

Admission system to public universities in Ecuador

Sistema de ingreso a las universidades públicas del Ecuador

Irvin Kevin Mejia Dume

Bachelor's Degree. University of Guayaquil.
Guayaquil-Ecuador. Irvinkevin@ug.edu.ec.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8084-5200>

Abstract

Education is one of the systems of inclusion and social equity of the Good Living Regime, in Ecuador, until before 2012, there was no national entrance exam to public universities, several had filters, but the rule was simple to wait in long lines for a place. Outside each third level institution, all that changed with the arrival of the unified exam Ser Bachiller. The objective of this article is to expose the social reality and the impact on the student population that arises from the implementation of this system provided by the Senescyt, using the mixed method of research, making use of the quantitative procedure for the processing of statistical material and in turn the qualitative method for a deeper analysis based on that numerical magnitude, finding a disturbing reality, nonconformity, protests and rejection of an examination described by most citizens as ineffective, clumsy and exclusive. Concluding that education implies an obligation on the part of the authorities to facilitate and formulate plans of The education available, adequate and without disproportionate limitations or that cause a kind of restriction to the access to education at all levels.



Social Imaginary
Publishing entity

University of Guayaquil -
REDICME (reg-red-18-0061)

e-ISSN: 2737-6362

January - June 2021 Vol. 4-1-2021

<http://revista-imaginariosocial.com/index.php/es/index>

Receipt: July 15, 2020

Acceptance: December 05, 2020

1-13

Atribución/Reconocimiento-NoComercial- CompartirIgual 4.0 Licencia Pública Internacional — CC

BY-NC-SA 4.0

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/legalcode.es>

Keywords: Public Universities; Admission; Senescyt; Ser Bachiller; Higher Education.

Resumen

La educación constituye uno de los sistemas de inclusión y equidad social del Régimen del Buen Vivir, en Ecuador, hasta antes del 2012, no había una prueba nacional de ingreso a las Universidades públicas, varias tenían filtros, pero la regla era simple hacer largas filas por un cupo. Afueras de cada Institución de tercer nivel, todo eso cambio con la llegada del examen unificado Ser Bachiller. El Objetivo de este artículo es exponer la realidad social y el impacto en la población estudiantil que surge, de la implementación de este sistema dispuesto por la Senescyt. Para ello hemos utilizado el método mixto de investigación, haciendo uso del procedimiento cuantitativo para el procesamiento del material estadístico y a su vez el método cualitativo para un análisis más profundo partiendo de esa magnitud numérica. Encontrandonos con una realidad preocupante, inconformidad protestas y rechazo hacia un examen calificado por la mayoría de sus ciudadanos como ineficaz torpe y excluyente. Concluyendo que la educación implica la obligación de las autoridades de facilitar y formular planes de estudios disponibles, adecuados y sin limitaciones desproporcionadas o que provoquen una especie de restricción para el acceso a la educación en todos sus niveles.

Palabras clave: Universidades Públicas; Ingreso; Senescyt; Ser Bachiller; Educación Superior

Introduction

The system of admission to public university careers in Ecuador is qualified by the National Secretary of Education as an effective, positive and efficient system, and logically it cannot be denied that it is a quite innovative procedure and has constituted great favorable changes for the Ecuadorian society, but it is not less certain that these changes also obey to disagreements of high school students with the way of choosing the career of their preference and the institution of higher education, qualifying then the same system mentioned before as efficient, in restrictive, clumsy, excluding, and totally deficient.

This article aims to describe the system of admission to public universities in Ecuador, through the application of the policy of free higher education, and thus present the reality perceived by the current student society, before this consolidated program called Ser Bachiller.

The National Institute for Educational Evaluation (Ineval) is in charge of taking the test known as Ser Bachiller aimed at third year high school students and people who graduated in previous years. The evaluation process is meritocratic and automated and evaluates the aptitudes and skills of the applicants in five fields: abstract aptitude, mathematical domain, linguistic domain, social domain and scientific domain. With a total of 160 items or questions.

The numbers that so far reflect the Ser Bachiller system in terms of statistics are not very encouraging if we talk about access, but it justifies these statistics as a search for excellence. The majority of the student population becomes high school graduates but does not have access to a university career, so only 22% of the student body obtains this opportunity.

