


**UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY IN MEXICO CASE OF THE AUTONOMOUS
UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO**

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received: April, 25th 2024 Accepted: June, 25th 2024</p>	<p>Purpose: The objective of researching university autonomy in Mexico lies in understanding its historical, legal and social importance.</p> <p>Theoretical Framework: Theoretical references for investigating university autonomy in Mexico may include relevant national legislation, such as the Organic Law of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and the General Law of Education.</p> <p>Method: The research method for studying university autonomy in Mexico generally involves a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches.</p> <p>Desing/Methodology/Approach: The methodological design includes a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews with academics and university administrators, documentary analysis of laws and regulations.</p> <p>Finding: Conducting research on the autonomy of universities in Mexico could have several significant implications.</p> <p>Originality/Value: The original value of carrying out research on university autonomy in Mexico lies in its ability to delve into a fundamental aspect of the national educational system.</p> <p>Doi: https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2024.v9i7.4852</p>
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**AUTONOMIA UNIVERSITÁRIA NO MÉXICO CASO DA UNIVERSIDADE AUTÔNOMA DO
MÉXICO**

RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo da pesquisa sobre a autonomia universitária no México é compreender sua importância histórica, legal e social.

Estrutura Teórica: As referências teóricas para a investigação da autonomia universitária no México podem incluir a legislação nacional relevante, como a Lei Orgânica da Universidade Nacional Autônoma do México (UNAM) e a Lei Geral de Educação.

Método: O método de pesquisa para estudar a autonomia universitária no México geralmente envolve uma combinação de abordagens qualitativas e quantitativas.

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Desenho/Methodologia/Abordagem: O projeto metodológico inclui uma abordagem qualitativa, usando entrevistas semiestruturadas com acadêmicos e administradores de universidades, análise documental de leis e regulamentos.

Conclusões: A realização de pesquisas sobre a autonomia das universidades no México pode ter várias implicações significativas.

Originalidade/Valor: O valor original da pesquisa sobre a autonomia universitária no México está em sua capacidade de se aprofundar em um aspecto fundamental do sistema educacional nacional.

Palavras-chave: UNAM, Autonomia, Leis, Orçamento, Estado.

AUTONOMÍA UNIVERSITARIA EN MÉXICO CASO DE LA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO

RESUMEN

Propósito: El objetivo de investigar la autonomía universitaria en México radica en comprender su importancia histórica, jurídica y social.

Marco Teórico: Los referentes teóricos para investigar la autonomía universitaria en México pueden ser la legislación nacional pertinente, como la Ley Orgánica de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) y la Ley General de Educación.

Método: El método de investigación para estudiar la autonomía universitaria en México generalmente implica una combinación de enfoques cualitativos y cuantitativos.

Diseño/Methodología/Enfoque: El diseño metodológico incluye un enfoque cualitativo, mediante entrevistas semiestruturadas a académicos y directivos universitarios, análisis documental de leyes y reglamentos.

Hallazgos: La realización de una investigación sobre la autonomía de las universidades en México podría tener varias implicaciones significativas.

Originalidad/Valor: El valor original de realizar una investigación sobre la autonomía universitaria en México radica en su capacidad para profundizar en un aspecto fundamental del sistema educativo nacional.

Palabras clave: UNAM, Autonomía, Leyes, Presupuesto, Estado.

1 INTRODUCTION

UNAM's 80 years of autonomy provides the opportunity to remember its achievement and reflect on its current implications.

This essay analyzes university autonomy, its importance and relationship with democracy at the local and Latin American level.

The responsibility and commitment to society that university autonomy implies is analyzed, highlighting current difficulties and challenges, including the relationship with the financing and coverage of higher education. Reference is also made to an analysis by the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation on the self-management of public universities.

The features of university autonomy are highlighted, its importance in UNAM throughout 80 years is mentioned and the importance of the basic budget for public universities by law is emphasized.

2 THE CURRENT MEANING OF UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AT A RICH THEORETICAL LEVEL

Autonomy implies sovereignty and self-government. Autonomy comes from the Greek *autotós* (oneself) and *nomos* (norm or law). Contrary to heteronomy, which implies acting in accordance with external norms imposed by others. It means being independent and not under the control of others.

Autonomy is the ability of people, institutions or States to establish their own rules and govern themselves, which implies self-awareness, self-determination, independence and freedom.

The principle of autonomy refers to the ability of certain entities within a State to govern themselves.

