Social Change in Brazil Through Innovations and Social Movements

Karina Maldonado-Mariscal
Humboldt University of Berlin
TU Dortmund University, Dortmund

ABSTRACT

Social innovations and changes in educational systems are the cornerstones for success of emerging countries. Current developments in Brazil and heterogeneity of society make the country a perfect candidate to investigate these topics. Drawing on historical analysis and content analysis, the author builds a model that recognizes patterns of social change. This model enables to analyze social change through the interaction of radical changes, innovations, social movements, and reforms. This model is applied to two periods in Brazil, where social movements, like the revolution in the 1930s and the military coup in the 1960s, triggered a series of social changes. The findings of this study suggest that social change is a cyclical process where social innovations and educational change are involved. These findings have significant implications for our understanding of current changes in the Brazilian society and provide a key instrument for analyzing social change in other societies.

Keywords: Social innovation, social change, social movements, education, Brazil

Introduction

Since 2013, Brazilian society has experienced radical governmental changes and social protests against unemployment, health care, and cuts in budgets for education and science. These radical changes indicate that Brazil is an appropriate country for studying innovations in society and the education system. Brazil also represents a challenging case of study due to its diversity in terms of social class, ethnic groups, urban–rural differences, and gender differences. Awareness of social diversity in research is necessary, in order to recognize differences and tackle inequalities in better ways (De Freitas, 2017).
Here, the article focuses on social movements and social innovations that pushed a great part of educational modernization and change in the country in two specific periods. Using this approach, this article is not meant to provide a general model for the diverse Brazilian society, but to investigate patterns of social changes followed during these periods.

This article provides a tool for studying trends in social change and offers a new approach to analyzing social change that can be useful for studying other countries. Hence, the case of Brazil can be used to deepen our understanding of the ways in which societies innovate. This article investigates the meaning of social innovation and educational change in Brazil. It considers radical changes, social movements, educational reforms, and social innovations in two key periods of change in the country and also discusses current events. The model proposed in this article is based in two historical periods with relevant changes in Brazil. It includes national events, but it focuses on three states of Brazil. These states are relevant because most of the political pressure groups and economic elites of the analyzed periods were concentrated there and boosted change at the national level.

The central questions that are addressed in this article are as follows:

- Has Brazilian society played a major role in the development of innovations in education in the last century?
- To what extent are social innovations and social movements in Brazil linked to educational and social change?

These questions emerge from three reflections on Brazilian society: the high investment in public education in Brazil, which has had poor outcomes; the recognition of Brazil as a driver of social innovation in Latin America; and the leading position of Brazil in social movements in Latin America.

Since 2008, Brazil has spent significantly more on primary to tertiary education than the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average (5% averaged from 2005 to 2015, compared to 4.7% of the gross domestic product (GDP); OECD, 2016, 2018b). Despite this higher investment, enrolment of 15–19-year-old students at any level of education is among the lowest in comparison with the OECD average (69% compared to 85%; OECD, 2018a).

Brazil’s number of social innovations is higher than other countries in Latin America (Domanski et al., 2017; Rey de Marulanda & Tancredi, 2010; Rodríguez Herrera & Alvarado Ugarte, 2008). Some fields in which
innovation in Brazil was implemented, are for example, participation of civil society in public decisions and in the improvement of education. In the field of education, Brazil stands out as the country with the most innovations between 1998 and 1999 (44 cases from 95) among 18 Latin American countries\(^2\) (Blanco & Messina, 2000).

In the 1930s, there was high social participation in public issues in Brazil. It is important to remark that such participation was initiated by the privileged social classes in Brazil (Ghanem, 1998). In contrast, in the 1960s and 1970s, mobilization for democratization and demands for better living conditions for the poor boosted social movements and the rise of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) (Ghanem, 2012). Gohn recognizes that in the beginning of the twenty-first century, NGOs in Brazil replaced social movements due to an increase in association with more active participation in public topics (Gohn, 2011). Hence, investigation of the links between radical changes and social movements is important in understanding the origins and consequences of social innovations.

Current scientific debates seek to identify the main differences between technological innovation and social innovation (Howaldt & Kopp, 2012; Rammert et al., 2018). Recent research suggests that social innovations produce new institutions (Huberman, 1973, p. 5; Rammert, 2010; Zapf, 1989, 2003), new organizations (Kesselring & Leitner, 2008; Neumeier, 2011), and new social relations (Fontan et al., 2008; Moulaert et al., 2005). Howaldt and Schwarz (2010) define social innovations as “new social practices that aim to meet social needs in a better way than the existing solutions.”

Some authors suggest that social innovation has an impact on social change (Howaldt & Schwarz, 2010; Kesselring & Leitner, 2008). Nevertheless, the question remains as to what kind of social changes originate from social innovation. Zapf (1969) was one of the first to recognize the potential of social change through innovation when he argued that “social change is the interruption of stable situations whose stability needs to be known in order to recognize the potential for change.”\(^3\) Similarly, Kesselring and Leitner (2008: 28) argue that “Social innovations are elements of social change that create new social facts, namely impacting the behavior of individual people or certain social groups.”