The problems of dissatisfaction with the allocation of quotas is high, thus seeing many students projecting a career that is not completely to their liking, this being a trigger for a not too distant future, the abandonment or withdrawal of the respective assigned career. The great search for excellence that Senescyt talks about can also hide the formation of professionals with a mission no longer by urgent desire which every university student should have, but by the assignment of a system that will define your future, your profession and vocation.

The diversity of admission mechanisms to universities throughout Latin America and the Caribbean is fundamentally due to political and social issues or situations. In publicly managed universities, the predominant factor is that of financial resources, which should force these institutions to make greater efforts before the corresponding government agencies to obtain such resources, in addition to the need for greater visibility of the impact of academic work in society, so that society as a whole supports the demands for an increase in the budget allocated to education at all levels.

Materials and Methods

In order to analyze the public system of access to higher education, we have used the "mixed" research method, using the "Quantitative" method to reflect with numbers and percentages, the national panorama of access to a Public University Institution of Education and, respectively, we proceed to use the "Qualitative" method for the analysis, processing and interpretation of the information with statistical and numerical magnitudes used to describe them in a satisfactory way.

Taking into account the current statistics of Senescyt, it tells us that the National Institute of Educational Evaluation (Ineval) is in charge of taking the test known as Ser Bachiller and evaluates the aptitudes and skills of the applicants in five fields: abstract aptitude, mathematical domain, linguistic domain, social domain and scientific domain. With a total of 160 items or questions.

The objective of the article is to address the general problems that society presents as a consequence of the implementation of an exam that at first glance defines the future of university students in Ecuador with emphasis on two aspects: The benefits that are perceived by the students from the perspective of the education system and on the other hand the social reality that is configured by the negative effects that society presents for the rejection of a test that is projected as a filter for access to higher education.

Results

Since the implementation of this innovative system, although it is true that a large part of the student population is exercising their right to education in Ecuador's public facilities, it is also true that the number of Ecuadorian citizens who see their access to higher education relegated is very high, managing figures in each process of 100% of the students who take the exam only 29% access to a university, the remaining 71% have no choice but to wait for another process, or in any case seek an alternative to public education. (COMERCIO, Education For All, 2020) The remaining 71% have no choice but to wait for another process, or in any case seek an alternative to public education.

Thus, this great system of access to State Universities shows us a perspective that is not so obvious at first sight, but if we analyze all these figures, we can see that the number of students who do not have access to public education is much higher than those who can, That is to say, in the background of the negative effects produced by this evaluation system, it is perceived that this has as great beneficiaries, or in any case those who have most favored is undoubtedly the private universities that since the installation of Senescyt in the country have developed a large increase in their percentage in terms of enrollment. Students who have been deprived of public education have no other choice than private education.

It is remarkable that due to the large number of students who can not pass the exam "Ser Bachiller" this undoubtedly reflects the lack of academic preparation of students for this test, to face this test is not an easy task, if we start from the negative rate of approval, it is necessary to work on the problem, essential for society is that the state begins to take steps to reduce this shameful percentage of student failure to an exam that allows access to university education, A specific solution in the field of secondary education, to help shorten the rate of failed students, would be to reform the academic curriculum at the collegiate level, that is, to implement or add as one more subject in schools nationwide a subject that has to do exclusively with the fields that are evaluated in the Bachelor's degree, that every student who attends the last level of secondary school, have the opportunity to receive the necessary and indispensable preparation to face the exam that will define their future. The schools should be the ones to provide society with fully prepared high school graduates on equal terms, that although they do not ensure a place in a university, if they offer students the security of a better exam, in any case all this could be achieved if our education system is modified at the collegiate level.

Leaving behind the unfavorable rate of approval of the Ser Bachiller, let us now expose one of the many other problems facing the third level education system but this time from the perspective of students who manage to gain access to a university career. According to the latest survey conducted by Cedatos 82. According to the last survey conducted by Cedatos, 82.3% of young people surveyed stated that their student situation is to be studying a career that is not to their liking, that it was not their main

motivation to study, that it was not their desired career, the ultimate reason for which they were prepared at the college level, the same one they chose simply because the system assigned them, in any case they were in a complex situation, it was to accept that career or not to study, but another much more worrying index is that 59% of students who enter a public university accepting a career that the system assigns them, end up abandoning the race and giving up the career and giving up. And if we talk about the young people who, even against their internal desire to opt for their dream career, end up accepting and completing their studies in the career assigned by the Ser Bachiller system, the only social reality that will be projected into the not too distant future is that these young people will end up being professionals without motivation, mission and vocation.

