

BASIC EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT INDEX (PROFICIENCY AND FLOW): WHY HAVE WE ADVANCED SO LITTLE?

ÍNDICE DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DA EDUCAÇÃO BÁSICA (PROFICIÊNCIA E FLUXO): POR QUE AVANÇAMOS TÃO POUCO?

ÍNDICE DE DESARROLLO DE LA EDUCACIÓN BÁSICA (CAPACIDAD Y FLUJO): ¿POR QUÉ HEMOS AVANZADO POCO?

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to analyze the IDEB as a marker of the quality of national Basic Education, highlighting its creation process. The discussion focuses on the Articulated Actions Plan (PAR), a public policy that allocates resources and technical and financial support to states and municipalities, so that public schools achieve the goals of the external evaluation; and on the school flow variable, shown here through the indices of Age-Grade Distortion (DIS). To discuss the information, we used a documental analysis and the Historical-Dialectical Materialism method. The study indicated that the improvement of the quality of education goes through a fight in defense of public schools and the fight for a more just and egalitarian economic system. For this, we suggest the analysis and in-depth reflection on the results of external evaluations at the national and local level, along with institutional evaluations and debates with the school community and, above all, in the defense of decent transfers for education.

KEYWORDS: External evaluations. Age-grade distortion. Articulated Actions Plan.

RESUMO: *Este artigo objetiva analisar o IDEB enquanto balizador da qualidade da Educação Básica nacional, destacando o seu processo de criação. A discussão se centraliza no Plano de Ações Articuladas (PAR), política pública que destina recursos e apoio técnico e financeiro para estados e municípios, a fim de que as escolas da rede pública alcancem os objetivos da avaliação externa; e na variável de fluxo escolar, apontada aqui através dos índices de Distorção Idade-Série (DIS). Para discutir as informações utilizamos a análise documental e o método Materialismo Histórico-Dialético. O estudo indicou que a melhoria da qualidade da educação perpassa por combate em defesa da escola pública e da luta por um sistema econômico mais justo e igualitário. Para isso, sugerimos a análise e reflexão aprofundada dos resultados das avaliações externas a nível nacional e local, juntamente com*

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avaliações institucionais e debates com a comunidade escolar, mas, sobretudo, na defesa de repasses dignos para a educação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Avaliações externas. Distorção idade-série. Plano de Ações Articuladas.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo tiene por objeto analizar el IDEB en cuanto balizador de la Educación Básica nacional, destacando su proceso de creación. La discusión se centraliza en el Plan de Acciones Articuladas (PAS), política pública que destina recursos y apoyo técnico y financiero para estados y municipios, con el fin de que las escuelas de la red pública logren los objetivos de la evaluación externa; y en la variable de flujo escolar, señalada aquí a través de los índices de Distorsión Edad-Serie (DIS). Para discutir las informaciones utilizamos el análisis documental y el método Materialismo Histórico-Dialéctico. El estudio indicó que la mejora de la calidad de la educación pasa por combate en defensa de la escuela pública y de la lucha por un sistema económico más justo e igualitario. Para ello, sugerimos el análisis y reflexión profundizado de los resultados de las evaluaciones externas a nivel educacional nacional y local, juntamente con evaluaciones institucionales y debates con la comunidad escolar, pero, sobre todo, en la defensa de repases dignos para la educación.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Evaluaciones externas. Distorsión edad-serie. Plan de Acciones Articuladas.*

Introduction

This text aims to discuss aspects of PAR, especially those related to dimension 3 (three): Pedagogical Practices and Assessment. To this end, we present data and discussions from two master's dissertations that had work plans in the *Research Project Educational Policies of the Plan of Articulated Actions in Municipalities of Bahia*, coordinated by the Study and Research Group Social Movements, Diversity and Education in the Countryside and the City (Gepemdecc/CNPq/UESB). The first, by Ivanei Carvalho dos Santos, “*Os Impactos das Políticas do Plano de Ações Articuladas no Índice de Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica em municípios da Bahia*”⁴ (The Impacts of the Policies of the Plan of Articulated Actions on the Basic Education Development Index in municipalities of Bahia), presented in 2018, by the Postgraduate Program in Education of the State University of Southwest Bahia - UESB; the second, by Valéria Prazeres dos Santos, “*A Distorção Idade-Série nas escolas do campo: um estudo sobre os Anos Iniciais do Ensino Fundamental no Município de Nazaré-BA*”⁵ (The Age-Grade Distortion in countryside schools: a study on the Early Years of Elementary Education in the Municipality of Nazaré-BA), defended in 2019,

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⁵ Research Financed by the State of Bahia Research Support Fund (FAPESB).

by the Postgraduate Program in Education, Professional Master's in Basic Education, State University of Santa Cruz (UESC).

