences (HEIs, Government and the European Union).

Our analysis allowed us to conclude that:

Regarding contextual challenges, in relation to the pandemic and use of technology, the following were identified:

- (i) The high satisfaction appeared to be associated with the experiences of opportunities to receive/participate in continuing training and access to new technological tools to support the teaching, as well as the use of the technologies institutionally available, which allowed collectively to build a technological ambition of support for the work carried out, with and by the students, during the entire period of isolation. It is also understood that these learning environments and such environments will continue to be used, in the return to face-to-face teaching, in recognition of their added value for teaching practice.
- ii.) Of moderate satisfaction, we highlight the physical space of the classrooms, which need to be better equipped with technological resources, more attractive, allowing for greater interaction and communication, teamwork, with a flexible structure that accommodates small stations and enriches learning possibilities.

iii.) Dissatisfaction was predominantly due to the lack of a continuing education policy at the university. Even though these are highly qualified professionals, it was thus flagged up as a critical factor that needs to be taken into account and that it should be the university's responsibility to create favorable conditions for this training to take place and be geared towards improving pedagogical practices and the teaching experience provided to students. We agree with Josso (2002, p. 30), for whom "the training process makes itself known through the challenges and stakes born of the dialectic between the individual condition and the collective condition". In this sense, teacher training as a human manifestation must take place in these two spheres: individual (at the moment of self-realization) and collective (at the moment of exchanges with others, as a team), the latter being encouraged by institutional initiative and also valued institutionally. Another source of dissatisfaction was the need to use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Emergency Remote Education (ERE), without having created conditions for this, namely in terms of time, for the necessary preparation and planning. Another problem detected was linked to the fact that some coordinators indicated that part of their students did not have access to technology and quality internet, namely international students, who constitute a substantial part of doctoral students. This is a challenge to be overcome in various parts of the world, including Portugal, and is of real importance. There is a need for public policies to ensure access to such goods and services, which are unquestionable in current and future society, and unavoidable for carrying out research. Also regarding technologies, they highlighted the lack of investment by universities in the acquisition/maintenance/updating of new, current, agile, and reliable technologies to support teaching. This investment, established mainly between 2000 and 2010, has been nonexistent recently, and the consequence of this absence was noticeable during the recent pandemic. Likewise, the coordinators highlighted the need to have access to more modern, comfortable, and technologically equipped physical learning environments, as well as offices/workspaces designed specifically to accommodate the work of doctoral students so that they could settle within the institution and be closer to science support services as well as teachers and advisors, being able to participate more in academic life and scientific activity.

This allows us to see that other conditions besides academic productivity need to be considered, even to guarantee it. Furthermore, there is a need to include other criteria and procedures, as well as the involvement of coordinators in internal and external institutional evaluation processes, as evidence of quality.

Still regarding contextual challenges, in relation to the consequences of globalization in the university:

i.) High satisfaction was associated with the opportunity to discuss, as a team, ways of bringing into the context of the course/specialty means of combating the economic crisis, and attracting more students. An example of this was the investment in carrying out innovative projects, committed to the social problems in the students' field, while investing in the demands that the market brings to these students and professionals.

ii.) What stood out in the analysis of the data collected from the coordinators, regarding the factors flagged as having moderate satisfaction, was the incentive to internationalize. Today, it is increasingly encouraged for universities to receive students from other countries in Europe and beyond, and the mobility of students and teachers is also encouraged, including virtually. In this sense, however, it was pointed out that it is not always easy to reconcile teaching periods between different countries, particularly in virtual mobility, and to raise funds to support this mobility that really do justice to the real costs involved, since existing mobility grants do not keep pace with economic inflation, favoring students from some countries with greater economic power and harming others.

In this sense, as we saw in Gonzaga (2017), this internationalization needs to take place from a south-south perspective, repairing damage and impacts historically caused by capitalism in its colonial relationship with the world, generating inequalities in resources and opportunities.

iii.) Another contextual challenge, caused by the global economic crisis, the greatest reflection of dissatisfaction, which appeared to be associated with the lack of teachers felt in several specialties, due to retirements, deaths and/or leaves due to health problems, aging teachers and the consequent lack of staff renewal. This phenomenon is not restricted to the area of Education and the 3rd Cycle of Postgraduate Studies, but affects them mainly because in doctorates the number of students tends to be reduced and there is a tendency to replace teachers in study cycles that are in greater demand, such as degrees. and master's degrees. The non-recomposition of professional staff is not guided by scientific factors; economic and institutional interests prevail (often the order of replacement of teachers is not aligned with the real needs felt by the teaching staff, but rather with the political options taken by the bodies of management of faculties/departments).