Studying innovation is not an easy task. Edquist (1997) suggests observing innovations as a system and from a historical perspective, meaning that social innovations should be contextualized within a specific time and space. Hence, Edquist’s research provides an analytical framework,
based on a system-wide and historical perspective of innovation, helpful to be applied in Brazil.

**Methodology**

This study's methodology consisted of a historical analysis of the key events that shaped the political, educational, and social context of Brazil during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This study shows the trends of social change led by the most developed states in terms of economy and literacy opportunities, in the period of analysis. In this study, I recognized that historical development in Brazil is linked to different aspects, like cultural and economic differences between ethnic groups (Soares and Aristides dos Santos, 2018), meaning that regions developed with different speed and focus. Considering this, this article focuses on the main social movements and innovations that influenced modernization of educational system in the country in two specific historical periods.

Historical analysis was undertaken in two steps. First, I identified the key events in Brazil's history and separated them into categories that cover the most important changes — related to innovation and educational change — in the country from 1800 to 2019. After this analysis, the states of São Paulo, Mina Gerais, and Rio de Janeiro were analyzed and identified as leading states on social innovation and educational change. Second, the categories used in the analysis are as follows: the main political changes, educational reforms, innovations in education, and social movements. All categories were considered at the national level, with the exception of reforms, where the state level was considered in cases where related reforms were identified.

I collected data from three main sources. First, journal articles and books focused on social movements, innovation and educational change in Brazil in the mentioned periods of analysis. The sources were in English, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Second, as a primary source, I collected an online version of the original Manifests of the Pioneers of Education of Brazil. Third, I collected reforms of law, such as decrees and codes that reformed the Brazilian education system during the period of analysis. In addition, the state reforms of São Paulo state were analyzed. The decision to focus on state reforms of São Paulo was made after the first literature review, where I identified São Paulo state as one of the most reformist and innovating states in the country (Maldonado-Mariscal, 2017).
The data analysis was a historical analysis that included a literature review of social movements, innovation and educational change in Brazil and a content analysis of national and state reforms. The data analysis also included the *Manifest of the Pioneers of Education of Brazil* as a proposal for several educational reforms. To answer the first research question, I performed a historical analysis of key events in Brazil and divided them into three periods: the nineteenth century (1800–1899), twentieth century (1900–1999), and contemporary Brazil (2000–2019). The historical events were classified into five categories that were used to build a model: political changes, national reforms in education, state reforms in education in São Paulo, innovations in education, and social movements. To answer the second research question, I used a historical analysis and content analysis to identify relationships in different periods and events. Building on this, I developed a model of social innovation and educational change. This model facilitates an analysis of the existence of links between radical changes, social movements, reforms, and social innovations in specific periods in Brazil. This model functions as an analytical tool, based on the key historical events identified, and builds six new categories that are named in stages:

1. radical changes,
2. social movements,
3. experimental reforms,
4. social innovations,
5. macro reforms, and
6. social change

In the following section, the model of social innovation and educational change depicted in Figure 1 and each stage of the model are explained.

**Description of the Model**

1. **Radical change** is a change of ideology in a society that recognizes that a current ideology or political system is no longer serviceable. For example, radical changes can be observed as revolutions. The group that opposes the dominant group collectively acts to replace the old ideology in such a way that a change in power and ideology occurs.
2. **Social movements** are the result of the goal of a collective and the identity of a group (Della Porta & Diani, 2006). One of the main
differences between social movements and radical changes lies in the clear goal and organization of the collective action of a movement. In contrast, radical change focuses on changing a political ideology by removing a group from power. According to Della Porta and Diani (2006: 20), a social movement is a “social process where actors are involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents, are linked by dense informal networks and share a distinct collective identity.” Social movements are motivated by group demands that create new priorities in politics and argue for their legitimization. Social movements are tightly linked to reforms (Fadaee, 2012). In this way, social movements take the form of concrete regulations or frameworks. Thus, I consider reforms the first institutionalizing process of social movements.

3. **Experimental reforms** occur when smaller reforms are implemented to test new regulations. Such reforms include previously ignored issues and cover specific demands from society. They have specific goals and cover particular issues that are not included in other reforms. In countries with a tradition of national reforms, a macro reform may occur, first, as an experimental reform.

4. **Social innovations** are changes implemented by a group of people reacting to a problem. Innovations usually offer better solutions to problems (Zapf, 1989). Social innovations change previous beliefs, norms, and institutions. Thus, they act at three levels: a cultural level (Barnett, 1953; Merton, 1938), a normative level, and an institutional level (Hämäläinen & Heiskala, 2007; Loogma et al., 2013). When applied to the education system, this concept can be understood as “interventions from below” on a micro level (Torres, 2000).

5. **Macro reforms** refer to educational “interventions from above” that are implemented on a macro level by the state (Torres, 2000). The main difference between experimental reforms and macro reforms is that macro reforms can occur at a later stage than experimental reforms. Macro reforms aim to ameliorate the mistakes of previous reforms or have greater coverage.

6. **Social change** refers to social evolution, meaning evolution in terms of a society’s progress in favour of its citizens. Social change shows an advanced phase of progress, where innovation is accepted and transformed in established institutions in a way that achieves a certain equilibrium and agreement within society. Zapf (1995: 389)
defines social change as “the processual change of the social structure of a society in its basic institutions, cultural patterns, associated social actions and consciousness.” This definition includes changes in institutions, culture, and awareness.

