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INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL IN MARANHÃO: NEW CHALLENGES FOR TEACHERS[1]

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ABSTRACT

This article is part of the research "Innovative High School Program in Maranhão: training needs of teachers and innovative pedagogical practices in public schools in São Luís" which is in the process of development at the doctoral level. It deals with the implementation, assumptions and propositions of this Program in the State of Maranhão and its impacts on the continuing education of teachers who work in this program. It aims to analyze the implementation of the Program in question from data and official documents, having as a guiding axis the multiple determinations of the socioeconomic context of contemporary society, which has demanded complex educational demands from schools that has been impacting the continuing education of teachers through educational policies and programs implemented by the spheres of government. In this way, the educational reality of Brazilian and Maranhão high schools is discussed, taking as a reference for analysis mainly the results of the Basic Education Development Index – IDEB and the official documents that establish educational policies and programs as a mechanism to improve the quality of education, which require reflections and redirections to the policies of continuing education of teachers, specifically high school. It is concluded that even with the implementation of this Program in more than 100 municipalities in Maranhão, it has not yet been possible to achieve better results as in the IDEB and the continuing education of teachers for this level of education is still under discussion due to its complexity.

Keywords: Innovative High School. Continuing Education. Educação Maranhense.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this text was to establish the first approximations on the implementation of the Innovative High School Program – ProEMI in Maranhão from the analysis of data and official documents and its impacts on the training of teachers who work in high school.

The starting point of this study is the multiple transformations of capitalist society from the last decades of the twenty-first century, which imposes numerous challenges and demands on all social sectors, such as the educational sector, which is facing the emergence of new and complex educational demands on schools.

The profound changes that have taken place in this new century, with unusual characteristics, if compared to others no less important, that have occurred in their time and space, have fertilized the production of fear, anguish, insecurity, anxiety and hopelessness. All these different forms of manifestation of the psychological state of the citizen have impacted both those who have been excluded from the productive process, those who still remain in it, as well as those who wish to enter the world of work.

It is thus confirmed that, throughout history, the productive forces have caused a whirlwind of changes in the production of material life in the same way that they have simultaneously caused changes in the subjectivity of the worker.

From this recognition, it is shared with the ideas of Marx ([19--?], p. 301) when he recognizes that, "the mode of production of material life conditions the process of social, political and spiritual life in general. It is not man's consciousness that determines his being, but on the contrary, his social being that determines his consciousness."

These ideas justify the fact that changes in the material life of men produce a fertile field for the elaboration of new ideas. Therefore, the new ideas, resulting from the production of the new, will renew the old practices that will rebuild the new world. This idea can be summarized as follows: man's practice in the world determines a new way of thinking, acting and feeling, which is built in practice and returns to it in order to redirect it.

These changes, in the objective conditions of society and in the subjectivity of the citizen, although they have intensified at the end of the twentieth century and on the threshold of the twenty-first century, are the result of the continuous process of capital development and also contribute to the accumulation of experience in the productive process.

In this world convulsed by changes, especially in the world of work, characterized by the reduction of formal jobs and the increase of informal workers, expelled from the productive process, the concept of employment and unemployment as it has been defined

in the world of work no longer corresponds to the reality experienced by young people. In this sense, the ideas of Pais (2003, p. 15) stand out when he assures:

> Little is gained by peacefully accepting these old concepts and there is no point in polishing them so that they appear to have a false shine. The common expressions that young people use in their daily lives – hooks, pots and odd jobs – to portray their short and repeated flights through the world of work are much more suggestive.

For today's globalized citizen, finding space in the labor market, much more than "knowing" and "knowing how to do", it is required to "know how to learn". This is because technology advances at an unbridled speed, never seen in the past, and the worker who has not developed this skill runs the risk of being left behind, as it becomes obsolete.

This fact is aggravated when the knowledge and information society, determined by the speed of technical-scientific transformations, brings in its wake constant and complex demands and challenges to citizens who necessarily need to overcome the old ways of thinking, seeing, feeling and acting in order to insert themselves or maintain themselves in this globalized world.

