



# Chapter 10

## Democratization of higher education in Angola: inclusion and academic success

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### ABSTRACT

Currently, social inequalities in education are mentioned in numerous studies that concern institutions and governments around the world. However, elite and new middle-class students generally appear to have longer and more successful learning trajectories, unlike students in a disadvantaged economical situation whose learning trajectories are marked by academic failure. This article discusses the social inclusion policies adopted by Angolan higher education institutions in the 2000s, about access to and permanence in higher education,

based on the problems encountered at the time. The purpose of this article is to approach aspects related to the democratization of higher education in Angola, discussing some aspects of the fulfillment of the goals of massification and inclusion in education. In this perspective, we approach in particular the affirmative action policies concerning access and permanence, which began in the 2000s and influence the different paths toward the academic (failure) of students. The study is based on a literature review and document analysis. It is concluded that mass access to education is not enough, it is necessary to guarantee permanence in the university, that is, the student must conclude with the expected academic success in the stipulated time.

**Keywords:** Higher education; Massification access; National institute of scholarship management.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Currently, social inequalities in education are configured in numerous studies that concern institutions and governments around the world. However, elite and new middle-class students generally seem to have longer and more successful learning trajectories, unlike students from less favored classes whose learning trajectories are marked by academic failure (Dubet, 2015).

Since the beginning of the 21st century, there has been a significant expansion in the number of graduates in Angola, rising from 4,900 in 2009 to 14,735 in 2015. As for the number of enrollments, in 2013 it was 216,175, situated above 16.6 percentage points of the predicted value in the National Development Plan (2013 – 2017) (Mesct, 2018). Even though significant advances have been achieved, the continuous increase has not been maintained, with a decrease of 72,677 (33.2%) in the following year in the total number of enrollments. However, students who attend both general (elementary) and higher education face difficulties in maintaining and achieving satisfactory academic performance in the established period (Liberato, 2014). However, guaranteeing access to education is not enough, the

durability and degree of completion of courses must be constantly discussed so that academic performance is more comprehensive and represents an important step in the democratization of higher education.

To understand the difficulties of groups belonging to minorities, or groups traditionally excluded from higher education, we resorted to reflections undertaken by Pierre Bourdieu, as a representative of the classic formulations of the sociology of the reproduction of inequalities in schools.

The purpose of this article is to approach aspects related to the democratization of higher education in Angola, discussing some aspects of the fulfillment of the goals of massification and inclusion in education. In this perspective, we discuss in particular the affirmative action policies regarding access and permanence, which began in the 2000s and influence the different paths towards the academic (un)success of students.

The text demonstrates that, although there has been an increase in mass access to ES, this has not been accompanied by the permanence of students, calling attention to discussions on student permanence policies and on which aspects favor the affiliation of these students to life university in fact, increasing the chances of their academic success. However, there is no statistical information to carry out a more in-depth analysis of certain dynamics of higher education in Angola, such as, for example, the evolution of the number of admitted and enrolled candidates, evasion, failure, and dropout, rates of graduation and completion of courses of graduation. This gap makes room for numerous questions, such as, for example, what is the use of various actions/policies to ensure massification/inclusion at the higher education level, without having concrete data assessing its real scope or impact? How to redesign a new program without prior evaluation of past editions, how to plan the future without knowledge of the past, how to plan the future living in an opaque and obscure present?

Official government bodies, such as the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology, the Ministry of Education, do not have consistent data on these indicators, with a large gap regarding this problem. There is silence about these problems that plague ES Institutions by the competent bodies, making discussions about the democratization of higher education become empty, given that the cycle of democratization is not complete, due to the lack of information to confront the planning and the concrete results that have been obtained.

The text is structured as follows. Right from the start, we outline an overview of Angolan higher education, from its implementation in the 1960s to the present day, referring to educational institutions and the number of enrollments, both in the public and private sectors. The second part of the text brings the issue of social inequalities and their confrontation through education, bringing a narrative about the power of education in social transformation. That is, how education impacts breaking the vicious circle of inequalities. The third part analyzes inclusion policies in HE in Angola, especially about the less favored strata. In the final considerations, questions are raised to problematize the need to include mechanisms in higher education that make it possible to analyze not only access, but all the variables that make it possible to measure academic performance in Higher Education, given that there is still a multifaceted view of

performance academic that integrate the dimensions of democratization, but also a cleavage between the programmatic discourse, where these actions are evidenced, and the instrumentalization of the evaluation of HE, are blurred.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

In methodological terms, the study is characterized as bibliographic, descriptive, and of a qualitative nature. The bibliographic study is characterized by the use of secondary data or information, that is, data that have already been collected or have undergone some type of treatment/analysis on a given topic by other authors (Sacol, A, et al., 2012), the that allows the researcher to use a variety of resources available on the searched topic. As mentioned by Lakatos and Marconi (2009), bibliographical research captures/encompasses the entire theoretical framework related to the published themes.

According to Saccol, A, et al. (2012), this type of research has the advantage of ensuring a broader theoretical basis compared to direct research. However, bibliographical research is not limited to surveying the existing literature, as it requires great skill from the researcher to arrive at something new through what has been written. In this sense, according to Lakatos and Marconi (2009, p. 57), “bibliographical research is not a mere repetition of what has already been said or written about a given subject, but allows the examination of a theme under a new focus or approach, reaching conclusions innovative”.

