



## **HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS AND THE CHARGING OF TUITION FEES: PERSPECTIVES AND PERCEPTIONS IN BRAZIL, CANADA AND CHINA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims to understand the perceptions of the charging of tuition fees in Canada and China and the perspectives of this practice in Brazil, which is a country where society requires access to quality higher education, but which faces large budgetary constraints on its public funding. To understand these questions, a qualitative exploratory multi-case study was conducted with government officials, specialists in higher education, and student leadership from all three countries, from 13 semi-structured interviews and 27 responses to an unstructured questionnaire, in order to clarify a subject still paradigmatic in the scope of Brazilian public higher education. In conclusion to this analysis, and considering the benefits provided by the Canadian and Chinese participants, it is suggested to Brazil to carry out a reflection on this subject. This reflection is necessary, especially if the need to increase the financial support to these institutions is proven and this cannot be done because of the financial availability. This initiative would aim to boost public higher education institutions through greater financial availability and democratize access and permanence, as it would have more resources to invest in assisting students from underrepresented groups participating in the system.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of the variable "education" has been considered by several countries, since it is often associated with the progress of a country. According to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) studies, "Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies: Creation and development of new Companies in Latin America and East Asia," the formation of potential entrepreneurs is a long process that begins during the initial stages of school and extends to the university and the first years of work (IDB, 2011).

This development through investment in higher education was already confirmed in Canada, which for many years has invested heavily in education, achieving significant rates of young people between 18 and 24 years enrolled in higher education (HADDAD; GRACIANO, 2004). In that scenario, Canada stands out not only quantitatively but also qualitatively, one of the higher quality of countries with respect to higher education worldwide.

In Asia, the continent grows as much as it invests in education. In recent years, the Asian discovered this formula of success and began to invest heavily both in basic education and in higher education. Countries like China are now conducting research within their own universities and then commercialize the results, as well as increasing investment in higher education (MAHMOOD; SINGH, 2003).

In South America, with emphasis on Brazil, the most prominent universities receive state public funding, not federal (University of São Paulo (*Universidade de São Paulo*, USP) and the University of Campinas (*Universidade de Campinas*, Unicamp)). This is due to the still inadequate investment in relation to public funding for higher education (WEBOMETRICS, 2015; ARWU, 2015; HEEACT, 2015).

For this reason, Brazilian society demands access to quality higher education that can meet this need, which generates the need to study new forms of public funding. Therefore, this study try to seek new alternatives for management and financing through initiatives already implemented and consolidated in other countries, in this case Canada and China, aiming to assist in solving a chronic problem faced by Brazilian higher education.

The choice of this countries for the study is based on their experience with the charging of tuition fees:

- Canada is a country that charges tuition fees for more than 50 years, and has seen a large increase since 1984;
- China is a country that started to charge tuition fees from 1997 and during this period promoted a revolution, housing today the largest educational system in the world;
- Brazil is a country that faces significant budgetary constraints and has been struggling to improve higher education indicators, especially in terms of increasing the number of young people aged 18 to 24 enrolled in higher education.

Would Brazilian public universities be ready to charge tuition fees? How did the charging of tuition fees help in the development of Canadian and Chinese systems?

To answer these questions, a research was conducted with government officials, specialists in higher education, and student leadership from all three countries, in order to clarify a subject still paradigmatic in the scope of Brazilian public higher education.

## 2. WORLD HIGHER EDUCATION CHALLENGES

At the end of the first decade and the beginning of the second decade of this century, many nations, especially those developed, have faced one of its greatest financial crises. Continents hitherto economically sound, like North America and Europe are the main

affected, especially the United States, which shall have its hegemony threatened by China (SAWAYA, 2009). That situation makes these continents start to rethink a number of structural changes.

Amid the unwanted situations, some instruments are now considered essential to improve economic indicators, including higher education, which is responsible for several factors that have a direct impact on the results of the economy, such as:

- a) generation of labor, skilled labor, which causes direct impact on productivity and consequently in job creation;
- b) innovation discoveries, which can also help in the economic progress of countries and generating jobs;
- c) creation of new business and maintain existing business, by training entrepreneurs.

Factors such as these make the nations start to give even more attention to higher education and funding should be allocated for such, as the United States, which has always been regarded as an innovative nation, mainly due to Silicon Valley's results. That nation begins to worry not only in generating technological innovations and mainly how to market the innovations that have been developed to reach favorable economic results. This concern is due to the speed at which Asians are playing such innovations and then the marketing for the rest of the world, something easily possible after globalization (ERNST, 2005).

In Europe, higher education is now also one of the main instruments. The main adversity faced by countries concerns to high unemployment, which can be minimized with the generation of skilled labor, influencing productivity, and the training of entrepreneurs. Undertake results in job creation, something that is critical to the economic performance of European countries in the coming decades (EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2011).