Individuals, especially according to Kantian ethics, have the ability to make decisions and regulate behavior through rational deliberation. Autonomy gained importance in the Enlightenment by promoting reason, fighting against despotism, ignorance and superstition, universalizing human rights and promoting secularism and secularization.

Kant defines Enlightenment as freedom from dependence on others due to the inability to think for oneself. He attributes it to indecision and lack of spirit. The famous phrase "*sapere aude*" encourages the use of reason with courage, becoming a symbol of the Enlightenment.

During Modernity, Nation States were established, which led to the creation of national educational systems, influencing universities such as the Napoleonic University in France, which was a benchmark for universities in Latin America.

The emergence of nation states is due to trade, production, social evolution and consciousness. The Enlightenment caused the revolution of knowledge, the advancement of science and technology, the change from a religious vision to a human one, and the promotion of libertarian ideas.

Modern autonomy is the liberation from ignorance through knowledge, allowing self-regulation without the need for authority.

Juliana Gonz ález highlights the importance of autonomy in Modernity for freedom and equality. Autonomy is key in the modern definition of the human being.

3 SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY TO UNDERSTAND RATIONALIST MODERNITY AND INDIVIDUAL AUTONOMY

According to the author, as a result of the process of evolutionary differentiation of society, different types of specific rationality emerge, including economic, political, legal and scientific rationality. Various types of rationality impact what is understood by rationality in modern society, manifesting themselves in specialized systems such as politics, economics, law, education and science. Communication in society is organized around specific functions and problems are addressed at the level of partial systems.

Luhmann points out that autonomy in the educational system is a necessary pressure for the differentiation of functional systems.

4 UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AND ITS ACADEMIC SPECIFICITY

Authors have indicated that the university has its own purposes that make it the same but different throughout history. Despite changes in its environment, it has retained its distinctive characteristics and its objectives have adapted. The university has maintained its social role throughout history (Ruegg, 1994: XIX).

The university is a place of intellectual life and cultivation of knowledge for eight centuries. As an educational entity. The university preserves, enriches, recreates, transmits and disseminates culture through the cultivation of knowledge.

The university institution is distinguished by its mission of knowledge and culture, and by the service it offers to society.

Research, teaching and university extension can vary in criteria and modalities according to social and historical conditions, which can lead to diversity in their objectives.

The university is defined mainly by its work of cultivating knowledge. A social organization based on culture and freedom of expression needs freedom to thrive. Historically, societies recognize the university as a place that supports varied expectations towards knowledge.

University autonomy requires fidelity to the academic mission. Academic autonomy implies communicating with society, not isolating oneself, to disseminate knowledge and culture. The university interacts with society to respond to its academic demands.

5 ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND TOLERANCE

Academic autonomy and freedom of thought imply plurality and criticism. The university promotes diversity, criticism and the continuous search for knowledge, recognizing that there is no absolute truth and fostering an environment of debate and scientific and cultural consensus.

The principles are related to the autonomy of the institution and of the people in the university community. The autonomy of an institution implies that the people who make it up are also autonomous. Autonomy in university education seeks to promote the independence and responsibility of young people in their adult lives. In collegiate instances, decision makers need to be autonomous.

Autonomy and responsibility are linked, since having autonomy implies having responsibility and vice versa. The responsibility lies with those who act freely, not under duress or imposed rules. Autonomy implies responding to oneself, assuming consequences and verifying the effectiveness of decisions. Autonomy involves being accountable for your actions to others in society.

Autonomy is acquired gradually in your daily practice, in a continuous and never-ending process. In short, it is the result of an educational process to embed values and achieve autonomy as a habit.

6 HISTORY OF CURRENT UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

University autonomy comes from early medieval universities as "corporations" of teachers and students. These universities sought independence from local powers to promote intellectual life. The fight for autonomy would be against them for freedom of thought. The funding of universities has been a point of tension from ancient times to the present, with most being supported by governments.

The principle of autonomy is as old as the university. It was crucial in medieval universities. Academic autonomy implies freedom of thought and expression. The open discussion of ideas is essential at university. Academic activities cannot be fully realized without freedom. The powers of the State recognize autonomy instead of granting it.

In Latin America, after independence, universities were changed to follow the Napoleonic model. The universities lost autonomy when they were absorbed by the new States

and became only schools to train professionals, losing their university identity. The professional focus delayed interest and dedication to science.