The school, as a privileged space for the formation and construction of knowledge, has the responsibility and social commitment to insert itself and adapt to these needs of the globalized world, seeking both structural and pedagogical alternatives, aiming at new learning for the formation of skills and competencies of children, young people and adults.

In this context, Brazilian high school is the educational level that has grown the most and is also the one that has most required a reconfiguration in the materialization of its identity in this twenty-first century, because as García (2012) puts it, the society in which we live is "directly related to the level of training of the subjects and the capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship of these subjects, imposing on the school a new culture of alternative learning that enables quality education". The same author also adds:

> Our schools and institutes have become multicultural spaces: never before as now, ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural and social diversities have been so much in evidence. This multiplicity is representing a challenge and an opportunity for teachers. Integrating plurality in education, making a school possible for all, symbolizes one of the commitments that educational systems have (GARCIA, 2012, p. 181).

In order to meet these and other demands, Brazilian education since the 1990s has undergone numerous changes, with the educational reforms unleashed in this decade as a milestone. In this context, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education – LDB No.

9394/96 stands out, which brings, in its core, both the expansion and guarantee of the right to education and the advancement of a more comprehensive conception, such as the one set out below:

> Art. – 1 Education encompasses the formative processes that take place in family life, in human coexistence, at work, in teaching and research institutions, in social movements and civil society organizations, and in cultural manifestations.
> [...].
> Item 2 - School education should be linked to the world of work and social practice (BRASIL, 1996, not paginated).

However, even though there has been progress in the conception, the LDB places as a right and duty of the State the guarantee and obligation only of Elementary Education in its Article 4 and respective Paragraph I, leaving Secondary Education in the background, when it establishes, in this same Article, in its Paragraph IV, only "the progressive extension and obligation and free of charge to secondary education" (BRASIL, 1996, not paginated). This situation causes, in a few years, a problem for this level of education.

According to data from the Brazilian Yearbook of Basic Education, in a population of 10,644,789 adolescents and young people aged 15 to 17 in 2013, 1,523,220 of these young people do not study and have not completed high school (ALL FOR EDUCATION, 2015).

This report cited above (2015) also detected an enrollment rate of 81.5%, however only 55.5% attend high school and only 53.3% of young people up to 19 years old manage to complete this level of education. There is also a high rate of age/grade distortion, corresponding to 29.5%, as well as failure rate of 11.8%, for a population of 8,312,815 young people and adults enrolled in Brazilian high school. It should also be added that the IDEB target of 3.9 for 2013 was not reached, standing at 3.7. (BRAZIL, 2013)

Although it is considered that these evaluation mechanisms are somewhat homogeneous, most of the time, disregarding the geographical and cultural specificities of each state and regions of the country, this evaluation system has enabled since the 1990s a kind of X-ray of Brazilian education, forcing the implementation of policies and programs in an attempt to improve this situation by the Brazilian government.

THE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM: ALTERNATIVE AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR TEACHERS IN MARANHÃO

With the purpose of reversing the reality of secondary education, in the context of Brazilian education, one of the main goals of the National Education Plan – PNE, Law No. 13.005/2014 for Secondary Education is "to universalize, by 2016, school attendance for the

entire population aged 15 to 17 years and to raise, by the end of the period of validity of this PNE, the net enrollment rate of High School to 85%" (BRASIL, 2014a, not paginated).

Another mechanism that aims to reverse this situation is Constitutional Amendment No. 59/2009, which ensures, in the Brazilian legal system, the mandatory and free right to Basic Education for the population aged 4 to 17 years, including those who did not have access at the appropriate age (BRASIL, 2009a, not paginated). These are guaranteed rights that aim to minimize an almost immeasurable problem for our country. Some official documents that deal with Secondary Education, such as the Guiding Document of the Innovative Secondary Education Program (BRASIL, 2009a; 2013c), recognize that this situation needs to be urgently reversed. To exemplify, the following highlight contained in the National Curriculum Guidelines – DCN's 2013 is cited:

> To achieve full development, Brazil needs to invest heavily in expanding its technological capacity and in the training of middle and higher level professionals. Today, several industrial and service sectors do not expand at the intensity and pace appropriate to the new role that Brazil plays on the world stage, because they resent the lack of these professionals. Without a solid expansion of high school with quality, on the other hand, it will not be possible for our universities and technological centers to reach the degree of excellence necessary for the country to take the great leap into the future (BRASIL, 2013a, p. 145, emphasis added).

