

# Synthetic indicators and humanities: large-scale assessment in Brazil and Rio Grande do Sul

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## Abstract

Large-scale external assessments, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (Pisa) and the Rio Grande do Sul School Performance Assessment System (Saers, acronym in Portuguese), guide public policies and pedagogical practices in Brazil, favor quantitative disciplines, and marginalize the humanities, limiting students' comprehensive development. This documentary and bibliographic study analyzes the impacts of excluding the humanities, limiting students' comprehensive development. This study, based on documentary and bibliographic analysis, examines the impacts of excluding the humanities from these assessments, discusses their implications for comprehensive education, and proposes strategies to promote a more inclusive assessment model in Brazilian and Rio Grande do Sul basic education. The analysis showed that the exclusion of the humanities leads to curricular fragmentation, distancing it from comprehensive education, impoverishing critical and socio-emotional competencies, reinforcing technicist logic. Finally, a hybrid assessment model is proposed, combining synthetic indicators and qualitative approaches to integrate humanistic knowledge into educational quality monitoring, promoting equitable, formative basic education oriented toward consistent human development.

Keywords: External assessment. Synthetic indicators. Humanities. Basic education.

## Indicadores sintéticos e humanidades: avaliação em larga escala no Brasil e no Rio Grande do Sul

## Resumo

Avaliações externas de larga escala, como o Programa Internacional de Avaliação de Estudantes (Pisa) e o Sistema de Avaliação do Rendimento

Escolar do Rio Grande do Sul (Saers), orientam políticas públicas e práticas pedagógicas no Brasil. Ao privilegiarem áreas do conhecimento como Leitura, Matemática e Ciências, essas avaliações marginalizam as humanidades, limitando o desenvolvimento integral dos estudantes. Este estudo, de abordagem documental e bibliográfica, analisa os impactos da exclusão das humanidades dessas avaliações, discute suas implicações para a formação integral e propõe estratégias para promover um modelo avaliativo mais inclusivo na educação básica brasileira e gaúcha. A análise mostrou que a exclusão das humanidades gera fragmentação curricular, o que distancia a própria educação de uma formação integral, empobrecendo competências críticas e socioemocionais, reforçando a lógica tecnicista. Por fim, propõe-se um modelo híbrido de avaliação, que combine indicadores sintéticos e abordagens qualitativas para integrar saberes humanísticos ao monitoramento da qualidade educacional, promovendo uma educação básica equitativa, formativa e orientada à uma formação humana consistente.

Palavras-chave: Avaliação externa. Indicadores sintéticos. Humanidades. Educação básica.

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## **Indicadores sintéticos y humanidades: evaluación a gran escala en Brasil y en Rio Grande do Sul**

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### **Resumen**

Las evaluaciones externas a gran escala, como el Programa para la Evaluación Internacional de Estudiantes (Pisa) y el Sistema de Evaluación del Rendimiento Escolar de Rio Grande do Sul (Saers, acrónimo en portugués), orientan las políticas públicas y las prácticas pedagógicas en Brasil, privilegian las disciplinas cuantitativas y marginan las humanidades, limitando el desarrollo integral de los estudiantes. Este estudio, de enfoque documental y bibliográfico, analiza los impactos de la exclusión de las humanidades de estas evaluaciones, discute sus implicaciones para la formación integral y propone estrategias para promover un modelo evaluativo más inclusivo en la educación básica brasileña y de Rio Grande do Sul. El análisis mostró que la exclusión de las humanidades genera una fragmentación curricular, distanciándola de una formación integral, empobrece las competencias críticas y socioemocionales, reforzando la lógica tecnicista. Por último, se propone un modelo híbrido de evaluación,

que combina indicadores sintéticos y enfoques cualitativos para integrar los saberes humanísticos al monitoreo de la calidad educativa, promoviendo una educación básica equitativa, formativa y orientada a la formación humana coherente.

Palabras clave: Evaluación externa. Indicadores sintéticos. Humanidades. Educación básica.

## Introduction

Large-scale assessments play a central role in shaping public policy and defining pedagogical practices in Brazilian basic education. However, the prioritization of areas such as Mathematics, Portuguese Language, and Sciences, common in these examinations, results in the marginalization of the humanities, which are essential for the critical and civic development of students.