These dissertations are connected based on the centrality of PAR as a public educational policy of greater reach in Basic Education in the country. They also make critical remarks about neoliberal educational policies, entrepreneurship in public education and the actions of international organizations whose actions are monitored, above all, by the national IDEB.

Through the description on the page of the National Fund for the Development of Education - FNDE (2020) and through the reading of Decree No. 6,094/2007, subnational entities, in order to receive financial resources from the Union, must prepare a “work plan, the in order to develop actions that contribute to the expansion of the offer, permanence and improvement of school conditions and, consequently, to the improvement of IDEB of its public education networks” (IBIDEM). The intrinsic relationship between the PAR and the Plan of Goals Commitment to All for Education - PMCTP is plausible for criticism and observations, because, as Peroni and Caetano (2015) discuss, this PMCTP is composed of the sector of high business leadership that has an interest and acts for the privatization of public schools, also influencing the conception, monitoring and execution of public policies.

Both master's research, which resulted in this article, had the historical-dialectical materialism as their method of analysis, as they understand that the phenomena start from a complex social reality, which does not present itself immediately, being necessary to unveil it to carry out an investigation that addresses the multi-determinations that compose it. The research technique used was the documentary analysis, since two dissertations were analyzed whose focuses cover the theme addressed here.

Introducing the PAR

The implementation of PAR, instituted by Decree 6,094/2007, took place during the second term of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (2007-2010), within the scope of the Education Development Plan (PDE).

According to Saviani (2009), in 2007, in the period when the first execution of technical and financial assistance to the municipalities took place, 1,242 municipalities joined, 23% of the national total. The number was gradually increasing, as non-adherence brought losses, mainly financial. Yari and Oliveira (2016, p. 200, our translation) emphasize that:

The adhesion of the Municipality, States or Federal District to the Plan of Goals Commitment to All for Education is carried out voluntarily, and this adhesion implies the responsibility of the federated entity to promote the quality of basic education in its sphere of competence, which will be expressed by the achievement of the evolution goal of the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB). In the text of Law 12,695, of July 2012, as explained above, technical and financial assistance is subject to adherence to PAR.

Since its implementation, PAR has had three cycles and is starting the fourth, running through the Lula, Dilma, Temer and now Bolsonaro governments. In this last stage, states and municipalities were instructed to carry out a diagnosis of their networks in order, based on updated data, to prepare their respective Plans. In table 01 we present the main legal frameworks of the PAR up to 2020.

Table 1 – PAR Legal and Logical Frameworks

PAR- 2007- 2010	
Decree No. 6,094, of 2 April 2007	
2007	Beginning of the 1st cycle - criteria for serving the municipalities: social vulnerability, economic and financial situation, deficit of places in early childhood education; Assistance to states: Renovations, extensions and constructions.
2008	Paths to the school, monitoring of works at SIMEC. Professional service to states - PAR and Brazil; Commitments and partial payments of agreements.
2009	Expansion of daycare services
2010	Price Record for Furniture
PAR- 2011- 2015	
Ordinary Law No. 12,695/2012	
2011	New PAR cycle - start of PAC execution (daycare centers and courts)
2012	Beginning of the execution of the PAC (vehicles, furniture and equipment). Law 12,695 Amendments through the PAR. Assistance in the construction of rural, quilombola and indigenous schools (PRONACAMPO)
2013	Innovative methodologies for building daycare centers. Price record minutes.
2014	Rules for payment of vehicles and furniture: transfer according to the insertion of contracts and tax invoices. CGU ⁶ Award for PAR and Proinfância ⁷ .
2015	Resolution for payment of works release of resources in installments, upon execution. CGU Works / Monitoring Award
PAR- 2016-2020	
2016	Beginning of the 3rd cycle, Beginning of the preparatory and diagnostic stage, in this stage several improvements were implemented both in the interface, aiming at the ease of use of SIMEC, PAR Module by the user, and in content with the availability of data from the integration of the PAR with other systems of the Ministry of Education, offering a variety of useful information for diagnosing networks and managing education in the city or state.
2017	1 of September - Beginning of the Work Plan Elaboration Stage. The planning phase of PAR 2016-2019 has started. States and municipalities will be able to present their educational demands, based on the diagnosis made, and build their Work Plans for the period

⁶ related to the defense of public assets and the increase of management transparency, through internal control actions, public auditing, correction, prevention and fight against corruption and ombudsman.

