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# MEXICAN HIGHER EDUCATION ENTRANCE EXAMS, AN OBSTACLE TO THE ASPIRATION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR POOR AND INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

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— Abstract —

This article exposes and discusses a problem of big relevance nowadays in Mexican education: entrance exams, especially those that promote access to Higher Education (HE). These tests have been questioned for their remarkable limitations concerning its standardized and decontextualized evaluations of knowledge and aptitudes in thousands of students who try to access universities and other public institutions, without considering socio-cultural origin nor their socio-economic conditions. Indeed, several authors and organizations consider that such exams are an obstacle to the academic and professional development in a big sector of candidates, which frequently are in remarkable circumstances of poverty and marginalized situations (which is a very big problem in cases of students coming from different autochthonous communities). Usually, this sector does not have basic resources (nutritional, monetary, and educational among others), or even previous education (overall linguistic and mathematic aspects), to compete for a place in higher education with middle and upper-class students, creating a big disadvantage without opportunities to continue their studies. The previous goes in a decrease of the federal commitment with the inclusive education, this policy seeks that all students, without taking into account circumstances (physical, ethnics, social, etc.), can get into public education. For those reasons several proposals have been planned to modify, adequate, and remove the assessment process through the entrance exams, to allow a greater number of poor and native indigenous students to access HE, as is exposed in this essay.

## Keywords

*Entrance exams; High Education; Inclusive education; poor students; indigenous students.*



The main objective of this article is to present the main problems generated by the entrance exams concerning the federal policy of inclusive education, as well as some of the alternatives that have been proposed to solve them. For this purpose, we used an analytical method through qualitative information gathering and interpretation techniques from specialized bibliographic sources that presented results in the period 2006 - 2020. The structure of this review about the problem and the discussion on entrance exams to higher education started by defining the main difficulties arising from entrance exams, to later analyze the evidence found on the HE entrance processes of low-income and/or *indigenous peoples*<sup>1</sup> in different national universities; finally, we propose some options for solutions.

### CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PROBLEM: THE LIMITATIONS OF ENTRANCE EXAMS AND INEQUALITY IN THE HE ADMISSION PROCESS

The concern for increasing student enrollment and opening new possibilities for young people is not new since, throughout the first two decades of the 21st century, various international organizations have warned about the low educational rates in Mexico (for example, that less than 55% of students finish upper secondary education mainly due to poor economic and social conditions), according to figures from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development<sup>2</sup> (OECD, 2015a). To these figures we must add those mentioned by Tuirán (2012), who points out that university coverage, despite having a constant growth, in 2012 barely hovered around 30% of the total number of students between 18 and 23 years of age (more or less 3 million), far below that of other Latin American countries, such as Argentina and Uruguay (where it hovers around 70%). Besides, this same association estimated that, despite economic and educational support programs, only 25% of young people from the poorest families in Mexico have the opportunity to study a professional career (approximately 750 thousand). Because of this, the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions

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- 1 The concept of *indigenous peoples* refers to those settlements that existed before the emergence of the modern state and pre-existed the current legal-administrative structure. They include the descendants of the first settlers of America, who have "identity elements (culture, region, and beliefs) not only to distinguish themselves from the indigenous ethnic groups of the country but also to circumscribe an identity distinct from the rest" (Guzmán Vázquez, 2019, p. 2), establishing a specific construction of ethnicity. In Mexico, it includes not only the native peoples that existed before the Spanish Conquest but also the communities of different denominations (mestizos, Afro-descendants, and Creoles, among others) that have roots and belong to the localities.
- 2 The OECD is an international organization with more than 60 years of experience, which studies, designs, and promotes public policies to promote prosperity, equal opportunities, and well-being for all segments of society. This institution coordinates with governments, associations, and citizens to carry out comprehensive research to define alternatives, indicators, and standards in the social, economic, and environmental fields (OECD, 2020).



(ANUIES)<sup>3</sup> in 2012 had set the challenge of reaching 60% coverage by the 2021-2022 cycle (5 million 840 thousand students) with an increase of 257 thousand new spaces each year (Tuirán, 2012). Unfortunately, the goal defined in 2012 was not achieved due to budgetary limitations and disorganized administrative conditions<sup>4</sup>.