**Summarizing the Model**

Figure 1 illustrates the model of social innovation and educational change, which shows the six stages mentioned before. The starting point of this model is radical change, since radical changes abruptly modify the direction of a paradigm or ideology. The second stage depicts social movements that emerge from radical changes and depicts the organized actions of social actors to achieve common goals. The third stage illustrates reforms as a stage that collects and implements demands for change. Experimental reforms may deal immediately with the general object of the social movement. The fourth stage shows social innovation as a stage that reflects some reactions of adaptation and needs for change. The fifth stage also shows reform, but it represents macro reforms, meaning reforms that emerge from previous unsuccessful reforms. Macro reforms may act as an adaptation after social innovations are implemented. The sixth stage is a summary of all previous stages. This means that a certain level of change and an institutionalization of new practices have been

![Figure 1. Model of Social Innovation and Educational Change](image)

Source: Author’s illustration.

Note: This figure illustrates the direction of change in the model of social innovation and educational change. The figure shows that change begins with a radical change—usually a political change. This leads to a social movement that involves a collective of people who organize around a common goal. Once a social movement is settled, experimental reforms can take place. After experimental reforms, social innovations that offer new solutions to problems appear. Social innovations can drive a macro reform that can result in a nationally implemented reform. Finally, social change shows an advanced stage of institutional progress. Social change is both an end and beginning stage, meaning that this stage represents the completion of a cycle, though a new cycle of change may begin again with a new radical change.
achieved. Nevertheless, social change is not a static stage. It is possible to observe social changes by framing a specific time and space. However, social changes continue, and this phase moves on, starting a new cycle with a new radical change.

This article argues that a key stage within this model is that of social innovation, as this represents a milestone at which a society’s collective mind starts to experience a shift. One characteristic of social innovation is that it is rarely spontaneous: it is triggered by different groups and emerges simultaneously with different initiatives for change. Social innovations are examples of reactions to reforms that have failed to provide a satisfactory solution. Although social innovations do not have the magnitude and political power of social movements, they do have a tradition of engaging in power struggles (Hämäläinen & Heiskala, 2007).

Implementation of the Model of Social Innovation and Educational Change

The implementation of the model of social innovation and educational change was applied in two historical periods in Brazil: the 1930s and the 1960s. These two decades were selected because they are crucial points in Brazil’s history when radical changes arose with waves of activism relating to social issues and education.

Period 1: Brazil 1930–1964

The first period of social innovation and educational change in Brazil is from 1930 to 1964 and begins with the revolution of 1930. An unstable economy and political environment characterized the 1930s Brazil. The Brazilian revolution occurred during a period of strong economic depression worldwide.

Figure 2 illustrates the first period of social innovation and educational change in Brazil in the 1930s, including the six stages of the model. The seventh stage represents the starting point of a new radical change.

The following lines explain each of the stages depicted in Figure 2.

1. **Radical change**: The Brazilian revolution of the 1930s was an armed movement driven by several disagreements between the oligarchies in São Paulo and Mina Gerais that prevented the elected president from taking power. At the time, the country was well positioned in the international market, particularly as an exporter
of coffee (Silber, 2018). The worldwide economic depression of the 1920s affected Brazil’s international commerce. The states of São Paulo and Mina Gerais possessed the highest trade capacity in the country; São Paulo was a major producer and exporter state of coffee, whereas Mina Gerais was the largest producer of milk. The political influence of these two states was important in the support of presidential candidates and led to a system of alternation of power known as the “coffee with milk politics” (Sánchez et al., 2016: 180). In the 1930 elections, the political differences between both states created tensions between their presidential candidates. The Paulist candidate (Júlio Préstes) won the election but never took office. The opposition of Mina Gerais led a putsch against the Paulist president and established a new government (Getúlio Vargas). The new government implemented several reforms and established the basis for a New State (known as *Estado Novo*).
Estado Novo adjusted the political system to adapt and control the economic system to a greater extent.

2. Social movement: The New School Movement (the Escola Nova) emerged two years after the Brazilian revolution in 1932. After the revolution, the new political system and, consequently, the education system, fell into the hands of the political elites. The New School Movement aimed to avoid excessive political control over the education system by the new government. Some authors suggest this movement as one of the most relevant factors in building a new form of pedagogy in modern Brazil (O’Cadiz et al., 2018). The main purposes of this movement were to modernize education and society and to have a better qualified education system as “the scientific organization of the school” (Vidal, 2013).

This movement had a strong influence on national and municipal reforms in Brazil (Da Cunha, 2005). Its principles were based on the Progressive Education Movement5 that had emerged in the USA. Two leaders of this social movement in Brazil and considered as important thinkers on education were Azevedo and Texeira (Vilela & Dittrich, 2018); together, they wrote the Manifest of Pioneers of New Education, which promoted democratization, modernization, and innovation in education. This movement represented a milestone for later national and regional reforms in education (Vidal, 2013). The New School Movement and the transformation of the system of higher education set a strong basis for deeper reforms.

3. Experimental reform: After promulgation of the Manifest of Pioneers of New Education, the first reforms implemented by Azevedo (Vidal, 2013, p. 580) and led by education pioneers took place in Rio de Janeiro (1932)6 and São Paulo (1933), as the New School Movement was strong and active in these states. These reforms transformed the normal schools into institutes of education for the professionalization of teachers’ education.

