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A CRIAÇÃO DO CURSO SUPERIOR EM ADMINISTRAÇÃO
NA UFRGS EM 1963: UMA ANÁLISE HISTÓRICA

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THE CREATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION COURSE IN ADMINISTRATION AT UFRGS IN 1963: A HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

*A criação do curso superior em Administração na UFRGS em 1963: Uma análise histórica**La creación del curso superior de Administración en la UFRGS en 1963: Un análisis histórico*

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyze how the “Americanization” of management education took place in practice in Brazil. In doing so, we focus on one of the most important management courses in Brazil that has not yet been analyzed by previous researchers. This paper focusses on documents of the communications between American academics at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul [UFRGS]) and their supervisors, who also worked on the bilateral agreement between Brazil and the United States. This agreement aimed to expand management higher education in Brazil, and relevant progress reports were located in the archives of Michigan State University. In analyzing these documents, we demonstrate the development of UFRGS management courses between the year in which the institution signed the cooperation agreement (1959) and the course approval year by educational authorities. (1963). This period was chosen because it helps to clearly explain the reasons that led to the delay in the implementation of courses at UFRGS, as well as the actions of representatives of the institutions in this period. Our analysis describes the course’s development but also reflects on the difficulties that faced the establishment of management higher education in Brazil. We found that the lack of legislation regulating the course and also the administration profession served as the justification for barring the undergraduate course at UFRGS. We also point out several difficulties that had to be overcome for the undergraduate programs to settle from 1963 onwards.

KEYWORDS | Americanization, history of Administration, history of the Brazilian courses in Administration, organizations and history, historiography.

RESUMO

O artigo aborda a história e a Administração, e apresenta elementos sobre o desenvolvimento de uma escola específica, o que permite olhar com mais minúcia para a forma como a “americanização” da Administração se desenvolveu na prática. Análises históricas foram realizadas a respeito dos cursos de Administração da FGV EAESP, UFBA e UFMG, e este texto preenche a lacuna de falta de análises de um dos cursos mais importantes do Brasil, o da UFRGS. Analisamos os documentos inéditos oriundos da comunicação entre professores estadunidenses na UFRGS e seus supervisores, que também atuavam no acordo bilateral entre Brasil e EUA, documentos que não foram objeto de análise anterior. Discutimos o desenvolvimento dos cursos de Administração da UFRGS entre 1959 e o ano em que ela, de fato, estabeleceu os cursos (1963). Assim, foi possível não apenas narrar o desenvolvimento dos cursos e refletir sobre as dificuldades encontradas para o estabelecimento do ensino superior em Administração no Brasil, mas também identificar que a ausência de legislação que regulamentasse o curso e, também, a profissão de administrador servia como justificativa para barrar a implantação da graduação na UFRGS. Ainda apontamos dificuldades que tiveram que ser superadas para os bacharelados se estabelecerem a partir de 1963.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE | Americanização, história da Administração, história dos cursos de Administração brasileiros, organizações e história, historiografia.

RESUMEN

El artículo se centra en la historia y en la Administración y aporta elementos sobre el desarrollo de una escuela específica, lo que permite observar con mayor detalle la forma en que la norteamericanización de la Administración se desarrolló en la práctica. Se realizaron análisis históricos sobre los cursos de Administración de la FGV EAESP, UFBA y UFMG y este texto suple la falta de análisis de uno de los cursos más importantes de Brasil -el de la UFRGS-. Se analizaron documentos inéditos que no fueron objeto de análisis anterior, oriundos de la comunicación entre profesores estadounidenses en la UFRGS y sus supervisores, que también trabajaban en el acuerdo bilateral Brasil-EE.UU., destinado a la expansión de la educación superior en Administración de Empresas. Se discutió el desarrollo de los cursos de Administración de la UFRGS entre 1959 y 1963, año en que de hecho se establecieron los cursos. De este modo, no sólo fue posible narrar el desarrollo de los cursos y reflexionar sobre las dificultades encontradas para el establecimiento de la enseñanza superior de Administración en Brasil, sino también identificar que la falta de legislación que regulara el curso y también la profesión de administrador sirvió como justificación para impedir la implantación del curso de licenciatura en la UFRGS. Asimismo, se señalaron las dificultades hubo que superar para que las licenciaturas se establecieran a partir de 1963.

PALABRAS CLAVE | Norteamericanización, historia de la administración, historia de los cursos brasileños de administración, organizaciones e historia, historiografía.

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INTRODUCTION

The bachelor's degree in management became the higher education program with the greatest student enrollment in Brazil, about 1.3 million, according to the Higher Education Census of 2015 (Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira, 2015). Recently, several studies have analyzed the origins and development of this course of study in Brazil. Management (or Administration, as it is also called) began to be taught in university courses in Brazil in the early 1950s and gained momentum in the early 1960s. These courses were greatly influenced by the United States, where the teaching of management first gained prominence before expanding to the rest of the world (Kipping, Engwall, & Üsdikem, 2008/2009).

Cooperation agreements between Brazil and the United States were signed during the government of Juscelino Kubitschek, who was president from 1956 until January 31, 1961, when Jânio Quadros took office. However, Quadros resigned in August of that year, which led to the turbulent government of João Goulart, who was deposed by a military coup in 1964. Thus, management education developed in Brazil during a period of intense political upheaval. In the international realm, this was the time of the Cold War, which strongly influenced relations between countries and also shaped the collective ethos of the era. In this context, various bilateral agreements were created between Brazil and the United States, starting with the World War II period, when a specific time period for the development of management education was designated and implemented in Brazil.