The Córdoba movement in 1918 was important for university autonomy in Latin America and Mexico. It was the first comprehensive review of universities amid the emergence of the urban, college-going middle class. In that year the First World War ended and the Russian Revolution began.

According to Carlos Temmerman, the Córdoba Reform changed the relationships between the university, society and the State. The reform attempted to separate the university from the State through autonomy.

The reformist movement of Córdoba advocated university autonomy, including the election of authorities, academic freedom, appointment of professors based on academic criteria, and control of the institution by its governing bodies. It was recommended to find a mechanism for the university to be self-financing and avoid economic pressures from the State. At that time, autonomy acquired unique characteristics worldwide.

Córdoba's ideology spread throughout Latin America through national and international student congresses.

Tunnermann lists the main points of the university reform program, including autonomy, election of authorities, competitive examinations for teaching staff, free education, academic reorganization, social assistance, linkage with the educational system, university extension and struggle against dictatorships and imperialism.

The author highlights that the Córdoba movement has been the most influential in Latin American universities. It focused on the autonomy and co-government of the university, which damaged university work and caused deviations among students.

Latin American universities included university extension and cultural dissemination as regular tasks due to the reform program between world wars. During that time, the Napoleonic-style professional university model continued to prevail in Latin America, which hindered scientific and technological research in the region.

Marco Antonio Dias, Brazilian academic and former head of UNESCO's Directorate of Higher Education, highlights the importance of the Córdoba movement in improving universities. Paulo Freire's contribution to university autonomy, the treatment of students as adults and the relationship with society stands out. Córdoba was a reference for the leaders of the '68 movement in France and marked the beginning of university reform worldwide.

7 UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AT UNAM

In the case of Mexico, Justo Sierra highlighted the importance of autonomy in higher education and science when presenting the initiative to create the National University.

It is crucial to consider the context of university autonomy since the Organic Law of 1929. Founded in 1910, the National University of Mexico managed to survive in the midst of diverse pressures and circumstances during the revolutionary era. Huerta issued a University Law in 1914, Carranza ignored it that same year.

University autonomy was a priority in those years due to the Córdoba movement and student participation in conferences.

University autonomy in Mexico began in 1917 with the Colegio de San Nicolás and was consolidated in the UNAM in 1929.

There were previous attempts to recognize autonomy for the National University in 1917, 1923 and 1928. It was formally obtained in July 1929 after a partial student strike in May and June. It was partial because it allowed the University Council to elect the rector from a list of candidates presented by the president, who could veto decisions of the Council and required annual reports to various authorities.

The student strike and the Organic Law of 1929 occurred in a period of national unrest due to events such as the murder of Álvaro Obregón and an armed uprising against Calles.

Two important circumstances for university autonomy were the Vasconcelos campaign and the government's negotiations with the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

A new Organic Law was issued in 1933 after the controversial Caso -Lombardo case, which granted more autonomy to the University, including the direct election of the rector by the University Council without government intervention. The new law reduced nationality and limited funds to 10 million pesos. The University faced internal conflicts and with the government that promoted a socialist orientation in education, reforming the third article of the Constitution in 1934.

The Organic Law of 1945 established institutional mechanisms for the stability of the University, such as the Governing Board and the balance between collegiate bodies for decision-making.

The State recognizes that autonomy is fundamental for the effective functioning of UNAM.

Until now, UNAM has faced tensions internally and with the State. The principles of university autonomy promote diversity and respect, allowing university students to solve their internal problems.

These principles strengthen their function by promoting dialogue and collaboration between different ideological positions and academic approaches at the university.

UNAM has progressed and strengthened. "Its development is largely due to its autonomy." This has helped him overcome challenges and crises. Autonomy promotes advances in knowledge, institutional growth, and the creation of new academic fields.

The autonomy of the National University has been a long and perfected process with obvious implications. The process is something unfinished and always improvable. He has matured over time despite the difficulties. Autonomy must be promoted daily by the entire academic community and its authorities.

The rector of UNAM thanked the Congress of the Union for recognizing the 75 years of autonomy of the university in 2004.

At the National University we learned that dissent is a privilege of intelligence and agreement is a privilege of reason. Endorsing university autonomy requires strengthening internal and external relationships with respect, commitment and collaboration (De la Fuente, 2004).

8 DIMENSIONS OF UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY FROM A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE

University autonomy is a right based on the nature of the university and not granted by the State to public universities. In 1980, an amendment to the Constitution did not give autonomy to public universities, it only recognized and enshrined the autonomy that they already had according to their organic laws.