In this sense, how can we guarantee a degree of excellence and a promising future if, historically, in the past and in the present, the State has relegated and denied education to the Brazilian people, making the opposite movement of most countries that since the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have come with the purpose of improving and increasing the level of education of their citizens. Our country is even far from Latin American countries, as Militrus (2002, p. 219) puts it:

> While already in the first half of the twentieth century Argentina, Chile and Uruguay exhibited high rates of schooling of their populations, Brazil was only interested in incorporating the popular strata into the list of educated citizens from the middle of the century, with the beginning of the industrialization process. In the years we still had 40% of the population illiterate. The "quality school" has been a middle-class, white and urban school, marked by high internal selectivity.

The most serious situation is found in Secondary Education, as the data already explained demonstrate, considering that both in elementary and higher education in recent years, there has been a process of expansion based on some government measures aimed

at meeting these levels of schooling. Thus, at this moment, "it is to secondary education that the educational policy in the country is turned, committed, like the most developed countries, to projects aimed at modernization and social democratization" (MILITRUS, 2002, p. 219).

Brazilian High School, historically, has been left in the background, with a questioned, selective and excluding identity. While Elementary Education and Higher Education are well defined with their bases and guidelines and objectives, it was only from LDB No. 9394/96 that the secondary level was constituted as the final stage of Basic Education of intermediate schooling, with the purpose of preparing both for the world of work, for life and for the continuity of studies, thus presenting a cohesive identity and in a way that makes it possible to meet the current reality, as Puentes, Faleiro and Leonanrdi (2012, p. 100) point out:

> In order to adequately fulfill its mission, the identity of High School began to be pedagogically constituted from a curriculum that favors the dissemination of values that are fundamental to the social interest, the rights and duties of citizens; the consideration of the educational conditions of the students in each school or establishment, the orientation to work, diversification, flexibility, contextualization and interdisciplinarity; the formation of skills, knowledge and skills and scientific preparation.

In the face of so many challenges to be faced, secondary education becomes central to the implementation of policies and programs, as this level of education has been constituted since the middle of the last century as a minimum requirement in the performance of activities in many sectors of the world of work. In view of this reality, we share the ideas of Militrus (2002, p, 2019):

> It seeks to offer a type of training at the secondary level, in view of the transformations in the modes of production and management of work, resulting from scientific and technological development, with effective repercussions on social relations and on the political and cultural sphere of society.

To meet this purpose, as a strategy to improve the quality of Brazilian high school, there is the creation and implementation of the "Innovative High School Program – ProEMI", instituted through Ordinance No. 971/2009, whose main objectives according to the Program in question are:

> To provoke the debate on High School with the State and District Education Systems by fostering innovative proposals in high schools, providing technical and financial support, according to the dissemination of the culture of a dynamic, flexible curriculum that meets the demands of contemporary society;
> To induce the curricular redesign of high school curricula, understanding that the actions initially proposed are being incorporated into the curriculum, expanding the time in school and the diversity of pedagogical practices, meeting the needs and expectations of high school students (BRASIL, 2013c, p. 9-10, emphasis added).

ProEMI in its proposal brings as its central focus the creation/implementation of innovative pedagogical proposals in schools, placing as a mechanism for this intent a Curriculum Redesign Proposal – PRC to be inserted in the school curriculum gradually. The Program, in its fourth Guiding Document (2014), explains that:

> The Curriculum Redesign Project (PCR) should present actions that will make up the curriculum and these can be structured in different formats such as elective subjects, workshops, interest clubs, integrated seminars, research groups, fieldwork and other interdisciplinary actions and, for their implementation, they may define the acquisition of educational materials and technologies and include specific training for education professionals involved in the execution of activities (BRASIL, 2014b, p. 6).

In order for these actions to be incorporated into the school's own Political-Pedagogical Project, one of the requirements is the expansion of the workload, of the time in school with a view to integral education. To this end, the Program in question proposes the organization of these actions based on what it called "macrofields and areas of knowledge", in order to consider the needs and interests of everyone who makes the school, but mainly, the students.