Recently, studies have investigated both the role of the Cold War and the role of the United States in the creation of three educational initiatives: 1) the São Paulo Business School by the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (Escola de Administração de Empresas de São Paulo da Fundação Getúlio Vargas [FGV EAESP]) (Alcadipani & Bertero, 2012, 2014), 2) the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the Federal University of Minas Gerais (Faculdade de Ciências Econômicas da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais [FACE-UFMG]) (Barros, 2014), and 3) the Brazilian School of Public and Business Administration (Escola Brasileira de Administração Pública e de Empresas da Fundação Getúlio Vargas [FGV EBAPE]) (Coelho & Nicolini, 2014). These were the first three schools in the country to offer management courses. FGV EAESP was one of the first Brazilian schools to be fully dedicated to teaching business administration and had the direct support of the U.S. government. With regard to FGV EBAPE, the public administration program was supported by the United Nations (UN). As noted by Machado (1966), these schools emerged before the profession began to be regulated in 1965 and before the establishment of the first

core curriculum requirements in 1966. Thus, the three pioneer institutions functioned in an experimental manner or through special permits. For some time, the appropriateness of applying these educational programs to the realities of Brazilian society was a matter of discussion, for example, by Motta (1983), Fischer (1985), and Serva (1992). We also note studies that are critical of U.S. influence in Brazilian management education, highlighting the pro-U.S. and pro-capitalist ideological content present in the training of administrators in Brazil (Covre, 1981). This article is inserted within the field of historical analysis concerning Brazil (Costa, Barros, & Martins, 2010).

The U.S. and Brazil have been portrayed as “development partners” (Fischer, 1985). The role of the Ford Foundation and its influence on FGV EAESP (Cooke & Alcadipani, 2015) has also been analyzed. This research found that not only was the U.S. government interested in the implementation of management education in Brazil, but that U.S. foundations also participated in this process. Archived documents from Michigan State University (MSU) indicate that FGV EAESP was designed as a central disseminator of management teaching in Brazil, an aspect that was also highlighted by Coelho & Nicolini (2013). The school sought to influence the expansion of management education in southern Brazil through UFRGS, and in the northeast through UFBA at the same time, some studies indicate that the creation of management education in Brazil occurred in opposition to the influence of the U.S. and the FGV, as shown by Barros and Carrieri (2013) in the case of UFMG. However, we have been unable to find discussions about how the expansion of such teaching occurred with the support of the U.S. government through the FGV.

Thus, this article attempts to understand the relationship between the U.S. government and the FGV in creating the business management program at UFRGS. Fischer (1985) partially addressed the subject in his research, but in this article, we deepen the analysis through consideration of unpublished documents. To that end, we will focus on the period between the signing of the bilateral agreement between Brazil and the United States in 1959 and the creation of the undergraduate degree in management at the Faculty of Economic Sciences (Faculdade de Ciências Econômicas [FCE]) at UFRGS in 1963. The agreement provided for the administrative and financial support of the U.S. and the Brazilian governments for the establishment of undergraduate programs in management. The signatory universities did not yet offer this diploma at the time. The initiative also aimed at strengthening existing courses in the schools of the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (Fundação Getúlio Vargas [FGV]). For our analysis, we studied communications available in archives at MSU between the U.S. mission sent to the school and the

program coordinators. These communications were hitherto unknown to the Brazilian public. This delimitation is justified insofar as, based on the documents from the American mission, we focus on discussing the plan that its members outlined for the implementation of the program, as well as their perspectives for its development. The text contributes to the study of management history by emphasizing the relationship between UFRGS and the U.S., with FGV as an intermediary (especially FGV EAESP), within the context of the expansion of management education in Brazil. It is important to emphasize that we do not argue that this relationship is fundamental or decisive in explaining the genesis of the program that we are analyzing. Certainly, other local and national factors are equally or more relevant than the actions of the U.S. government and the FGV. However, we focus on the role of the U.S. and the FGV because the expansion of management education in Brazil through an agreement with U.S. institutions (e.g., MSU) in conjunction with a local institution (e.g., FGV) has been little explored in the literature on U.S. influence on the global diffusion of management education. Thus, it is imperative to emphasize that this is one possible version of the history of the business administration program at UFRGS, based on documents to which we had access. We are aware that it is not necessarily the most true, correct, or only version of this history.

HISTORY AND ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES AND THE MANAGEMENT COURSE

Although historical research in the area of administration and management is not new, the field came into clearer focus with Clark and Rowlinson (2004), which gave visibility to changes that emerged at the intersection between history and organizational studies. Üsdikem and Kieser (2004) also contributed to the development of the debate by mapping the field, classifying historical works in the area into supplementary, integrative, and reorienting works. The authors point out that, in the works from the first group, history was seen as a source of data in order to formulate general theories based on a rigid notion of science. Integrative studies, on the other hand, use historical elements to enrich perspectives on present-day realities. Finally, reorienting studies see history as an object of study in itself, to the extent that there will always be connections between the past and the present.

The categories created by Üsdikem and Kieser (2004) were influential for studies published throughout Brazil. Both Vizeu (2010) and Costa, Barros, and Martins (2010) used this work as a starting point to reflect on the historical research in Brazilian

organizational studies. Thus, although some may criticize the effort to classify and create frameworks that may be seen as obscuring specific variations in the currents of historical research, it is also important to recognize that this classification system contributed to greater awareness and discussion of the topic.

In the area of organizational studies, important works in the literature use history to try to create narratives of the past that contribute to greater understanding of the social and political contexts that gave rise to certain paths of development rather than others. In this sense, the works of Kelley, Mills, and Cooke (2009), for example, discussed how the political and ideological environment of the Cold War influenced the development and institutionalization of administrative knowledge that was fundamentally aligned with what were considered American values (Grant & Mills, 2006; McLaren & Mills, 2008).