4. Social innovations: The reforms that transformed the normal schools into institutes of education had an impact in São Paulo, where, in 1934, the Faculty of Philosophy, Sciences and Letters was introduced at the University of São Paulo as the first of its kind in the country. This faculty turned into a role model for teachers’ education. With the implementation of the first reforms, the
pioneers of this new system of education were convinced that innovation was needed to improve the organization of the national and state system of education. Social innovations during the 1930s focused not only on better organization of higher education and teachers’ education to promote professionalization of education but also on enhancing critical thinking for educators and academics. Another important goal of the social innovations was to change the tradition of higher education that had previously been exclusive to the higher social classes (Maldonado-Mariscal et al., 2018; O’Neil, 1971).

5. **Macro reform**: After numerous reforms like the transformation of normal schools into education institutes and several innovations to provide better teachers’ education, a national reform took place. In 1934, the new Constitution of Brazil introduced the first National Plan of Education, which recognized the need of a national education project. This reform established the first National Plan for Education and recognized the Brazilian State as the Republic of United States of Brazil. In 1937, the Constitution was modified by Vargas to create the New State. The new 1937 Constitution maintained the National Plan for Education, but it returned to a centralization of power that legitimized Vargas’ authoritarian government, giving rise to unrest (Levine & John, 1999).

6. **Social change**: The Brazilian Revolution, New School Movement, the Manifest of Pioneers of New Education, the focus of universities like the University of São Paulo on developing leadership in relation to teachers’ education, and a new Constitution of Brazil that implemented a National Plan for Education were big steps for the country. These steps showed a new understanding of the importance of education for all society and not only for elites and recognized the need for a new system of education. One of the main social goals in Brazil from 1930 to 1964 was the transition of education away from being a political system to a more professional system. The New School Movement, reforms for teachers’ education, and innovations in universities promoted the involvement of educated individuals in educational changes and reforms. The changes observed in this period show an understanding of education and schools as a place for experimentation and socialization, which was new to the country. Another element that contributed
to social change was the leadership of actors within society, such as the pioneers of new education, teachers, and citizens. These actors affected the transformation of teachers’ roles from a marginalized role into a more active role. This change was important, since it represents the potential for social progress to improve an entire system of education and society.

7. **Radical change**: A new radical change began in 1964 with the military coup. Despite several reforms and changes, the government of Vargas (1930–1945; 1951–1954) continued to govern based on an authoritarian model. In addition, a legacy of political unrest due to the centralization of the government’s power within the 1937 Constitution had created social and political tensions. For example, the 1937 Constitution eliminated the rights of the National Congress and restricted the participation of political parties. Vargas’ government consolidated a totalitarian power in the executive, claiming the political construction of a New State (1937–1945). Nine years later and after different governors, the military and some civilian leaders organized a military coup against the seventh President after Vargas—João Goulart—implementing a new dictatorship that reigned from 1964 to 1985. Hence, a new radical change began in 1964 with a military coup, shaping a new cycle in Brazil from 1964 to 2016 and onwards.

**Period 2: Brazil 1964–2016**

International events during the 1960s mobilized different social groups around the world through movements for workers’ rights, women’s rights, and minority rights. In some countries of Latin America, groups were also mobilized against military regimes, as in the case of Brazil.

Figure 3 depicts the second period of social innovation and educational change in Brazil from 1964 to 2016. This model begins with the military coup and gives continuity to the previous model, showing that radical change began to occur in the 1960s, but the effects and institutionalization of such changes took at least five decades. Social movements in Brazil have been a continuous process at least over four decades; however, this study focuses on one cycle related to innovation and educational change, which began in the 1960s.

1. **Radical change**: A new radical change in the country began with the military coup in 1964. After the president in office sought to
guide Brazilian politics to the left, a military intervention toppled the government and took power, shaping a military dictatorship that prevented democratization and transformation for 21 years (1964–1985). There has been some debate as to whether the dictatorship ended with the Amnesty Law (1979) or with the establishment of the New Republic in 1985 (D’Araujo, 2015). The military regime–imposed restrictions on the social and education system, and in the following decades, various actors such as civil society, NGOs, and students were involved in public issues, making space for social movements in the country.
2. **Social movement**: Several social movements emerged after the military coup and had a continuous presence in the country over the following four decades (1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 90s); however, this study focuses on the 1960s specifically.

In 1960, the emergence of the National Union of Workers in Education defended the participation and rights of educators, while, decades later, social movements with community-based, popular organizations and civil society grew in popularity. These movements had two main objectives in common: they sought an end to the dictatorship and promoted democracy and rights for the marginalized. The social movements of the 1960s were based on the Basic Ecclesial Communities (*Comunidades Eclesiais de Base*; CEBs) and student movements.