According to the Guiding Document, *macrofield* is defined as "a field of pedagogical-curricular action in which interactive, integrated and integrating activities of knowledge and knowledge, times, spaces and subjects involved with educational action are developed" (BRASIL, 2014b, p. 8). Based on this definition, the following macrofields were chosen: Pedagogical Monitoring (Languages, Mathematics, Human Sciences and Natural Sciences); Scientific Initiation and Research; Reading and Literacy; Foreign Languages; Body Culture; Production and Enjoyment of the Arts; Communication, Digital Culture and use of Media and Student Participation. Of these eight macrofields, the first three are mandatory and among the others at least two can be chosen by the school, considering its specificities and interests, thus totaling at least five macrofields to be developed by the school that chooses to participate in the Program.

It is not a matter of elaborating and executing another curriculum in the school, but of inserting actions, didactic and pedagogical activities in an integrated and interdisciplinary way aiming at the expansion of knowledge, knowledge, social and ethical values of students, so that they can exercise their citizenship as social subjects imbued with rights and duties before society, bearing in mind that:

> The Program is essentially an incentive for pedagogical innovation, inducing a new educational paradigm, in an open debate with the state education systems and the federal district with the necessary technical and financial support for the dissemination of the culture of a dynamic, flexible and compatible curriculum with the demands of contemporary society (SANDRINI & FARIAS, 2014, p. 87).

To this end, ProEMI proposes to "stimulate new forms of organization of disciplines articulated with integrative activities, based on the interrelations between the constituent axes of secondary education, that is, work, science and technology and culture" (BRASIL, 2009b, p. 14). With this broad view of actions, the Program in question aims to minimize the current reality of this stage of education. However, this reality may in fact begin to draw another scenario if the active involvement of teachers is considered in this process. The effective participation of teachers is a *sine quo* condition in order for programs of this nature to materialize and this necessarily permeates the pedagogical practice of teachers who work at this level of education. However, it is still a challenge for teachers, especially in the State of Maranhão.

Maranhão is one of the poorest states with a high rate of social inequality that appears in the Brazilian federation. Currently, it has a population of 6,850,884 inhabitants according to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE (2013), however, the illiteracy rate among the population aged 15 and over corresponds to 18.5%, this means that almost one million Maranhão people do not know how to read and write, second only to the State of Alagoas, with a rate of 19.7%. However, this reality corresponds to more than double the national average, which is 8.3%.

According to data from the IDEB/2013, high school in Maranhão decreased the average of 3.1 that it reached in 2011 to 3.0, while the goal to be achieved in 2013 should be 3.3. If we consider only the average of the state network, Maranhão, reached only 2.8. Even before this last result was released, a document from the State Education Plan already made the following warning:

> In relation to state high school, despite reaching the stipulated average, the results for Maranhão need to advance further towards the national goal (3.7 for 2011 and 3.9 for 2013), otherwise we will be left on the sidelines of the preparation of young people in a broad context. (MARANHÃO, 2014, p. 15).

It was also observed that the pass rate is 76.5%, but the dropout rate is 12%, the failure rate is 11.5% and an age/grade distortion rate of 42.8% according to data from INEP/MEC in 2012 for an enrollment of 308,433 young people aged 15 to 17 years. These last three rates: dropout, failure and age/grade distortion, respectively, constitute major problems to be overcome, urgently, in education in Maranhão. It should also be added, according to IBGE data (2013), among the population of more than 400,000 adolescents and young people between 15 and 17 years old, an average of 90,000 young people do not study or are out of school.

Another worrying fact recorded by the Maranhão State Education Plan (MARANHÃO, 2014) was the quality of teaching that was demonstrated in student learning in the 2011 SAEB/INEP data. The minimum score, in this evaluation mechanism, for students in the third year of high school in Portuguese, has to be above 300 points and for Mathematics above 350. According to the results, only 15.3% and 3.3% of students in Maranhão reached the desired level in Portuguese Language and Mathematics respectively, making it urgent to resize the teaching and learning of students.