Subsequently, as Barros (2014); Alcadiapani and Bertero (2014); Kipping et al. (2008/2009); and Kipping, Üsdikem, and Puig (2004) discuss, U.S.-style management was actively exported to other countries as a strategy for influencing a pattern of economic development in opposition to Soviet-style communism, especially after the late 1950s. Then management courses in the U.S. went through a period of consolidation in response to the publication of two reports in 1958 that discussed the state of higher education in the area. These reports proposed changes that were intended to move the field toward what is considered academic knowledge, as opposed to practical or vocational knowledge (cf. Barros, Cruz, Xavier, Carrieri, & Lima, 2011). A text prepared for the Carnegie Foundation, *The Education of American Businessmen: A Study of University-College Programs in Business Administration*, was written by Frank Pierson, and the Ford Foundation report entitled *Higher Education for Business* was authored by Robert Aaron Gordon and James Edwin Howell.

At the same time, business management practices were seen as an exportable product that could help to weaken the “communist threat” posed by the Soviet Union in the context of the Cold War. The clash between the two powers at that time influenced the debate and development of management education (Cooke & Mills, 2008; Grant & Mills, 2006; Kelley et al., 2009; McLaren & Mills, 2008), resulting in a tendency to silence the influence of the left wing in this area of knowledge (Cooke, 1999).

The establishment of new educational programs in business administration, especially in countries considered to be in play in the Cold War struggle for dominance, was seen as an instrument that could help expand U.S. influence, to the extent that the epistemology underlying this area of knowledge is marked

by elements that reflect aspects of U.S. culture and ideology (Grant & Mills, 2006; Kelley et al., 2009). Several countries received direct and indirect U.S. support to establish or shape the courses in business management and administration, among them Brazil.

In Brazil, the first degree program in management that was established with support from the U.S. and through the UN was the EBAPE. It was linked to the FGV and created in 1952. (Machado, 1966). In the same year, a higher education degree in public administration was also created at the UFMG, which received support from an American consultant in 1953 (Barros, 2014; Barros & Carrieri, 2013). In 1954, the business administration program at the School of Business Administration of São Paulo (EAESP), also linked to the FGV (Alcadipani & Bertero, 2014), was established with strong support from MSU-Michigan State University and the Ford Foundation.

As Alcadipani and Bertero (2014) point out, this school was intended to be used as a base to propagate American-style business administration – or *managerialism*, according to Foster, Mills, and Mills (2014) – according to the terms established in the bilateral agreement between Brazil and the United States (Fischer, 1985), under the auspices of the Point Four Program begun by Harry Truman in 1949. Thus, technical support was provided to countries of the “Third World” to help them avoid the “communist threat.” Under the agreement, management programs would be created at the UFRGS and the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), which would have the support of both MSU and EAESE. Prospective faculty members to be appointed by their universities completed a training period in São Paulo as preparation for enrollment at the Michigan State MBA.

The establishment of these higher education programs was part of a wider strategy of disseminating U.S.-style management practices worldwide and particularly in Brazil. These schools were intended as hubs for the dissemination of business administration in their respective areas of influence, a role that would also have been “formally” taken by UFMG, had the school not been kept from participating in the Agreement on Special Technical Services between Brazil and the U.S. at (Barros, 2014).

Thus, it is possible, with some degree of certainty, to speculate why the UFRGS was chosen to be one of the schools to participate in the bilateral agreement between Brazil and the U.S. (Alcadipani & Bertero, 2014). They point out that the U.S. intention was to make participating schools centers for the diffusion of knowledge about business management and administration. The chosen institutions were located in the capitals of states that made large contributions to Brazil’s GDP and were the largest cities in the country at the time, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife

in declining order (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística [IBGE], 2010).

However, the federal universities of Belo Horizonte and Recife ended up not signing the agreement, despite participating in the negotiations (Barros & Carrieri, 2013). São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro had already established participation with the schools linked to the FGV. Thus, only Salvador and Porto Alegre signed agreements (which were specific, although they fell under the same extension project). The University of Bahia opted to create a school of management, while in Porto Alegre an undergraduate course in management was created in the College of Economics, since its directors were afraid to take a more definitive step toward the creation of a full degree program as long as there was not yet a law regulating management as a profession.

THE USE OF DOCUMENTS

Interestingly, in one of the documents analyzed, there is a consideration that must be taken into account with regard to attempts to reconstruct the past (which is always problematic):

I must say, too, that if our letters on administrative details seem to be too formal, and even harsh, it is because our official correspondence becomes part of the documents subject to review at any time by the auditors of the contract and the offices [of the International Cooperation Administration] ICA/Washington. It is not only our letters that become part of the archives, but also those that come from the agents “in the field.” (Austin, 1959, n.d.)

Here, Austin explains that the content of letters must meet certain standards of formality because they will be filed serving as a basis for narratives that will be built on the topics they cover. In this sense, we are aware that the documents used to generate narratives should be viewed with some caution, in that they were based on official documents that were considered fit to serve as records of actions carried out in the middle of the last century, and which complied with certain rules of formation and discursive enunciation, as discussed by Foucault (2008). The archives, in this sense, say something directed at someone from a finite, though perhaps inexhaustible, set of possibilities (Foucault, 2008; Stoler, 2009).