To achieve the objectives presented in this study, a descriptive study with a qualitative approach was chosen, seeking to understand the policies of massification of access to higher education in Angola, without, however, exhausting the specific points of these and their trends, but raising questions and reflections on the topic. Descriptive research aims to characterize a given population or phenomenon, or establish relationships between variables and define their nature (GIL, 1999 & Vergara, 2007). In the same line of reasoning, Selltiz et al. (1987) pointed out that this type of research allows a detailed description of a phenomenon or situation, mainly what is happening in a situation, person, or group of people. That is, they aim to describe facts or phenomena of a given reality, especially when the researcher intends to know a certain community, individual, or group, its characteristics, values, beliefs, and problems related to culture (Triviños, 1987). This type of research uses survey data and is characterized by speculative assumptions (Aaker & Day, 2004).

According to Richardson (2010, p. 80), studies with a qualitative bias have greater potential to "describe the complexity of a given problem, analyze the interaction of certain variables, understand and classify dynamic processes experienced by social groups". In addition, Godoi and Silva (2006) state that this type of research aims to translate and express the meaning of phenomena in the social world. In other words, it reduces the distance between the "researcher" and the "researched". Furthermore, this type of research works with subjective data, beliefs, values, opinions, phenomena, and habits (Luke & André, 1986). It does not list the events studied, but rather describes and explains them, seeking to understand the phenomenon studied according to the perceptions of the subjects, or situation (Godoy & Silva, 2006).

Studies with a qualitative bias are fruitful when studying a particular and complex phenomenon that one seeks to understand through an explicit interpretation of what the action represents (Chizzotti, 2000).

### 3 CONTEXTUALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ANGOLA

Higher Education (HE) began in 1962, following the process of evolution of the Portuguese university, through Decree-Law n. 44 530, of August 1962, on the initiative of the Ministers of Education of Angola at the time, Lopes de Almeida, and the Portuguese Minister, Adriano Moreira, university studies in Angola were integrated into the Portuguese University, everything that happened in Portugal also occurred in Angola. After 6 years, there was a need to transform university study centers into a University, through Decree-Law n. 48 790, of December 1968, calling itself the University of Luanda in Angola (Santos, 1998; Silva, 2012 & Liberato, 2014), granting them some academic, financial, and administrative autonomy.

In 1975, with the proclamation of independence, the University of Luanda receives the name of the University of Angola, and in 1985, receives the name of Universidade Agostinho Neto, being the only higher education institution until 1998, when the Catholic University comes into operation de Angola (a first private institution in ES).

From the moment of its implementation (1962), Higher Education was constituted as an elite system, dominated by the colonial class and some assimilated ones. There was a slight increase from its implementation until 1975 (581 to 4,176 students enrolled), and there was a decrease in 1977 (from 4,176 to 1,109), a reflection of the exodus of teachers and administrative staff to Portugal in the face of the installed armed conflict. Later, in the 1990s, with the democratic openings in the country, some evolution in access to education began to be observed, albeit timidly, since it was not possible to absorb all those who wanted to attend higher education (Santos, 1998 & Liberato, 2014).

It was from the 2000s onwards that growing mass access to ES began to be observed, due to the end of the armed conflict, the implementation of the Master Lines for the Improvement of Management of the higher education subsystem, which provided for the expansion of the public higher education institutions for the entire national territory, through the decentralization of Universidade Agostinho Neto (UAN), and the implementation of scholarships. The decentralization of the Agostinho Neto University gave rise to more (seven) public universities, distributed throughout the country, namely the Katyavala Buila University – UKB; the University 11 de Novembro – UON; Lueji A’Nkonde University – ULAN; the José Eduardo dos Santos University — UJES; Mandume Ya Ndemofayo University – UMN; and Kimpa Vita University — UKV. In 2014, Presidential Decree No. 188, of August 4, was issued, which created the eighth University, Kuito Kuanavale University – UKK. Later, countless other higher education institutions emerged, and the number of student vacancies also grew. Until 2014, there were 71 HEIs created in Angola: 26 public and 45 private, with 62 fully functioning, 22 public, and 40 private (Mesct, 2014). From this

context, there is a significant increase in access to higher education in the last millennium compared to previous decades, as can be seen in Tables n. 1 and 2 below.

Table 1 - evolution of the number of students from 1967 to 2000.

Year	1967	1968	1969	1970	1997	1998	2001	2012	2013	2014	2015	2014
Number of students	989	1.252	1.784	2.369	7.916	8.536	9.129	161.197	216.175	166.037	221.037	166.037

Source: Carvalho, (2012) and (Mesct, 2016).

Table 2 - evolution of the number of students from 1967 to 2000.

Ano	IES Pública	IES Privada	Total
2012	79.369	81.828	161.197
2013	95.155	121.020	216.175
2014	89.690	77.090	166.780
2015	97.980	123.127	221.037
2016	---	---	241.284

Source: (Mesct, 2016).