Therefore, the importance of the need for investments in human resources, and in more rationalized processes of these investments, is evident, as these are the ones that provide quality in Portuguese public education, giving them the favorable conditions for this, and required in internal evaluation processes. and external.

Regarding the dimension related to personal interests and values, of the teaching and student teams and other relationship sectors, the highlight, with regard to a level of satisfaction, identified in the data analysis was:

As factors for high satisfaction, the value of having a rich and updated collection of scientific materials in libraries, including those made available online, serving as teaching and scientific material to support students' research; another factor of high satisfaction was the development of curricular projects for courses/specialties with a conception that allows the academy to agree with the demands of social reality and the students themselves and generate innovative and transformative projects of this reality; Coordinators' self-perception as positive leaders and performance as managers were also highlighted as factors of high satisfaction;

ii.) In relation to personal interests, those of the teaching team and other relationship sectors, with regard to factors associated with moderate satisfaction, the following emerged: Diverse profile of students taking these courses, who reveal themselves to be “mature”, with many professional experiences, enriching exchanges between students, but at the same time, because they are student workers, they are subject to the demands and changes in their work scenarios, or losing their job, they can no longer maintain payment tuition fees, interfering with their dedication, and in some cases interrupting their attendance at the course, which could be resolved with the award of scholarships, which does not occur frequently in the area of education. This scenario favors evasion;

We saw how the Bologna process reinforces the elitist nature of higher education, making it an experience accessible to few.

iii.) Regarding personal and team interests, with regard to factors associated with dissatisfaction, difficulties in partnership and interfaces with other sectors supporting the course emerged: lack of technical/technological support, in particular the absence of a shift's wider scope of work by such services, providing support at different times to meet the needs of students, working mainly after work hours as this is when most doctoral classes are held, as well as guidance meetings, including the lack of a shift on weekends. It was pointed out that teaching activity takes place during non-working periods (end of the day and weekends) but that the remaining institutional services (technical, academic, treasury, even café/cafeteria and library) tend not to operate during these periods. Likewise, it was highlighted that, in the context of distance learning, whose foundations were laid during the pandemic period, bringing the perception of the viability of expanding distance education in Portuguese territory, such services need to meet the new needs of students (who are in different time zones, including offering doctoral courses/specialties, where it will be necessary to meet different time zones, in foreign countries that need to communicate synchronous modalities, etc.) of foreign students, who today represent a significant part of doctoral students; Another factor noted was the absence of a multidisciplinary team to support the management and design of virtual learning environments in an interactive way, especially with distance education in mind; Another factor of dissatisfaction is the lack of greater integration between university services, especially those that directly support the course/specialty (financial, academic support, operational support, etc.), including giving them opportunities to learn about the course routine, in order to better understand certain demands and seek joint solutions; And finally, as a factor of dissatisfaction, the lack of greater participation of the Coordinator in the decision-making bodies regarding the course (with a predominance of three aspects: definition of the Course Project, Evaluation of the Course/Specialty and representation of all areas of specialty on the Councils scientific institutions and in the University's Research Centers).

There is a need to invest in processes and policies to support teaching work, so that quality can truly be a reality for everyone.

Regarding Institutional, Governmental and European policies, they only highlighted

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i.) Dissatisfaction is the absence of an institutional policy of continued training for knowledge and use of technological tools, and other knowledge necessary for professional practice, considering the constant transformation of reality and consequently of teaching, research, and extension; constraints felt by some coordinators, regarding the Quality Management Policy proposed by the European Community and accepted by the regulatory Agency (A3ES) and government (IES, DGE and MCT). The factors that were most emphasized were: the conception of quality with an economic bias only, which interferes with professional development policies, curricula, research financing, a lack of investment in teaching staff, and making reception and advanced training difficult. of more students. Although the number of new doctoral students has grown lately in Portugal, the contours of the professional integration path are minimal when compared to those of graduates or masters; Likewise, points were mentioned relating to the Portuguese higher education evaluation agency itself, specifically, and often to the HEIs themselves, not guaranteeing the representation of all professional staff in the process of institutional self-evaluation and in the External Evaluation Committees, as well as relating to the lack of clarity about what is being evaluated, its results and what they do with them, and how this may or may not impact the lives of professionals; subjective professional framework process, not prioritizing technical competence and professional path of some HEI departments; With regard to the measures established by the Portuguese government and the policies issued by the European Commission, problems were identified relating to the lack of investment in incentive policies and professional development of higher education teachers, as well as the lack of talent retention policies in Portuguese universities; Still regarding the European Commission, the standardization of Higher Education in Europe, disregarding the differences between countries and between the different regions of each country; investment only for projects that are in the direction of institutional (the university itself) and European economic interests; Failure to value the doctoral course for teaching staff in Portuguese Basic Education, for career advancement, with teachers having little incentive to attend it, currently resulting in more foreign students, and, finally: the lack of financial resources to development of research projects, and scholarships for students. These scholarships and funded projects could create conditions so that doctoral students can dedicate more to research, not needing to combine study and work, and progress more quickly with their thesis.