This, of course, does not invalidate the effort required to interpret the data and construct the narrative itself, but it is

an aspect that needs to be explained so that both the authors and the reader do not lose sight of the fact that this is not a definitive perspective on the development of the UFRGS program in business administration. The archives, as noted by Schwartz and Cook (2002), exert power over the potential ways of telling a story, which augments the need to inquire into not only the remaining documents but also the institutions where they were kept. In this case, we must reiterate the need for caution about the picture that emerges from the data, given their one-sidedness (all of the documents were produced by foreigners, generally Americans), and the regulations that controlled the production of the texts, as suggested by Austin (1959) in the passage quoted above.

The documents analyzed here were collected from the MSU files, including the minutes of meetings held by the American commission that headed the program in Brazil, which was based at the EAESP. After being selected from the MSU files, the documents were photocopied and grouped by theme. Subsequently, they were read three times by a different researcher than the one who collected and grouped them: an initial, superficial reading to gain knowledge of all the information provided; a second reading to mark the most important points; and a third reading to regroup them based on logical narratives that emerged, namely,

- Preparations for the arrival of the professors: the preparation questionnaire, the visa application and car permit, the curriculum of Oberg and Nordstrom, the consulting invitation extended to Oberg.
- Influencing the actors: meetings with entrepreneurs, workshops, and course programs; translation of books and dissemination of new teaching techniques; conferences with the departments of economics.
- Difficulties encountered in the establishment of the program: lack of a curriculum and the dean's concerns about establishing a program that would exist outside educational legislation; the workload of students; the language and adaptation difficulties of American professors; Brazilian professors returning from training with no assured position; criticisms of various aspects of the program in the U.S.;
- Other topics: the preparatory program at the FGV; the other schools participating in the agreement; visits to the U.S. by school directors.

As will be apparent, not all of these topics will appear in this article. All documents were in English and were translated

into Portuguese. Documents with no definite authorship were attributed to the organization that produced them or are quoted based on their title. It should also be noted that, among several documents that dealt with the establishment of the program at UFRGS, some stood out due to the extent and quantity of information relevant to our work. These were the *Report on the Conference of Economics Faculties in Brazil*, the *Progress Report* (1959), the *Annual Report (July 1958 – June 1959)* submitted by Winston Oberg in November 1959, the *Semi-Annual Report (July – December 1960)*, presumably written by Oberg, and *Professor Winston Oberg End-of-Tour Report* submitted to the ICA by Winston Oberg on September 25, 1961. In the documents, the main voices are those of Winston Oberg, the first American professor to coordinate the activities of the agreement in Porto Alegre; Ruben Austin (Dean of the College of Business at MSU); and Claude McMillan, head of the mission based at EAESP. Another name often mentioned is Pery Pinto Diniz da Silva, UFRGS vice president and also dean of the College of Economics.

A NARRATIVE FROM THE DOCUMENTS

Founded as a School of Commerce in 1909, the current College of Economics at UFRGS is one of the oldest in Brazil (Fonseca & Carrion, 2006). As will be discussed later, this may have influenced economists' political power. In 1934, the institution came to be called the College of Economics and Administration, possibly due to regulation of the program of higher education in administration and finance, which it began to offer that year. When the federal government terminated the program in 1945, the college began to offer courses in economics, accounting, and actuarial sciences, in accordance with regulations established by the federal government (Barros, 2014). In 1950, on the occasion of the federalization of the university, the college assumed its present name: The College of Economic Sciences (Fonseca & Carrion, 2006). The need to establish a core required curriculum for a business administration program had already been discussed as early as 1954. The need for recognition of the career title of "administrator" as a profession was also discussed.

Thus, in 1958, when FCE-UFRGS entered the agreement providing for the establishment of a university degree in administration, the college was already considered a well-established institution. For more than ten years, it had been offering higher education programs in compliance with the most recent legislation. This is significant because it is possible that this position influenced the willingness to offer a program of higher education in business administration in the college,

considering that – according to the sources consulted – much of the opposition to the new program came from professional associations of accountants and economists, and from professors of those fields within the school.

This differentiates the experience of FCE-UFRGS from that of other schools that already offered administration programs at the time: the schools linked to the FGV were established with an administration program from the start, whereas the programs offered by UFMG had been planned at least since 1950 (Barros, 2014). In turn, UFBA, which also signed the agreement, opted to establish a higher education program in business administration in a separate school, apart from the other schools within the institution. This school was formally established only in 1962, although the first group of students was admitted in 1960 (Barreto, 1999; Machado, 1966).

Before the first professor actually arrived in Porto Alegre, an American professor traveled to the city to speak with the dean of the college, Professor Pery Pinto Diniz, to discuss establishing an undergraduate program in administration in the city. The visitor, identified as Professor Charles Lawrence, left with a positive impression of the meeting and with great hopes for the progress of the agreement. On April 10, 1959, Claude McMillan, head of operations in Brazil, wrote to Austin stating that four UFRGS professors had been recruited and were at EAESP to initiate their master's studies. In addition, McMillan pointed out that some short courses had been designed to be taught at UFRGS. These courses, as will be seen below, took on great importance, at least before the undergraduate degree in administration was created. In this same message, McMillan (1959) asked Austin, coordinator of the cooperation project, to obtain more information about the program between the University of Chicago and the University of Santiago, which allowed the latter to establish an institute for management education, with openings for consultants. The interest of the Brazilian schools in the subject was due to the difficulties they had encountered in maintaining full-time professors.

