


NATIONAL PROGRAM OF CIVIC-MILITARY SCHOOLS AS A PUBLIC POLICY: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the public policy of the National Program of Civic-Military Schools (PECIM), contextualizing its pedagogical and legal implications within the Brazilian educational system. There is an intense process of mediation between the crisis of education and the non-appropriation in the school space of the management of excellence in educational, pedagogical and administrative processes and the strengthening of human and civic values (hierarchy, structured curriculum, efficiency and productivity, obedience, armed peace and codification), as these lead to the impossibility of understanding the epistemological tasks of education, placing on this expectations that do not belong to him, thus causing a discourse that reveals a posture of alienation in the face of society's broader problems. The objective is to analyze the influences of PECIM in education, focusing on the identities and freedoms of students. The methodology includes bibliographic research, analysis of educational legislation, reading of academic articles and examination of official documents related to the implementation of the program. The results indicate that PECIM may represent a setback by adopting an authoritarian, content-based and neo-technicist teaching model, where the centralization of the teacher's role is accompanied by a decrease in their autonomy. At the same time, public policy also reveals a distortion in investments, with educational resources being diverted to pay military personnel, which compromises the quality and democratic nature of public education. This diversion of resources contradicts the constitutional principles that defend a public, democratic and quality education, accessible to all.

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INTRODUCTION

In a society organized under a democratic state of law, public policies must reflect the interests of the population, formulated by political representatives who seek to benefit the largest possible number of citizens. Understanding public policies related to education makes it possible to perceive how they are situated in a historical context influenced by unequal power relations. Critical evaluation of these policies is essential to identify their flaws, challenges and, especially, progress in the sector. Lawrence M. Mead (1995) defines public policy as an area of policy study that investigates government in relation to important public issues. Laurence E. Lynn (1980) describes it as a set of government attitudes that generate specific effects. In line with these definitions, Celina de Souza (2006) characterizes public policy as an area of knowledge that aims both to "put the government into activity" and to analyze this action, suggesting changes when necessary. The formulation of public policies involves the process through which democratic governments translate their intentions and electoral platforms into projects and actions that may or may not generate significant transformations in society (SOUZA, 2006). Renato Raul Boschi (1982), a researcher of public policies and development, defines public policies as "responses of the State to social demands, formulated through political and administrative processes."

Nevertheless, in order to understand the political nuances and social panorama that led to the implementation of the National Program of Civic-Military Schools (PECIM), it is essential to contextualize the concepts of public policy, its trajectory in changes of government, and the relations with the interests of the current power groups. The PECIM, instituted by Decree No. 10,004, of September 5, 2019, to organize the Civic-Military School (ECIM) in regular public schools that have a low result in the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) and that serve students in vulnerable situations. It appears, in the speeches and documents made available at the PACIM Social Observatory, as an attempt to face the great national problems and the obstacles to social development, aiming at the construction of a more egalitarian and just country. However, this proposal raises important questions: is public, secular, democratic and plural education at risk? Are the constitutional principles of the right to education, the freedom of professorship, plurality of thought, the appreciation of education professionals and the democratic management of teaching, threatened and compromised? The possible answers and new questions intended as a whole, we analyze

the public policy of PECIM, its guidelines, objectives, implementation and growth, contextualizing it in the face of current educational legislation.

We seek to highlight the reflections that this national policy program represents in education and the effects it can have on students, their identities and freedoms.

The methodology used is bibliographic research, analysis of educational legislation, reading of articles and investigation of official documents of implementation of the program. Dermeval Saviani, one of the most influential theorists in Brazilian education, defines public educational policy as "a set of actions and regulations designed and implemented by the State, with the objective of organizing, regulating and guiding educational processes in society." Saviani highlights the importance of these policies to ensure universal access to education and improve the quality of education. Agreeing with Saviani, it is clear that public policy should be conducted by the state and not by the armed forces or a specific ministry.

Therefore, the defense of a public educational system that preserves the freedom of professorship, plurality of thought, the appreciation of education professionals and democratic management is crucial for the integral development of students and for the construction of a truly democratic society.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used is a qualitative approach, a bibliographic review. It was necessary to analyze and interpret official documents, books, publications in recognized journals and doctoral theses on the subject, in order to develop a critical analysis from primary and secondary sources, according to Severino (2016). The methodological steps were the selection of reliable sources, critical reading, synthesis and organization, and finally, the writing of the article.