On the other hand, continents like South America and Asia, especially the countries Brazil, China and India, are living a moment of progress to be considered the main emerging economies. The crisis affecting the developed countries eventually make room for the growth of emerging countries that understood the importance of higher education and gradually has improved its indicators. Investments in education have a direct impact on innovation, it can be seen in oil exploration, ore, in producing software or even electronic equipment, measures which are responsible for the good results of the countries (ARMIJO (2007).

The information cited above show the significance of the effects of globalization worldwide, with a profound impact on education (especially in higher education) and financing that composes it.

## 2.1 THE EFFECTS OF GLOBALIZATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS FINANCING

From globalization, there is a worldwide need for higher levels of education, resulting in a large increase in demand and access of students seeking the third degree. Ilon (2010) shows that between 1975 and 1995 there was a considerable increase in students enrolled in higher education in the world, out of 40.3 million, going to 80.5 million, almost doubled in just 20 years.

Delimiting the developed countries, Lazerson (2010) argues that globalization was responsible for promoting competition for financial resources between countries and universities, promoting changes in their funding. These features are achieved through the scientific and technological innovation through the generation of patents, given that represent concrete results to the market. Additionally, students begin to seek higher education courses according to the shortage of skilled labor, making both economy and market beacon offers of higher education.

This type of globalization, from the scientific and technological developments, now called economic globalism as it seeks to produce greater capital accumulation and has a strong influence of capitalism. The economic globalism has the characteristics of the free market, competitive, open communications, individualism, deregulation and privatization of the public sector (TÜNNERMANN BERNHEIM, 2010).

This variation of globalization then goes on to influence higher education, which must conform to this new global reality, in order to produce knowledge that is commercial, affecting traditional academic activities, it began to be guided by the requirements of applicability and market value. Tünnermann Bernhim (2010) criticizes this influence, saying that the instrumental knowledge, if applied indiscriminately, will cause new and complex problems, citing as an example the deterioration of the environment. To Didriksson (2000), is explicit the economic character that has higher education, in that it has a particular relationship with the production of knowledge related to the industry. The author adds saying that many of the knowledge produced aim to contribution to economic output, featuring in a close relationship. As already noted, the scientific and technological innovations depend on many factors that are arising in many cases of research centers, which are beyond the own production system. The existing direct relationship between science, production and technology generates a set of new categorical that suggest major changes in the financing of tertiary education, appreciation of intellectual work and knowledge that are seen as economic value.

From the structural changes presented above, Carnoy and Rhoten (2002) describe the financing of higher education began to receive a large investment from the private sector, especially in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom (which meant the decrease financial support from the Federal Government). On the other hand, the authors argue that the Federal Government's participation in the financing of higher education in the East Asian countries has increased considerably, demonstrating a firm commitment to improving the quality of higher education institutions, which are now seen as one of the main factors for the progress of countries.

As a result of these investments, one third of the world's best universities are located in the Asia Pacific region, been observed a large intervention of the government in emerging Asia (CARNOY; RHOTEN, 2002). Countries like Taiwan, South Korea and especially China are increasing funding to its universities aimed at increasing the number of universities with world-class. Even the Academic Ranking of World Universities, prepared by the University of Shanghai Communications (Jiaotong) was created for Chinese universities can understand what has been done in the world's premier universities. Ilon (2010) shows that the numbers of these countries are amazing when notes that Asia has made almost twice more engineers than Europe, a professional area that has a certain shortage of skilled labor currently qualified, representing the important role that higher education has played in world economies.

Finally, in order for a country to succeed in meeting these challenges, it is necessary for its government to take on the responsibility of improving the results and to make the necessary interventions, subject matter in the next topic.

## 2.2. GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION AND ITS ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITIES

The Federal Government presents itself as a key player to meet the needs of society, given its interference in economic activities, political and social. This intervention is possible because the Federal Government presents itself as a regulatory body, seeking to hold a promotion of development, a fair distribution of income, maintain the stability of the economy, and yet, in seeking to provide goods and public services to society. The state

intervention with development models are intended to positively influence the orientation of elements in the short and long-term dynamics of a nation, state or county. Among all state responsibility actions, some stand out, such as: security; employment; welfare; and education. These actions aim to reduce violence, social inequality and improve the quality of life of the population (MATIAS-PEREIRA, 2006).

Tax collection then becomes the main tool in order to maintain the proper balance of the public system by the growth of the private system. Longo (1984) shows that both the United States and Brazil, almost one third of all income collected comes from taxes. In some Scandinavian countries, this collection is even higher, exceeding 40%. This collection of taxes, which marks a strictly budgetary role, is the main influence of the Federal Government to the course of economic activities by means of conducting monetary policy, management of state enterprises, regulation of private administrative responsibility of companies, policies control prices and inflation, among others.

