

Chapter 3

Challenges for the Creation of an International Online University in a Controversial Environment: Chilean Higher Education System Case

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ABSTRACT

This chapter analyzes the controversial challenges faced by the Chilean university system for the creation of an international online university. Chile is a country with a neoliberal economic system, widely exposed to international markets, faces the need to internationalize its universities and expand its online offer, two copulative actions in essence, but which have not had enough advances, given the tensions within the university system of that country and the context conditions that surround it.

INTRODUCTION

Chile is a country where a neoliberal socio economy prevails (Zunino, 2014), which for four decades has given way to a decrease in the State's presence in the fixing of prices and deregulation of economic activities, an opening of international trade, and a privatization of social services (Bello, 2012). Paradigm of the political economy that over time has hardened its position regarding deregulation, finance forms, globalization and the emphasis on economic growth (Rodrik, 2018).

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Thus, the Chilean context has led into a privatization of university education (Sanchez, 2016; Alarcón, 2017; Espinoza, 2017; Rodrik, 2017). And despite of country's commercial openness in international markets (Ortiz, 2004; Alarco, 2017; Jenne & Briones 2018) and high Internet connectivity (Subsecretary of Telecommunications of Chile, 2017), there is no an international online university in Chile (National Council of Education, 2018).

National controversies regarding the higher education system, in terms of access and quality (Vega et al., 2017), could be a precedent for this. But, in any case, in relation to the growth of the Chilean university system, the offer of online education is scarce and concentrated inside its (National Council of Education, 2018). And even more lacking that gives an account on compliance local educational accreditation criteria (National Accreditation Commission - Chile, 2018). This gives rise to research questions, such as: what conditions make possible the lacking existence of an online offer? What degree of internationalization does that offer present? What challenges must be overcome to increase it?.

Based on the above, this chapter focuses on analyzing the challenges for the creation of an international online university in the current controversial environment in where the Chilean university system is located.

Distance Education First Experience in Chile

Arkoful and Abaiboo (2015), mentioned some advantages and disadvantages in distance education:

- Flexibility, allows to consider the time and place of the student
- Efficiency of knowledge, student has access to a large amount of information
- Provides opportunity to generate relationships among apprentices through discussion forums
- Reduce the cost, students do not need to travel to study and offers the opportunity of learning to a large number of students without the need of many buildings.
- Adapts to the learning needs of each student and allows him to study at his own pace
- Compensates lack of educators, instructors, laboratory technicians, etc.
- Among disadvantages these authors point out:
- Isolation makes it necessary for students to have time management skills and a strong motivation to study
- Regarding explanations and clarifications, the e-learning method is less effective than the face-to-face method because through a computer is difficult to avoid cheating.
- Not all disciplines are effective to be learned via e-learning, such as those of a scientific nature or that require manual practice

It is important to focus on the role of social inclusion that distance education can have, virtual platforms could revolutionize the knowledge society. Today it is possible to access large amounts of information through the Internet, it is possible to review studies conducted in different parts of the world without having to travel long distances. This has made it possible for thousands of people to learn different disciplines without leaving the place where they live, then the technology era bridges the geographical gaps that previously made knowledge acquisition difficult. Pino (2013), establishes that the internet has the capacity to break the geographical variables, which allow people to transcend spatial limitations and facilitate communication and the coordination of activities at the global level. This inclusive aspect would

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