According to Table 1, the growth in the number of enrolled students increased from 9,129 in 2001 to 221,037 in 2015, with an average annual growth rate of 16,440 enrollments per year. Private educational institutions have the highest number of enrollments compared to public education, data from 2015 indicate that 55.7% of the student population was enrolled in private higher education and 44.2% in public education (Mesct, 2018). The total number of enrollments in 2013 was 216,175, which is 16.6 percentage points above the value foreseen in the National Development Plan 2013 – 2017. There was a decrease of 72,677 (33.2%) in the following year (2014) enrollment compared to the previous academic year (Ceic, 2015). In 2015, the number of enrollments grew again, standing at 221,037, and 241,284 in 2016. This number remained below the forecast by government authorities of 326,886 for the 2016 school year (Mesct, 2016). Private HEIs absorb the largest number of students, Universities form about 2/3 of the total number of graduates, and 1/3 are formed by Higher Institutes and Schools (Mesct, 2018).

According to Jacob (2018) this decrease in enrollments may be linked to three factors: 1. The economic and financial crisis that has affected the country since the beginning of 2014, which resulted in a decrease in the number of vacancies; 2. Increase in school dropout rates, due to the decrease in income of most families, as a result of rising inflation, particularly students enrolled in private institutions; and 3. The absence of statistical data in the HEIs, especially in the private HEIs, does not allow for accurately measuring the number of enrollments.

In 2016, the training offer corresponded to 111,290 vacancies throughout the country, with a greater proportion in the provinces of Luanda and Benguela, representing 72% and 6.9%. This training offer moved 157,947 applications to the selection process (69.9% in public HEIs and 30.1% in private ones) in different courses, with the greatest demand in the areas of Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts, Letters and Educational Sciences. Of the total number of registered candidates, only 39.8% were admitted, 23.7% belonging to private HEIs and 16.1% to public HEIs. About 60% of candidates failed, with a higher incidence in public

HEIs, with a rate of 53.9%, due to the application of more demanding/competitive tests in the selection process, due to the low absorption capacity of all those who intend to enter (Sees, 2016). Of the candidates admitted to HEIs, 10.1% fail to enroll.

However, as the expansion of education in Angola been accompanied by true democratization/inclusion/social equity at this level of education? The literature is unanimous in stating that the socioeconomic indicators of students are of paramount importance in influencing access to HE, which is why Angola is still far from having an equitable system. As mentioned by Edgar (2019), the probability of access by a student with high cultural and social capital is about 50 times higher than that of families from lower resources. Recent statistics indicate that the Gross Enrollment Rate in Higher Education in 2016 was 7.2% (percentage ratio between the total number of enrollments and the total population) and a Net Enrollment Rate of 3.2% (percentage ratio between the number of enrollments and the population expected to be enrolled in higher education, 18 – 24 years old). The number of students enrolled in Higher Education is 877 per 100,000 inhabitants, with a ratio of 8 per 1000 (Mesct, 2017).

As much as national education presupposes access to equal education for all citizens of school age, regardless of their physical and intellectual capacity, free from any form of discrimination (Capingalã, 2017), it is noted that access to the various levels of education still it is deficient. There are still regional differences in terms of accessibility to education, as mentioned by Sees (2016), the country's capital (Luanda) absorbs more than half of the student population, around 55%, with emphasis on private HEIs representing 44.3 % and 10.7% to public HEIs. Then the provinces of Benguela, Huambo and Huíla absorb respectively 8%, 6.7% and 6.7%, these data can be explained by the high number of institutions (Paulo, 2020). However, the reading of greater or lesser democratization/inclusion/equity in ES in Angola cannot be confined to access, nor the expansion of ES in all provinces of the country, being relevant to consider in the indicators of (un)success and student dropout.

It should be noted that at this point there may be other data that we cannot allude to at the moment due to the difficulties in updating most data in Angola, including data from the Higher Education System and its availability on Internet sites.

#### **4 SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND ITS CONFRONTATION THROUGH EDUCATION**

Social inequalities in Angola are traces of the long colonial period (1482 – 1975), and the civil war that followed (1979 – 2002). The country is a territory of multiple realities, which "powerfully illustrate the divergence between resource wealth and social well-being" (Rocha, 2014, p. 12). Angola is one of the most influential countries in the Southern African region, it is the second largest exporter of oil in sub-Saharan Africa and the fifth largest producer of diamonds in the world, and despite this it also stands out for its weak development rates (Rocha, 2014). According to Inea (2014), the infant mortality rate is one of the highest in the world, being the eighth highest in the world, with 161 deaths per 1000 children per year, data from 2014. Despite this, Angola was one of the countries that most grew between 2000 and 2011, with an

average rate of 7%, surpassing China's growth rate in 2012. The effect of this growth was practically nil on the way the majority of the population continues to live (Inea, 2018). According to data from IBEP 2008 – 2009, they show that around 37% of the population lived in poverty (4,793 Kwanzas/month; income less than US \$1 per day), and 6% of the population lived in extreme poverty. These data have been worsening, the proportion of people living in poverty rose to 41% (12,181 kwanzas/month, income less than US\$1 per day) in 2019 (Isdra, 2019). Of the total poor population, 56% live in rural areas and 44% in urban areas, data from 2019 (Inea, 2020).