Adding this addition to the Constitution implies aligning the objectives of public universities with the principles and values of the third article, which promote comprehensive development, secularism, scientificity, democracy, equality and respect for human dignity.

The addition to the third article was made during the unionization of university workers in the 70s to differentiate the academic from the labor. Section VII defines university autonomy as the capacity for self-regulation and academic, economic and administrative management, according to certain principles. The labor relations of academic and administrative staff will be

governed by article 123 of the Constitution and the Federal Labor Law, in accordance with the autonomy and freedom of the institutions.

Autonomy in public universities is granted exclusively to decentralized institutions created by a Congressional Law.

The Constitution recognizes autonomous constitutional bodies autonomy for certain purposes. Several organizations are in this situation, such as the Federal Electoral Institute, the National Human Rights Commission and the Bank of Mexico. The autonomy of public universities is unique due to the nature of their functions.

Public universities must act in accordance with constitutional principles and have no immunity.

University autonomy involves freedom in teaching, research, the discussion of ideas, academic organization and the issuance of degrees. In addition, it has the exclusive power to decide the terms for academic staff.

University autonomy includes the power to govern itself, appoint internal authorities and participate in governing bodies.

The autonomy of public universities includes legal, administrative and financial aspects such as having legal personality, establishing internal regulations, managing public resources, generating their own income and using them for their programs without altering their purposes.

University autonomy can be seen in self-government, self-regulation, self-organization and self-management.

9 UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AND DEMOCRACY

Autonomous public university needs autonomous members and reflects a democratic society. In an authoritarian State, university autonomy is not recognized.

A democratic society and a State are necessary for university autonomy. In public universities you can find diverse value systems that characterize a democratic society. That is where different scientific and cultural perspectives can mutually recognize each other. In a plural context, identities can be integrated without excluding each other based on ethnic, regional, linguistic, cultural, religious or class differences.

University autonomy is important for the country, since it influences its culture, academic activities and the identity of its graduates.

The public university is essential for society since it educates, researches and disseminates culture. University work is an important public good to build a just society.

It is essential for social life and common well-being. It has been instrumental in strengthening the rule of law, protecting human rights and promoting national identity.

The public university is vital for the country's democracy. It has played an important role in promoting democratic values according to the constitution.

10 UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

10.1 UNIVERSITY INDEPENDENCE: SOCIAL COMMITMENT

Education, research and culture are means to respond to the society where the university is located. Service to society is a fundamental goal of public universities in sustainable human development. They fulfill their mission of service to society through the generation of knowledge, training of professionals and dissemination of culture.

The abstract idea of serving society needs concrete specifications. It is important to recognize that Mexican society and public universities are not homogeneous.

Social needs often contradictory when they become demands for the university. Not all sectors and groups can make demands on the university. The public university generates many expectations of its actors and society.

The social functions of the university depend on consciousness and geopolitical and social circumstances.

Local societies influence universities in different ways. The 1998 World Conference on Higher Education established that each institution must define its mission in accordance with the present and future needs of society.

The environment and local communities influence the objectives of universities.

The future of universities and colleges cannot be generalized. The idea of what public universities should be is increasingly questioned.

Universities differentiate themselves by addressing academic needs in a broad way, without neglecting dedication to regional, national or international problems.

The university has autonomy to define and decide its purposes and goals due to its intrinsic nature and formal recognition by the State. The public university is distinguished by its power of self-definition.

In every university and department, there should be a focus on meeting social needs. At that level, the demands from university autonomy and the respective disciplinary field must be reevaluated. There cannot be direct and mechanical answers without considering university and disciplinary criteria, values and principles.

Knowing the social, economic and political reality is important to respond to the demands of society and plan academic offers and university projects.

The Declaration of the 1998 World Conference on Higher Education highlights the commitment of universities to serve society and address problems such as poverty, violence and environmental deterioration.

Referring to the Millennium Goals of the United Nations Summit Meeting in 2000, the aim is to eradicate poverty, promote gender equality and protect the environment.

University autonomy implies analyzing one's own tasks and the reality of the country to contribute to solving problems and inequalities. As an educational institution, it implies reflecting on the educational project of the State and the public university in our country.

Public universities must ensure the quality of their academic activities. Quality in higher education is essential to meet social needs.