And finally, there is a need to define public policies that truly support and involve all instances, where each one in their area can participate and decide the direction of Portuguese public education, considering global, intermediate and local instances, in defining its quality. And as Morgado (2009) pointed out, internationalization has served the private sector, the interests of financial circuits and multinationals, and has not been able to play its role in the field of social regulation, bringing universities closer to the less favored. All of this contributes to an increasingly unequal society, which, according to Boaventura Santos (2002), generates conflicts between social groups, the State and hegemonic interests, on the one hand, and between social groups, the State and subordinate interests, on the other.

5 Concluding considerations

Returning to the questions that mobilized this study: How does this globalization manifest itself in the doctoral courses studied? How have public policies in the field of education protected themselves from the harmful influences of economic globalization and contributed to this social globalization, or not? And how have they materialized in higher education institutions, in the practice of post-graduate education at the advanced level? At this level, how satisfied are their managers, or not, with their management, with the definition of the project of the course/specialty, the curriculum proposal, the challenges brought by the pandemic of COVID-19, the use of technologies, and the requirement for Emergency Remote Education (ERE)? How does the advancement of Communication and Information Technologies (ICT) affect education at the studied level, considered the highest level of training of professionals in this area, and, at this time, pandemic and post-pandemic? What prospects do they announce, or not, for the so-needed expansion of distance education in Portugal? We identify that:

The results signaled that moderate or high satisfaction, or even its absence, expresses a relationship between three large dimensions: contextual challenges (COVID-19 pandemic, pressure experienced by universities in the face of economic globalization and the use of technologies), personal and staff interests and values, and political influences. (Institutional, Governmental and European).

We can highlight from these three dimensions some satisfactions and dissatisfactions of the greatest importance in this research:

Regarding the contextual challenges of COVID-19 and the use of technologies, we highlight as satisfaction the opportunities experienced to receive/participate in continuing education (namely that offered internationally online) and access to new technological tools to support teaching, as well as the use of technologies institutionally made available. This allowed us to collectively build a technological environment to support the work carried out with and by students, throughout the period of social isolation, strengthening the experiences that were already occurring with foreign students who needed online monitoring, and, opening the field for the expansion of distance learning.) or even because universities tend to be located in large cities and the cost of living (accommodation, food, transport) becomes increasingly unaffordable for students, who already face considerable expenses given the amount they need to pay annually to attend a doctoral program (in Portugal it is not free, not even in public universities). At the same time, dissatisfaction was felt due to the absence of a continuing training policy for teachers, under the responsibility of the university and even an appreciation of the pedagogical training carried out.

As for contextual challenges, the pressure experienced by Universities in the face of economic globalization, we highlight the internationalization of education as a satisfaction, giving students and teachers the opportunity to get to know other realities, cultures and experiences, as well as producing knowledge in partnership, and, as a dissatisfaction, the lack

of recomposition of teaching staff due to teachers leaving due to retirement, aging staff, absences due to illness, among other reasons, placing an overload on active teachers.

In relation to personal interests and those of the teaching and student teams, and other institutional sectors, we highlight the following as satisfaction: access to the rich and updated collection of scientific materials in university libraries, including those made available online, serving as teaching and scientific material for support student research; and as dissatisfaction: lack of teamwork in the different sectors of the University, especially technical/technological support and academic services, in particular the absence of work shifts in such services, at different times, to meet the needs of students, functioning especially during after-work hours, as this is when most classes are held, as well as guidance meetings, including the lack of a shift on weekends, and the absence of a multidisciplinary team to support the management and design of environments virtual learning.