⁷ Proinfância - Program for Restructuring and Acquisition of Equipment for the Public School Network for Early Childhood Education, established by Resolution No. 06 of 24 April 2007.

2020	RESOLUTION No. 3, OF 29 APRIL 2020: Establishes the criteria for technical and financial support to public basic education networks in states, municipalities and the Federal District, under the third cycle of the Articulated Action Plan - PAR.
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Source: Devised by the authors based on information provided by UNDIME (2017) and FNDE (2019-2020)

According to Santos, Oliveira and Cardoso (2017), PAR, even after more than a decade of implementation as a public educational policy, has not yet reached its objective of raising the Basic Education indexes to the level of developed countries with an average of 6.0. However, it is possible to see significant advances in the country's educational aspects, in each of the dimensions that it comprises: 1. Educational Management; 2. Formation of Teachers and Service Professionals and School Support; 3. Pedagogical Practices and Assessment; and 4. Physical Infrastructure and Pedagogical Resources.

Several educational programs were implemented in the countryside and in the city, as an example, we highlight: *Escola Ativa* Program (currently, *Escola da Terra*), *Mais Educação* Program, *Educação Inclusiva*, *Educação para a Diversidade*, *Pró-Letramento*, *Pró-Gestão*, *Proinfantil*, *Brasil Alfabetizado*, *Brasil Carinhoso* Program, *Caminho da escola* Program, *Proinfância*, *PDDE Água*, *PPDE Escola Sustentável*, *ProCampo Saberes da Terra*, among others. In addition, at the state level in Bahia, the All for Literacy Program (TOPA), the Pact for Education and the National Program at the Right Age (PNAIC).

It is not possible to predict how long this policy will remain in operation, since the problems pointed out for the development of Basic Education are far from being solved. As previously mentioned, the PAR is in its fourth term. The first cycle (2007-2010) presented the main objective of combining efforts, through a collaboration regime between the federated entities, to improve the quality of Basic Education. Therefore, in the second cycle, the PMCTE was created, through which all federal entities were instructed to carry out a new diagnosis of the educational situation and, thus, made a new PAR for the implementation of public educational policies, which led to greater coverage and expansion of actions, with emphasis on serving quilombolas, indigenous communities and countryside schools. The term of commitment was also established as a form of agreement (FNDE, 2019). According to FNDE (2019, p. 45, our translation),

In the stage referring to the third cycle, the states, the Federal District and the municipalities are instructed to make a new diagnosis of their networks so that, based on updated data, they draw up their new PAR work plans. A fundamental characteristic of this PAR cycle is its structure in line with the National Education Plan (PNE).

The PNE (2014-2024) approved by Law No. 13.005/2014, on 25 July 2014, valid for ten years, from the date of its publication, is composed of twenty (20) goals and two hundred and fifty-four (254) strategies, with the challenge being their execution based on the fulfillment of these goals and strategies in all their dimensions. Among these, goal 7 stands out, which is directly linked to the PAR, as can be seen below:

- Goal 7: Foster the quality of basic education in all stages and modalities, with an improvement in the flow of schooling and learning, in order to reach the national averages established for the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb).
- Strategy 7.5: Formalize and execute the articulated action plans, fulfilling the quality goals established for public basic education and the technical and financial support strategies aimed at improving educational management, formation of teachers, service professionals and school support, the expansion and development of pedagogical resources and the improvement and expansion of the physical infrastructure of the school network (FNDE, 2019, p. 42, our translation).