The relevance of university activities to social needs is fundamental on a social and rational level. Social needs should not be limited to the economic approach based on market and cost.

It is important to value the social relevance of university tasks, not only their effectiveness and efficiency.

The quality of higher education is evaluated mainly by the relevance of actions to the problems and needs of society. It is important to remember that efficiency and effectiveness do not guarantee social value if actions lack relevance or are not well focused on clear objectives.

The perspectives of public universities, including UNAM, extend beyond the circumstances that gave rise to them. University autonomy must be connected to its social relevance by responding to society for the results of its activities.

The autonomy of the university institution implies responsibility and connection with society. The public university must perform its specific functions and be accountable to society for its performance.

University education must have quality and relevance to be connected to society.

In 2003, during a meeting on the 1998 World Higher Education Conference, pressure groups attempted to add "global" to "public good", which was rejected by the Latin American

delegation according to Marco Antonio Dias. University education as a public good must be egalitarian, continuous and adaptable. The global public good involves adopting models from rich countries, especially Anglo-Saxon ones. The creation of principles of recognition of the quality of institutions must be adapted to the global public good.

11 CHALLENGES AND DIFFICULTIES IN UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

Until recently, some sectors viewed the autonomy of public universities in Mexico as a problem for higher education, including the government.

There have been critical situations in public universities attributed to institutional autonomy. Autonomy has been beneficial, allowing us to move forward without going backwards.

Autonomy protects against bad ambitions and promotes knowledge. Autonomy is a crucial strength of public universities.

Universities remain independent through autonomy, both from the government and from other groups and organizations. It applies to all of them (Narro, 2004).

Public universities have constitutional autonomy to fulfill their purposes.

University autonomy is fragile and vulnerable by nature. Often attempts are made to distort or paralyze the organization due to external interests. Public universities face problems that affect their autonomy and functions. Many are related to financing.

The ideology of the free market has limited the role of the State and the public for years. It has questioned university autonomy and its institutional functioning. This has changed the idea of common welfare and the usual financing methods.

Under the logic of the market, public universities have been contained, while private for-profit institutions grow and non-utilitarian disciplines are disqualified. No public university can ignore them; They are necessary for the development of the country.

Globalization impacts university autonomy by posing economic challenges. Globalization has turned higher education into a large modern market. Education is considered a commodity in the WTO GATS.

Higher education institutions reject privatization and consider higher education to be a public good. In short, those who benefit from a private good must pay for it. In many developing countries, higher education budgets have been stagnant or cut due to a stance that pressures educational institutions to increase their revenues.

Higher education is considered an essential public service for development in the declaration of the World Conference on Higher Education in 1998.

Latin America ratified its position at the Regional Higher Education Conference in 2008 with three clear points for the 2009 World Higher Education Conference.

Higher education is a public good when everyone has access to it as a real right. National educational policies are essential to improve access to quality higher education.

Higher education as a public good is threatened by marketization and lack of state support. It is necessary to review the decrease in funds for public universities in Latin America and the Caribbean and promote transparent management. Education should not be controlled by market logic or commercial regulations.

Education as a commercial service rejected by higher education organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean. We affirm that education should not be a business.

The 2009 World Conference on Higher Education broadly reiterated the approaches of the 1998 World Conference. The communiqué highlights that higher education is essential for research, innovation and creativity, and must be financially supported by the governments. In the current economic depression, it is crucial to invest in higher education to close gaps and promote innovation. The last decade shows that higher education and research help combat poverty and achieve international goals such as the Millennium Goals

Globalization drives the adoption of the Anglo-Saxon model in public universities. Economic organizations and some sectors of UNESCO promote this trend. Higher education as a global public good is being modernized by the Bologna process, promoting the consolidation of Europe.

The promotion of the model in local education policies affects university autonomy. Roberto Rodríguez points out that university Americanization is present in higher education in administrative and academic terms. The trend towards standardization in management and evaluation models stands out. International indicators are based on models from the United States and Europe, which creates a relationship of dependency reminiscent of center-periphery models.

The tendency of governments in Europe to use university autonomy to evade financial responsibilities is worrying. In France, there is resistance to a law with protests in some universities. In Latin America there have been various manifestations of this trend.

12 UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY AND FINANCING

Thinking that autonomy is permanent is illusory. University students face constant challenges to maintain and expand academic, government, and financial freedom, which requires efficient allocation of resources by the State.