It is evident that there are many young people in the classrooms of public universities in Ecuador who are studying careers that are not to their liking and that the majority opt to withdraw is a reality that cannot be denied. But a viable solution could be that the exam that until now evaluates specific fields such as logical, verbal, mathematical and abstract knowledge, could also evaluate the psychological field. (Mendez, p. 3) In other words, questions at a mental psychic level, something like a small test of vocational orientation, which would not only help the system to assign careers in a better way, but would also provide the student with an answer or an academic profile, which would show for what type of career or vocation he/she would actually be better qualified, A test that helps to define the personality with professional projections of each student, this would undoubtedly give us, once and for all, a better answer, a because, with which the Senescyt system is based, in the assignment of careers, an accessible reality for the student to know, to which professional profile he/she would be better linked. Simply by taking their own answers. This evaluated psychological field would answer the great unknown that this unified exam presents today; it would be the system's tool that justifies the granting of a certain career to an applicant to third level public education. Barros-Bastidas, C., & Turpo, O. (2020), Barros Bastidas, C., & Turpo Gebera, O. (2018).

The discussion on this issue is already in the question of whether this test should continue to be taken as the main requirement for university education, it is notorious the displeasure of society by the implemented system, it is true that many are supporters of it, but even more true is that society invites the rejection of the Ser Bachiller system. If we remember the old university system that provided access to its institutions, we find procedures that were not far from corruption, criticism, and

instability, large queues outside the institutions, large numbers of people sleeping on the outskirts of universities to get a place in the Pre University is what brings to mind every Ecuadorian citizen, remembering the before the Ser bachiller, so returning to that chaos is not an option. Although it cannot be denied in any way the level of coordination and order that the system of Senescyt has implanted in the universities in the field of access to education is undoubtedly innovative, even at the regional level this has a pending debt with the young aspiring to the preparation of the third level,

Every system will be graded by its percentages and statistics. (Ramirez, 2016) and the only truth is that the Ser Bachiller continues to yield very poor statistics and very high criticisms the step to follow is very simple, it is necessary for the system to work together evaluating those criticisms provided by the same society to give way to an urgent improvement, There are many mobilizations that have been carried out for the nullity of the test to eradicate this unified exam is the answer of the student community, a very radical and general solution, of course not very far from reality, it is urgent that measures are taken to improve this procedure linked to third level education, which has left us very good things, such as scholarships abroad, students being part of the G.A.R. (High Performance Group), the eradication of student overpopulation in universities, coordination and order structure at the time of giving the test, recognition as an innovative system at international level, in short, the eradication of student overpopulation in universities, coordination and order structure at the time of giving the test, recognition as an innovative system at international level. (Senescyt, 2019) In short, the eradication of the Senescyt test may not be the best answer, but improving each of the aspects related to its work is a task that keeps society waiting and waiting for a better tomorrow for access to a university.

Unfortunately with the passing of time and the impact that the unification of an accessible exam for higher education has had, it has become very common to observe in the daily life of Ecuadorian society dozens of young people and parents piled up with posters of complaints outside the Joaquín Gallegos Lara building, in the north of Guayaquil, where the offices of the Secretariat of Higher Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (Senescyt) are located, (COMERCIO, El Comercio, 2020) but this is only one of the most general criticisms because if we analyze more deeply

the real development that this system has been developing in terms of internal reception, it is necessary to say that statistics are projected that affirm that each process the social nonconformity tends to rise, That is to say, with each process carried out by the Secretary of Education, the increase of rejection to this system grows, undoubtedly due to the fact that less and less students pass the exam and the rate of students who fail in their attempt continues to increase. The Ser Bachiller provides 30% of the final average to graduate from high school and 60% of the score to apply to the public university. The percentage of students who achieve a bachelor's degree is high, but those who manage to access third level education is really minimal, in this projection is where the rejection and nonconformity of the Ecuadorian student population, to this innovative system, between quotation marks, develops.