This scenario is evident in both international assessments, like PISA, and regional instruments, such as Saers and Imers, where modest advances are observed in the early grades, low progression in the final grades, and the persistence of regional inequalities. By reducing education to quantitative parameters, these assessments limit the development of interpretive, reflective, and socio-emotional competencies, directly affecting the quality and equity of teaching. In this context, this article analyzes the impacts of excluding the humanities from external assessments, discusses the implications for the integral education of students, and proposes strategies to promote a more inclusive and comprehensive assessment model within Brazilian and Rio Grande do Sul's basic education systems.

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## Methodology

This research adopts a critical approach, both qualitative and quantitative in nature, based on a documentary analysis of official sources and specialized literature. Reports, legislation, and statistical data available on institutional portals, such as those of the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep), the Secretariat of Education of the State

of Rio Grande do Sul, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), were examined. The analysis focused on the critical interpretation of performance data and its trends, as well as on evaluating the implications arising from the absence of the humanities in external assessment instruments.

Data processing prioritized synthesis and comparison through compact tables and graphs, facilitating the identification of patterns and inequalities. The investigation combines the descriptive and analytical dimension of the documents with a reflective approach to their implications in the educational field (Gil, 2008; Robaina; Fenner; Martins; Barbosa; Soares, 2021). It follows the methodological foundations of research in education, considering the importance of triangulating sources to ensure a critical and in-depth analysis of the results.

## Overview of External and Large-Scale Assessments in Basic Education

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External and large-scale assessments in Brazilian basic education are structured along two main axes: national and international. At the national level, the National High School Exam (Enem) and the Basic Education Assessment System (Saeb) are prominent. The Enem, created in 1998, individually assesses students at the end of high school and is used as a pathway to higher education. The Saeb, implemented since 1990, uses instruments such as the Provinha Brasil, Prova Brasil, and the National Literacy Assessment (ANA) to measure competencies in Portuguese language and mathematics. Its results form the basis for the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb) (MEC, 2024b). The Ideb, established in 2007, is currently the main national indicator of educational quality, combining exam performance with school promotion rates (Inep, 2024a; Inep, 2024b).

At the international level, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), coordinated by the OECD, has been conducted triennially since 2000 with 15-year-old students. It measures proficiency in reading, mathematics, and science, as well as innovative domains like creative thinking.

PISA allows for global comparison and informs analyses of educational policies (OECD, 2022; 2024; Inep, 2024c).

Both Saeb and PISA, while relevant for diagnosis and planning, have historically favored areas considered easier to measure quantitatively (Portuguese language, mathematics, and science), contributing to a curricular prioritization that comes at the expense of the humanities (Nussbaum, 2019; Sudbrack & Fonseca, 2021).

At the state level, such as in Rio Grande do Sul (RS), the Saers (Assessment System for School Performance of Rio Grande do Sul) has administered annual tests in Portuguese language and mathematics since 2005. It serves as the basis for calculating the Imers (Municipal Index of Education of Rio Grande do Sul), which is used as a criterion for distributing the state's value-added tax (Imposto sobre Circulação de Mercadorias e Serviços - ICMS) revenue to municipalities. The Imers measures both average proficiency and performance evolution, also incorporating factors like promotion rates and vulnerability status (Rio Grande do Sul, 2023a; 2023b).

The recent context shows localized progress in the early years of elementary school but stagnation in the final years and in high school, with persistent regional and socioeconomic inequalities. Legislative changes, such as the adoption of the "Educational ICMS," have increased the weight of assessment results in policy formulation and resource allocation (Rio Grande do Sul, 2021; MEC, 2024a; 2024c).

Finally, it should be noted that while large-scale assessments guide goals and investments, they also pose challenges, especially due to their narrow focus on the assessed disciplines. This limits curricular breadth and impedes the development of skills fundamental to students' civic education (Afonso, 2007; Nussbaum, 2019).

In the remainder of this study, we will address external assessment at the international level and, subsequently, large-scale assessment in the context of Rio Grande do Sul. Among external assessments, PISA will be analyzed, focusing on the results of its latest edition, followed by an analysis of the Saers and Imers assessments conducted in the state of RS.

## International Assessment: PISA

PISA, coordinated by the OECD and established in 1997 with its first application in 2000, assesses 15-year-old students from member and partner countries every three years, allowing for international comparisons of proficiency in mathematics, reading, and science (Inep, 2024c). In the 2022 edition, 81 countries participated. In Brazil, 10,798 students from 599 schools took the exam, covering both public and private networks (Inep, 2023).