To achieve the objectives, the PAR presents deliberate indicators based on local diagnosis and planning, materialized annually, for the four dimensions, which are composed of areas of action, and each area presents specific indicators, which according to the Integrated Planning System, Budget and Finance of the Ministry of Education - (SIMEC) (2020), are distributed as follows:

Table 2 – Dimensions and Areas of the PAR

Dimension 1 - Educational Management - there are 7 areas and 45 indicators
Area 1 - Planning, management organization and regional collaboration initiative (9 indicators).
Area 2 – Normative, evaluative and regulatory management of educational provision (3 indicators).
Area 3 – Pedagogical Management (6 indicators).
Area 4 - People Management (8 indicators).
Area 5 - Finance management (5 indicators).
Area 6 – Management of student support programs (7 indicators).
Area 7 - Democratic Management (7 indicators)
Dimension 2 - Formation of Education Professionals - there are 6 areas and 18 indicators:
Area 1 - Initial formation of basic education teachers (4 indicators).
Area 2 - Continuing education of basic education teachers (4 indicators).
Area 3 – Formation of basic education teachers to work in special education/specialized educational assistance (1 indicators).
Area 4 - Formation of basic education teachers in countryside schools, quilombola school education and indigenous school education (3 indicators).
Area 5 - Formation of basic education teachers to comply with specific laws (2 indicators).
Area 6 - Formation of education professionals and other representatives of the school community (4 indicators)
Dimension 3 – Pedagogical Practices and Assessment – there are 4 areas and 20 Indicators
Area 1 - Organization of the education network (5 indicators).
Area 2 – Organization of Pedagogical Practices (6 indicators).
Area 3 - Assessment of student learning and time for individual/collective assistance to students who have learning difficulties (2 indicators).
Area 4 – Pedagogical resources for the development of pedagogical practices that consider the diversity

of educational demands (7 indicators)
Dimension 4 - Physical Infrastructure and Pedagogical Resources - there are 2 areas and 16 indicators:
Area 1 - Conditions of the existing school physical network (13 indicators).
Area 2 - Use of technology (3 indicators).

Source: Devised by the authors based on Simec/PAR – Planning guide (2016/2020)

The indicators pointed out in each area reflect aspects of the reality to be evaluated, measured and analyzed. The progress of these indicators indicated in Basic Education in the country can be verified from the development of the indicators present in the diagnosis, prior to the planning of PAR actions. FNDE is responsible for providing technical and financial support to federated entities in the formulation of their plans, which must assess local educational needs, prioritizing each of the stages and modalities of Basic Education. Since its creation, the PAR has already contemplated several actions, as can be seen below:

Table 3 – Scope of the PAR

LEVEL	STAGE	MODALITY	PEDAGOGICAL ACTIONS	INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIONS
Basic education	Child education Elementary School High school	Special education Technological and professional education Youth and adult education Environmental education Countryside education Ethnic-racial education Indigenous education Quilombola education	Bibliographic collections Continuing education and qualification Literary journey Didactic Materials Pedagogical material School supplies Consumables Distance learning courses Sport materials	Expansion Construction Reform Equipment School buses Accessible bus Bicycle and helmet Kitchen equipment and kit Toys School courts Air conditioning equipment Musical instruments Furniture Computers, projectors and tablets

Source: Devised by the authors

In this section, we seek to demonstrate the reach of the PAR and its main objective: to improve the quality of Basic Education, relating this improvement to the achievement of the goals established by international and business organizations for national education through the financing of educational programs for the Development of Education Basic.

Discussing IDEB: Emphasis on Assessment and School Flow

IDEB was created in 2007, by the Anísio Teixeira Institute of Educational Studies and Research - INEP, during the Lula government, designed to measure the quality of learning throughout the national territory and establish goals for the improvement of Basic Education.

As IDEB associated the performance of teaching (proficiency in Portuguese and Mathematics) with approval/fail rates, it highlighted two acute problems in national education and stressed the need for political actions to solve these, which are problems that hinder growth Brazil's position in the ranking of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Thus, interest in the development of evaluation policies and, consequently, programs/actions to alleviate disparities in school flow grows.

Santos (2019, p. 124, our translation) states that "tying the quality of education to specific goals and making the transfer of resources conditional on improvements in these rates puts municipalities in a competition". This form of management means that actions taken do not reflect the real problem behind the teaching problems and makes subjects responsible for what should be the State's duty.

SAEB is considered one of the most advanced systems of external evaluation, however, it constitutes itself as a policy of the "evaluating state". For Afonso (2000, p. 49, our translation),

This expression means in a broad sense that the State has been adopting a competitive, neo-Darwinian ethos, starting to admit the logic of the market, by importing private management models into the public domain, with an emphasis on the results or products of the educational system.

With this, the State foresees ways of how to apply resources aiming to reach the target predicted for IDEB and to reach the indexes of developed countries, functioning as one more instrument of the decentralization of public policies adopted by the country, mainly, from the decade of 1990 and, consequently, favoring the market and its groups of businessmen.