Faced with this horizon, the OECD (2013) has stressed that Mexican students must acquire a series of fundamental skills, either to enter the labor market or to continue preparing for higher education. Some of the most important, according to the same OECD (2015b) are:

- Interpersonal and social and emotional skills, such as leadership, intelligent management of emotions, social responsibility, interpersonal communication, self-management skills, continuous learning, and elimination of stereotypes, initiative, proactivity, as well as respect and support towards women (considered *soft skills*).
- Skills that connect school content with the demands of the workplace, such as the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), the ability to process information, language skills, organization of work teams, project development and evaluation, management and application of knowledge, innovation and strategic decision-making (characterized as *tough skills*).

The said institution has also emphasized the need to expand educational coverage to train skilled workers, professionals in all areas, and scientific and technological researchers (OECD, 2013). To the above has been added the requirement to institute *inclusive education*, a concept that refers to practices that respond to the diversity of students' needs, with the objective of greater student participation in learning, cultural, and community activities, to reduce their exclusion within and outside the educational system, as described by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization<sup>5</sup> (UNESCO, 2005). This provision is also contemplated

3 ANUIES was founded in 1950, participating in the formulation of national programs, plans, and policies, as well as in the creation of organizations oriented to the development of Mexican HE. It is a non-governmental, pluralistic association that brings together the main HEIs in the country to promote their integral improvement in the fields of teaching, research, cultural extension, and academic services. As of 2020, it was made up of 203 universities and higher education institutions, both public and private, throughout the country (ANUIES, 2020).

4 In this regard, the OECD (2019) refers that "the effectiveness of extraordinary funding is reduced by the fragmentation of programs, overlapping and unclear objectives, and complex implementation procedures. Also, it is common for institutions to devote extraordinary funding to cover core costs" (p. 4).

5 UNESCO (2020) is an organization that promotes peace through international cooperation in matters related to education, science, and culture. Its programs contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda, adopted at the UN General Assembly in 2015.

in Mexico's General Education Law<sup>6</sup> (LGE), Article 36, which stipulates that the authorities must take measures that:

Education, in its different types, levels, modalities, and educational options will respond to the linguistic, regional, and socio-cultural diversity of the country, as well as of the dispersed rural population and migratory groups, in addition to the characteristics and needs of the different sectors of the population (Congreso de la Unión, 2019, p. 5).

Amid this panorama, the HE entrance exams that have been used to date (2020) do not usually take into account the aforementioned guidelines, much less the problems suffered by many of the students in conditions of poverty and marginalization (especially those belonging to native peoples), which significantly reduces their opportunities to continue their studies at the higher level. In this regard, Núñez (2005) pointed out, in his work on educational backwardness, that there were notable educational gaps between the two richest deciles and the rest of the population; in fact, this author noted that the educational gap between the richest decile and the 30% of the population with the lowest income exceeded nine years. In turn, Blanco (2014) corroborated the enormous inequality caused by socio-economic status in the passage from secondary to high school (with a 7.5:1 difference between the highest and lowest strata) and from their EMS path to university (with a ratio of almost 3:1 between both strata described) in Mexico City, proportions undoubtedly more unbalanced in states with larger rural populations and less economic development.

We should emphasize that the inequality referred to above is the product of at least three decades of disguised neglect of the national education system. This has been documented by Núñez, who indicated that "the institutional apparatus that has been designed to combat educational backwardness has not been sufficiently endowed and supported in its functions, because it has been viewed as an administrator of the problem, and not as a factor for its solution" (2005, p. 66). Likewise, De Ibarrola (2012) pointed out four specific problems that have not been solved and, in many cases, have increased: coverage; quality; "inadequate management"; and insufficient resources.

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6 The LGE, published with its latest update on September 30, 2019, regulates the education provided by the State (in terms of its federal, state, and municipal authorities), as well as its decentralized agencies and individuals with authorization or with recognition of official validity of studies (RVOE) (art. 1). It guarantees the development of programs and public policies that make effective the right to education at all school levels (art. 2). It also emphasizes inclusive education, intending to eliminate all forms of discrimination or exclusion, as well as other structural conditions that are barriers to learning and participation (art. 7).

This author offers various alternatives to address them and, without directly pointing the finger of blame, she describes that "educational results will possibly always be insufficient or unsatisfactory, but there are undoubtedly many responsibilities for which we have not achieved the corresponding commitments" (p.14). In this sense, the contribution of Camacho (2020) is also noteworthy, who pointed out that, starting in the 1990s, the drive for coverage and the development of the educational system stopped and much greater importance was given to *educational quality*, which led to disagreements among the different educational actors, impacting not only in the school field but also in the cultural and socio-economic fields.