The Basic Ecclesial Communities' movement emerged in Brazil as an evangelical movement that was not only strongly against the military regime but also argued for access to education for all. This movement based its principles on two ideologies: the *Theology of Liberation* based on ideas of Latin American theologians and Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 2000). The Theology of Liberation was supported by the Catholic Church as a set of ideas to protect and benefit the poor. Pedagogy of the Oppressed, on the other hand, argued that education and culture create mechanisms of oppression that subjugate the lower classes and the poor. For this reason, Freire argued that there was a need for freedom and autonomy in society, achieved through education and values (Freire, 2000). The movement built around Pedagogy of the Oppressed and other social movements based on the Christian Base Communities, which were not only popular in Brazil but also spread throughout Latin America (O’Cadiz et al., 2018). In Brazil, despite the closeness of the Basic Ecclesial Communities movement to the Catholic Church, the movement contributed to the construction of communitarian leaderships and to the opposition of dictatorships. Mainwaring (1987) asserts in his work *Grassroots Catholic Groups and Politics in Brazil in 1964–1985* that the CEBs and other similar groups were crucial in opposing military rule. Another relevant social movement was the student movement that arose in 1966. This movement was not only against the dictatorship but also demanded democracy in the education system (Gohn, 2013).
3. **Experimental reform**: After at least two important social movements, educational reforms began to appear. The experimental reforms of the 1960s reformed higher education. This led to the participation of private actors in education, in order to increase university education coverage, and to promote the strengthening of collaboration with secondary education. The Law 5,540 of 1968 established a clear organization within the universities and proposed forms of articulation between the universities and the institutions of secondary education. It also introduced higher education through public and private institutions and granted them more autonomy. For example, the reforms granted more financial and administrative autonomy to institutions, as well as more autonomy to teach, which had been taken away in prior reforms. Although this reform allowed the participation of new private actors and organizations in education, it did not increase the opportunity to participate in higher education for most people in society (Martins, 2009). The reform of 1968 fostered the spread of higher education as private education. After this reform, the 1969 Decree of Law 464 established complementary norms that restricted universities’ operation and reduced their autonomy that had been granted only one year before.

The education reforms of the 1970s were introduced in basic education with the 1971 Law 5,692. This reform structured basic education and established a general curriculum that created new disciplines such as social organization, Brazilian policy, and moral and civic education.

4. **Social innovations**: After the first reforms on basic and higher education, further social innovations aimed to strengthen and establish education where it had previously been lacking. The first wave of innovation was visible in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1970s, the CEBs were active in the introduction of nonformal education and in the empowerment of civil organizations. Civil organizations were critical of the insufficient state coverage of basic education and argued for the need to spread education throughout the country, while different CEBs promoted the creation of Integrated Centers of Public Education (*Centros Integrados de Educação Pública* [CIEPs]) from 1983 to 1987. These multidisciplinary centers of education followed the initiative of the Park Schools in Bahia of
the 1950s. Their main aim was to provide basic education, sport, and culture to citizens who lacked access to integral education and participation in cultural activities. They also sought to provide a space where communities could experience democratic participation. This was considered an “educational revolution,” since such infrastructure had never before been brought to the slums of Brazil (Silveira, 2017).

The first CIEP was introduced in Rio de Janeiro in 1985 (the CIEP Presidente Tancredo Neves) and later spread to São Paulo. São Paulo experienced an increase in interventions in education, and similar CIEPs were implemented in São Paulo under a different name—the Unified Educational Centers (Centro Educativo Unificado [CEU]). These centers were built in marginalized neighbourhoods that were difficult to access and which often had high criminality. More CEUs have been introduced in São Paulo since 2001, and there are already 46 centers\(^\text{11}\) spread throughout the state.

5. Macro reform: After the social innovations of the 1970s and 1980s, macro reforms, like a new constitution and new law regulating social organizations in public issues, were implemented at the end of the 1980s. The 1988 Constitution promoted the involvement of community actors in public and educational issues, including democratic principles. This is visible in the first Law of Social Organizations (1988 Law 9.367), which recognized new social organizations working in public areas such as education, scientific research, technology, environmental issues, culture, and health\(^\text{12}\) and allowed these organizations to take on some of the state’s responsibilities.

6. Social change: Visible social changes took decades to be consolidated in Brazil (1960–1999), since political and societal changes were constantly occurring. Three key factors during this period are relevant to social change: the promotion of democratic principles, the participation of society in public issues, and the engagement of communities in the construction of regional education policies. During this period, Brazil strengthened citizenship through the participation of popular organizations and NGOs, which illustrates important progress for democracy, education, and civil rights in the country.
7. **Radical change:** A new radical change began with the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff in 2016. The impeachment took place in the context of high political and social tension. For example, previous protests showed society’s discontent with rising public transportation fares, corruption in public spending, and a precarious welfare system. Later, constant changes in the government occurred. For example, the minister of education was altered three times in 2015, and four different ministers held the position during that year. The protests continued, and with them came changes in the government. However, the major shift came in 2016 when the Brazilian president was impeached (*O Globo*, 2016) and replaced by an interim president. The interim president established an entirely new cabinet and designated a new minister of education. The new government reformed the Ministry of Education to a Ministry of Education and Culture, making the education system less relevant. These political changes led to more social discontent. Protests continued following cuts to the education and science budget. Hence, the impeachment of the president in 2016 represents society’s expression of need for radical change.

**Contemporary Brazil**

With the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, a new presidency and unstable government was installed (from Dilma, to Temer, to Bolsonaro). The 2016 impeachment was not an isolated event and was followed by protests in different states, demanding an end to corruption in the government.