In the economy, Federal Government intervention can happen in different ways. Among all, five should be highlighted:

- a) form a legal basis;
- b) keep non-distorcionists policies (keeping even economic stability);
- c) invest in basic services and that makes up the infrastructure;
- d) support vulnerable groups;
- e) protect the environment (BANCO MUNDIAL, 1997).

In addition, the Federal Government should also play an important role in the opening of trade, technological innovation, communication and promotion of national consensus (MATIAS-PEREIRA, 2006), something that to Lerda, *et al.* (2005) should be performed with greater efficiency and effectiveness, they will be responsible for activities offer the provision of better service to the population.

The Federal Government intervention in developing countries such as Brazil, China, India, among others, is usually based on ideological reasons or because the private sector was not able to make the necessary investments for the development of a sector. In Brazil, Giambiagi and Além (2001) believes that greater Federal Government intervention in the Brazilian economy had to supplement the actions of the private sector for the development of the country. For the Brazilian higher education it can be analyzed public policies as Fies, Proni, and Reuni Uab which aimed to equalize the participation of public funding from the private sector, which has expanded considerably after the LDB/96.

Finally, government intervention is leading to ensure success in all levels of education, including higher education, which in recent decades had its role driven by the benefits associated with the progress of nations.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

In this research, due to the objectives, the study was developed as an exploratory research. For Collins and Hussey (2005), the exploratory research should evaluate which theories or concepts can be applied to a relevant problem, or if new concepts and theories can be developed. From then on, such study is characterized as exploratory for seeking to deepen the articulation of the charging of tuition fees in higher education in three countries essentially different (culturally and economically): Brazil, Canada and China.

The exploratory study is guided by the comparative multi-case analysis, which for Schneider and Schmitt (1998, p.1) helps the researcher to:

[...] discover regularities, perceive shifts and changes, build models and types, identify continuities and discontinuities, similarities and differences, and specifying the more general determinations that govern the social phenomena.

From then on, direct approach collection techniques were applied, by conducting semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The target audience comprised the key stakeholders in the system:

- a) Government managers: Government service professionals in their respective countries, responsible for effective in higher education public policies;
- b) Experts in higher education: Professors and researchers who have as one of its main fields of study the issue of higher education in some of the countries studied;
- c) Student Leaders: Leaders who are ahead of student unions that represent the student audience of each of the countries studied.

The list of interviewees is presented in Chart 1, contemplating the agency of the participants, the denomination used in the research, the city where the interview took place, date, time/duration and a last call column observation, in which it indicates whether the interview was in person or by video conference.

Chart 1 - Interviewees: government managers

<b>Government managers - Canada interviewees</b>					
<b>Denomination</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Schedule</b>	<b>Obs.</b>
Interviewed 1	<b>CMEC</b>	Calgary	30 Mar. 2014	13:00 to 14:20	Video conference
Interviewed 2	<b>COU</b>	Toronto	05 Feb. 2014	14:00 to 15:30	Presential
Interviewed 3	<b>MTCU</b>		28 Mar. 2014	09:00 to 10:00	
Interviewed 4	<b>HEQCO</b>		10 Feb. 2014	10:30 to 12:30	
Interviewed 5	<b>HESA</b>		19 Feb. 2014	15:00 to 16:30	
<b>Government managers - China interviewees</b>					
Interviewed 6	<b>MOE/NCEDR</b>	Beijing	31 Mar. 2014	19:00 to 22:00	Video conference
Interviewed 7	<b>MOE/NCEDR</b>		06 May 2014	12:00 to 13:30	
Interviewed 8	<b>MOE/NIES</b>				
<b>Government managers - Brazil interviewees</b>					
Interviewed 9	<b>DIFES/MEC</b>	Brasilia	05 Aug. 2014	10:30 to 12:30	Presential
Interviewed 10	<b>DIFES/MEC</b>			15:00 to 16:20	
Interviewed 11	<b>DIPES/MEC</b>			13:30 to 14:30	
Interviewed 12	<b>SPO/MEC</b>				
Interviewed 13	<b>SPO/MEC</b>				

Source: Prepared by the author.

\*Note: Although the organization Higher Education Strategy Associates (HESA) is not effectively governmental, it is the main provider of educational consulting service for the government, for which it is classified within the group "government" in this research.

To analyze the perception of experts in higher education and student leaders of the three countries, were used unstructured questionnaires. The advantage of using this tool is to save resources for execution, providing time-saving, cost, travel, and to not be influenced by the interviewer (MARCONI; LAKATOS, 1990).