The aforementioned conflicts have caused that most students from the most disadvantaged sectors (poorer strata, indigenous communities, and people with disabilities, among others) do not have the technological tools (computers, cell phones, etc.) or the educational supports (such as specialized teachers, libraries, laboratories, etc.) to acquire basic knowledge and skills (Alcántara and Navarrete, 2014), aspects that are usually evaluated by HE entrance exams, as well as by other more specialized ones.

However, as Guzmán and Serrano (2010) rightly warn, to solve the problem of inequality of opportunities, it has not been enough to open more places in universities to increase their enrollment, since what is sought is not only greater coverage, but equity that takes into consideration the differences among students and their human diversity, to introduce policies that promote social justice.

In this regard, although new institutions have been created since the 1990s aimed at students with specific needs (technological, tourism, etc.) and contextual conditions (intercultural, rural, etc.), these have been insufficient in the face of the growing demand for HE, which is not covered by even a third of the total (OECD, 2019).

Delving into the issue of equity, Silva (2012) stated that there is no equal access to HE for poor young people, who are constrained by their socio-economic and cultural background. This author also questioned the "meritocratic" criteria in this selection process, since they do not have an evaluation system that adjusts to the diversity of the Mexican population, so it is essential to have equity policies that "implement compensatory and affirmative actions" in favor of the most vulnerable sectors.

## PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The 20th century brought with it the impulse and consolidation of HEIS, which already existed in previous times (since the 16th century and expanding their scope in the 19th century); however, it was after the Mexican Revolution, starting in 1917, when such institutions began to spread permanently



throughout the country (Herrera, 2013). It is relevant to add that, although in these post-revolutionary public universities there were already exams to select incoming students, such tests were focused on validating, more administratively than epistemologically, certain basic knowledge or specific skills focused on bachelor's degrees (Díaz Barriga, 1993). Thus, as Bartolucci (1994) explained, from the 1940s to the 1970s, since the demand to enter the HEIS was not yet high, these evaluations practically did not restrict admission to students who wished to join them; but this changed in the 1970s when population growth and the limitation of spaces led to the fact that admission began to be controlled through political rather than academic decisions.

Subsequently, in the 1980s, as Navarro and Contreras (2013) describe, the neoliberal political-economic model<sup>7</sup> was imposed in Mexico, which dictated, through a series of inter-institutional documents (where the report of the International Council for the Development of Education in 1990; ANUIES' assessments through the National Commission for the Evaluation of Higher Education or CONAEVA; and the OECD report of 1997 stand out), that the lack of academic level in universities was because they had expanded their enrollment very fast, with a wide differentiation of HEIS and their study plans and programs, in parallel to the management of financial restriction that did not allow greater investments in them (Navarro and Contreras, 2013).

Under these terms, the new government policies led to universities and autonomous HE institutions throughout the country -which normally planned their activities to their local contexts- having to adjust to the administrative conditions of federal and state authorities, in the face of the permanent need for additional financial resources. This caused HEIS to move from "indicative" planning (focused on strategic development factors) to "inductive" planning (guided by simply obtaining funds to cover expenses), leaving aside their own priorities to put those of the SEP first, as also expressed by Navarro and Contreras (2013).

As a result of the aforementioned circumstances, serious conflicts began to arise from the so-called "HE quality problem", which led to the concentration of economic and logistical resources in the HEIS of the largest cities, generating serious inequalities in educational services among the different regions of the country (where the central and northern states were relatively favored due to their proximity to the USA, while the southern

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7 Neoliberalism is the theory that establishes a reduction of state intervention in the economy, privatization of public enterprises, decentralization of authority, deregulation and reduction of bureaucracy, marginalization of trade unions, minimization of subsidies for the protection of the population (especially in health and education), as well as the reduction of various social assistance programs for the poor (Latapí, 2008).

and eastern states were not prioritized because they were mostly rural), as Camberos, Huesca and Castro (2013) and López and Peláez (2015) expressed in their works. Also, there was a marked inequality in the selection of applicants between social groups (with a notable advantage for the upper classes and few incentives for the most marginalized sectors) (Padua, 1994; De los Santos, 1997; Millán & Pérez, 2008; Cortés, 2013). In turn, disparities appeared in the distribution of students among professional fields (with a sustained growth of applicants for administrative and computer sciences), with a significantly low number of graduates and a reduced absorption capacity of graduates in the labor markets, as mentioned in the OECD reports (1997, 2013) and the reports by López Moguel (2009) and Navarro and Favila (2013).