This reality of the educational situation in Maranhão is worrying and requires urgent and qualitative measures aimed at minimizing this situation, otherwise, Maranhão will continue with its population suffering the consequences of poverty, and social inequality, since education is a constitutional right that is configured as one of the instruments for improving the quality of life of the citizen.

The high school in Maranhão, the focus of this study, according to the State Education Plan – PEE/MA, Law No. 10,099/2014, the data presented are not at all encouraging, as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1 – High School Enrollment Data – 2010 – 2012

Population of 15 to 17 years old (2010)	Registration (2010)	Registration (2011)	Registration (2012)	Young people who completed the E. M
417.388	317.385	312.155	308.433	35%

Source: MARANHÃO, 2012; SEDUC/MA, 2014; MARANHÃO, 2014.

By making a parallel between the number of young people aged 15 to 17 years and the number of enrollments up to 2012, it can be inferred that almost one hundred thousand

young people in this age group were out of school and less than half were able to complete high school (Table 2).

Table 2 – High School Data – 2012

Registration	Rate Approval	Rate Reproof	Rate Abandonment	Distortion Age/Grade
308.433	77,2%	9,1%	13,7%	43,94%

Source: BRASIL, 2012; SEDUC/MA, 2014; MARANHÃO, 2013.

Another relevant data is the high rate of age/grade distortion, as well as the dropout rate, which is also very high if we consider the need for knowledge in today's society.

As an alternative to improve this reality, the Innovative High School Program was implemented in 2009 in some schools in Maranhão in partnership with the MEC, through the State Department of Education – SEDUC/MA, as shown in the table below.

YEAR	URE	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS	NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
2009/2011	09	18	09	15.000
2011/2012	11	65	30	65.000
2012/2013	19	239	150	155.572
2013/2014	19	172	112	279.714

Source: SEDUC/MA, 2014.

According to data from the State Department of Education of Maranhão – SEEDUC/MA/2013[3], many positive results have already been achieved, such as:

a) Restructuring, adaptation and physical improvement of school spaces;
b) Acquisition of bibliographic collection and pedagogical resources;
c) Carrying out some continuing training for teachers and school technicians, respecting the needs of the school community;
d) Greater involvement of teachers and students in school activities;
e) Review of the Political-Pedagogical Project of the schools;
f) School reinforcement in the after-hours;
g) Expansion of the workload, above 300 hours per year, aiming at optional pedagogical didactic activities;
h) Integration of actions with other programs such as Mais Educação.

It can be observed, initially, that the actions carried out after the implementation of ProEMI were punctual and are mainly aimed at improving the school as a physical structure. However, it is necessary to move forward with a diagnosis of the training needs of the

[3] The data listed correspond to the analyses of SEEDUC/MA/2013 technicians that are part of the ProEMI reports.

teachers involved and a diagnosis of student learning. The first, aiming at a plan for the continuing education of teachers, and the second a strategic plan, also aiming at improving the quality of student learning, as one of the mechanisms that better qualifies these students for today's society.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The educational reality of Brazilian and Maranhão High School, according to data already demonstrated, is not very encouraging. However, it is necessary to register some alternatives that are being put into practice through institutional programs and projects, such as ProEMI. However, it is understood that a Program of the magnitude of ProEMI, in order to be materialized and achieve positive results, the engagement of everyone who makes the school and especially the teachers is fundamental, because it is not enough to create/institutionalize an educational policy for positive results to occur. It is essential that teachers are the main agents of these processes. To the extent that teachers feel challenged to put into practice programs of this nature, consequently there will be a renewal in pedagogical practice.

It was observed that the results obtained by ProEMI in Maranhão, so far, correspond to the improvement of the physical structure of schools and the acquisition of pedagogical didactic resources, little is said about student learning and continuing education of teachers. Therefore, urgent educational measures are needed to improve this level of schooling, otherwise these young people will be on the margins of the so-called knowledge and information society that requires increasingly qualified, creative and innovative citizens. Given this situation, there are numerous challenges imposed on teachers at this level of schooling.

To this end, it is essential to have a continuing education plan based on the diagnosis of training needs, taking into account the place that teachers as agents of transformation occupy in today's society, in view of the fact that teacher training is one of the decisive instruments for improving the quality of education.

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