The experts in higher education who answered the questionnaire is shown in Chart 2, considering the denomination used in the research, the university, the date, time/duration that was answered the questionnaire, and the last column called observation, in which it indicates whether the respondent sent the answers via online website dedicated or opted perform sending by email.

Chart 2 - Respondents: higher education experts.

<b>Experts in higher education –Canada respondents</b>
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Denomination	University	Day	Schedule	Obs.
Respondent 1	York University	18 Feb. 2014	09:15 to 09:39	Online website
Respondent 2	University of Ottawa	19 Jan. 2014	20:07 to 20:18	
Respondent 3	York University	25 Jan. 2014	15:48 to 16:14	
Respondent 4	University of Toronto	19 Feb. 2014	13:10 to 13:38	
Respondent 5	York University	22 Oct. 2014	07:56 to 09:15	
Respondent 6	York University	16 Oct. 2014	08:38 to 09:39	
Experts in higher education – China respondents				
Respondent 9	York University	02 Mar. 2014	18:02	Email
Respondent 10	University of Tampere	17 Feb. 2014	15:05	
Respondent 11	East China Normal University	19 Feb. 2014	04:54 to 06:40	Online website
Respondent 12	University of Toronto	08 Feb. 2014	08:22 to 08:34	
Respondent 13	East China Normal University	20 Feb. 2014	22:59 to 23:31	
Respondent 14	Beijing Normal University	07 Feb. 2014	02:05 to 02:55	
Respondent 15	Peking University	10 to Feb 11, 2014	23:48 to 00:20	
Respondent 16	Tianjin University	28 Mar. 2014	04:53 to 05:10	
Experts in higher education – Brazil respondents				
Respondent 18	Inst. for Labour and Society Studies (IETS)	20 Jul. 2014	18:37 to 19:19	Online website
Respondent 19	State University of Campinas	08 Sep. 2014	07:15 to 00:31	
Respondent 20	University of São Paulo - USP	21 Jul. 2014	15:01 to 15:34	
Respondent 21	Federal University of Goiás - UFG	15 Dec. 2014	14:22 to 14:44	
Respondent 22	Federal University of South Border - UFFS	06 Nov. 2014	03:38 to 05:13	
Respondent 23	Federal University of Espirito Santo - UFES	13 Nov. 2014	10:36 to 11:07	
Respondent 24	State University of Santa Catarina - UDESC	26 Nov. 2014	03:40 to 05:17	

Source: Prepared by the author.

The list of leaders of student movements that responded to the questionnaires is presented in Chart 3, considering the denomination used in the research, the student organization to which he belongs, date, time/duration that was answered their questionnaire, beyond the last column called observation, in which it indicates whether the respondent sent the answers via dedicated online website or opted perform sending by email.

Chart 3 - Respondents: student leaders

Student leaders - Canada respondents				
Denomination	Organization	Day	Schedule	Obs.
Respondent 7	Can. Alliance of Student Assoc. (CASA)	26 Mar. 2014	09:28 to 10:26	Online website
Respondent 8	Ont. Undergrad. Student Alliance (OUSA)	04 Apr. 2014	10:12 to 11:20	
Student leaders - China respondents				
Respondent 17	Academic and Scientific Department in the Postgraduate Association	12 Jan. 2015	20:19 to 23:19	Online website
Student leaders - Brazil respondents				
Respondent 25	National Union of Students - UNE	14 Jan. 2015	16:14	Email
Respondent 26	Union of Youth and Students in Brazil - UJE	19 Nov. 2014	10:24 to 12:09	Online website
Respondent 27	Central Directory of Students UFJF	06 to 07 Jan. 2015	14:17 to 06:24	

Source: Prepared by the author.

For the qualitative treatment, the data collected through unstructured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were treated using as reference the content analysis technique, using the *MAXQDA 10* software, in order to confirm or refute the findings.

#### 4. RESULTS

The results show participants' perceptions regarding the charging of tuition fees, initially describing Brazil, followed by Canada and China.

#### 4.1 BRASIL: TUITION FEE CHARGING AND ITS PARADIGM IN THE PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIS)

In Brazil, the Public Higher Education is 100% free. In other countries, such as Canada and China, there is a charging of Tuition Fees, where students bear, on average, 30% of the total cost of their higher education.

Based on this premise, it was investigated with the participants if they believe it feasible the charging of tuition fees in Public Institutions of Higher Education in Brazil and also if they see some prospect of charging of such fees in universities.

##### a) Government

The government leaders have shown radically against the charging of any fee in public institutions of higher education, particularly in the federal universities. In addition, they reported that there is no prospect for any action in this regard.