All of the above led federal administrations, starting in the 1990s, to turn educational evaluations into the perfect pretext for cutting university budgets, limiting entry to HE, and justifying inequalities in access to this level, as described by De los Santos (1997). This is how the exams elaborated by the National Evaluation Center (CENEVAL) appeared.

Taking as a reference what was expressed in previous lines, nowadays (2020) the entrance evaluations to different HEI have become a reason for concern, anguish, and innumerable complications for parents and students themselves. Many media -echoing the neoliberal discourse of educational quality and the scale of academic merits to move up in society-, have insisted on the importance of standardized, internationally accredited and strongly technical evaluation; to this has been added the pressure of different civil society organizations (such as "Mexicanos Primero" and businessman Claudio X. González' "Bécalos"), which have insisted that exams are the main solution to move forward the country's educational system (Sánchez, 2019).

As a result of these circumstances, in recent decades a repertoire of evaluation concepts and proposals has been developed under different theoretical and methodological perspectives (Rueda & García, 2013), but they continue to be mostly quantitative, unequal, and focused on general or utilitarian theoretical contents. Some examples of this problem are presented below:

The first paradigmatic case is that of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), the largest in the country in terms of enrollment and the one with the greatest resources. Its selection contest is open twice a year (in February and June), where students from any high school (public or private) with a minimum average of seven can participate, being able to choose the desired bachelor and campus. In this competition, a 120-item



exam is applied to the different areas of knowledge recognized by the SEP<sup>8</sup> (very similar to the CENEVAL, but without belonging to that organization), assigning a place to applicants who obtain a minimum score established for each career, regardless of their place of residence (UNAM, 2020).

Now, when analyzing the 2006-2007 admission process to UNAM, Guzmán and Serrano (2011, p.40 ) characterized the population of applicants, finding very interesting data, such as that only 29% of their fathers and 17% of their mothers had university studies (p. 40); likewise, most of the students were children of families of employees, trade or domestic workers, and merchants (more than 60 %), belonging to the lower-middle classes, with precarious incomes (especially in the case of female students, who tend to have less support in terms of resources in relation to males); only a little more than a quarter (26.5 %) came from families earning more than six minimum wages per day.

The aforementioned differences weighed significantly in the admission process, as broken down by Guzmán and Serrano (2011) giving a marked advantage to students from families with incomes above ten minimum wages, whose pass rate was 100% higher than that of students from families earning less than two minimum wages. These researchers also highlighted that the relationship between family income and acceptance at UNAM was linear, since as family income increases, so does the frequency of admitted students (2011, pp. 45-46). In turn, they found an approval ratio of 2 to 1 in favor of men concerning women, a situation that was explained by pointing out the possibility that there was an unfavorable influence of the socio-economic conditions of most female applicants, contrasting with the studies of Mingo (2006) and Millán (2006), which emphasize a better overall academic performance from women. It was also indicated that the exams show an evident bias, giving greater weight to mathematical skills, formal thinking, and standardized communication, without taking into account the learning styles developed by many female students in general (usually non-technical) schools, which gives advantages to male students, as highlighted by Mingo (2006).

Another revealing fact is that more than 50% of the students who pass these tests studied their basic education and high school in private schools, making it clear that they have a better education as they enjoy notorious advantages: higher family income, parents (and especially mothers) with more schooling, schools with better infrastructure, more effective teaching-

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8 The Ministry of Public Education (SEP, 2020) is the federal agency responsible for the planning, management, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of educational services offered by the Mexican State, as well as the reviewer and accreditor of private school institutions.

learning models, smaller groups, better-trained teachers and, as a consequence, better academic trajectory and higher averages (Mingo, 2006, p. 44).

Based on these findings, it has become evident that the admission process to UNAM -the university with the largest academic offerings in the country- shows aspects that can be attributed to socio-economic and cultural inequalities, which can affect the admission opportunities of very specific segments (low-income students, women and public school students).