Recently, in 2019, further protests among students and scientists have taken place against cuts to the research budget and unjustified increases in the cost of education. In 2020, a national strike on education was planned, but due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, such a strike was cancelled. The findings from this study suggest that current protests can reach the magnitude of a social movement to demand an end to corruption and an increase in the education and research budget.

Thus, the radical change brought about by the impeachment of the president and the social movements of organized groups, like students and scientists, suggests that such events can bring about social innovation and educational change in Brazil. This opens the door to further investigations into whether a new cycle of social innovation and educational change is currently underway.
Conclusion

This article demonstrates that educational changes in Brazil are led by cyclical changes in society (radical changes), changes in educational law (reforms) and changes in ability of social actors to solve problems (social innovation). This article shows a model based on a complex and diverse society like Brazil. The advantages of such a model are the analysis of relationships and consequences of social movements and social innovation. A possible limitation of this study is that it focuses on two periods and, as such, cannot be applied to make generalized statements about Brazil.

Findings more generally valid suggest that social innovations and educational change are part of a cyclical process of social change. More specific findings for Brazil in the 1930s show the involvement of a pioneer educational movement for modernization of the national education system. Similarly, specific findings for Brazil in the 1960s show the participation of society in public issues like education as well as engagement of marginalized communities in the construction of regional education policies, where states like São Paulo, Mina Gerais, and Rio de Janeiro, appeared to be leaders on innovation in education.

The methodology of the historical analysis and content analysis provides limited scrutiny of all historical events in the country. However, this article presents two relevant examples in Brazil that can help us understand the influence of society in educational change. Moreover, it provides an original tool that can be used to analyze different time periods and countries.

Evidence from this study suggests that Brazilian society has played a key role in driving innovations in education and educational transformation in the last century. Although this study does not cover all possible radical changes in Brazil, it recognizes that society’s involvement plays a key role in changing the direction of education, reforms, and innovation in education. The results of this research also support the idea that innovations in education in Brazil are tightly linked to social movements and education reforms. Innovation is closely linked to social movements in the sense that social movements create opportunities to innovate. Social movements represent a strong driver for innovation because they lead to reforms and, consequently, to innovation.

The analysis performed in this article is relevant because social innovations are not isolated events that occurred suddenly, but they had a
strong background in social movements and in society’s engagement in public issues.

These findings have significant implications for our understanding of how current changes in Brazilian society can be understood according to previous cycles of change. The major radical changes in the last century in Brazil took place in the 1930s and the 1960s. Therefore, an analysis of the political and social changes from 2016 onwards may provide tools to explain the new cycle of change in recent years and contribute to research on social innovation and social change.

More research is needed to understand how specific parts of society build new social movements and implement innovations. For example, how a feminist movement is linked to innovation, how a black movement, or how an indigenous movements build innovation, not only to improve education but also to recognize their own rights as citizens and to promote social change.

Authors such as Kesselring and Leitner (2008); Gillwald (s/n) Hochgerner (2009); Howaldt and Schwarz (2010); and Ogburn (1937) agree that social innovations create the conditions needed for social change. However, two other remaining questions that require further investigation are as follows: to what extent do social innovations lead to social change? And how can we recognize these changes?

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank all the individuals from different disciplines who have encouraged, reviewed, supported, and read this publication. I thank both Professors Boike Rehbein and Jürgen Howaldt for their valuable feedback and support for this research. I also thank to Dr. Luzia Costa-Becker, who helped me to improve this manuscript with her knowledge of the Brazilian society. I am especially grateful to Professor Andreas W. Schell for his critical questions from a different scientific discipline and his support in finalizing this article.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

FUNDING

The author disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This publication was possible thanks
to the financial support of the National Council of Science and Technology of Mexico (CONACYT), Grant 312499, and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Grant 5330 6407.

ORCID iD

Karina Maldonado-Mariscal https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4670-1182

NOTES

1. The years included were 2005, 2008, 2010, 2013, and 2015.
2. The countries included were Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, and Venezuela.
3. Self-translated from original text in German.
4. Self-translated from original text in German.
5. Progressive education was a movement led by the educator and philosopher J. Dewey that aimed at structuring a new system of education through experimentation with the school as a laboratory and with experimentation of its methods. The movement also aimed at recognizing the links between education and society, and provide a more pragmatic view of education.
6. Rio de Janeiro was the capital of Brazil of that time and currently is Brasília.
7. Constitution of 1934, Article 5, Section XIV.
8. Constitution of 1937, Article 15.
9. Law 5.540 of 1968, Article 2.
10. Law 5.540 of 1968, Article 3.
11. CEUs in São Paulo. https://educacao.sme.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/centros-educacionais-unificados-ceus/
12. Law 9.367 of 1988, Article 1.
13. The interim President, Michael Temer, took power after the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff. Following the appointed vote of the Congress at the end of August 2016, Temer was the President of Brazil.

REFERENCES

Azevedo, F., Teixeira, A., & Lemme, P. (1932). Manifesto dos Pioneiros da Educação Nova: A reconstrução educacional no Brasil–ao povo e ao governo. [Manifesto of the Pioneers of New Education: the Educational Reconstruction in Brazil to the People and the Government]. MEC, Fundação Joaquim Nabuco.
Barnett, H. G. (1953). *Innovation: The basis of cultural change*. McGraw-Hill.

