

Medical Societies and Public Universities

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Medical societies are important and strong institutions in our country. We can take as an example the Brazilian Society of Cardiology (*Sociedade Brasileira de Cardiologia, SBC*), of which most of those reading this text are members. I have never done corporate politics, but I follow it with interest. I am impressed by the determination observed in the fierce disputes between competitors at election time.

These groups, which always include members of university faculties, spend a lot of energy to achieve command positions. Such is the game, which often drifts into tortuous paths. Therefore, the human resources of societies and universities have much in common, since they promote scientific and didactic activities, educating professionals all over the country, using both the face-to-face and the media modalities.

The quality of the received information is directly proportional to that of the universities and their members. Thus, societies must have great interest in the intellectual evolution of our universities. Therefore, some questions should be asked: Are there constructive undertakings for the improvement of public universities by societies? Are these energies, after the elections are finished, used in their benefit? If they are not, what are the plans for greater interaction between these two universes? Would these projects be helpful in alleviating the steady decline in the quality of academies?

The reasons for this decline are well known and financial bankruptcy is undoubtedly the primary cause of this decline. There are other, perhaps more serious causes for this crisis in academies, of which approach is hampered by powerful corporations. These are turning education and health into big businesses; *Their* power has an enormous influence in the absence of the political will to fight them. Could we, as members of a society, have well-defined and constructive positions, when trying to collaborate with the authorities regarding the referral of alleged solutions? How do societies associate with the public power? Is there any interest in this relationship?

In the university scenario, this situation has a deep impact on human resources, leading to disbelief and hopelessness of employees at all levels, even though there are highly qualified and productive professionals who are often undervalued because they are not accepted by the members

of the current power systems. This hopelessness is the most destructive feeling, the greatest poison for the productivity of our institutions. The escape of brains, both to the private sector and to other countries, makes this evil equation an even worse one. No wonder our young people have so little interest in academic life.

To make things even more complicated, career plans are attacked by corporatism, physiologism, and nepotism. Important political facts collaborate very much to keep high-level teachers away from our teaching centers. It is sad to see individuals who have dedicated decades of their lives, with exemplary university careers, being neglected, greatly diminishing their dedication to teaching, research, and extended education.

This political side is an important cause of the intellectual decline of human resources. Many brilliant careers have been interrupted by this malignant association of factors. We, therefore, have the perfect recipe for decadence.

Is there a solution or solutions? I believe there are, with the political will that creates changes in the current cultural pattern. Many opinions should be voiced and challenged through serious and healthy dialogues. These are my thoughts:

On the academic side, teachers must and should be involved, humanly and professionally, with their institutions. Being a teacher is different from simply working as one. Being a teacher must and should be the primary mission in their professional life. They must fully meet the needs of their institutions, thus creating no conflicts of interest.

Teachers must and should be appraised periodically on their merits, which should be the key factor for reaching the top of their careers. There should be more Full Professors, who would be impartially chosen among active, institutional teachers with heterogeneous profiles, thus reducing the risk of the formation of dominant oligarchies. They should take the university to the civil society, removing it from its crystal dome, while bringing a productive society to the university, as healthy associations for both. As an idea, medical societies could play an important role in this matter.

Teachers should distance themselves from the utilitarian thinking. One should keep in mind the balance between personal and institutional achievements. Unfortunately, personal conveniences predominate, to the detriment of the entity advancement. This manner of thinking has become a cultural issue that has deep roots. If my institution prospers, I prosper. Cicero said: "Each one must, in all matters, have only one objective, that is to conform his own interest with the general interest".

Genevan Rousseau offered the same lesson, just like many other thinkers. These ideas have been with the human being for a long time. Medical societies would benefit. There would be

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an increase in the quality indexes of didactic and dissemination activities. The question remains, which I believe would be difficult to answer today: is it possible for medical societies to contribute to public universities? If so, which would these contributions be? What could be the participation of societies in future university reformations?¹

It is an effort that requires a dialogue between all who participate in these two universes. There are highly qualified human resources to carry out this task. There will be much disagreement, but this is the way to build something solid. This text does not intend to propose ideas, only to propose the dialogue. When the latter is present, the results appear. All sectors of this country are in need of healthy reformations, as are our societies and universities. I believe this approach could leave a magnificent legacy for the future, for our successors.

Reference

1. Mady C. O futuro das universidades públicas. [Internet]. [Citado em 2018 jul 19]. Disponível em: <https://jornal.usp.br/artigos/o-futuro-das-universidades-publicas/>

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