Adding to this position, Dr. Pérez Castro (2016), belonging to the Research in Education area of UNAM itself, has pointed out that there are marked inequalities in the living conditions of students that educational institutions reproduce and prolong in a vicious circle of exclusion, such as poverty, gender discrimination, place of residence, age, ethnicity, violence, migration, and disability. The elitism of most HEIS is largely because they are usually autonomous, so that each student, to enter, must submit to procedures that are more administrative than educational (such as the general knowledge exam or aptitude and talent tests), which tend to focus on measuring and accrediting "a set of individual qualifications and competencies" (p. 2). This has led to the fact that only seven out of every one hundred young people from the poorest decile of Mexican society can access HE, in contrast to the 47 out of 100 young people from the highest decile who can enter this level.

Another example, described by Zueck (2011), occurred in the 2010-2011 process at the Autonomous University of Chihuahua (UACH), where they apply the CENEVAL entrance exam, better known as EXANI II (which has been institutionalized since 1997 as the test most commonly applied by public universities, regional technological institutes, technological and polytechnic universities, and even some private HEIS). With this test, as well as the Terman intelligence test, three groups were assessed: disciplinary areas (2090 students), Health Area specialties (429 students), and the Physical Education degree (234 applicants). To classify and interpret the results of the exams, predictive variables (disciplines, professional area, and degrees), outcome variables (Terman cognitive skills and EXANI II factors), high school averages, and demographic conditions (gender and context) were used. Among the findings, it was detected that administrative, health, and engineering areas had the highest performance; on the other hand, physical education students (who present the most disadvantageous contextual circumstances) showed statistically lower ranks in both tests, exhibiting a notably low level of cognitive skills and general knowledge. The author of this research attributed this to the fact that such instruments do not take into account their psychological, social, and economic characteristics, which are fundamental in competency-based and learning-centered educational models, but which are not measured with these standardized tests.



Broadening the discussion of cases, it is also relevant to analyze the case of the Benemérito Instituto Normal del Estado de Puebla (BINEP), where the EXANI II was applied in the admission process of the 2012-2013 cycle. This 110-item instrument measured students' skills in five areas (logical-mathematical reasoning, mathematics, verbal reasoning, Spanish, and information and communication technologies), with the addition of a complementary English test. In this regard, authors Bringas and Pérez (2014) referred that students required an average score above 1000, out of a maximum of 1300, to pass the exam; they found that 80.3 % of students scored above the previously defined standard, for only 19.7 % who did not pass. However, the students' results showed low scores in the six areas assessed (just 80 points above the mean line on average), which made it possible to verify that none of the selected applicants possessed the minimum competencies established by CENEVAL, so they needed "compensatory academic actions". This made clear a very interesting message: obtaining the highest scores in the EXANI II does not mean that students have the knowledge and skills required for HE; nor does it mean that students with the lowest scores are incompetent since the process is not equitable for all and a large number of them are in positions of socio-economic and educational disadvantage.

Regarding the situation of students of indigenous origin trying to access and develop academically in HE, Bermúdez (2017) made a recapitulation of the studies done between 2002 and 2015 on that topic. His findings showed that from the 2000s onwards, policies for the inclusion of students from native peoples began to be incorporated, with the implementation of the Program to Support Indigenous Students in Higher Education Institutions (PAEEIES) of the Ford Foundation and ANUIES in 2001, as well as with the creation of intercultural universities (UI) in 2003. However, the students who participated in these initiatives made it clear that there were notorious controversies between the national educational system (strongly oriented towards the achievement of technical and economic progress) and the intercultural educational models (related to the contextual conditions of the native peoples), such as marked institutional racism, since the former discriminates against indigenous students by rejecting their languages, cultural characteristics, traditions, ways of learning and socio-political stances, in addition to marginalizing them in the labor market. This contradiction has materialized in the admission exams, where indigenous students find themselves in a clear inequality of opportunities, having to take them in another language (Spanish), with questions formulated in an urban and high tech environment (which is usually not theirs) and without taking into account their socio-cultural perspectives (which may be quite different from the conceptualizations of Westernized societies), just to point out some of these inequities.