Based on this assumption, the State starts to adopt new configurations around educational public policies, assuming the role of financier and policy evaluator; among these policies is the IDEB, functioning as a qualitative and quantitative thermometer of Basic Education in the country.

As previously mentioned, the PAR in its third cycle is directly linked to the PNE 2014-2024, whose goal 7 points to indices to be achieved in all stages of Basic Education, optimizing a gradual increase in IDEB. According to the report of the second monitoring cycle of the 2014-2024 PNE targets,

Monitoring Goal 7 is not restricted, however, to monitoring Ideb. Guided by the guidelines of the PNE to improve quality and reduce educational inequalities, Goal 7 presents a set of 36 strategies to be considered, including that all elementary school (EF) and high school (EM) students reach, by the end of the Plan's term, a sufficient level of learning in relation to the rights

and objectives of learning and development of their year of study (Strategy 7.2) (BRASIL, 2018, p. 134, our translation).

In this sense, we observe that there is a concern, at least in the written document, with the reduction of educational inequalities. This concern is contradictory with the actions that have been developed, mainly after the Coup of 2016, which removed the elected president, Dilma Rousseff, from her post and promoted reforms of a neoliberal nature, as is the case with the Constitutional Amendment - CA no. 95, of 15 December 2016, which changes the fiscal regime and has as its main focus a 20-year investment freeze in the area of education and health, an action that directly impacts the transfer of resources to Basic Education (BRASIL, 2016).

In addition to this CA, there is a Ministry of Education involved in controversies and lack of specific actions to strengthen existing policies. It should be noted that in 2020 the MEC was without the Minister of Education (from June 18th to July 16th), until Professor Milton Ribeiro (4th minister of the current Bolsonaro government) took over the portfolio, already having to deal with the cut of 1.6 billion reais⁸ for 2020.

The unbridled race in search of indices, although without transfer of resources for the maintenance of educational programs, goes unnoticed by most managers, generating a contingent of excluded people who do not adjust to the requirements of standardized external assessments and end up stigmatized as bad schools by not achieve the goals.

The curricula of the school units are now adequate according to what is prescribed in these assessments, leaving out important aspects for the development of the student's knowledge, since the focus of the assessments is on the subjects of Portuguese and Mathematics, the others are not covered. The actions turn, sometimes, to the final grades of Elementary School in the initial and final years and the last year of High School, in which the assessments are applied. During this period, the concern is to prepare the student to obtain good performance, with a certain type of training taking place, a worrying factor since teaching is not limited to preparing for tests. In this regard, Garcia, Pereira and Ribeiro (2018, p. 697, our translation) corroborate by saying that:

IDEB makes local managers accountable for educational outcomes. Since they are widely publicized, some managers, in order to avoid social

⁸ R\$1.6 billion cut in the MEC reaches prominent areas in the Ideb, says minister. Available: <https://educacao.uol.com.br/noticias/2020/09/17/corte-de-r-16-bi-no-mec-atinge-areas-de-destaque-no-ideb-diz-ministro.htm>. Access: 10 July 2020.

See also: Budget cut threatens to stop 29 federal institutes, and MEC warns Ministry of Economy. Available: <https://educacao.uol.com.br/noticias/agencia-estado/2020/09/17/corte-de-verba-ameaca-parar-29-institutos-federais-e-mec-alerta-ministerio-da-economia.htm>. Access: 10 July 2020.

demands, create conditions that alter results, without bearing the costs of structural, organizational and pedagogical changes that can actually reverse the quality of the educational process.

IDEB, due to its nature of competitiveness and exhibitor of “successes or failures”, is often occupied with two main issues: preparation to increase proficiency in the disciplines that make up the assessment; and the practice of releasing the flow to decrease the Age-Grade Distortion (DIS) indices, but not exactly meaning a change in the concept of assessment for teachers and students. As Freitas (2007, p. 973, our translation) warns, these consist of new forms of exclusion practiced by public education systems:

The new forms of exclusion are now operating inside the elementary school. They delay student elimination and internalize the exclusion process. From an assessment point of view, these new forms of exclusion lead to a reduction in the emphasis on formal and punctual student assessment in the classroom (they introduce new forms of school organization: continued progression, automatic progression, cycles etc., and new forms evaluation), freeing up the flow of students within the school and leading to the strengthening of monitoring through external evaluation [...].