Reviewing in a very general way the surveys made to the common citizen, we find that there are those who express that this evaluation, which allows the applicants to reach a place in the university, should be eliminated, in the same way, others who recognize that the test is a good option for the State to reach the development in the educational system, The famous search for excellence is a rather repetitive discourse that justifies the high rate of students who fail the test, but there are also those who suggest that changes should be made in the formulation and content of the exams, that is, their position is that the exam should be maintained but the structure and content should be changed in its entirety, the test should not be abolished, but it should definitely be more general, or in accordance with what was learned in class. The National Institute of Educational Evaluation (Ineval) applies changes to the exam, as explained by its authorities, in each process, in order to obtain more homogeneous results in aspects of territory (urban and rural population) and schooling (schooled and unschooled) in all their speeches and even on their websites Senescyt ensures that they analyze complaints and have even installed a security committee to evaluate the process and detect possible flaws, unfortunately little or nothing is what has been able to improve, to overcome such adverse statistics and social dissatisfaction, which so far has generated.

Since 2012, which is recorded as the date of the first exam for access to higher education, its only negative consequences were always rejection, nonconformity,

protests and offensive campaigns on social networks, so it was, until the morning of Thursday, January 23, 2020, the day in which Evelyn Iza Criollo, 18 years old, was found dead, hung by the neck with a rope in her room, (UNIVERSE, 2020) According to the mother of the young woman, Zenaida Criollo, depression for having failed twice in the 'Ser Bachiller' exam would have led her to suicide. The mother of the deceased expressed that the young woman was not the same since she took the test and that in addition to seeing her sad, she was angry and impotent with this system applied by the Ministry of Education, which requires certain qualifications to young people in order for them to opt for a university education. According to Criollo, her daughter wanted to become a psychologist and studied "night and day" to obtain the required grade, however, in her last evaluation she obtained less than 500/1000, because she had to answer different questions than the one she studied.

The young woman went through the hard process of feeling and knowing the failure after taking the Ser Bachiller exam, and seeing frustrated the desire to enter the classrooms of a public university institution, to forge her professional destiny, depressed and angry she made a terrible decision. Like her, there are many young people who go through the same situation, even having to repeat the exam more than 5 times, in that same scenario, some end up passing it, others with less luck, simply give up public education, that is when the only visible path is private education, which as mentioned above is one of the great beneficiaries of the implementation of this system, but even more worrying is that people who do not have or do not have the necessary resources to opt for a career in a private institution, the most common thing is that they give up on public education, The most common thing is that they consider their academic preparation as finished, that is to say, their simplest and closest option is to work or in any case leisure, silently developing one more problem for this country, that as a result of the collateral damage of a restrictive system, the number of young people without academic preparation and aspirations increases more and more, placing us at a regional level as one of the countries with less professional projections, a very poor nation when it comes to form and germinate the educational and academic desire in its population.

The solution that is presented to end the social discontent and its unpleasant consequences would be to rescind this test, the closest tool for this would be to return the autonomy to the universities, that is to give back to the public institutions of Ecuador, the internal power to decide their systems and requirements for admission to their respective facilities, but how to return to give them this autonomy if giving a superficial view of these institutions we find a discouraging reality intervened universities with people in charge of them, with obvious links to private education, I do not intend to accuse or encourage a feeling of corruption coming from this problematic situation, but it is my goal to project my criticism from my point of view, I do not intend to accuse or encourage a feeling of corruption coming from this problematic situation, but it is my goal to project my criticism from my point of view, especially if I am faced with this reality, which is a restrictive system for young high school graduates, an intervention to a public institution taking away its autonomy, if a question arises which I express as follows: who is the great beneficiary of the uncontrolled increase of young people without access to public education?.

The only obvious answer is clearly the private education sector that using statistics has experienced a high rate of increase in terms of enrollment, i.e. their classrooms are obviously full, indeed privatized education is very comfortable and even grateful with this method developed by the Senescyt, And if we add to this the control of private education through the intervention of the State University of Guayaquil, which has been stripped of its own public sovereignty, to give it to the private sector, I think I am not wrong in thinking that the days are far away when the only beneficiaries of this system of admission to universities will be the students and public institutions.