The Interviewed 9 believes that Brazil has two systems, the pure free through the federal funding and the other in which the government contributes with a part, who is the private sector, that receive scholarships and student financing. The Interviewed 11 goes further by asserting that the government doesn't think "no way" in making such charges, since to one action like that would be necessary even change the Brazilian constitution, which says that education in public institutions is free. The interviewee admits it is something possible to do, open a national debate, change the constitution, but he never would lead a process like this, and believe that no one in the ministry of education will also assume this responsibility. However, he recognizes that public institutions, especially public universities, have a high cost to the public coffers, because they are essentially educational, research and extension institutions, which provide a high quality education and has an internationally recognized framework.

The Interviewed 10 reports that some people have defended the hypothesis of the charging, but the appointed reasons weren't sufficient to improve the debate on this action.

It has thought of something. There are economists and thinkers who speak of it, that you have an individual advantage with higher education. But if so, we will have to charge the SUS, because when I go there ill and go out with health I have a personal advantage. Thinking like that, we have to charge for a lot of public services (INTERVIEWED 10).

Corroborating with the understanding of the above leaders, Interviewed 9 reinforces that Brazil has health and education with this free premise and that it isn't wrong in relation to other countries, each one just found their own way. However, Interviewed 11 reports that the OECD argues for charging fees, and that has been asked to the government why not adhere to this practice.

They cannot see, but our model is not so unique as well. If you go to Germany, everything is free. In several European countries, everything is free. So they're just looking at themselves, that's why, as there are very different models in other countries. And I think we chose a model today, hybrid. If it's to be called hybrid, since we have 76% of enrollments in the private sector but in the private sector the government goes with the direct appeal. So strictly speaking, at least 51% of



enrollments today are already public. This is the method by which it was decided (INTERVIEWED 11).

In order to contribute to the debate, Interviewed 12 said that within the government policy, there is no fee collection perspective. As a challenge, the public service is trying to improve and reach the largest student's number and possible beneficiaries but it doesn't have sufficient capacity. For this reason, the private market goes in and absorbs the demand that hasn't joined the public service. Fearing any initiative for the fees collection, Interviewed 13 believes that to start this process, there is the possibility of public institutions to exclude the population with low income.

Finally, the Interviewed 11 realizes that in the entire system, there is a balance in favor of democratization, because it allows for an equitable treatment to rich and poor in the process. The interviewee reaffirms not agreeing if it is instituted the paid public education, it will be a more accurate system. While institutions can garner more resources to the fees collection, these resources can be got by part of the income tax of a more economically favored population, for example. The issue is to the Federal Government always seeking the fairer alternative to decide how to behave.

#### b) Experts in Higher Education

Corroborating the views of the government managers, experts also show that the fees collection in public institutions wouldn't be feasible. If the idea is to diversify sources of funding, other alternatives could be considered, such as taxation on higher incomes or the search for a contribution from the graduate students when they return to society.

Initiating the debate, the Respondent 23 ensures that this is a difficult discussion to the federal universities, since they are in a development phase and need to expand higher education for the big population still without access.

For Respondent 20, charging fees doesn't achieve expansion. The expert says that when it was charged fees at the time of the military dictatorship, it simply replaced one source with another and the budget was of the same size.

According to the Respondent 21, this is a question debated in Brazil for many years and has already been implemented in some institutions and subsequently repealed. The understanding that prevails is that the offer must be public. If it is considered that democratization is happening of this educational level, through political quotas and other actions that have allowed access to low-income and ethnically diverse, it is not consistent to take an action like this, a view also shared by the Respondent 22.

The Brazilian social scene is uneven markedly. Therefore, gratuitousness is a decisive factor for the democratization of any level of education. I'm among those who consider education at any level, a right. So it isn't spent, but an investment. Therefore, I am totally against the charging of any tuition fees in the HEIs (RESPONDENT 22).

For Respondent 24, considering the term "feasible" within the legal precepts, isn't credible the adoption fees, given the audit of Government Ministries for public universities don't charging for anything.

The Respondent 19 explains that today, even with an unfair tax system, Brazil is in the range of 35% of GDP with respect to the tax collection. So it suffices to enter the club of countries that are in the range of the 40% as is the case of Norway, Austria, Finland, Denmark, Sweden, France, Belgium, Italy, among others, designed for the surplus for education to reach the goal of 10% of GDP proposed by National Plan of Education (PNE).

Finally, in a complementary way, the Respondent 20 suggests that it might require certain commitments from students who return to society instead of a direct student's charging during their formative process.

#### c) Student Leadership

The student leaders also didn't consider feasible to start a fee-charging process in public institutions, by contrast, they argue that the public and free institutions get even more students.

According to the Respondent 25, the fees charging imposed socio-economic barriers to education access, which needs to be treated as a social and Federal Government responsibility as well to ensure equally access to all.

Although not agreeing with the fees charging, the Respondent 26 believes that in the distant future, it may so happen, especially if they lacked resources to promote the expansion of education. Still, the student leader reports a failure experience with the fees charting in a recent time.

