

**THE PENDULUM EFFECT: EXPLORING NORMATIVE STRUCTURE AND THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM IN HIGHER EDUCATION'S CONTRIBUTION TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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### **Introdução**

Universities have taken a prominent place in Sustainable Development (SD). The normalization of institutional activities and the direction of their normative structures, such as institutional planning and course projects, are initiatives considered and studied in this article. However, the hidden curriculum concept is emerging about what remains hidden in informal interactions in the educational path that can be used as a parameter for the unfolding of practice.

### **Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo**

The field of study on the hidden curriculum is unknown, as well as the specific implementation processes that lead to the institutionalization of SD in universities (Leal Filho, 2022; Mousa, 2022). Therefore, the research problem is “How do normative structures and the hidden curriculum act as barriers or drivers for the Higher Education Institutions’ (HEIs) contribution to Sustainable Development (SD)?”

### **Fundamentação Teórica**

We delineate the concepts of normative structures and the hidden curriculum of the university. Besides, we present some drivers and barriers already shown by the literature, such as political articulations and budget restrictions. In this way, we may analyze what is being founded in the cases selected and the contrary facts.

### **Metodologia**

We performed an exploratory qualitative study. To observe the phenomenon, we chose two Brazilian public universities which are similar in their organization. The sample is composed of primary and secondary data. The primary data are semi-structured interviews with 25 teachers and focus groups with 19 students. Secondary data refers to 17 institutional documents. We applied the thematic analysis using data triangulation supported by ATLAS.ti software. This research was approved by the Ethics Committee in Research in Human and Social Sciences (CAAE n° 60389622.0.0000.0214).

### **Análise dos Resultados**

The evidence showed an intensity and diversity of the mechanisms of one and the other. First, there are fewer incentives than barriers. However, the incentives are more intense. Second, the barriers are diverse, showing different impediments, although to a lesser extent. The performance of normative structures and the hidden curriculum depends mainly on institutionalizing the norm in practice. When actions lean too far to one side rather than the other, they become a driver or a barrier. We illustrate such dynamics with a pendulum.

### **Conclusão**

The results demonstrate that the performance of normative structures and the hidden curriculum, as barriers or drivers, impact the contribution of HEIs to SD, exemplified by the lack of norms being countered with the institutionalization of norms. We encourage future research on different undergraduate and regionals to see the similarities and differences, as future studies are associated with decoupling theory to understand the movement of the normative structures and hidden curriculum.

**Referências Bibliográficas**

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