The professors assigned to the “mission,” as the bilateral cooperation program was called, underwent a selection process that involved asking many questions, with several of them referring to the preferences and political choices of the candidate, as well as their previous activities. In the case of Porto Alegre, we identified the files of two professors who came to Brazil to serve as professor-consultants. The questionnaire, called *Security Investigation Data for Sensitive Post*, and the *Application for Federal Employment* form asked about previous duties and, specifically, whether the applicant had belonged to the Communist Party or any fascist or communist organization. From reading

these documents, we found that the two professors had worked in the United States Air Force: Winston Oberg (who arrived in 1959 and was responsible for the field of business administration) and Adolph Grunewald (who was nominated to come to Brazil in 1961, when he assumed Oberg's post), who appears little in communications to which we had access. Unfortunately, we did not find information about Professor Joseph Nordstrom, who assumed Grunewald's post in 1963. Another professor who came to Brazil, but who did not sign any documents we could access and whose questionnaire and application form we could not locate, was Professor Alfred G. Obern. Professor Obern came to Brazil in 1959, shortly after Oberg, and was responsible for the field of public administration.

Professor Winston Oberg, who was the first to reach Brazil with Porto Alegre as his destination, chose to land at Santos in order to travel on the same ship that transported his car. Apparently, there was a long negotiation related to the total cost of travel for Oberg and his family. Oberg came to Brazil in 1959 and went initially from Santos to São Paulo, where he stayed for three weeks at EAESP before traveling to Porto Alegre with his wife and son. It is possible to detect from the messages exchanged that most of the time, Oberg was more abrupt than the counterparts with whom he corresponded. This may have been a sign of irritation, but it is consistent with other messages sent by the professor, often with clearly defined positions with respect to matters relating to the mission.

One example of this is Oberg (1961), who stated in one of the reports sent to the United States Operations Mission (USOM) that fellowship grantees who went to California had an “unhappy experience.” In response, the USOM states that “Professor Oberg may have misunderstood the comments made by Dean Diniz, since all the conversations with the dean are conducted in Portuguese” and “Professor Oberg has no responsibility or authority to comment on the public administration area of the university.”

Oberg understood that the main purpose of his stay in Porto Alegre was to establish an undergraduate degree program in business administration. However, he claims to have faced resistance from faculty members, although he did not give details about what those objections were, apart from the fact that the program was not regulated by the federal government. Oberg set up workshop events, called *jornadas*, that were short courses offered to business managers from the region of Porto Alegre. These events would now be referred to as “executive education activities.” At the same time, he tried to persuade the dean of the college, Diniz, not to oppose the implementation of a program that was not yet regulated, due to the importance of this type

of education for economic development. Claude McMillan says that, although Professor Oberg did find a receptive environment,

[i]t became clear in our operation in Porto Alegre that our Brazilian counterparts would actually “put us on trial” to prove that the changes we propose to implement are appropriate for Brazilian education and superior to traditional concepts currently used. (McMillan, 1960, n.d., loose translation)

Oberg notes the following in his final report:

The first problem, and one that was not resolved for several months, was to develop a close relationship with Professor Diniz as a basis for constructive advice, so that he would seek me out for advice about the development of the program, the curriculum, and similar issues, and at the same time that he would act in accordance with such advice. At first, the language barrier was an especially acute problem since Diniz had little command of English and I arrived with no knowledge of Portuguese.

However, I gradually learned the language to the point of being able to dispense with the interpreter while speaking with Dean Diniz, and from that point on – particularly after the first of a series of seminars given on weekends for executives, which proved to be a spectacular success – my relationship with Diniz improved rapidly. (Oberg, 1961, p. 3, loose translation)

It is interesting how, in the words of Oberg, he hoped that Professor Diniz would “follow his advice,” although he also considered Diniz to be his supervisor. Oberg’s position suggests that he believed he would exert decisive influence over the course of implementation of the business administration program of the College of Economics at UFRGS, which had received U.S. \$200,000 from the Ford and Rockefeller foundations. Moreover, Oberg (1961) points out that organized workshops served to bring the university into closer connection with the business community, which made it easier for graduates to find employment as business managers. These courses also encouraged local entrepreneurs to donate money to the college. In this sense, building stronger ties with business and company managers was considered the most successful of the undertakings that Oberg (1961) initiated. The

second professor assigned to the program, Joseph Nordstrom, came to Porto Alegre in September 1960. He was also dedicated to persuading the business community and faculty from other departments at UFRGS colleges of the importance of establishing an administration program at the university (Oberg, 1960).

One of the major events that occurred during the period we looked at was the first National Conference of Economics Departments in Brazil, based at FCE. The conference was attended by representatives of 28 economics departments in Brazil. Among them were the FGV schools (EBAPE and EAESP), the economics department of UFMG – which initiated the activities of a public administration program in 1953 and of a business administration program in 1955 (Barros, 2014) – the Federal University of Bahia – which had established a school of management two months earlier (Barreto Filho 1999) – and the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE) – which established a management program in 1959, despite having not entered the cooperation agreement (Barros & Carrieri, 2013; Machado, 1966).

The fact that different schools chose to deal with the legislation regarding higher education in different ways was a source of great confusion for the American professors:

Different universities in Brazil behave differently with regard to the importance of conducting their various activities in accordance with the Ministry of Education’s requirements, to the extent that the Ministry interprets and applies relevant legislation to the federal universities. Given that the relevant factors in the Brazilian environment are largely political in nature, members of the American Mission who are linked to the Expanded Program are dedicated mainly to advising their Brazilian counterparts in terms of academic affairs in anticipation of new programs and in dealing with administrative matters with regard to the training of potential professors of Business Administration. (Oberg, 1959, 1, loose translation)