The presence of an education that prepares students to answer standardized tests excludes those who do not raise the rates and creates preparatory methodologies for the tests, that is, it changes the educational scenario in favor of reaching goals, as if the school were a company.

Another factor that directly influences the IDEB of schools is the school flow rate. Brazil has high failure/evasion and abandonment rates that go against those stipulated by international organizations. Obviously, the problem of failure needs to be faced, mainly because at its core is non-learning: every year thousands of students attend classrooms and do not learn what is considered enough to continue their school career, however, because this is a complex phenomenon, it must be understood and treated in its entirety.

Discussion of DIS also comprises the evaluation processes. We have several scholars, such as Luckesi (2011) and Freitas (2012) who make considerations about school evaluation and analyze it when used as an instrument of power, turning their results to a new way of evaluating. However, evaluation is not the core of this problem, as the unequal conditions of access and permanence and the very structuring of the capitalist system in education make up this totality. Correia, Arelalo and Freitas (2015, p. 1277, author’s highlights, our translation) discuss

[...] the transformation of evaluation into a procedure that is worthwhile in itself accentuates de-ideologization and de-territorialization, reifying it. It

promotes its technicization, exacerbating the technical axis to the detriment of ethical implications. The non-questioning of the values inherent to the judgments that evaluation produces, as being societal options, opens the way for the transformation of evaluation into an authoritarian producer of what is worth in education, thus promoting the definition of educational quality.

The research by Santos (2019) revealed the class character involved in the high rates of DIS in Brazil, since the problem is predominantly present in public schools and its numbers are accentuated in states with lower *per capita* income. The research demonstrated, locally, how the concern with the reduction of DIS rates often presented itself as imposed on teachers without the necessary understanding and debate that would really encourage them to understand and reflect on their practice, clearly another mechanism for increasing the IDEB.

Santos (2019, p. 123, our translation) argues, based on the analysis of the Evaluating State, that:

This emphasis on results that can meet the established goals and the consequent demands that federated entities (states and municipalities) go through makes policies focused on results, without reflecting on the process and on problematizing the roots of the problem.

In this way, the blame for a serious problem, such as failure, falls on the student, teachers, managers, families, diseases, among other factors, except on the system that governs, not only education, but all social relations, and that is a producer of social inequalities that prevent a poor student from having the same conditions as a student with a higher income family.

Analysis and discussion of IDEB and DIS data: from macro to micro

As previously mentioned, the target referring to IDEB in the PNE 2014-2024 is target 7. To monitor it, indicators related to each stage of Basic Education were chosen, pointing out: “Indicator 7A: IDEB of the initial years of the elementary school, Indicator 7B: IDEB for the final years of elementary school, Indicator 7C: IDEB for high school” (BRASIL/INEP, 2018, p. 135). Table 04 presents the projected goals and their respective results.

Table 4 – National IDEB Goals and Results

Years	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
Initial Years								
Goal	3.9	4.2	4.6	4.9	5.2	5.5	5.7	6.0
Results	4.2	4.6	5.0	5.2	5.5	5.8	5.9	
Final years								

Goal	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.4	4.7	5.0	5.2	5.5
Results	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.9	
High School								
Goal	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.4	4.7	5.0	5.2	.5 ⁵
Results	3.8	4.0	4.1	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.9	

Source: Devised by the authors according to data from INEP (2020)

Table 04 shows the results of the national goals established for the country, these results referring to an average between public schools (state, municipal and federal) and the private network. It is important to highlight this fact, as IDEB varies between different educational networks, depending on the sphere in which it is analyzed.

In a general perspective, it is observed that the rates achieved, for the initial years of Elementary School, nationally, are always above the projected goals, which generates a positive factor for the proposed objectives, which is to reach an average of 6.0 by 2021. Indices for Elementary School have, since 2013, been below the expected goal. In high school, the contrast between the projected goals and the results obtained are even greater, and since 2013 Brazil has not achieved the stipulated goal.

It is interesting to highlight that in High School such results are being used to justify a series of curricular reforms and the progressive entrepreneurship of education, as an example, we can highlight the High School Reform, made without due debate with the educational community, by provisional measure no. 746/2016, which became law n. 13,415/2017 (BRASIL, 2017).

Table 04 shows us, albeit generally (since we chose to take national data, not differentiating between public and private networks), that the country only achieves the goals established in the Initial Years of Elementary School; when analyzing the Final Years, only 7 federative units, of the 27 that make up the country, manage to reach the target for 2020; and in high school, only one of them (INEP, 2020).