Brazil's 2022 results indicated average scores of 379 in mathematics (2018:384), 410 in reading (2018:413), and 403 in science (2018:404), showing a slight decrease in all three areas compared to the previous edition and performance consistently below the OECD average (OECD 472/2022; OECD 476/2022; OECD 485/2022) (Table 1).

Table 1 – Brazil's Performance in Pisa (2018-2022)

Year	Mathematics	Reading	Science
2018	384	413	404
2022	379	410	403

Source: OECD (2022).

In addition to the traditional areas, PISA 2022 introduced assessments in innovative domains, such as Creative Thinking and Financial Literacy. Brazil's performance in Creative Thinking was 23 points (OECD average: 33), placing the country in the 49th position among the 64 assessed, alongside countries like Albania, the Philippines, and Uzbekistan (OECD, 2024). "[...] Only 1% of Brazilians achieved high performance in mathematics [...]" and 31% fell below the minimum level required for full citizenship (Inep, 2023, n.p.). The results indicate the resilience of the Brazilian educational system during the pandemic but also expose historical and structural gaps in learning and the development of creative and analytical competencies.

Performance differences based on socioeconomic context were notable: advantaged students outperformed disadvantaged ones by 11.4 points in creative thinking, an impact higher than the OECD average (9.5

points) (OECD, 2022). Nevertheless, 12% of disadvantaged Brazilian students ranked in the top quarter of performance in the country, being considered "resilient creative thinkers" (OECD, 2022, p. 6). Regarding gender, girls outperformed boys by 2.5 points in creative thinking, consistent with the international pattern (OECD, 2022).

The report highlighted additional challenges: The correlation between reading and mathematics in OECD countries (0.80) was higher than in Brazil, indicating a disconnection in the learning process; Although Brazil invests 5.4% of its GDP in education (OECD average: 4.7%), it did not meet the goals of the National Education Plan (PNE) and reduced investments during the pandemic, unlike countries such as Germany, Canada, and Sweden (OECD, 2023; Inep, 2024d); The country moved up to 60th position in the PISA 2022 ranking, slightly better than in 2018 (66th), but still behind the world leaders (Facts Maps, 2018; 2022).

Research and reports indicate that countries with positive PISA results invest heavily in infrastructure and teacher valorization, and adopt innovative curricula and active methodologies that promote creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking. In Brazil, a content-based and traditional approach prevails, lacking strategies to stimulate creative competencies (Robinson & Aronica, 2019; Bühler & Ignácio, 2020; Marques; Campos; Andrade & Zambalde, 2021).

PISA, therefore, signals the pressing need for structural reforms in the Brazilian educational system - especially regarding the strengthening of teacher training, the integration of the humanities into the curriculum, and the adoption of innovative pedagogies - to provide a broader, more equitable, and contemporary education for students.

National and international assessments, particularly PISA, show that Brazil is still far from achieving satisfactory results in education. The combination of specialized knowledge and the ability to motivate learning is essential for strengthening high-level education systems. Furthermore, respect and incentives are fundamental for attracting and retaining committed teachers.

The lack of investment in teacher training compromises professional qualification, and despite the curriculum's focus on mathematics, science, and literacy, results remain unsatisfactory. The prioritization of technical knowledge

over the humanities may limit the school's role in building a more just society, restricting its contribution to human dignity.

To continue this research, we will next discuss the assessment carried out in the state of Rio Grande do Sul and the alignment of Saers with Imers as a means of monitoring and evaluating the quality of education in the state's municipalities.

## **Saers vs. Imers: Assessment and Monitoring of Education in Municipalities of Rio Grande do Sul**

8 In Rio Grande do Sul, Saers is the main instrument for measuring student performance in Portuguese Language and Mathematics in the state and municipal school networks. Established by the State Secretariat of Education (Seduc) in partnership with the National Union of Municipal Education Directors (Undime) of RS and the Union of Private Education (Sinepe) of RS, its application is supported by Law No. 10,576/95, which guides the Democratic Management of Public Education. It has been implemented since 2005, with updates to its format and scope over the years (Rio Grande do Sul, 2007).

Saers conducts annual assessments, collecting data from students in the 2nd, 5th, and 9th grades of elementary school and the 3rd year of high school. The results serve as the basis for Imers, a composite indicator that considers not only proficiency but also performance evolution and aspects such as vulnerability and school promotion rates. This directly impacts the calculation of the share of ICMS tax revenue allocated to municipalities (Decree No. 56,679/2022; Law No. 15,766/2021) (Rio Grande do Sul, 2024a)

The assessment uses parameters such as Item Response Theory (IRT) in the Portuguese Language and Mathematics tests, allowing for equitable comparisons between municipalities of different sizes. Imers introduces incentives to combat school dropout and to include students in vulnerable situations, thereby enhancing the redistribution of resources according to improvements in educational indicators (Caed, n.d.; Rio Grande do Sul, 2024a).