Regarding institutional, governmental, and European policies, we highlight the following as satisfaction: progress in the way of making educational policies above-mentioned nationally, with the strengthening and search for quality in professional training, particularly for teachers. According to the coordinators, the model is good; what has not been good is “at the service of those who put it in”. And as a source of dissatisfaction, the Quality Management Policy proposed by the European Community and accepted by the regulatory Agency (A3ES) and government (IES, DGE and MCT). The factor that was most emphasized was the conception of quality with an economic bias only, disregarding the multiple missions of the university, and which also interferes with policies for valuing professionals, defining curricula, research financing, updating teaching staff, hindering the reception conditions, and providing advanced training provided to other students.

With this study, we verified how globalization manifests itself in Portuguese higher education, bringing both positive and negative consequences.

Most of the factors previously highlighted are reflections of a Higher Education policy, where “indicators and reference parameters (benchmarks), regulatory agencies, networks of experts, mutual accountability, partnership agreements, exchanges of best practices” (Nóvoa, 2005, p. 199), and where the educational, training, and social value of higher education activity is little or not valued at all. Reinforcing this analysis, we find:

The “indirect effects” of globalization dynamics in the field of education are visible, both in the changes in the process of formulating educational policies and in the reconfiguration of the governance of education. Thus, with regard to the Bologna Process, the approach to the model of market regulation seems to be on the agenda, through the creation of devices and entities such as quality assurance and accreditation systems and agencies. On the other hand, the form of regulation determined by objectives constitutes a marked development in the processes of managing social and educational change in various sectors of the educational systems. The draft flags for Europe of building the European space of education and the paradigm of lifelong learning seem to be part of the new legitimizing myths linked to the desire to involve in the same movement the arrangement of the territory, physical, social and symbolic, and the creation of the subjects. (Antunes, 2006, p.63).

Both Novoa (2005), and Antunes (2006), almost twenty years ago, already announced what was to come with regard to the reflexes of economic globalization in Portuguese education, and the Bologna Process as its fruit.

Thus, we realize that Portuguese and European public policies have not provided answers to overcoming the negative influences of economic globalization, neutralizing it with an equivalent social globalization, and democratizing access for all with equality and equity. And finally, we observed maturity and openness for professionals regarding the possibility of expanding distance education in Portuguese territory, as long as, according to them, the necessary technical, technological, and human resources conditions are created and the necessary preparatory processes of curricular (re)design and institutional (re)organization.

Deepening this analysis, what we have seen so far, in the European scenario, is that world globalization and its consequences in terms of the projection of countries regarding the hegemonic power of global economic decision-making, forced European countries to unite in common strategies, with a view to its strengthening to have more significant power in global decisions, and to be able to compete under better conditions in the global market.

These common strategies were defined predominantly with an economic focus in mind, not social or even scientific ones, thus disregarding the differences between the countries of the European bloc, as well as their cultures, values, and history. And more, also disregarding the European economic vocation built throughout its history, because for economic globalization, the important thing is to ensure competitive power in relation to the other outsider, and not to the other from the same bloc, as occurs with the countries of the European Union.

This same globalization also makes everyone think from a single logic, that of the market, which is not necessarily concerned with human well-being and social equity, unless they take more advantage of them, to the benefit of the corporate sector. . Thus, the vision of quality does not involve human and social capital, although it cannot survive without it, after all, it is he who will be the potential consumer of what is produced, even if not necessarily of the product he himself produced.

Boaventura Santos (1997) points out that there are other forms of globalization: hegemonic (proposed by dominant social and economic groups) and counter-hegemonic (proposed by subordinate social groups, whose power is still of little projection). That is why globalization has only been in the economic sphere, increasing at the global level the distances between rich countries and poor countries, and between regions and people within each country, further expanding asymmetries and intensifying inequalities.

It is a global movement, and, therefore, experienced by most of the international academic reality, even if its consequences are felt in different nuances. But regardless of the nuances of its consequences and political positions or lack thereof, what we cannot lose sight of is that the University has a social role and cannot be exempt from it, and has networks,

technology and scientific knowledge in its favor. We have to wake up to it. The University, as a legitimate space for the production of knowledge for social transformation, cannot shirk its function of strengthening global counter-hegemony.

The muffled speech of four of the ten coordinators interviewed, almost filled with sadness, and some of them choked up, showed that they did not want to believe what they were experiencing today in the university space, as teachers. According to them, this space is very different from when they attended as students, and where they were trained. It was an expanding university, today a competitive university. Some of them, on the verge of retirement, feel indignant when they see colleagues caught up in the intense routine of teaching and unbridled research, with no time for extension or depth, as if they were not understanding anything... The movement is so silent for some and so deafening for others.

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