In order to discuss and compare the impact of the policy at the local level, we will present data referring to the Initial Years of the municipalities of Ilhéus, Itabuna, Vitória da Conquista and Nazaré, all located in the state of Bahia. We emphasize that the analysis of the municipalities in question took place because they are the municipalities in which the two master's research studies were focused.

Figure 1 – IDEB table by municipality surveyed

	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021
<i>Ilhéus</i>									
Meta		3.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.9	5.2
Resultado	2.9	3.3	3.8	3.9	3.6	4.3	4.6	4.6	
<i>Itabuna</i>									
Meta		3.2	3.5	3.9	4.2	4.5	4.8	5.1	5.4
Resultado	3.1	3.9	4.0	4.3	4.2	4.4	4.0	4.3	4.3
<i>Nazaré</i>									
Meta		3.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.9	5.2
Resultado	2.9	3.8	3.5	4.1	3.7	4.1	5.1	5.2	
<i>Vitória da Conquista</i>									
Meta		3.2	3.6	4.0	4.3	4.6	4.9	5.2	5.5
Resultado	3.2	3.8	2.8	3.4	3.9	4.1	4.7	5.6	

Source: INEP (2020)

When we started to analyze the data by municipality, focusing on the municipal education system, the results found show a significant divergence from the national results. While nationally the 2019 IDEB, for the initial years of elementary school, reached 5.9, in the municipalities investigated the highest result was that of the municipality of Vitória da Conquista, with 5.6; followed by Nazareth (5.2); Ilhéus and Itabuna did not reach the projected goals, obtaining 4.6 and 4.3, respectively.

As a determining factor for the IDEB average, we will now analyze the evolution of the school flow. For this, we present table 05, which addresses the DIS indices in three stages of Basic Education.

Table 05 – DIS data - Brazil (Public and Private)

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2018 ⁹
Initials Years	23%	19%	18%	15%	13%	12%	11%
Final Years	34%	29%	29%	28%	26%	26%	25%
High School	43%	34%	33%	30%	27%	28%	28%

Source: Devised by the authors with data from Qedu (2020)

As it is possible to analyze, the highest percentage of students in DIS is in High School, as in 2007, 43% of the students, almost half of those enrolled in this stage, were above the stipulated age for the grade they were attending; in 2018, this rate drops to 28%. In Elementary School, the Initial Years in 2018 presented 11%, decreasing, since 2007, by 12%; and the Final Years of Elementary Education went from 34% to 25%, a decrease of 9%. In general numbers, these data show an advance, but these indices vary a lot from state to state and from region to region, concentrating, above all, in the North and Northeast regions

⁹ In the database where the research was carried out, the DIS data for 2019 was not yet available.

(SANTOS, 2019). Table 05 shows how DIS rates have been decreasing, but are still very high, which shows that the right to learning of many students has been hindered.

Making an alignment with the national results of IDEB, we realize that the best situation is still in the early years of elementary school. Santos (2019) argues that one of the causes of DIS decreasing in the early years, mainly in the state of Bahia, is due to initiatives such as the National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age Program¹⁰, whereby the student cannot be failed until completing the literacy process, taken as a cycle.

In table 06 we present the DIS indices in the early years of Elementary School of the investigated municipalities:

Table 06 – DIS municipal schools, Early Years

	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2018
Ilhéus	29%	27%	28%	27%	28%	28%	27%
Itabuna	20%	13%	6%	5%	7%	12%	18%
Nazaré	47%	39%	38%	28%	20%	18%	14%
Vitória da Conquista	34%	19%	31%	34%	35%	35%	33%

Source: Devised by the authors with data from Qedu (2020)

When analyzing table 06, we see that the four municipalities in Bahia still had, in 2018, rates higher than the national, which in 2018 was 11%. Santos (2019) demonstrates in more detail that this issue is mainly given in the North and Northeast regions, and that Bahia is one of the states with high DIS in all stages of education, although it has been decreasing significantly in recent years. Another observable factor is that the municipalities of Ilhéus, Vitória da Conquista and Itabuna maintained stability in the DIS indexes. However, Itabuna goes through a different process, it goes from 20% in 2007 to 5% in 2013, and maintains a stable margin in 2015 and increases again from 2017; this fact occurred due to the municipality having adopted the Human Formation Cycles (started in 2002 and legitimized in 2003, taking place until 2012)¹¹. Silva (2015) conducts a study on the topic and reveals problems in teacher education, failures in the evaluation of municipal policy, among other aspects, which made:

¹⁰ The National Pact for Literacy at the Right Age Program (PNAIC) was established by Ordinance No. 867, of 4 July 2012, to strengthen and reaffirm the commitment made in the Plan of Commitment Goals All for Education, to teach children to read and write up to a maximum of eight years old, at the end of the 3rd year of elementary school and is also linked to the fifth goal of the National Education Plan (PNE) (2014-2024), which aims to ensure "the literacy of all children, in a full way, until the end of the literacy cycle" - corresponding to the same period.