There have been advances in various sectors of contemporary societies, with an emphasis on technological and scientific areas. However, there are still demands that are far from being resolved, which have been mitigated, but far from being extinguished. We are talking specifically about the social inequalities observed in most developing countries. Social inequalities are interconnected, variably, as they are interconnected with many social phenomena of different types, levels, amplitudes and temporalities (Costa, 2012), it is as if it were, the little investment in education reflected in the low development rate and consequently affects all spheres of society, economic, social and political.

For Stiglitz (2013), the way inequalities are faced helps us to understand the costs and benefits of reducing them. The author points out two fundamental assumptions that help shape inequality levels: the market and government policies. The latter as far as he is concerned also alters market forces. Government policies reflect the present study well since the creation and implementation of social policies is the best way to level inequalities.

The poverty and inequality that exists is the result of the armed conflict that followed shortly after the conquest of independence, demographic pressure, the destruction and degradation of economic and social infrastructure, the malfunctioning of the health and education sectors, and social protection, the devaluation of human capital and the ineffectiveness of macroeconomic policies (Minplan, 2005). The problem most Angolan families face is undoubtedly poverty. Each month, individuals lose the power to buy food, pay their rent and buy medicine to treat illnesses. In general, those most affected by poverty are women and children, given that 23% of families are single-parent and headed by women (Ucan, 2011). Furthermore, Angola is located in sub-Saharan Africa, a region considered one of the poorest and most unequal in the world, life expectancy is less than 60 years, and with a strong demographic (World Bank, 2019). However, currently, Angola is no exception to the rule, we find in the country high rates of maternal and child mortality, low life expectancy, illiteracy, malnutrition, unemployment, little human mobility, in short, degrading socioeconomic conditions.

Poverty/misery in Angola contrasts with the potential of natural resources that the country offers. Angola is the second-largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa and the fourth-largest diamond producer in the world. In addition to mineral resources, Angola benefits from good rainfall, arable land, abundant water, forests, coastal fishing and rich fauna and flora (Minplan, 2005). However, there are flaws in the government's capacity to translate economic returns into the application of socioeconomic and

redistributive policies to create equal social opportunities in the sectors of education, health, agrarian reform, the consolidation of the business community and social safety nets (Cangue, 2020 ), aimed at improving the well-being of populations, which has caused major social and economic problems.

Poverty deprives people of some dimensions of well-being, such as precarious access to health services, housing, work, and precarious training, and the lack of opportunities to choose a profession. In general, when there is no government support, the poor often find it difficult to satisfy their socioeconomic aspirations. However, only the State manages to change the dynamics of wealth (Stiglitz, 2013), through, for example, the full guarantee of free public education. If this support exists, children will have access to education, and once instructed they will be able to produce, and this production will bring benefits to families and the State itself. Thus, the State changes the reality of these individuals, giving them a better education in the sense of raising the human capital that will produce financial capital, easing inequalities. In this regard, education has an emancipatory character (Fernandes, 2008).

Education is seen as both a stage for maintaining inequalities and a stage for social mobility. Thus, it falls on it to produce the necessary effects to change, in a positive sense, the real conditions of the country. It is fair to say that access to education is the possibility for the population both to claim their rights and to obtain future subsidies for their personal and social growth. Thus, guaranteeing opportunities for young people in socioeconomically vulnerable situations to benefit from social programs (scholarships) is a way of mitigating the injustices and lack of opportunities they have experienced in the course of their lives, even if this is implemented late.

According to Bourdieu (1992), unlike "well-born" students, who have the minimum conditions to satisfy their school needs, students from poor families would be forced to submit to the injunctions of school institutions or to chance, so that to find their most complex path. For this author, education systems act covertly to perpetuate differences between classes, demonstrating that students who obtain the best results are part of the dominant classes in the social and economic pyramid of society. In this sense, the educational system ends up favoring social conservation, offering favorable conditions to those who are already privileged. In general, few poor students aspire to enter a higher education institution, given that, historically, university students are part of a range of society who do not need to work to guarantee their livelihood. Thus, since higher education is seen as a privilege of the few, many students give up the "dream" of entering higher education to the detriment of the historical tradition of exclusion (Boudieu, 2010).

With this, it is clear that the classes with greater economic capital are those that also have a high degree of cultural capital, and, therefore, have a greater possibility of entering higher education, unlike classes with lower economic capital, which often do not even manage to complete high school. According to Bourdieu and Passeron (2014), the school would not be an institution that democratically promoted social change. What the authors call the "sociology of reproduction". Schools are instruments for the reproduction of society, maintaining a structure of domination when they adhere to the cultural capital of the dominant classes. This happens because "the school demands and presupposes behaviors and knowledge (a habitus



and a cultural capital) characteristic of a certain class, without teaching them directly, exercising a "symbolic violence" that favors the exclusion of those who do not have them". In this sense, we could reflect on the importance of student permanence policies, since students belonging to deprived families cannot count on them or count on them to a limited extent, ending up creating their opportunities or relying on institutional mechanisms to support their permanence in school.

It is from this that state intervention proves to be a fundamental instrument to guarantee equal opportunities, in an attempt to meet the most urgent needs of political, economic, and social life, causing effects for a democratic order, covering all layers of society (Fernandes, 2008). It is from the attempt to break the vicious circle of inequalities and expand opportunities, such as fair justice, that quota policies in education systems are justified (Neves & Lima, 2007). For, at the time of their non-existence, universities are characterized as spaces destined for individuals with a privileged social class (Fernandes, 1995), currently they look for ways to provide inclusion of hitherto marginalized classes, breaking with alienation, reaching fundamental rights and unveiling knowledge for the historically neglected classes.