Since its implementation, Saers has provided relevant inputs for the development of public educational policies. In the 2022 edition, approximately

336,000 students participated, and the results indicate a progressive decline in indicators as students advance through the educational stages. The percentages of students at the "Adequate and Advanced" levels decrease considerably from the beginning to the end of basic education, especially in Mathematics (Table 2).

**Table 2 – Results of Saers/2022 Administered to Basic Education Students in RS**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Average Proficiency</b>	<b>Adequate and Advanced (%)</b>	<b>Below Basic and Basic (%)</b>
2nd Year EF	Portuguese Lang	605	54	46
2nd Year EF	Mathematics	512	58	42
5th Year EF	Portuguese Lang	201	51	49
5th Year EF	Mathematics	208	37	63
9th Year EF	Portuguese Lang	245	30	70
9th Year EF	Mathematics	245	13	87
3rd Year HS	Portuguese Lang	262	27	73
3rd Year HS	Mathematics	257	4	96

Source: Authors' elaboration with data from research in Rio Grande do Sul (2022).

The data show progress in the early years and a significant deterioration in the final years of elementary and high school, especially in mathematics. In 2023, the statewide Imers score evolved from 59.79 (2022) to 63.44, reflecting recent efforts, particularly in the literacy stages (Rio Grande do Sul, 2023a).

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Furthermore, socioeconomic and racial disparities stand out, with better performance among students with higher purchasing power, who are white or pardo (mixed-race), and female, a trend that becomes more pronounced in

the 3rd year of high school. In Porto Alegre, the index of 40.02 reinforces the challenges faced by large capitals, while smaller municipalities like Vespasiano Corrêa and Rondinha exceed 80 points on the Imers scale (Rio Grande do Sul, 2023b).

Regarding the identified challenges, it is considered that despite engagement with initiatives such as Todo Jovem na Escola (Every Youth in School), Alfabetiza Tchê (Literacy Program), Educação no ICMS (Education in ICMS), and the expansion of full-time high school, the progression of indicators remains modest in the final years (Todos pela Educação, n.d.; Rio Grande do Sul, 2023b). Table 3 synthesizes inferences and challenges that persist in light of the recent Imers results.

Table 3 – Inferences from the Imers Results in RS

Inference	Description
Regional and Socioeconomic Inequality	Significant disparities between urban and rural regions; areas with higher social vulnerability indices face difficulties in improving learning indicators
Continuing Teacher Education	Work overload and lack of specific support to address students' learning gaps
Challenges in Public Policy Implementation	Local monitoring and adjustments are still insufficient
Dropout and Age-Grade Distortion	Grade repetition and late entry negatively impact performance
Diagnostic Assessments	Lack of optimization and interpretation of results/ data to define concrete/assertive actions
Innovation and Adaptability	Resistance to curricular and methodological updates
Impact of the Pandemic	Learning gaps aggravated by the suspension of in-person classes
External Factors	Violence, family problems, and difficulties in accessing psychosocial support services

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on Rio Grande do Sul (2024b).

The scenario reiterates the need for coordinated efforts to overcome the observed low progression, with an emphasis on combating inequalities, strengthening the teaching career and training, and adapting public policies to local demands. The debate on the inclusion of the humanities is currently limited by predominantly technical and quantitative metrics (Rio Grande do Sul, 2022; 2023a; 2023b; Todos pela Educação, n.d.).

The data presented reveal limitations in student performance, both in Brazil and in RS, raising concerns. We propose to introduce into the debate the valorization of the humanities, which are essential for the critical and ethical development of students. The absence of these areas in assessments, focused on technical and quantitative metrics, compromises the formation of competencies fundamental for the challenges of contemporary society, making this reflection imperative.

## **Implications of the Absence and the Importance of the Humanities in External Assessments**

Although national and international assessments indicate gradual progress in mathematics, literacy, and science, the results remain below the established goals, and the prioritization of these areas ultimately marginalizes the humanities in school curricula. This focus stems from historical and economic factors, particularly the valuation of quantifiable disciplines since the Industrial Revolution, which favored competencies easily measurable in standardized exams.