Besides the schools and colleges, Oberg (1959, pp. 9–11) states that about 50 other entities also participated in the conference. These included institutions (such as the office of the Point Four Program), government agencies, and professional associations of economists and accountants. Oberg had arrived in Brazil only a few weeks earlier. He notes that among the topics under discussion was the attempt to define the area of professional expertise of graduates from the economics and

accounting programs. According to Oberg, although some of those present considered it appropriate for administration to be a discipline within the curricula of economics and accounting, with the idea that this would be a sufficient way to meet Brazil's needs, there was near consensus among scholars that it was necessary to wait for public and business administration programs to be regulated by law. However, such regulation was met with opposition from professional associations. In Oberg's words,

In developing a business administration curriculum at the undergraduate level, progress has been blocked almost completely during my two-year stay. In November 1959, Dean Diniz convened a conference of the economics departments of several Brazilian universities. [...] Diniz asked me to work on a curriculum recommendation for business administration to present to this group. Some other curriculum suggestions were made by people from other universities. However, there was active opposition on the part of associations of economists and accountants, who were against any curriculum change. (Oberg, 1961, p. 4, emphasis in original, loose translation)

All in all, as attendees at the conference were not successful in achieving any degree of agreement on the establishment of a curriculum for undergraduate courses in business administration, the leaders of the FCE at UFRGS continued to resist the implementation of an undergraduate program. Oberg points out that

Diniz was not willing to proceed with the implementation of an undergraduate degree program without having legal support for the establishment of a curriculum. So, for all intents and purposes, all planning for the development of the curriculum for an undergraduate degree in business administration stopped at the end of 1959 [after the National Conference of Economics Department rejected an initial curriculum proposal, developed through discussions with economics departments at the university] and did not resume until 1961. This resumption was due to the decision by the association of economists to develop – within the economics curriculum – an area of concentration [a major]

in business administration. (Oberg 1961, p. 3, loose translation)

In order to achieve this, the president of the association of economists sought support from UFRGS in the figure of Dean Diniz, who asked another member of the U.S. mission, Joseph Nordstrom, to make suggestions. Still, Oberg (1961) was discouraged about the possibility of establishing an undergraduate course in administration at the university prior to approval of a curriculum, although he believed that, for graduate courses and on issues related to development administration, the prospects were better.

When the first step toward the development of a core curriculum was taken at UFRGS, the U.S. consultants were disappointed. The professor chosen to prepare the initial plan was not one of those who had studied in the U.S. (Oberg, 1960), suggesting resistance within the UFRGS to the role played by the U.S. in the expansion of business management/administration education in Brazil. The reports make further mention of laws under discussion in Congress that would expand the autonomy of universities to create new course programs or that might even open the possibility of including administration as a regular course program within the “inflexible” curriculum model in place in Brazil. The professors from MSU and from the International Cooperation Administration (ICA), in general, expressed their frustration at having failed to implement a program – either within the economics department at UFRGS or as a separate college as was done in Bahia – even after the bilateral cooperation program had been in place for two years.

Another difficulty was related to job placement of professors who were trained in the United States. For the course program to be established, it was understood that it was necessary for faculty to be prepared to teach administration or, more properly, “management.” To this end, they were sent to EAESP and thereafter for a period of time to MSU, where they were enrolled in the master's degree in public administration. After the first group of professors went, there were difficulties in sending new candidates to EAESP. One of the possible reasons for this difficulty was the fact that the newly trained professors did not have a guaranteed position at the school, especially because there was no administration degree program where they could be placed. So they were relegated to temporary teaching positions, which was the rule at Brazilian universities at the time. Oberg (1961) points out that the lack of U.S.-trained professors might also have been due to their accepting employment outside the university. These professors were included on the payroll as part-time professors for just two months after their return, although they also received back pay. In addition, one

of the four teachers who were part of the first group to go to the U.S. was hired by the airline *Varig*, with the consent of the leadership of the university. This situation was indicative of the precariousness of the academic profession in Brazil in 1960 and even later. It was only in that decade that full-time positions began to be available in the federal system.

Some of the returnees complained of having had unfortunate experiences in the U.S., which was noted by Oberg as one of the possible causes for others' reluctance to seek training abroad. Oberg says,

When I arrived in 1959, Dean Diniz chose six men [*sic*] to go to Michigan State University to do graduate studies. Since then, not one person has been selected to go to the United States to do graduate work. [...] In part, Diniz's reluctance to send more people to study is due to the unfortunate experience had by the people he sent to study public administration. [...] they said the effort was not worth it and Diniz said he would not send anyone else to the United States to pursue a graduate degree in Public Administration. He does still show interest in sending candidates to study business administration and in sending other – more senior – professors for short visits or training at EAESP. [...] of the four [professors] who returned, none is particularly above average. (Oberg, 1961, p. 5, loose translation)

This analysis by Oberg (1961) provoked a strong reaction from the United States Operations Mission (USOM, 1961), which, in an institutional response, states that after formal written consultations with MSU and the University of Southern California (USC), they believe that Oberg misjudged the situation. According to USOM, this misunderstanding may have resulted from comments made in Portuguese and misinterpreted by Oberg, who, according to the office, had no authority to comment on the graduate programs of the universities. In addition, in the document called *Chief of Party Comments*, Oberg is criticized by Milton Dickerson, also a MSU mission member:

Perhaps Professor Oberg found himself to be at the service of Dean Diniz and therefore was unwilling to aggressively insist on proposals to which Diniz was opposed. However, I [*chief of mission*] do not think any other approach would have been more successful. (Dickerson, 1961, p. 2)

A reply from USOM (1961) points out that Diniz actually nominated three fellows to go to the U.S. and that the lack of prior nominations was due to the Brazilian government restricting funds for international travel. There is some indication that the agreement was facing difficulties because the Brazilian government was not releasing the agreed-upon funds, which made it necessary for the EAESP, UFBA, and UFRGS to seek agreements on a case-by-case basis every time resources had to be expended (Oberg, 1960). This situation bothered the U.S. operators, who stated, in any case, that given the conditions the project made satisfactory progress.