Thinking about policies as a governmental strategy or not to solve a certain social demand, it is possible to state that policies to encourage education in Angola gained prominence in 1975, shortly after the country became independent, as a result of historical, political, social and, of the productive scenario, in addition to the qualification of workers forged to develop new skills required at the time. Although timidly, the government paid greater attention to the training of its human resources for the development of the country through the attribution of full study scholarships and shared through bilateral cooperation agreements with other countries in the field of training (the Angolan State undertakes to share the expenses of the scholarship holder with the family and the donor country) (INAGBE, 2017). In this sense, "between 1982 and 1992, 1,733 senior technicians have trained abroad, in countries in Europe (western and eastern), Latin America and South America, and from 1975 to 1991, 2,174 were trained in Angola" Zau (2002, p. 137). With the end of the armed conflict (1979 - 2002), the 2000s were marked by increased expenses for higher education, as well as the creation of a scholarship policy, the National Institute for Management of Scholarships (INAGBE ) (Mesct, 2018).

The policy for granting and awarding Scholarships is the responsibility of the National Institute for the Management of Scholarships (INAGBE), which is a body under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, created through Presidential Decree No. 168/13 of October 28, instituted in 2008. Postgraduate Scholarships were instituted in 2017 by Presidential Decree 174/17 of August 3.

INAGBE aims to carry out the process of attributing scholarships to all Angolan citizens to enhance cadres in the field of Higher Education with merit, necessary for the development of the country, and also providing the training of university professors for postgraduate courses academics (masters and doctorate).

The Scholarship is a social action financial policy adopted for training national staff and technicians at undergraduate, graduate, and specialization levels and in strategic areas for the political, economic,

social, and cultural development of the country. The strategy for training Angolan staff focuses on areas that allow the country to respond to the needs resulting from the commitments assumed within the framework of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and at the world level. Within the framework of this strategy, requests from various State bodies and institutions may also be met, based on specific training programs (Inagbe, 2017).

Scholarships are awarded internally and externally, in undergraduate and graduate programs, prioritizing merit and equal opportunities for less favored groups (Decree 165/14). Financial aid is awarded annually according to the quotas defined in the National Development Plans, distributed in all provinces of the country according to the training development priorities and the goals of the National Training Plan for Staff (National Development Plan, 2018 - 2022). With the main objective of promoting equal opportunities and ensuring educational equity in the university system, facilitating, above all, the permanence of students, as well as good academic performance (Mesct, 2018 & Inagbe, 2017). We can say that INAGBE is concerned with reconciling the democratization of ES with academic excellence, given that one of the prerequisites for maintaining scholarships is performance in the disciplines.

It should also be noted that INAGBE is not a policy for reserving student access places, as seen in some affirmative actions in other countries around the world, such as Brazil and India, on the contrary, to participate in the selection process, the student must be linked to an HE institution. Candidates must register for the selection process via the internet, on a dedicated page managed by INAGBE, or directly at the INAGBE Facilities and submit the necessary documentation.

Requirements for applying to undergraduate internal scholarships (Decree 154/14):

i) have Angolan nationality; ii) be no older than 25 years old; iii) age not exceeding 27 years for candidates who have completed compulsory military service; iv) not having interrupted the training cycle after completing secondary education for a period exceeding 1 (one) year; iv) students in the 1st and/or 2nd year of Higher Education (MESCT, 2017).

Requirements for applying to internal postgraduate scholarships:

i) have Angolan nationality; ii) be enrolled in a postgraduate course taught at a Higher Education Institution in the national territory; iii) be a professor, researcher, or teacher at an HEI in the country; iv) be no older than 35 years old for master's courses and 45 years old for doctoral courses; v) for teachers and researchers working full time and exclusively for each of the HEIs, with a positive performance assessment, the age limit is not applicable; vi) have professional experience in the area of knowledge in which he was trained and who will be doing a master's or doctorate, attested by the HEI in which he works; vii) present a scientific research project in their area of knowledge validated by the Course Coordination and/or by the Scientific Council of the Higher Education Institution in the country in which they are enrolled (MESCT, 2017).

Requirements for applying to external Undergraduate scholarships (Presidential Decree 165/14):

i) have Angolan nationality; ii) be aged no more than 22 years; iii) have moral, civic, and patriotic behavior of reference; iv) have an average of not less than 14 (fourteen) values, particularly in the basic disciplines for the chosen course, unless otherwise required by the donor country; v) not having interrupted the training cycle after completing the II Cycle of Secondary Education for a period exceeding 1 (one) year; vi) have the physical and mental aptitude, proven by a Medical Certificate; vii) have duly proven regular military status for male citizens; viii) meet the requirements established by the donor and host country; ix) students who have completed the II Cycle of Secondary Education with a reference grade and meet the requirements defined in article 14 of the External Scholarships Regulation (MESCT, 2017).