Blanco, R., & Messina, G. (2000). *Estado del arte sobre las innovaciones educativas en América Latina* [State of the art on educational innovations in Latin America]. Convenio Andrés Bello, UNESCO.

Da Cunha, M. V. (2005). John Dewey, the other face of the Brazilian New School. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 24(6), 455–470.

D’Araujo, M. C. (2015). Taking stock (with discomfort) of the military dictatorship fifty years after the 1964 coup: A bibliographical essay. *Brazilian Political Science Review*, 9(3), 143–163.

De Freitas, M. E. (2017). Managing diversity in Brazil. In Özbligin, M. F., & Chanlat, J. F. (Eds.), *Management and diversity international perspectives on equality, diversity and inclusion* (Vol. 3, pp. 113–157). Emerald.

Della Porta, D., & Diani, M. (2006). *Social movements: An introduction* (2nd ed.). Blackwell.

Domanski, D., Howaldt, J., & Schröder, A. (2017). Social innovation in Latin America. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 18(2), 307–312.

Edquist, C. (1997). *Systems of innovation: Technologies, institutions and organizations*. Pinter.

Fadaee, S. (2012). *Social movements in Iran: Environmentalism and civil society*. Routledge.

Fontan, J. M., Klein, J. L., & Tremblay, D. G. (2008). Social innovation at the territorial level: From path dependency to path building. In P. Drewe, J. L. Klein, & E. Hulsbergen (Eds.), *The challenge of social innovation in urban revitalization* (pp. 17–28). Techne Press.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Bloomsbury.

Ghanem, E. (1998). Social movements in Brazil and their educational work. *International Review of Education*, 44(2–3), 177–189.

Ghanem, E. (2012). As ONGs e a Responsabilidade Governamental com Escola Basica no Brasil [NGOs and the Government’s Responsibility for the Basic School in Brazil]. *Pro-Posições*, 23, 2(68), 51–65.

Gillwald, K. (s/n). *Konzepte sozialer Innovation [Concepts of Social Innovation]*. (WZB paper, Ed. P00-519). WZB.

Gohn, M. G. (2011). Movimentos sociais na contemporaneidade [Social Movements in Contemporary Times]. *Revista brasileira de Educação*, 16(47), 333–361.

Gohn, M. G. (2013). *Movimentos sociais e redes de mobilizações civis no Brasil contemporâneo [Social Movements and Civil Mobilization Networks in Contemporary Brazil]* (5th ed.). Vozes.
Hämäläinen, T. J., & Heiskala, R. (2007). *Social innovations, institutional change, and economic performance: Making sense of structural adjustment processes in industrial sectors, regions, and societies.* Edward Elgar.

Hochgerner, J. (Ed.). (2009, Juni 5–6). *Soziale Innovationen finden, erfinden und realisieren* [Finding, inventing and implementing social innovations]. XV. Tagung für angewandte Soziologie: *Sozialwissenschaftliche Theorien und Methoden im Beruf.* Universität Hamburg.

Howaldt, J., & Kopp, R. (2012). Shaping social innovation by social research. In H. W. Franz, J. Hochgerner, & J. Howaldt (Eds.), *Challenge social innovation.* Springer.

Howaldt, J., & Schwarz, M. (2010). ‘Soziale Innovation’ Im Fokus: Skizze Eines Gesellschaftstheoretisch Inspirierten Forschungskonzepts [Social Innovation In Focus: Outline of a Research Concept Inspired by Social Theory]. Transcript Verlag.

Huberman, A. M. (1973). *Understanding change in education.* UNESCO: IBE.

Kesselring, A., & Leitner, M. (2008). *Soziale innovation in Unternehmen* [Social innovation in Enterprises]: Studie, erstellt im Auftrag der Unruhe Privatstiftung. Wien: Zentrum für Soziale Innovation.

Levine, R. M., & John, J. C. (Eds.). (1999). *The Brazil reader: History, culture, politics.* Duke University Press.

Loogma, K., Tafel-Viia, K., & Ümarik, M. (2013). Conceptualising educational changes: A social innovation approach. *Journal of Educational Change, 14*(3), 283–301.

Mainwaring, S. (1987). *Grassroots Catholic groups and politics in Brazil, 1964–1985* (Working Paper 98). University of Notre Dame: Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies.

Maldonado-Mariscal, M. K. (2017). *Subsystems of Social Innovation in Brazil: The Society of São Paulo as a New Actor in the Education System and Innovation.* Dissertation for doctoral degree of Philosophy. Faculty of Culture, Social Sciences and Education, Humboldt University of Berlin. https://doi.org/10.18452/18568

Maldonado-Mariscal, K., & Rehbein, B. (2018). Soziokulturen, Klassen und soziale Innovation in Brasilien (Sociocultures, Classes and Social Innovation in Brazil). *Zeitschrift für Kultur- und Kollektivwissenschaft, 4*(2), 235–254. https://doi.org/10.14361/zkkw-2018-040212

Martins, A. S. (2009). *A Direita Para o Social: a Educação da Sociabilidade no Brasil Contemporâneo* [The Right to the Social: Education for Sociability in Contemporary Brazil]. Editora UFJF.