At this point, emphasis can be placed on the most forceful criticisms of evaluation instruments such as EXANI II, listed by Navarro and Contreras (2013): 1.- They are homogeneous exams, so they are based on general contents that do not take into consideration the different contexts in which students find themselves. 2. They are standardized tests, so they do not value the socio-cultural particularities of students or their types of intelligence. 3. They are multiple-choice, so they do not incorporate learning styles or other characteristics of students. 4. - They consolidate CENEVAL's monopoly in the design and application of these exams, preventing other educational and professional organizations from participating in these processes. 5.- Their role hinders the access of most students to HEI, greatly limiting their coverage. 6.- They prevent compliance with the guidelines of inclusive education proposed by SEP and ANUIES. 7.- They show a more than questionable academic validity, as they contain biases and discriminatory features against women, young people in poverty, and students coming from native communities.

## ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS

Intending to reduce the negative impact of decontextualized and impersonal entrance exams, Rueda and García (2013) have proposed the possibility of carrying out a diagnostic-formative evaluation, which allows the evaluation of individual performance through the documentation and presentation of experiences, combined with the delivery of finished products. Thus, the evaluation of portfolios of work, which would be reviewed by professionals in the respective area, would allow a greater openness to the inclusion of different learning styles and would mitigate several aspects that cause inequality in the opportunity for applicants to access HE. Unfortunately, this proposal is hampered by the enormous operational requirements that would be needed in terms of materials, trained reviewers, and time, although it could be used for specific cases of students in especially complicated conditions due to poverty and marginalization.

Regarding the evaluation of students from native communities, Bermúdez (2017) pointed out that, being a heterogeneous group, it is necessary to incorporate educational policies that focus on their identity processes, meanings, and intercultural practices, which lead to reformulations of ethnicity. Consequently, admission exams would have to be adapted considering their different cultural particularities, to achieve a fair assessment process. To achieve this, it would require the participation of a group of specialists in Anthropology, Sociology, Linguistics, and other social sciences, which is complicated to coordinate and carry out, so it would be essential to create a national plan for the inclusion of these students in HE,



which would be jointly financed by international institutions, civil associations and authorities at all academic levels.

## CONCLUSIONS

This analysis exposed how the existing inequalities in Mexican HEIS entrance exams are related to inequalities in different aspects of life (access to public services, food, safety, health, educational quality, and labor obligations) of many students from lower strata and/or coming from native peoples, which have been documented in studies such as those of Moreno and Flamand (2015), Cortés (2013) and Millán and Pérez (2008). Likewise, such students, by not being able to access HE, lose the possibility of having social mobility (an increasingly rare phenomenon in Mexico), remaining in poverty, as discussed in the report by Olaberría and Dugain (2015).

It cannot be overlooked that inequities in HE entry can be linked to the geographic location of students (with greater options for those living in the center and north of the country) and the size of the populations in which they live (where rural areas are very prone to educational backwardness), as the research by Navarro and Favila (2013) and Alcántara and Navarrete (2014) expose.

On the other hand, it is relevant to point out that, during the search, analysis, and comparison of information sources, it could be noted that there are few studies focused on reviewing and criticizing the admission processes and evaluation instruments used for the selection of students in Mexican HE, especially with the socio-economic conditions and ethnicity of students. Most studies focus on how the admission test is related to the quantification of academic performance and its relationship with their school of origin, as in the work of Torres, Torres, and Ponce (2018) in several HEIS in Aguascalientes; or its value as a predictor of school dropout, as investigated by Solís and his work team (2017) at the Autonomous University of Campeche. This is largely due to the failure of inclusion policies and the strong "meritocracy" that still predominates in national universities, where these evaluations are still considered completely valid, functional, modern, accredited, and unquestionable.

Faced with this difficult situation, educational authorities and university academies of HEIS must become aware that these instruments are not the most equitable or adequate for the selection of students in an environment such as the Mexican one, so each university and institute must design their own contextualized instruments adapted to the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of their students. This is not an easy task, considering that the CENEVAL has monopolized the area of entrance evaluations with the

approval of the universities, since the acceptance of its assessment criteria (approved by international organizations) results in greater funding for the HEIS, in addition to greatly facilitating their administrative tasks. This is where HE managers must make a strategic decision: is it worth sacrificing the future of millions of young people with limited resources and disadvantaged by their socio-cultural status to obtain resources and facilitate the management of the admission process? It is urgent that the answer to this question goes beyond bureaucratic expediency and leads to a fundamental change in the admission processes of all HEIS in the coming years.



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