Requirements for applying to external postgraduate scholarships:

i) have Angolan nationality with permanent residence in the country; ii) be no older than 35 years old for master's courses and 45 years old for doctoral courses; iii) have good moral, civic, and patriotic behavior; iv) have professional experience in the area of knowledge in which he was trained and who will be doing a master's or doctorate, attested by the HEI in which he works; v) present a scientific research project in their area of knowledge and with relevance for local, regional or national development, validated by the Scientific Council of the Higher Education Institution in the country indicated by the competent service of the Guardianship Body; vi) fulfill the requirements established by the donor or host countries (MESCT, 2017).

By the end of 2017, a total of 25,907 internal scholarship holders were under the control of INAGBE, 25,533 at the undergraduate level and 374 at the postgraduate level, distributed across the country's various Higher Education Institutions. After the internal scholarship renewal process, carried out during April and May/018, INAGBE, controlled 16,495 Undergraduate and 374 Graduate scholarship holders. The drop in the total number of scholarship holders at the undergraduate level was due to the end of the training of several scholarship holders and the non-granting of scholarships to new students in the same year (Inagbe, 2018). As for students studying abroad, until 2017, INAGBE controlled a total of 4,508 scholarship holders in 28 countries, 3,764 undergraduate and 750 graduate (Inagbe, 2018). The following table presents the number of internal scholarships awarded between 2008 and 2017.

Also noteworthy are other public and/or private entities that are also engaged in the attribution of external and internal scholarships, such as Sonangol (a public oil company), the Ministries of Petroleum, National Defense, Total (an oil company), Unitel (telecommunications company) among others (Pnfq, 2016). These institutions and others that are being implemented are fundamental instruments for promoting student access, permanence, and success. The student financial aid provided by these institutions is no longer seen as a "favor", they are configured as a list of social rights.

However, the scholarship and aid system presents a dilemma that is worth overcoming in terms of financial resources for the student and the school (failure). These policies compensate for the injustices that historically accumulated, recognizing the exclusion of cultural and social groups by models of academic competition and the need to initiate a process of voluntary democratization (DUBET, 2015). However, these actions can be seen as a denial of justice by members of majority groups and as humiliation felt by members of minorities who benefit from them, having their merits questioned. It is through this that, in some cases, the practice of these policies is rejected, however, they must be applied with due rigor.

## **5 INCLUSION POLICIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN ANGOLA: PROBLEMS AND LIMITS**

The concern of the massification of higher education in the 2000s by the Angolan government represents the first guarantee towards the democratization of the system, however, they are not enough for the de facto inclusion of all historically excluded strata. As much as there is a significant increase in students in education, there is a phenomenon that inhibits the entry of countless individuals into higher education. These have been victims of a structural tendency of the system, as well as due to the fragile social and

economic context that affects the majority of the population, which translates into the difficulty of access and permanence for students from the less favored classes.

Despite policies aimed at the "democratization" of higher education, such as the creation and implementation of the National Institute of Scholarships (INAGBE), through the granting of student financial aid; the decentralization of the only public university in 2009, the then Universidade Agostinho Neto, to another 8 Universities distributed throughout the country, among other measures, the inclusion of marginalized segments is far from being achieved. These initiatives face barriers related to the permanence of these students in the system, as students face material and academic difficulties, related to their trajectory in basic education and their economic, social, and cultural capital.

Education inequalities in Angola begin in the basic education systems. According to the World Bank (2018), data from 2018 demonstrate that attendance in General Education (primary, fundamental, and secondary) is quite unequal between urban and rural populations, the differences are striking. The literacy rate is 68% in urban centers, as opposed to 34% in rural communities. It is also possible to observe inequality between groups with different incomes in enrollment rates, less than 10% of young people from poorer households attend school, against 76% of households with higher income.

Until 2016, school coverage remained insufficient regarding the growth of the school-age population. Enrollments in general education reached around 78.3% of school coverage, 5.7% less than expected for that year. Therefore, there was a drop in school coverage of around 3%, given that, in 2015, enrollment in general education corresponded to 81.2% of the school-age population (Sees, 2016). The table below mentions school coverage in general education, in terms of the school-age population and school attendance rates.

Table 3 - school coverage by education levels, by thousands of students, 2016.

Indicators	Initiation Class (5 years)	Primary Education (6 to 11 years old)	Secondary Education (12 to 18 years old)	
			1. o Ciclo (12 to 14 years)	2. o Ciclo (15 to 17/18 years)
<b>School-Age Population</b>	977.470	4.841.346	1.7 73.486	2.180.723
<b>Enrollment</b>	712.300	5.937.800	1.136.300	702.100
<b>Gross Schooling Rate</b>	72,8%.	112,6%	64,0%	32,1%

Source: CEIC com base no MED, (2016) e Inea (2016).

In primary education, even with a positive balance of 12%, it is noted that these data can be controversial. Because, the fact that its gross rate is above 100% does not imply that the entire population aged 6 to 11 is enrolled, on the contrary, this sublevel of education has the highest rates of late enrollment (Rsa, 2016). In 2010, 58% of the population enrolled in primary education was between 12 and 17 years old (Inea, 2010). This delay about age/grade spreads to all levels of education and over the years.

Official statistics indicate progress in school achievement. In 2016, the approval rate was around 80%, with an increase of 1.5% above the expected target. Of every 1000 students enrolled in the General

Education subsystem, 800 passed through the class, 100 failed and 100 dropped out, in concrete numbers, there were 6,230,000 approvals against 780,000 failures and an equal number of dropouts (Aees, 2016). However, the weaknesses verified in the General Education system spill over to Higher Education.

