

## **Education, Scientific Prospecting and Social Development**

We can say that education is the fundamental basis for the progress of any society. It not only equips individuals with knowledge and skills, but also promotes essential values such as citizenship, ethics and social responsibility (Silva, 2020). According to Oliveira (2019), “scientific education stands out as a crucial pillar for sustainable development and technological innovation”.

In this sense, scientific prospecting, which involves the investigation and exploration of new frontiers of knowledge, is a vital component of modern education. It encourages curiosity, critical thinking and the ability to solve complex problems (Santos, 2021). These elements are essential to form citizens capable of facing the challenges of the 21st century, such as climate change, resource scarcity and social inequalities (Ferreira, 2018).

Social development is intrinsically linked to the quality of education offered. A robust scientific education can transform societies, promoting social and economic inclusion (Costa, 2022). Mendes (2020) states that by providing equal access to scientific knowledge, we can reduce disparities and create opportunities for everyone, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

In addition, science education plays a crucial role in shaping a culture of innovation. Countries that invest in science and technology tend to have more dynamic and resilient economies (Almeida, 2019). Pereira (2021) highlights that “science-driven innovation can lead to significant advances in areas such as health, energy and the environment, improving the population’s quality of life”.

However, for science education to fulfill its transformative role, a continued commitment from governments, educational institutions and society as a whole is necessary (Rodrigues, 2023). Investments in infrastructure, teacher training and the development of updated curricula are essential to ensure that students receive a quality education (Lima, 2020).

In short, education, scientific research and social development are interdependent elements that, together, can build a fairer and more prosperous future. Gomes (2022) concludes that, by valuing and investing in these pillars, we are not only preparing future generations for the challenges ahead, but also promoting sustainable and inclusive development for the entire society.

The editor

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