Universities need resources to be truly autonomous. It is necessary to guarantee a basic budget established by law to allow your work without uncertainties. The law must allow multi-year budgets for infrastructure investment projects. The autonomy guaranteed by the third article of the Constitution is completed safely within the available economic resources.

Public universities have relied heavily on state funding.

Globalization is promoting the widespread adoption of the Anglo-Saxon model in public universities, which represents a challenge to their autonomy. International economic organizations and some sectors of UNESCO promote this trend. Higher education as a global public good modernizes the European university system and contributes to the consolidation of Europe as a political and cultural unit.

uncritical promotion of this model by local higher education policies affects university autonomy. Roberto Rodríguez points out that the influence of the United States on higher education is seen through the "university Americanization" in administrative and academic terms. The trend towards standardization in management, evaluation, accreditation and accountability stands out. The growing use of international indicators reflects a relationship of subordination and dependence on the models of the United States and Europe.

University autonomy is used by governments in Europe, including France in 2007, to avoid financial liability. In France, rejections and protests continue in universities against the law. In Latin America there have been different manifestations of this trend.

Believing that autonomy is permanent is illusory. New challenges constantly arise for university students in the preservation and expansion of academic freedom and financial autonomy.

It is difficult to achieve autonomy without adequate resources. It is necessary to assign them a basic budget by law that allows them to work without depending on variable circumstances. The law must allow multi-year budgets for long-term infrastructure investments. The autonomy of the third article is guaranteed with available economic resources.

The text of the reform mentions additional provisions on articles 74 and 79, reformed in May 2008.

The Ministry of Finance and Public Credit is promoting the use of a results-based budget and a performance evaluation system to control the resources of federal programs. Since 2007, the Secretariat with the Secretariat of Public Administration and CONEVAL have developed guidelines for an annual evaluation program. In the 2009 evaluation program, federal programs from the Federation's Expenditure Budget for public universities are considered, such as PRONABES, PROMEP and FOMES, totaling one fifth of the budget for higher education. There is a risk of tensions with university autonomy when evaluating and controlling federal program resources.

This highlights the need to pay attention to the relevance of the processes due to the difficulties in accessing resources for public universities.

It is important that public universities strengthen their autonomy and improve their internal evaluation, transparency and accountability practices, including periodic reports, internal audits and comptrollership.

The powers of the Federation must supervise the resources granted to public universities, in accordance with democracy and the rule of law. However, the desired levels have not yet been reached, which is worrying due to its impact on university autonomy.

It is relevant to mention the forum of April 20, 2009 on the reform of article 6 of the constitution and public universities. In a forum, Dr. Jorge Carpizo stated that university autonomy and the right to information can be harmonized in regulations to guarantee transparency. Furthermore, the review of the classification of university information should not be carried out by officials and the resources for access to information should be provided internally. The deliberations of the collegiate bodies and the appointment of authorities are confidential information.

Resource management has been key to planning in public universities. The budget, especially extraordinary funds, has been a key tool to promote public policies more clearly and decisively recently. The trend has been greater centralization of resources and economic decisions in the federal government, with greater intervention in public universities compared to other countries.

Roberto Rodriguez indicates that the Federal Executive has shown interest in influencing the higher education system, mainly in autonomous public universities. Rodríguez (2007) questions whether university autonomy is affected by federal government regulations.

Adrián Acosta points out in a book by ANUIES that university autonomy in Mexico has changed since the 90s with the influence of the federal government. In the 80s they focused on

planning, but in the 90s they changed to evaluation and quality, reducing the autonomy of universities.

Acosta believes that mistrust has influenced many policies and programs, highlighting that the differentiation between ordinary and extraordinary public financing since the 1980s strengthened the regulatory role of the federal government in higher education, science and technology. University autonomy has changed, affecting the ability of universities to determine their orientations and processes (Acosta, 2009).

Starting in the 1970s, an increase in higher education enrollment promoted the creation of new universities, increasing federal participation in their financing and blurring their relationship with federal entities and local governments.

It is proposed to federalize higher education to give more autonomy to the states, similar to what was done with basic education. This process would mark a milestone in the history of universities and higher education. It would encourage cooperation between educational institutions to address different levels of education.

public universities could better adapt to social needs if they had more autonomy and less dependence on the federal government. Universities should adjust their autonomy in relation to the government and local society. The role of rectors could change to a more academic and less administrative and political focus.

Public state universities could relate more authentically without depending on the federal government. Collaboration between autonomous universities can strengthen their mission.