There are experiences where UEMG (State University of Minas Gerais), tried encamping institutions within the state from the late '90's and early 2000, where tuition and students would bear 50% of the course and the government would be charged with the other party, yet the idea and experience it was not fruitful because the students of these institutions had no way to afford this payment (RESPONDENT 26).

Finally, Respondent 27 shows what the aspiration of the student movement is.

What we want is the democratization of education and that all social classes are in the classroom, we believe that education must be free, public and with quality (RESPONDENT 27).

#### 4.2 TUITION FEES IN CANADA AND ITS RELATION TO THE MAINTENANCE AND EXPANSION OF SYSTEM

Unlike Brazil, Canada has its totality of higher education offered by the public system, but it charges tuition fees of its students. Once this scenario is known, this section seeks to understand with the government, the experts and student leaders, what is the perspective behind the charging of tuition fees, how this fee may be related to the expansion and system quality and perception of a public higher education 100% free.

#### a) Government

The government leaders unanimously favor the charging of tuition fees in public universities. However, they demonstrate that it is necessary a good student assistance system so that the access from the excluded socially don't get compromised. Once you have this concern, there is a part of them which guarantees that the charging of tuition fees does not reduce the percentage of enrollment and access.

For Interviewed 1, there is no clear relationship between having tuition fees on your system and the ability to promote access to higher education, on the contrary, he believes that the fees have a certain ability to make larger and better systems because, simply, they help to increase the financial resources within the system. This view is reinforced by the Interviewed

2, which advocates in favor of the charges saying that research has shown that fees don't really affect access.

The Interviewed 4 also shows favorable for charging of tuition fees, saying that traditionally, people who go to higher education are from the middle and upper classes, and they can afford these costs, there is no reason for this level of education is subsidized to them. Another point systematically defended by both Interviewed 3 and Interviewed 4, are the private gains that a graduation can offer to an individual who happens to have a better outplacement, compensation and quality of life, i.e., higher education cannot be classified only as a public good and the student must contribute during this formative process. In the other hand, Interviewed 5 believes that this process goes against the culture of the country itself.

Canadians don't like to see things being delivered for free, but they also don't like to pay too much. It cannot be free, since access would be very low. It cannot be very expensive because it is difficult to pay (INTERVIEWED 5).

According to Interviewed 4, there is a very specific return on investment in higher education, and the government's intention is not to harm the participants and not charge exorbitant fees. The philosophy of the government is to charge fees to cover around one third (1/3) of the actual cost to educate a student.

When asked regarding the full gratuity in public higher education, leaders have shown that such a measure would not be beneficial to the system.

In Interviewed 1 view, the country doesn't have financial resources available for an action like this, considering even difficult to measure how much would need to spend to subsidize the tuition fees for all students who potentially would go to higher education. Complementing the speech of Interviewed 1, Interviewed 4 presents a theory of an inevitable shrinkage of the system if a measure such as this were adopted. For the interviewee, it is not possible to have a system of this size if they have it currently for free, the reason is that there is no money to support it.

We actually think that a free system wouldn't be accessible to underrepresented students how the system we currently have. So what we do, we have a very generous financial assistance plan for the most in need students (INTERVIEWED 4).

Finally, the Interviewed 5 admits that there have been some debates on public higher education 100% free in the 60's and 70's, but in any opportunity this idea proved to be representative, and he personally believes it will never will, because they need of tuition fees to feed the system.

## b) Experts

Specialists in higher education don't act radically against totally free public higher education, however, they act cautious when addressing the issue, because, at the time, the fees are absolutely essential to the proper functioning of the system.

For the Respondent 5, the government wants students to pay the tuition fees, as when someone makes a personal investment, this individual becomes more engaged. Respondent 2 complements this idea, believing that tuition fees are a balance of political pressures, concerns about access, needs to increase revenue for the system, and a sense that those who benefit should pay at least a part of education they receive. For Respondent 4, it is a more complex situation, since the whole formation process cannot be charged from all, since it is used only by a part of society.

Respondent 1 presents a different view about the fact. For him, Universities in general, would like to charge higher tuition fees, which would be ideal for the government. However, politically it isn't feasible, because middle-class families are reluctant to pay more. A student protest that took place in the province of Quebec in 2013 against rising fees meant that the governments stay worried about it. The deregulated fees also bring harm to the system, as account the Respondent 6, because it makes certain programs become unaffordable for many. However, the perspective of high tuition fees is still difficult for the government to understand, so it always tries to moderate the increase in fees, but with no prospect of eliminating them.