In the current context, large-scale assessments like PISA influence curricula, public educational policies, and resource distribution, but they fail to consider the complexity of educational contexts and human trajectories (Sudbrack & Fonseca, 2021). This translates into standardized models that hierarchize certain types of knowledge and reduce the autonomy of systems and schools to strengthen democratic and formative processes.

Regarding the hierarchization of knowledge, "The assignment of grades in areas such as mathematics, science, and reading demonstrates which skills and competencies to reinforce, forgetting the humanities as necessary for integral education" (Sudbrack & Fonseca, 2021, p. 10). The authors advocate

for the construction of democratic and transparent models, involving participation, negotiation, and justification of results, as well as the valorization of educational processes rather than just outcomes.

In this scenario, Afonso (2007, p. 20) corroborates when referring to a quality assessment, arguing that "[...] a quality school can only be a school that is simultaneously democratic and has high potential for providing effective learning in scientific, technical, and humanistic terms." For the author, standardized and quantitative assessments represent a setback for broader educational development.

Similarly, Alvernaz, Souza, and Henrique (2021) observe that external assessments, such as Saerj, tend to fossilize pedagogical practices, overvaluing test results and devaluing formative processes. This logic puts pressure on teachers and students, distancing them from innovative assessment and promoting bonuses and awards based on narrow performance.

Corroborating this view, Ravitch (2011) argues that assessments geared towards testing end up distorting the true purpose of education, leading to a pursuit of better scores at the expense of real learning. The author warns of the risk, illustrated by Campbell's Law, that indicators become "ends in themselves," compromising and distorting the educational process (Ravitch, 2011, p. 183).

External assessments like Ideb, instead of reflecting educational quality, reinforce educational inequalities by ignoring socioeconomic differences and imposing standards, making comparisons between students unfair and inadequate, and generating a false perception of progress (Afonso, 2007; Sudbrack & Fonseca, 2021; Medeiros & Sudbrack, 2022). In this sense, Aguiar and Barguil (2024) state that although the accountability system promotes improvements in indicators, it also imposes challenges on teacher autonomy and school dynamics through standardized goals and assessments.

Silva and Souza (2022) warn that there are gaps to be addressed for assessments to truly drive educational development, highlighting the importance of continuing teacher education. In this vein, Darling-Hammond (2014) emphasizes that school success depends on the effective training of teachers.

By prioritizing disciplines that are easily measurable quantitatively, external assessments can fragment school work and reduce the curriculum to

mathematics and Portuguese, limiting the consolidation of an integral education. Historically, the humanities were seen as secondary to economic development. Updated understandings reveal that these areas are fundamental for innovation and creativity, including in sectors like marketing and technology (OECD, 2018). Furthermore, the humanities develop essential capabilities that cannot be measured by quantitative multiple-choice tests, such as critical thinking and empathetic imagination - competencies fundamental for global citizenship (Nussbaum, 2019).

In the case of RS, an assessment focused solely on Portuguese Language and Mathematics restricts the concept of educational quality and hinders the full development of critical, reflective, and civic competencies. Nussbaum (2019, p. 134) warns that "[...] critical reasoning and empathetic imagination cannot be measured by quantitative multiple-choice tests [...] as are the skills associated with global citizenship [...]" and alerts to the risk of memorization and the impoverishment of humanistic values in education. When tests become central to the educational process, practices of interaction, creativity, and teacher-student dialogue are set aside (Nussbaum, 2019).

The implications of the absence of the humanities in assessment suggest: Education reduced to quantitative indicators; Limitation of civic education and full development; Accentuation of school and social inequalities; and Curricular shrinkage, restricted to technical knowledge. The integration of the humanities into external assessments is essential for an education that values both technical knowledge and integral formation, promoting critical, ethical, and creative development in students.

Based on the assumptions presented by Nussbaum (2019) and considering the assessment scenario marked by intense efforts, strategies are proposed, based on these implications, for the inclusion of the humanities in the assessments conducted in the state of RS. Some suggestions are highlighted in Table 4.