Discussion

The implementation of this unified exam, better known as Ser Bachiller in Ecuador, has given the country great achievements from the academic point of view, scholarships abroad, students who make up the High Performance Group (G.A.R), and international recognition as an innovative system of access to public education, this process granted a transcendental change in terms of Coordination and Structure if compared to the old system offered by public institutions in the past, going from the long lines in the vicinity of the faculties or the large numbers of people sleeping on the

outskirts of universities to get a place for a pre-university, going from that to do it from the comfort of a computer, It is undoubtedly a really positive change, but when making a comparative analysis using official statistics and taking into account the number of young people who do not have access to public education and that because of this at present there is already a death registered as a suicide as a result of the negative effects of the implementation of this system, it is evident the great feeling of rejection, nonconformity and discontent of the society that does not conceive or adapt to a system which they qualify as restrictive and deficient.

Since the implementation of this innovative system, although it is true that a large part of the student population in search of excellence is exercising their right to education in public facilities in Ecuador, it is also true that the number of Ecuadorian citizens who see their access to higher education relegated is very high. It is enough to take a look at the statistics to realize the social reality that the country is facing today, But if we analyze all these figures, exposed in this article, we can see that the number of students who do not have access to public education is much higher than those who can, that is, in the background of the negative effects produced by this evaluation system, it is perceived that this has as great beneficiaries, or in any case those who have most favored is undoubtedly the private universities that since the installation of Senescyt in the country have developed a large increase in their percentage in terms of enrollment. Students who have been deprived of public education have no other choice than private education.

Referencias

Barros-Bastidas, C., & Turpo, O. (2020). La formación en investigación y su incidencia en la producción científica del profesorado de educación de una universidad pública de Ecuador. *Publicaciones*, 50(2), 167–185. doi:10.30827/publicaciones.v50i2.13952

Barros Bastidas, C., & Turpo Gebera, O. (2018). Factors influencing the scientific production of university professors: a systematic review . *Pensamiento Americano*, 11(22). <https://doi.org/10.21803/pensam.v11i21-1.276>

Cedatos. (2 de Octubre de 2019). CEDATOS. Obtenido de <https://www.cedatos.com.ec/>

- COMERCIO, E. (8 de enero de 2020). Educacion Para todos.
- COMERCIO, E. (11 de enero de 2020). El Comercio. *Reclamos por pruebas de Ser Bachiller,inconformidad con sistema de Ingreso a las Universidades del Pais.*
- INEC. (s.f.). *Instituto Ncional de Estadisticas y Censos*. Obtenido de INEC: <https://www.ecuadorencifras.gob.ec/educacion/>
- Mendez, C. G. (s.f.). *Dialnet*. Obtenido de Prueba Ser Bachiller, el inicio para la educación superior en el Ecuador: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=6560205>
- Ramirez, J. Z. (25 de Mayo de 2016). *Dialnet*. Obtenido de Una mirada Crítica al Examen Nacional para la Educación Superior en Ecuador: https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjZmpvYntrnAhVIwVkJHZAbAfkQFjABegQIAhAB&url=https%3A%2F%2Fdialnet.unirioja.es%2Fdescarga%2Farticulo%2F5678387.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3KTqCb-N1bsbXylwqkol_f
- von Feigenblatt, Otto Federico, The Importance of Historical Heritage and the Fallacy of the Cancel Movement: International Case Studies (May 23, 2020). *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences* (2020) Volume 10 No 3, 483-492, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=>
- von Feigenblatt, Otto Federico, JAPÓN Y EL COVID-19 DESDE UN PUNTO DE VISTA SOCIOCULTURAL (Japan and COVID-19 from a Socio-cultural Perspective) (June 1, 2020). *Revista Observatorio Iberoamericano de la Economía y la Sociedad del Japón* (febrero 2020)., Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3663848>
- von Feigenblatt, Otto Federico, The Significance of the Shang Period for the Contemporary Construction of Chinese Cultural Identity (April 10, 2020). *Journal of Business and Entrepreneurial Studies*, 4(2), 309-318. , Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=>
- Senescyt. (9 de Diciembre de 2019). *Secretaria de Educacion Superior Ciencia Tecnologia e Innovacion*. Obtenido de <https://www.educacionsuperior.gob.ec/category/estadisticas/>
- UNIVERSO, E. (24 de enero de 2020). El Universo. *Joven se quita la vida por obtener baja puntuación en prueba Ser Bachiller.*