When analyzing the prospect of removing the tuition fees of the current model, some experts are skeptical. The Respondent 5 reports that Ontario doesn't see going to a teaching model 100% free, because the cost of higher education sector operation is significant and cannot be carried alone by the taxpayer. Respondent 2 is even harsher in his assessment, classifying the measure as a "*bad policy*."

No charging of tuition fees is a bad policy on efficiency, equity and equalization of public finances (RESPONDENT 2).

On the other hand, some experts classify the measure as valid, since the government honor its obligations and continue financing the system with an amount similar to the model with the fees. Respondent 3 states that it has no objection to a higher education system 100% free from the government to provide the money that currently comes to universities through tuition fees. For the specialist, universities cannot work without money, they need adequate funding, otherwise it will have access, but for one that is not worth it to have. Respondent 6 is optimistic with this model, believing that this is the only truly fair way to make higher education accessible. Finally, the Respondent 1 is favorable to the free model, but realistic about the current model.

My view is that higher education, in the ideal world, it would be free. But it will never happen. Moreover, students don't understand that free higher education limits access because it means that universities need to offer fewer seats in higher education. In places where the tuition fees are higher in Canada, access is also higher on the other hand, access is lower in provinces where tuition fees are lower (RESPONDENT 1).

### c) Student Leadership

The student leaders have shown slightly contrary opinions on this issue, although both agree that tuition fees are relevant for the proper functioning of the system.

For the Respondent 7, which operates in a student organization nationwide, tuition fees are an important source of funding for most higher education programs. He also believes that they encourage programs to see students more than just an expense, as they also offer a hand.

On the other hand, the Respondent 8, which operates in a student organization of provincial scope, shows dissatisfaction with the fees charged in Ontario. He reports that the tuition fees has been the means by which universities offer education and expand their own operations in the context of decline or stagnation of other form of government funding for higher education in Ontario.

The OUSA believes that a fair cost sharing model is one in which students pay less than at present, and no more than one third of the total cost of the training for a student through tuition fees. The OUSA would support any move toward reduction of tuition fees (RESPONDENT 8).

As regards the complete abolition of tuition fees, both student leaders believe that such a measure would bring more losses than profits for Canadian higher education system. According to the Respondent 7:

If there was a significant increase in levels of funding for universities, which according to the current financial policy is unlikely, this change would still have a greater impact on access to prioritize grants and loans, to maintain the level that was previously covered by tuition fees (RESPONDENT 7).

In the other hand, the Respondent 8, despite being unhappy with the amount of fees charged in Ontario, recognizes that students must bear at least some part of their education, due to significant personal benefits that come with having a higher education. He also strengthens that there is evidence to support the charge of an academic rate that may decrease dropout rates and increase the performance of individual students.

#### 4.3 TUITION FEES AND ITS ROLE IN THE REMARKABLE EXPANSION OF THE CHINESE SYSTEM

Like Canada, but as a more recent strategy, China also began to collect tuition fees in its public universities, which were central, provincial or local.

In this section, it sought to understand what the government's perspective on the charging of tuition fees and if this charge is related to the expansion and system quality. As asked to Canadians, it was also investigated with the Chinese participants the opinion of an education 100% free (free of tuition fees).

##### a) Government.

According to the perception of government managers, the charging of tuition fees was an absolutely essential process to ensure the expansion and democratization of the system. Due to the large volume of people interested in joining the higher education and the cost that this demand would bring to the public coffers, to divide the portion with the main beneficiaries was the solution found by China. None of the leaders consider the possibility of China returning to a completely free public system. The Interviewed 7 tells about the beginning of the tuition fees charging in the country.

You need to be aware of the fact that China provided free higher education by the end of 90's. At that time, China realized that wouldn't be able to expand using only your economy, then it chooses to start the collection, and it was in the 90's period which the expansion of higher education truly happened (INTERVIEWED 7).

According to Interviewed 8, the Chinese government realized a global provision for the charging of fees.

In the government's perspective, to charge tuition fees is a universal trend. On one side, higher education isn't compulsory, so the student should rather pay fees for this level of education. On the other hand, the government cannot afford more money because the student's number is currently too large (INTERVIEWED 8).

As regard of the complete elimination of tuition fees, making the Chinese educational system completely free, the Interviewed 8 shows nonbeliever with this action. For the interviewee, education in China is expanding and increasingly and has more students in universities. If students don't pay the tuition fees, universities couldn't afford the costs to

provide the undergratuating of these students. For this reason, he believes that the Chinese government doesn't intend to provide a 100% free education, opinion also advocated by Interviewed 6.

The government believes that higher education brings a public benefit to society, and private, for the individual, and then it isn't reasonable to adopt a totally free model for this level of education (INTERVIEWED 6).

Finally, Interviewed 6 strengthens that China has to charge tuition fees that are possible to be paid by students, but this process only began to be absolutely necessary so that they reach the desired indicators for this level.