According to USOM (1961), representatives from USC talked on three occasions with Diniz and raised grievances due mainly to the low quantity of funds received by fellowship grantees. Other points raised were the amount of work and the level of English required at USC, as well as the idea that Brazilians would be better served by attending a more specialized training program rather than the more general training offered by the U.S. institution. USC representatives understood that racism was also a problem that hindered the ability of the Brazilians to take full advantage of the program.

Funds are unsuitable for the Los Angeles area and fellowship recipients understand that USC demands an excessive workload, the students. Other hindering factors would be level of English in the face of difficult written and oral examinations required by the university, racial discrimination, poor academic performance during the first two semesters by a small number of fellows including one from Rio Grande do Sul who fortunately managed to improve his grades later on. Ultimately, and in some ways most difficult of all, was the conflict between the Brazilian tendency to seek very narrow specializations and the diploma program at USC, which has a broader focus and included social sciences as part of the public administration program as well as the standard requirements of public administration. (USOM, 1961, n.d., loose translation)

Oberg (1961) expressed his concern because the dean did not send students for preparatory training as agreed. Diniz agreed to send new students through 1961, but he refused to send two candidates who had asked to go to the U.S. and who had caught the attention of the American professors. Oberg (1961) also indicates that another problem was due to the fact that the professors who were trained in the U.S. were not particularly

“outstanding,” and they lacked strong initiative. Although Oberg affirmed that perhaps there were very high expectations very early on, he understood that the foundation of a high-quality program had not yet been formed, as the professors “were simply not as capable as we hoped they would be, or as capable as they will have to be in order for this to become a good Business Administration school” (Oberg, 1961, p. 4, loose translation).

It may also have been that students were not sent by Diniz because there was no administration curriculum in place that could meet the regulations to form the legal basis for a program to be established. From reading the documents, it is also clear that UFRGS’s main interest was to establish a business administration program, which in fact was the first such program to be implemented in Brazil, although the initial professors had been trained in Public Administration.

In addition to the difficulties related to education of the professors, a barrier was also posed by the lack of adequate Portuguese literature to be made available to the students of the administration program. Of those texts that were available, most were in English, which limited access. Thus, although about 400 books and 20 magazines had been acquired and distributed under the program, the language of the texts limited the potential for literature to be disseminated among professors and students. The American professors, therefore, had to deal with the challenge of bringing new literature in a little-known language to Brazil.

The program also sought to influence the adoption of new teaching methodologies that would shift the courses being taught in Brazil toward a more American style of education. One can imagine that the organization of the university through department chairs, which continued until 1968, may have hindered the adoption of new methods. However, documents written by the U.S. mission indicate that techniques such as business simulations, representation, and case studies began to be used by Brazilian professors in their undergraduate classes.

When the first courses in business administration were finally established at UFRGS, they were focused courses meant for mid-level and senior managers. There were also courses for managers who had completed a higher education program. Both business administration programs were seen as an important step, especially as part of the strategy to persuade business and academic communities of the importance and legitimacy of establishing the degree program in administration.

The courses began after the arrival of Professor Joseph Nordstrom. EAESP professors were available to teach classes for short periods (in contrast to UFBA, which had a professor from São Paulo for one year). Apparently, the courses were well received. The intensive course for mid-level managers had 39

students enrolled from various companies. Students had classes from Monday to Friday. The first graduate-level course enrolled 35 students, although several dropped out before the end of the course.

At the end of the first semester, however, there was criticism of the program because it had public administrators and business administrators in the same classroom. Criticism focused on the fact that the course was trying to meet the needs of both groups, who did not share interests. Therefore, it was decided that the courses would be separated for the following semester in order to remedy this point of dissatisfaction among students. Professors, on the other hand, noted that, since virtually all students worked during the day, they did not have adequate time to devote to reading or to assigned extracurricular activities.

This, incidentally, was one of the most frequent criticisms made by American professors who served as advisers for undergraduate programs established in Brazil. Often it was indicated that part of the difficulty in establishing a program similar to U.S. programs was the inability to attract full-time students who could fully dedicate themselves to the program. The situation was repeated in both the undergraduate and graduate schools, especially due to the lack of scholarships or paid leave from work, respectively.

Given the reluctance of the university administration to establish an undergraduate degree program prior to the regulation of a core required curriculum by the federal government, the MSU professors arranged for Diniz and the university president to visit the United States, so that they could be definitively convinced of the possibility and advisability of establishing the undergraduate degree program. We did not find further information about the visit, but there are indications that it was focused on the area of knowledge related to agriculture.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The information presented here is relevant to business management and administration education in general, but particularly to the history of the establishment of administration programs in Brazil. Among other things, clear cultural differences were perceived by U.S. advisers, notably with regard to the freedom to create new course programs with flexible curricula determined by universities. Moreover, the difficulty in gaining access to the necessary literature was an element that, having appeared several times in the analyses of U.S. advisers at UFRGS, was reflected in funding by the Ford Foundation for the development of textbooks by Brazilian professors.

Despite our position on research in the field of history, which led us to approach the sources without any previously formed hypothesis, and despite the fact that we do not believe that it is possible to formulate general rules for understanding different times and groups in society, we believe it is possible and necessary to extrapolate from data to achieve something more serious. We would not say that a narrative does not have value in and of itself, due to its potential to reveal elements that had been ignored and to open the door to new questions. However, in this section, we seek to address aspects that may be common to other experiences related to the implementation of university course programs.