As for higher education, public HEIs have proven to be insufficient to accommodate all students who wish to attend education. Annually, 10 – 30% enroll in public institutions, due to the limitations of available vacancies through the "numerus clausus" mechanism, and the rest resort to private higher education (SIMÕES et al., 2016). Entrance exams are held every year, any student who has completed high school can apply, and there is no gender, ethnicity, or other discrimination (Kotecha, 2012; Kigoto, 2014 & Teferra, 2014).

In a study carried out by Ditula (2015), on school dropouts at the Instituto Superior Politécnico Metropolitano de Angola, located in Luanda (capital of the country). The author concludes that school dropout at the institution in question has increased from 13.2% in 2009 to 21.1% in 2014, with economics and management and engineering courses having the highest dropout rates (69.6% and 25.2%, respectively). In another study carried out by Tambula and Alves (2016), the authors conclude that failure in higher education is linked to multiple factors with a high level of complexity. In general, they result from a combination of individual, institutional and social, economic, and political context factors. The authors also highlight the poor preparation of students in basic and secondary education, the long stop that students face after finishing secondary education, caused by the shortage of vacancies in public universities and the lack of financial resources to continue studying, poor preparation of teachers, teaching methodologies and student assessment, as well as the (weakly articulated) bureaucratic functioning of Higher Education Institutions (Tumbula & Alves, 2016). As mentioned by Mesct (2014), in 2014, of the total number of students enrolled in HEIs 146,001, only 2,629 corresponded to the age group of 18 - 22 years old, this denotes the difficulties that students face to enter Higher Education after finishing high school, as well as the age/school grade difference, found throughout the education system. In another study by Patatas (2019), entitled "Student Perception of Academic Failure in Portuguese Speaking Countries: the case of Angola and Mozambique", carried out in two public universities (Angola and Mozambique, respectively), the author concludes that the lack of financial means is the main cause of dropping out, dropping out and poor performance in school.

The regulation of education and the guarantee of good performance in Higher Education are today a challenge and lead society to question its quality, efficiency, and democratization. Generally, in Africa, mechanisms for evaluating the performance of HEIs are lacking (or not working), and Angola is not left out of this reality. According to Simões et al. (2016), in Angola, institutional evaluation, as a way to improve the quality of teaching and learning, is not regularly practiced, although its relevance and pertinence are evident in the debates and consensus in financial institutions and associations of African universities (Association of African Universities, Southern African Regional Universities Association, World Bank), among others (Mendes & Silva, 2011).

The National Institute for Assessment, Accreditation and Recognition of Higher Education Studies (INAAREES) was recently created in Angola, created in 2011 by Presidential Decree No. 252/11 of September 26, 2011, and later reformulated by Presidential Decree No. 172/13 of October 29, 2013, created to be a mechanism for evaluating the guarantee and improvement of the quality of higher education in Angola (Simões et al., 2016; Kotecha & Fongwa, 2012 & República de Angola, 2013 ). Until now, there are no impact measures in terms of guaranteeing and regulating the quality of institutions and ongoing programs.

Due to the unavailability of official statistical information on higher education, which encompasses categories referring to school inequalities, the percentage of students who finish the course within the time regulated by the system, the actual rates of school dropout and success or repetition, both in terms of scientific articles, newspaper articles, as well as, in the reports of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, does not allow demonstrating the academic (un)success with due rigor, we are obliged to infer/assume that the insufficiencies verified in General Education end up flowing into Higher Education, given that there is a consensus in the literature that as one advance in the level of education, the difficulties of staying in schools become even worse.

The complexity of the phenomena exposed so far leads us to the need to expose/or create reliable mechanisms for the evaluation of academic (un)success, with indicators of approval, failure, and abandonment. Only in this way, through such data, will it be possible to meet the demands verified in ES. In this sense, the question that arises is: has the expansion and growth of higher education in Angola been accompanied by a concern for the democratization of education? It is not possible to answer this question in fact, as there is no evaluation of such metrics in Angola. Since there are no quantitative elements for evaluating higher education institutions, we have to limit ourselves to presenting elements that, in isolation, attest to or not a certain degree of democratization in Higher Education.

However, we can conclude that, although it was not possible to present the rates of dropout, and pass/fail in higher education, it was possible to observe numerous disorders in General Education, such as still limited access to a good part of the population, reflected by the number of children outside of education, inequalities between rural and urban areas, the delay in age/school grade, all this ends up flowing into higher education to a greater extent, given that this level of education is a reflection of the sub-levels that precede it. This leads us to believe that democratization in higher education is relatively low. In addition, the democratization of education takes place when General Education is open and when students have a good level and relative equality of performance and not when this rests on a narrow primary and secondary education base, which is extremely unequal and fragile, which occurs still in Angola. However, the weaknesses of Higher Education in Angola are common to most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which we can highlight in the table below:

Table 4 – Weaknesses in Higher Education.