#### b) Experts

As university leaders, experts in higher education advocate the charging of tuition fees in the Chinese higher education system. They consider this issue closely connected with the expansion and stability of the system, believing it to be impossible for a nation so large to fully assume the costs for this level of education, which is not compulsory.

The Respondent 11 argues that, no doubt this policy was responsible for the expansion of higher education that took place in 1999. The Respondent 13 also supports this initiative.

It is reasonable for higher education to be charged and for system users to share part of the cost of higher education by paying tuition fees. This is beneficial for improving the quality and expansion of higher education (RESPONDENT 13).

For Respondent 10, the charging of tuition fees served to ease the government's financial pressures. With incentives charging fees, both the government and HEIs tend to enroll more students.

The Respondent 12 explains that in many ways, the structure of tuition fees is similar to Canada: public universities fees cover about 20% of the actual cost, and is available for most students. Respondent 14 also argues for the importance of fees and claims to be impracticable to proceed with the expansion without it.

When asked about the exclusion of tuition fees, experts argued not believing that would be the best option. For the Respondent 16, the tuition fees are closely related to the expansion in enrollment, it wouldn't be advantageous to the nation not collecting them. The same line of reasoning is stated by Respondent 10, which realizes a worldwide trend towards recovery, so he doesn't believe that the gratuity for higher education is an option.

For Respondent 11, some nations may even be able to operate with a fully public system and without charging fees, but today it isn't the case in China.

Finally, the Respondent 15 supports the effectiveness of charging policy, especially because it is accompanied by a series of assistance tools.

The charging of tuition fees is a way to expand enrollment beyond the budgetary capacity that is provided by the state. In China, I think the tuition fees policy is efficient and equitable. In fact, it works well, as there are also financial aid and loans for needy students (RESPONDENT 15).

#### c) Student Leadership

Respondent 17 also shares the same opinion of experts and government managers. According to the student leadership, the fees have an important role in the Chinese higher education system and removing them wouldn't be a good initiative.

For the Respondent 17, the rates should be maintained, and argues that without them wouldn't guarantee any quality to the participating students. The student leadership also analyzes a hypothetical scenario without charging fees.

Artificially, not charging tuition fees could help in the expansion of higher education, since the doors would be open to all. But it is not feasible in the current condition of the country (RESPONDENT 17).

Finally, the student leadership argues that the charges should continue, but it is necessary to review some factors, especially the student assistance tools, which are essential to ensure the democratization of access and permanence of students in universities.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This research aimed to understand all the aspects behind the charging of tuition fees in Canada and China, and also to understand the Brazilian view about this fact. The data showed that the charging of tuition fees are seen as necessary by Canadian and Chinese participants, and that this subject is still a paradigm in Brazilian territory.

This structural difference observed in the Canadian and Chinese systems (the existence of the charging of tuition fees in public institutions of higher education) is an extremely controversial issue in the Brazilian territory, but was possible to verify evidence of the effectiveness of charging fees for expansion and quality assurance along the studied systems. As the Canadian system performs the fees charging for over 50 years, it is more difficult to prove its effectiveness quantitatively, except for the fact that it is one of the well-funded systems in the world, as shown in the analysis of general indicators for higher education. However, qualitatively, the participants defended as absolutely essential to the charging of fees for expansion and maintenance.

In the case of Chinese higher education, the collection began to be performed in all institutions that there have 20 years (1997), which facilitates the understanding of the true impact on the system, and it was possible to quantitatively prove that the Fee-Charging Policy was one of the main actions that promoted the expansion of the Chinese higher education and therefore of its economy. To support this idea, the participants questioning about the real importance of the fees collection within the system was carried out, and all unanimously, recognized how essential this measure was. It is worth noting that many of these participants experienced the beginning of the fees collection, either as students or already as professors, but nevertheless acknowledged that it was a real watershed for transforming the Chinese higher education system in the world's largest in terms of quantity.

However, from the moment it starts charging in public institutions of higher education, there is a risk of under-represented groups being excluded from the system. They also supported the idea that a system is more fair and democratic if it is levied on who has the means to pay, and student assistance is offered to those who cannot afford to pay.

Then, in order to understand the perception of Brazilian participants it were surveyed about the possibility of charging fees in the public system, option completely rejected by virtually all participants, reinforcing a cultural barrier around this issue.

In conclusion to this analysis, and considering the benefits provided by the Canadian and Chinese participants, it is suggested to Brazil to carry out a reflection on this subject. This reflection is necessary especially if proven the need to increase the financial support to these institutions and such action cannot be realized due to the financial availability. This initiative would have intended to boost public higher education institutions through increased financial availability and further democratize access and permanence to the extent that it would have

more resources to invest in student assistance to underrepresented groups participating in the system.

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