¹¹ Resolution 020/2003. To better understand the organization by Cycle of the municipality of Itabuna, see Silva (2015).

[...] after ten years of experience, based on the principles of school organization in a system of cycles, the changes in schools in the municipal education network of Itabuna/BA focused on aspects related to the automatic promotion of students from this network and the organization of classes, based on the age of the children (SILVA, 2015, p. 130, our translation).

Silva (2015, p. 128, our translation) also highlights that: “In the course of this study, we found that the cycle proposals originated in a context of discussions, on the national scene, in search of intervention alternatives that minimized the high failure rates and school dropout”.

The municipality of Nazaré did not structure a formal municipal policy per cycle, like Itabuna, however the research by Santos (2019) revealed that teachers perceive an increase in discussions about assessment and a pressure for not failing, however, they do not understand or feel involved in the process.

The issue of DIS needs to be faced head-on and be treated with importance in a country that wants an inclusive and emancipatory education. This cannot, and should not be, in a compulsory way. Beisiegel (2005, p. 108, our translation), states that this perspective should not be based on “[...] massive failure or the progressive elimination of 'backward' students, but on the search for procedures that make it possible to extract the best from the teaching situation the best expected income rates [...]”. This teaching situation that provides better rates is not built with cuts in education or with exacerbated accountability of the subjects that make up the school community, but with investments in resource-rich environments, teachers with initial and continuing education, a curriculum that explores the historically constructed knowledge.

Improving the country's IDEB has been a great challenge, the indicated indices reveal that there is still much to be done, but the improvement of the meter does not necessarily mean the improvement of education, it is an indicator that measures the reach of students in reading and calculation and follows the issue of DIS, but the search for IDEB, in an empty way, does not guarantee significant learning, nor transformative practice, nor will we have quality without guaranteeing the basic conditions for schools, teachers and students.

In this perspective, Freitas (2007, p. 982, our translation) states that “[...] The improvement of teaching, in fact, will not occur through distance charges, but through State policies that take local actions in the municipalities, including the institutional evaluation of schools by the involvement of their actors [...]”.

With the new direction of social policies and the role of the State, which acts as a manager, financier and policy evaluator, the actions prove to be failures to serve the population, driving away from it those who need it most: the working class.

Final considerations

“The history of society to date has been the history of class struggle”
(MARX; ENGELS, 2015, p. 63, our translation).

In this text, we seek to debate the context in which educational policies are inserted, showing their importance, but, on the other hand, their limitations. The PAR as a policy that embraces several current programs for the improvement of Basic Education has its positive aspects, but its birth and objectives need to seek to account for an education beyond the market, the OECD, and the conglomerate of companies involved in the process which, as we have shown, are fully embedded in public policies, seeking to achieve profits. Recently, they have advanced in the curriculum, as we briefly discussed in this text.

External evaluation, of course, tells us something, but it does not say everything about national education. It reflects deficiencies, points out that students have difficulties in reading and calculating, however, the way in which these data are disclosed and have been worked on in the states and municipalities, often with exposure in ranking from best to worst school, from best to worst state, from the best to the worst municipality, overshadow the precarious conditions in which a good part of the public schools are still found, low wages, the overload of the teacher and the conditions of access and permanence of public school students. Likewise, the high rates of DIS in public schools are inserted in this problem, and also need to be taken beyond a concept of approval/failure. In addition, it is important to guide the social sphere, as many students are left on the path after successive failures, which greatly impacts their lives in different ways and contributes to the current state of affairs.

We believe that improving the quality of public education involves fighting in defense of it and fighting for a fairer and more egalitarian economic system. For this, it is necessary to reflect on the results of external evaluations at the local level, together with institutional evaluations and debates with the school community, but, above all, in the defense of decent transfers for education.

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