**Table 4 – Suggested Strategies and Practical Actions for Including the Humanities in RS Assessments**

Strategy	Practical Action
Expansion of Assessed Areas	Inclusion of history, philosophy, sociology, and arts in the Saers assessment structure
Interdisciplinary Questions	Development of instruments that connect the humanities with other areas, promoting critical analysis
Socio-emotional Competencies	Assessment of argumentation, empathy, collaboration, and critical thinking
Valorization of Regional Culture	Topics on the history and culture of Rio Grande do Sul to strengthen identity and belonging
Qualitative Textual Analysis	Open-ended assessments, such as essays and discursive analyses
Continuous Monitoring contínuo	Assessment of the impact of including the humanities on student development

Note: It is suggested to begin this expansion in the 9th grade of EF and the 3rd year of HS.

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

14 This assessment experience, by including the humanities, proves to be fundamental, as the quality of education cannot be measured solely by performance in exact science disciplines. Undoubtedly, the inclusion of the humanities in the RS assessments will allow for a new perspective on student learning, making it more complete, inclusive, and connected to social reality. As Nussbaum (2019, p. 112) highlights, "Innovation requires minds that are flexible, open, and creative; literature and the humanities cultivate these qualities [...]" and reinforces that "It is not impossible to create a nuanced and qualitative method of assessment [...]" when referring to examples she presents from her country. Although education is necessary in a "[...] business culture [...]", the broad capacity to imagine [...] is essential (Nussbaum, 2019, p. 135). Innovation requires open minds, and the humanities enhance imagination, flexibility, and citizenship.

Education extends beyond the limits of standardized tests, demanding approaches that value the meaningful understanding of content and the development of the humanities. These dimensions are essential for reflecting the complexity of multiple human intelligences, including those not easily

quantifiable, such as musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences (Gardner, 1994; 1995; 2000; Ravitch, 2011). International experiences, such as Finland's, demonstrate the importance of balancing sciences and humanities in educational policies (Sahlberg, 2017).

Data from PISA 2022 show that although there are challenges in creativity, Brazilian students exhibit creative potential and resilience, primarily through positive socio-emotional characteristics, which highlights the need to invest in integral and cognitive formation (OECD, 2022). The humanities are fundamental for understanding the multiple dimensions of human existence and for critical and reflective citizenship (Morin, 2011; Nussbaum, 2019; Arendt, 2022).

Nevertheless, current educational policies often restrict themselves to preparing for the job market, neglecting the valorization of the humanities and the central role of teacher training in the integral development of students (Frankl, 1991; Charlot, 2000; 2013; 2020; Nóvoa, 2009; 2011; 2022; Nussbaum, 2019).

## Final Reflections

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The results of this study show that external large-scale assessments in Brazil and Rio Grande do Sul, by excluding the humanities, consolidate a fragmented curriculum. Although these assessments provide important diagnostics through PISA, Saers, and Imers, they fail to encompass dimensions essential to the integral development of students. This marginalization reinforces a technicist logic in public policies, prioritizing measurable competencies and failing to consider critical, ethical, and socioeconomic processes.

Although there are signs of resilience, especially in the socio-emotional dimension and the potential for pedagogical interventions, it is urgent to invest in reforms that go beyond specific advances. Imers, as a diagnostic tool for the municipalities of Rio Grande do Sul, has demonstrated its strategic value in shaping local policies; however, the data show limited progress, concentrated in literacy and the early years, and the persistence of regional and socioeconomic inequalities in the final years and in high school.

In theoretical terms, this research, aligned with the reflective methodology of Gil (2008) and Robaina, Fenner, Martins, Barbosa, Soares (2021), highlights composite indicators as instruments that, without the contribution of the humanities, weaken the exercise of critical reason, empathetic imagination, and global citizenship. The introduction of this knowledge into the assessment framework is not merely an expansion of content but an epistemological repositioning that redefines educational quality as a formative and emancipatory practice.

Analytically, a hybrid assessment model is proposed that combines quantitative metrics with qualitative approaches from the humanities, favoring the construction of public policies that are sensitive to the local context and capable of addressing regional and local inequalities. Such a model requires: Valorization of dialogic and interdisciplinary pedagogical practices; Incorporation of ethical, critical, and sociocultural dimensions into assessment instruments; Teacher training focused on methodologies that integrate data analysis and humanistic reflection; Promotion of continuous research on the articulation between statistical indicators and qualitative narratives.

16 By considering the impacts of the exclusion of the humanities and proposing a more inclusive and comprehensive assessment model, this study concludes that the integration of PISA, Saers, and Imers must transcend the strict measurement of technical skills. The effective incorporation of the humanities ensures an integral education, aligned with contemporary demands and capable of promoting a basic education that is equitable, critical, and committed to a robust and integral human formation.

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