The federal government must promote a balanced development of higher education throughout the country to guarantee opportunities for access to quality services in all regions. The Federation's special resources seek to guarantee equity and reduce the inequalities present in higher education.

The federal government must establish a comprehensive policy on higher education, science and culture. It is important to constitutionally establish the financial autonomy of autonomous public universities to guarantee that the State provides them with adequate resources.

13 INDEPENDENCE OF UNIVERSITIES AND COVERAGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Coverage is linked to university autonomy, which involves public universities defining and regulating their growth and development.

Universities have had overcrowding problems since the 1980s and it was considered necessary to set limits on their growth, with it being the responsibility of the State to address this situation. It was considered a priority to consolidate them in that perspective. After the 1960s and 1970s, the growth of public universities was discouraged.

The emphasis was on quality and then reaffirmed on evaluation in the 1990s. This position is found in the 1986 PROIDES and in other educational programs of the federal government.

The expansion of higher education took a backseat due to an introverted vision based on quantity versus quality. For several years there was a lack of attention from public policies. Large inequalities in higher education arose when Mexico joined the OECD and was compared with other countries.

Tertiary education enrollment data from 2007 from UNESCO can be used to understand the current situation internationally. According to the source, higher education coverage in different countries was 27% in the country, 82% in the United States, 69% in Spain and 62% in Canada. Countries less developed than ours have greater coverage in higher education. For example, in Argentina and Uruguay the rate is 67% and 64%, respectively, while in Peru and Colombia it is 35% and 32%.

ANUIES published a study on higher education in Mexico. Important information is offered on trends, challenges and perspectives. The discrepancy in higher education rates in Mexico reflects social inequalities among young people. In 2006-2007, higher education coverage for young people in Mexico varied: 15 entities had rates above 24.8-47.4%, while the majority were below 23.8-13%. The official policy goal is to reach 30% national coverage of young people by 2012.

Expanding coverage means including previously excluded young people in an important public good. Expanding educational coverage is part of a social inclusion process that allows access to opportunities and active participation in society. It implies having more opportunities and mobility in various areas. Expanding higher education reduces social inequality and poverty, as well as increasing economic competitiveness and sustainable development.

It is important to mention some comments from the Communiqué of the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. The effort to improve access is recognized but great disparities persist, which are the main source of inequality. It is advisable to pursue equity, relevance and quality when expanding access. The goal is to ensure equity by guaranteeing

financial and educational support to students from disadvantaged communities. Member States should promote equal participation in higher education for underrepresented groups.

a great challenge for the country and public universities to improve access and academic success for disadvantaged students. The challenge involves improving efficiency and supporting students through changes in the university and teaching organization.

14 UNIVERSITY INDEPENDENCE AND DECISIONS OF THE SUPREME COURT

University autonomy can be analyzed in several dimensions. Institutional autonomy allows universities and other educational institutions to govern themselves, according to the Constitution. This statement mentions the four aspects of autonomy: self-government, self-regulation, academic self-organization and administrative self-management.

Concern for university autonomy: members of university communities go to court for institutional decisions that affect them. There is concern that judicial decisions could prevail over self-government and institutions.

The National Council of ANUIES expressed its statement in a newspaper advertisement on March 26, 2009.

The rectors of public universities express concern about protections regarding the appointment of holders.

The lawsuits could affect the autonomy of universities according to the Mexican Constitution.

Institutions can elect and remove their authorities to fulfill their academic functions.

It would be serious to restrict the power of self-government of higher educational institutions, which could cause instability in the appointment of their directors.

We request that the Supreme Court reinforce the autonomy of public universities. The governance of the regions is key to national governance.

The Supreme Court of the Nation decided in June 2009 that the processes of election of rectors in public universities cannot be challenged through the amparo trial. This decision is crucial for autonomous public universities since it guarantees stability in the appointment of authorities and strengthens their governance.

The resolution endorsed important principles for public universities in Mexico, including their integration into the State, their relationship with the constitutional order and the guarantee of autonomy.

On June 29, 2009, the National Council of ANUIES once again published a statement in this regard.

National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions of Mexico. (ANUIES) recognizes the resolutions of the SCJN on protections against the appointment of rectors of autonomous higher education institutions.

The Court ratified the autonomy of the universities enshrined in the Constitution. Autonomous universities reaffirm their commitment to their own responsibility, according to the SCJN.