<b>Faculty</b>	There is a need to raise teaching qualifications in HE, the number of Masters and Doctors is very low, both in public and private HEIs. Data from 2017 show that 531 professors were Doctors and 1927 were Masters. In addition, the precarious working conditions and the lack of incentives for teaching and research discourage the technical staff.
<b>Infrastructure and equipment</b>	There is a lack of means, resources, and equipment to assist in teaching and research in most HEIs. A good part of the institutions are adapted or improvised, but most of them do not serve the intended use. The lack of technological resources that encourage school performance, such as university homes or boarding schools, libraries, adequate bibliography, broadband internet, well-equipped laboratories, and other facilities, have been hindering the retention of students in teaching.
<b>Financial resources</b>	Public universities in Angola are maintained only with resources from the general budget of the State (O.G.E.), they are unable to raise other alternative/complementary sources of resources. The State is in charge of covering all expenses, from teaching salaries, administrative staff, and scholarship students, as well as current and investment expenses of the institutions. There are no inclusion policies within the communities. It is urgent to reverse this reality, educational institutions must generate their revenue resulting from their activities, fees and fees, sale of short courses, participation in national or international projects, etc.

Source: Prepared by the author, based on Simões et al., (2016) and República de Angola (2013).

These variables (faculty, infrastructure and equipment, and financial resources) have contributed to the failure of higher education to a greater or lesser extent. There is a shortage of professors in universities with training (master's and doctorate), and it is common to find university professors with graduation, and several foreign professors, given that the contingent of Angolan professors cannot support teaching. There is a lack of libraries and laboratories with a minimum degree of acceptance for scientific research, as well as insufficient financial resources for higher education, all of which have contributed to the failure of higher education, requiring government authorities to pay greater attention to the school reality in the country. both for school institutions and for students to better overcome such obstacles.

## 6 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Low-performance indices that have repercussions on school dropout and repetition is a worldwide problem that is justified by the application of public policies aimed at its reduction. The implementation of actions aimed at strengthening student retention processes, alongside policies focused on less favored groups and belonging to minorities, will certainly imply the provision of significant resources to provide the multiple supports required for students and institutions. The processes of accumulation of student disadvantages in Angola are not the result of a particular problem of an individual's deviated life path, but of a structure of opportunities that makes this process more uncertain and complex. Breaking this vicious circle of accumulation of disadvantages with concrete actions is what is expected from public policies of democratization and equity in higher education. With the creation and functioning of INAGBE, together with the decentralization of Universidade Agostinho Neto, a new awareness of the State towards the issue of student access and permanence in ES can be observed, causing significant changes in the profile of university students throughout the country.

As can be seen, student financial aid occurs with students already attending school, unlike policies observed in other parts of the world, for example, in Brazil and India, where policies reserve access places

for less favored groups. On the contrary, in Angola to have access to such benefits/aid, the individual must be enrolled in an educational institution, which ends up generating controversy about the policy, since in many cases the less favored groups fail to access the selective processes of education higher due to lack of resources for this purpose. More detailed studies would be needed to confirm this impression.

A central element for the success of a given action/policy is the degree of visibility for the recipients, in addition to the results and effects of these policies. It is expected in the medium and long term that they will no longer be necessary, as everyone will have the same opportunities to choose from. Faced with the challenges presented here, the need to debate affirmative action policies must emerge in Angolan society, as well as the results of the measures that have been implemented being known, and understood by all, especially the beneficiaries of such measures.

It should also be noted that completion, retention, and dropout indicators in HEIs are generally recognized as relevant for assessing the quality of teaching, so they must be monitored, exposed to the public, or on digital platforms from year to year, and implement a system for monitoring the quality of higher education in the country, so that follow-up takes place. Undoubtedly, we need to advance so that these indicators become normalized in the university routine. Only with the generation of indicators for evaluating the ES will we be able to better solve the demands, without these, we will continue to navigate in the dark and uncertainties.

b In the present study, we present an exploratory analysis of current actions in higher education in Angola, revealing some probable advances and setbacks, without, however, denying that empirical studies on the variables of completion, retention, and evasion are irreplaceable. Without quantifiable data, however, there is an undeniable movement to make the university student body more egalitarian/inclusive.

Considering the current challenges in HE in Angola, this article concludes with four recommendations:

1. That completion, retention, and dropout indicators are generally recognized as relevant to the assessment of teaching quality if these must be monitored, exposed to the public, or on digital platforms from year to year.

2. That all HEIs implement a higher education quality monitoring system so that monitoring takes place. Undoubtedly, we need to move forward so that these indicators are incorporated into evaluation mechanisms.

3. That all jurisdictions assign control responsibilities to a central institution, preferably a performance appraisal committee. The lack of supervision of HEIs is the most important deficit in Angola in terms of improving the quality of teaching.

4. That all HEIs adopt specific 'online' platforms for disseminating information developed in the institutions, as well as statistical data on student achievement, through which citizens, as well as any other institution, can obtain information, and monitor the performance of HEIs.

Given the actions implemented in higher education, the research presented here is a provocative



attempt to find evidence of how such actions can be configured to alleviate school demands, aiming to provide equal education for all. Comprising a still timid effort in this area, a limitation for the elaboration of this study is the scarcity of data on higher education, regarding approval, failure, dropout, and school dropout. However, this limitation proved to be an invitation for future work, always seeking greater depth for these issues. It is hoped that the information and reflections presented here will inspire new analyzes (theoretical and empirical) always aiming at deepening reflections on the academic success of higher education students as a democratization of teaching.

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