Merton, R. K. (1938). Social structure and anomie. *American Sociological Review, 3*(5), 672–682.
Moulaert, F., Martinelli, F., Swyngedouw, E., & Gonzalez, S. (2005). Towards Alternative Model(s) of Local Innovation. *Urban Studies, 42*(11), 1969–1990.

Neumeier, S. (2011). Why do social innovations in rural development matter and should they be considered more seriously in rural development research? Proposal for a stronger focus on social innovations in rural development research. *Sociologia Ruralis, 52*(1), 48–69.

O’Cadiz, P., Torres, C. A., & Linquist, P. (2018). *Education and democracy*. Routledge.

OECD. (2016). *Education at a Glance 2016: OECD indicators*. OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2016-en

OECD. (2018a). *Brazil Country Note, in Education at a Glance 2018: OECD indicators*. OECD. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/eag-2018-73-en.pdf?expires=1602505384&id=id&accname=ocid72025227&checksum=C53122FEF2DF1D38C52A093D363B304B

OECD. (2018b). *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD indicators*. OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en

Ogburn, W. F. (1937). *Technological trends and national policy: Including the social implications of new inventions. June 1937*. US Government Printing Office.

*O Globo*. (2016, May 12). Senador entrega intimação a Dilma na manhã desta quinta [Senator delivers summons to Dilma on Thursday morning]. *O Globo*. http://g1.globo.com/politica/processo-de-impeachment-de-dilma/noticia/2016/05/senador-entrega-intimacao-dilma-na-mancha-desta-quinta.html

O’Neil, C. (1971). Educational innovation and politics in São Paulo: 1933–34. *Luso-Brazilian Review, 8*(1), 56–68.

Rammert, W. (2010). Die Innovationen der Gesellschaft [The Innovations of Society]. In J. Howaldt & H. Jacobsen (Eds.), *Soziale Innovation: Auf dem Weg zu einem postindustriellen Innovationsparadigma* (1st ed.). VS, Verl. für Sozialwissenschaften.

Rammert, W., Windeler, A., Knochblau, H., & Hutter, M. (Eds.). (2018). *Innovation society today. Perspectives, fields, and cases*. Springer VS (eBook).

Rey de Marulanda, N., & Tancredi, F. B. (2010). *From social innovation to public policy: Success stories in Latin America and the Caribbean*. United Nations, Economic Commission for Latin América and the Caribbean, ECLAC.

Rodríguez Herrera, A., & Alvarado Ugarte, H. (2008). *Claves de la Innovación Social en América Latina y el Caribe* [Keys of Social Innovation in Latin America and the Caribbean] (Vol. 101). CEPAL.

Sánchez, Y., Sester, P., & Castro, M. (2016). Brazil. In Y. Sánchez & C. F. Brühwiler (Eds.), *Transculturalism and business in the BRIC states: A handbook* (pp. 171–206). Routledge.

*Journal of Developing Societies 36, 4* (2020): 415–438
Silber, S. D. (2018). Trade policy from the 1930s to the present. In E. Amann, C. R. Azzoni & W. Baer (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of the Brazilian economy* (pp. 394–422). Online Publication.

Silveira, P. H. (2017). Representações artísticas brasileiras: Do Segundo Reinado à Era Vargas [Brazilian artistic representations: From the second reign to the Era of Vargas], *Anais da XXXIII Semana de História da Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora*. Juiz de Fora.

Soares, P. H., & Aristides dos Santos, A. M. (2018). Horizontal inequality and ethnic diversity in Brazil: Patterns, trends, and their impacts on institutions. *Oxford Development Studies, 46*(3), 348–362.

Torres, R. (2000). Reformadores y docentes: El cambio educativo atrapado entre dos lógicas, el maestro, protagonista del cambio educativo. Convenio Andrés Bello, Magisterio Nacional.

Vidal, D. G. (2013). 80 years of the Manifesto of the Pioneers of Educação Nova: Questions for the debate. *Educação e Pesquisa, 39*(3), 577–588.

Vilela, I., & Dittrich, I. (2018). Brazilian key-thinkers on education. *Society Register, 2*(2), 107–130.

Zapf, W. (Eds.). (1969). *Theorien des sozialen Wandels* [Theories of social change]. Kiepenheuer & Witsch.

Zapf, W. (1989). Über soziale innovationen [About social innovation]. *Soziale Welt, 40*(H. 1/2), 170–183.

Zapf, W. (1995). Sozialer Wandel [Social change]. In B. Schäfers (Eds.), *Grundbegriffe der Soziologie*. Leske + Budrich, Opladen.

Zapf, W. (2003). *Handwörterbuch zur Gesellschaft Deutschlands* [Dictionary on German society]. Springer-Verlag.

**Karina Maldonado-Mariscal** is a researcher at the TU Dortmund University, Social Research Center (SFS), where she researches and teaches on social innovation. She was postdoctoral researcher at the ETH Zurich and she has been lecturer and doctoral researcher in Sociology at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Her past research projects were about social innovation in education in Brazil and Mexico, social inequality in Germany, vocational education and training, and research transfer between university, government and civil society. [E-mail: karina.maldonado@tu-dortmund.de]