PUBLIC POLICIES IN EDUCATION: WHICH POLICY? FOR WHICH AUDIENCE?

It is indisputable that the State, through its deliberative bodies, must develop education policies to meet the needs of the population. However, it is crucial to analyze the functions that these policies are intended to perform, their target audience, and the principles that guide them. According to Horta (1987), a realistic approach to educational policy recognizes its insertion in the country's global politics, determined by the hegemony of those who control the State.

In the context of economic neoliberalism, the social function of education is shaped according to the interests of the dominant productive forces. Educational policies are designed to maintain the status quo (Horta, 1987).

The emergence of public policies occurred after World War II, especially during the Cold War, a period marked by rivalry between the blocs led by the United States and the Soviet Union. According to Souza (2006), the introduction of public policies as an instrument of government decision-making was driven by the Cold War and by the valorization of technocracy as a means of dealing with its consequences.

From that point on, public policies began to cover several social areas of the State, including education. Souza (2006) points out that the application of scientific methods in the formulation and implementation of government policies has expanded to other areas, including social policy.

National public policies must address issues that allow for broad actions and impact as many people as possible. They also aim to correct inequalities and meet regional or social needs at the federal level. Machado (2021) highlights the importance of such policies being impregnated with initiatives that promote a greater good and social justice, reflecting values and beliefs about reality.

In the 1970s, the idea arose that the state was large and inefficient, spending its resources poorly, especially in social areas. This idea initially influenced the central countries and, later, the developing countries such as Brazil. Peroni (2006) explains that the neoliberal strategy aimed to blame the growing costs of social policies and their consequences on public funds, inflation and indebtedness, highlighting the importance of the market as a mechanism for allocating resources.

This crisis was catalyzed by factors such as the neoliberal mode of production, the globalization of the economy, and changes in the role of the state, with the decrease in state action in social and educational policies. Peroni (2006) observes that the market sought to reduce the power of government institutions, transferring the execution of social policies to non-governmental entities.

Globalized capital has influenced public education policies according to its interests, aiming to form a new demand for labor through a neoliberal education model. Sanfelice (2008) states that the globalization of capital has subordinated education to profit, interfering in States and placing itself above them as a supranational government. The transformations resulted in a series of changes driven by restructuring in the production

process, through the adoption of flexible forms of production. These involve rapid changes in patterns of uneven development, in scientific-technological innovation applied to production processes and in new models of work management. Chesnais (1996), when analyzing political economy in the context of capitalism, observes that the liberalization, deregulation and privatization policies adopted by capitalist states from 1978 onwards increased the freedom of capital to move on an international scale. This was made possible by information technologies applied to industrial production and to management and finance activities (financial capital), 'covering several regions of the world with resources and markets, which further highlights the exclusionary character of capital.

To achieve its objectives, globalized capital has used international organizations such as the World Bank, the UN, the WTO, the ILO, the WHO, the IMF, the OECD, the FAO, UNESCO, and UNICEF, among others. Sanfelice (2008) points out that studies on the educational policies induced by these agencies demonstrate that the 'new times' have guided Education.

Public policies, originating from the political action of the State, have specific nuances according to the guidelines of the government that conducts them. However, its purposes and impacts must respect the fundamental rights and guarantees established in the Federal Constitution of 1988. Educational policies and programs demand transparent and democratic processes, articulated with the demands of civil society and aimed at addressing priority issues in education. Duarte (2017) highlights the importance of institutional actions arising from conferences, congresses, councils, forums, unions, associations and public hearings.

In a complex, multicultural and diverse country like Brazil, public policies in education must serve all communities and ensure a secular, republican, democratic, inclusive and accessible education for all. Schools, as micro units of the educational system, need to understand that public policies influence their dynamics, whether in teacher training, teaching material, curriculum, infrastructure or educational objectives. Cássio (2019) emphasizes the importance of demystifying educational policy and humanizing its functioning, understanding who are the groups and people whose decisions will have consequences for teachers, families, and students.

From the perspective of SAVIANI (2011), educational policies are influenced by social and economic dynamics, reflecting power relations in society. Educational policy is

understood as the set of principles and norms that regulate the functioning of education and that are built from the class struggle.

To understand the implementation of authoritarian educational policies such as the National Program of Civic-Military Schools (PECIM) and the decline of democracy in educational spaces, it is necessary to understand the social, political, and economic nuances of the Brazilian panorama in recent decades.