Thus, even if this work does not allow us to immediately discern any large-scale plans or clear outline of the major strategies underlying the support to UFRGS and how it was provided, it contributes to the establishment of a history of the field of administration and management in Brazil. Through an analysis of the communications between U.S. consultants, the coordinators of the bilateral cooperation program, and the ICA, we were able to analyze elements that would have been lost if we had used a broader lens.

A point to note was the difficulty in demanding more commitment from Brazilian students, because many of them also maintained employment, which shows that the U.S. model could not simply be transplanted to Brazil. Indeed, the notion that it would be possible to import the American model, which has been questioned by Alcadipani and Bertero (2014) in relation to EAESP, also comes up due to the time period studied. The signed agreement was not in fact put into effect during this time period, which underscores the obvious distinction between what was planned and what actually occurred, as well as the continuing need to adapt planning to account for contingencies.

The difficulties encountered by the students who went to study in the U.S. also received little attention from those responsible for the agreement. Thus, the low level of English skills and the lack of familiarity with the culture of graduate school classes (which did not exist in Brazil) led to the students' time abroad being overwhelming for some of them. This was in addition to the students feeling that they often faced prejudice. Although their complaints were dismissed as exaggerations, the concern was significant enough to keep other students from going abroad.

We also highlight the role of language as a barrier to communication between the two U.S. consultants and the professors and leaders of UFRGS. The difficulty of transmitting ideas and understanding the context in which they arose was considered by the Americans to be a problem that thwarted the success of the program. At the same time, the consultants were

less able to influence the people they were dealing with due to their own failure to communicate in Portuguese. In this sense, one of the first points to note is that the language barrier was not considered in advance, since the consultants came to Brazil without speaking Portuguese and interacted with people who were not fluent in English. In addition, the Americans had little or no knowledge of the specificities of Brazilian culture, nor of the region in which they were working. Thus, the Americans' lack of understanding of the way employment worked and of the different realities faced by Brazilian students is apparent at various times in the set of documents examined.

It is also important to consider the differences that existed in the way higher education was organized. In Brazil, universities had less freedom to establish new courses. Options for careers were also limited in Brazil, where the exercise of a profession was historically regulated by the government. Thus, the governing body of UFRGS was quite reluctant to accept the idea of establishing an administration program, because neither the university program nor the profession of administration was regulated. As Barros (2014) points out, at UFMG this issue was solved by creating links between the administration program and other programs offered at the institution that already had governmental recognition.

In other words, not all the difficulties in implementing the agreement were the responsibility of the Americans. The inflexibility of the law that governed the establishment of new programs of higher education (and new jobs) in Brazil hindered the dissemination of knowledge about administration. This delayed the establishment of an undergraduate program by three years in this case. These delays occurred, although the Brazilian government signed the agreement with the U.S., which one might assume would indicate a push toward immediate approval of the course program. In addition, a financial crisis – especially with regard to foreign currencies – afflicted the Brazilian government throughout the second half of the twentieth century. This crisis contributed to a situation in which only the U.S. government was able to fulfill its share of commitments to participate in the program. We can infer the greater importance that this project had to the U.S., given that the Brazilian government often simply failed to fulfill its part of the agreements. Nevertheless, the agreements remained in place.

In the same vein, the professional lobbying associations of economists and accountants also opposed establishing an administration program in Brazil, particularly in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. In a context in which professional activity is highly regulated, preventing the emergence of new professions was seen as a way to maintain a more or less secure professional niche. Thus, it is possible to infer that the lack of specific legislation to approve the university program was related to the lack of regulation of the

profession itself, in order to impede (sometimes intentionally) the establishment of management higher education in Brazil.

This paper has constructed a narrative of the years between the signing of the agreement by the UFRGS (1958) and the effective implementation of the business administration program (1963). It is worth noting that later, in 1973, the master's program offerings at UFRGS included both the option of a master's in business administration and a master's in public administration; these options no longer existed after 1975 (Coelho & Nicolini, 2013, p. 416). We have shown how the Americans responsible for following through with the agreement made by the U.S. encountered various obstacles to the goals they sought to achieve. It is clear that the original intent – to transplant the American model to Brazil – failed due to the inadequacy of the model in light of the specific realities of Brazil. Moreover, the idea that EAESP would serve as a center for the dissemination of management techniques (and ideology) worked only partially, since there was resistance from institutions to the idea that the role of the FGV should be strengthened. We can conclude from the discussion here that the importance of U.S. support cannot be ignored, but that it should be relativized, considering various adaptations that were made to the initial objectives of the program and that were “imposed” by the Brazilian reality.

We would like to close by proposing a research agenda. We believe that this discussion may give rise to developments in exploring how management thinking has been influenced by modifications made to allow for its adaptability and acceptance in Brazil. The assumption is that, to some extent, knowledge from the American matrix was watered down by adaptations made in Brazil, either voluntarily or involuntarily. On that point, the notion of sociological reduction (Ramos, 1996) can be useful to critically analyze the adaptation of new ideas and practices (that were generated elsewhere) to the Brazilian context, and which were also developed at the same time during which the processes analyzed here occurred. In addition, studying the example of UFRGS shows us that it will be important for research to be undertaken about the origins of administration and management programs in other federal universities that played an important role in their respective states in the diffusion of management education. Such studies can examine whether and to what extent the pattern of the presence of U.S. influence was maintained. At the same time, it would be appropriate to analyze how the core curriculum for the administration program evolved over time. It would also be appropriate to discuss which other institutions influenced the dissemination of knowledge about management in Brazil. Studies of consulting firms, business media, and multinational corporations could add to efforts to understand how management knowledge came to occupy such a vital position in Brazil.

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