The Court highlights the institutional autonomy of universities and autonomous institutions in Mexico, which allows them to govern themselves and protect themselves from external influences. Autonomous universities express their support for the Supreme Court of Justice to protect university autonomy.

At UNAM, the issue of the Universidad Michoacana was conceptually analyzed without mentioning the particular case. Some ideas are taken up later (González P é rez, 2009).

15 BY WAY OF CONCLUSIONS

University autonomy stands out for the academic freedom and institutional self-determination that public universities have.

The cultivation of knowledge is fundamental in the university. Culture is accumulated knowledge that the university must preserve, enrich, recreate, transmit and disseminate widely. The university seeks the truth without pressure, promoting intellectual autonomy and a vocation for knowledge and culture.

The university is postulated as "conscience of society" and "critical consciousness", involving cognitive, psychological and moral dimensions. At university, university students must have a clear perception of reality, as well as the ability to analyze the social world and their own role in the organization. These dimensions imply adopting certain values and principles in a responsible manner.

University autonomy implies the self-determination of the public university. It reflects the autonomy of university students to make decisions about the institution. It implies freely deciding on the use of resources received from the State and self-generated resources.

University autonomy in the Constitution shows confidence in the public university to decide on quality education with social commitment and support for national issues.

University autonomy is considered "special" by the Supreme Court of Justice because it is linked to the freedom of teaching, research and cultural dissemination in the constitutional autonomous system. University autonomy is manifested in the self-regulation and self-government of the public university.

It is essential to identify and define university autonomy now that the Supreme Court of Justice is analyzing it. Public universities have institutional guarantees in the Constitution to fulfill educational, research and cultural functions.

It is important to understand that university authority is related to the academic activities of the university. The performance of a university authority covers academic and administrative management, both internally and externally, maintaining the academic condition of the institution.

University authority is not the same as political authority, since the former refers to academic management and the latter to the power of public administration.

The importance of university collegiate bodies in university government decisions must be recognized. Concerted decisions express the university will and reflect the commitment of the university and its community.

Collegiate bodies are fundamental in university life to make academic decisions and appoint those responsible for institutional management.

Collegiate bodies balance university academic functioning by making decisions on study plans, competitions, reports and academic recognition. They must be cautious when choosing academic authorities.

In the appointment of a university authority, the university will is expressed through the body empowered to do so. A legislative reform proposal is needed to improve the appointment process without altering university autonomy. Any different opinion is a threat to university autonomy in terms of self-government.

The appointment of a university authority depends on the necessary academic profile and the university will. In summary, university will is essential to guarantee university autonomy.

Public universities must comply with their internal regulations and, if necessary, propose secondary laws that regulate them. Universities must have the necessary regulations to exercise their academic, government and administrative autonomy.

This will be insufficient if social and political actors do not respect university autonomy.

Public universities make continuous decisions in the face of changing situations, reducing and increasing complexity at the same time. It is crucial to make decisions freely and responsibly, respecting university principles and values and current regulations. University autonomy becomes a daily lifestyle.

Autonomy is crucial for public universities to fulfill their institutional missions.

At UNAM, 80 years of university autonomy are commemorated, referring to the concepts of the document Work guidelines for the period 2008–2011.

Universities, especially public ones, are spaces to promote the values of democratic societies. In this space of pluralism and tolerance, members of society can belong without being excluded due to differences such as ethnic, regional, linguistic, cultural, religious or class identity.

Public universities are places for the cultivation of knowledge and intellectual life. It is necessary to protect and improve these spaces as they offer unique services to society.

Autonomy has been key in the development of UNAM. The freedom, responsibility and quality of university students has improved. The institution has remained independent of external influences. Basically, it implies rights and responsibilities such as governing themselves, managing their assets, setting terms of relationships and being a space for intellectual freedom.

The University would be limited without autonomy. It is part of its vitality. Stimulation for creativity and protection against the interests of political, religious and economic groups. It is the basis of objective criticism, disinterested proposal and national conscience.

The University must maintain scientific and technological competence, cultivate humanism and promote human rights due to its social responsibility and university autonomy. Your commitment and contribution to society is expressed. It seeks to intellectually and ethically enrich society to achieve greater equity and social justice. University autonomy, after 80 years, must continue to evolve and consolidate. Budget uncertainty limits annual negotiations. It is necessary to work on a financing policy for higher education. I empower her to take a key step when it becomes law. Constitutional autonomy is incomplete without guaranteed resources.

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