RESULTS

HISTORICAL-SOCIAL CONTEXT OF BRAZILIAN EDUCATION: BETWEEN AUTHORITARIANISM AND DEMOCRACY

In 1964, Brazil was the scene of a military coup that resulted in 21 years of authoritarian rule. During this period, the rights of citizens were curtailed, censorship, torture, kidnappings, murders and illegalities were implemented. In the area of education, the military persecuted students and teachers, invaded universities and student organizations. According to Lima (2020, p. 132), "The educational area was particularly affected. In addition to the end of student autonomy, educators whose thought and action were judged subversive, such as the three greatest Brazilian names in the sector: Anísio Teixeira, Darcy Ribeiro and Paulo Freire, were punished with the loss of their positions and political rights."

At its end in 1985, millions of Brazilians took to the streets of the main capitals to ask for freedom and direct elections for president, in what became known as the Diretas Já movement. According to Schwarcz (2015, p. 484), "In Belo Horizonte, about 300 thousand demonstrators gathered at Rio Branco Square; the second, in Rio de Janeiro, took 1 million people to Candelária; the last one, in São Paulo, hit the mark of 1.5 million participants." The winds of political and social change brought hope to Brazilians, and in the area of education it was no different, several movements for public schools for all, secular, democratic, with freedom, wide access and permanence gained strength.

This was partially materialized in the Federal Constitution of 1988, bringing advances in public education policies such as the mandatory nature of public education, in its article 208, as a duty of the State to offer elementary education, the progressive universalization of free secondary education and, also, making access to compulsory and free education a subjective public right and the accountability of the competent authority if there is no compliance with this law. The mandatory creation of the National Education Plan (PNE) was

also one of the advances in education, under the terms of article 214 of the Federal Constitution of 1988, and, later, articles 9 and 87 of Law 9.394/1996 (LDB). Thus, the National Education Plan and the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education have as principles the broad access to education, the democratization of the school, respect for diversity and free thought.

The changes in public education triggered ruptures in authoritarian and exclusionary teaching models and sought to democratize education, providing for the election of managers in schools and the inclusion of segments of society on the margins of the educational system. In the 90s, there was the universalization of education, the networks progressively expanded the offer of vacancies to serve the various layers of the population at various levels of education, still with difficulties, but more capillary than decades ago. According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), in 1968 there were 11,943,506 enrollments in the old primary school, in 1988 there were already 23,534,971 enrollments in elementary school and in 1998 there were 34,409,208 enrollments in elementary school, all considering only public schools at the municipal, state and federal levels. In ten years after the compulsory nature of elementary education according to article 208 of the Federal Constitution of 1988, the number of enrollments increased by 26.8%.

Despite these advances, in recent decades, Brazilian education has been influenced by a neoliberal, conservative, privatist policy that understands public teaching-learning as a company. Several actions by the public authorities have taken place in this direction, cuts in funds in the area of higher education, transfer of funds to private institutions and non-governmental organizations - NGOs, projects such as the New High School, the National Common Curriculum Base - BNCC, the 20-year freeze on public investments are just one part of this path. In a break with the democratic political model, from 2012 onwards, a conservative wave converged in the last decade in Brazil, which accompanied conservative orientations around the world, with a radical right-wing political agenda, of customs, religious, which attacks progressive behaviors, institutions as a whole and democracy.

DISCUSSION

THE PUBLIC POLICY OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAM OF CIVIC-MILITARY SCHOOLS - PECIM: REGRESSION TO AUTHORITARIAN MODELS OF EDUCATION

Regardless of the political group in power, public policies must focus on the interests of the population, especially in national education programs. The discretion of the public

manager cannot override the enforcement of fundamental constitutional rights and guarantees. There should not be a public education model aimed only at a specific audience, nor funding directed exclusively to a school management model. Public policies should be conceived as State policies, aiming at improvements in education in a broad and lasting way, and not as initiatives of transitional governments.

The National Program of Civic-Military Schools (PECIM) requires the understanding of different models of military schools. The Armed Forces, due to their traditional and dogmatic nature, have their own institutions for the training and education of their troops, such as the War College, the Naval Academy, and the Agulhas Negras Military Academy. Military schools, financed by the Armed Forces, have exclusive rules and reserve vacancies for children of military personnel, standing out as a closed and specific system.

Another model is the civic-military schools, resulting from agreements between state and municipal education departments with local military agencies, such as the Military Police or the Military Fire Department, operating under shared management. PECIM, instituted under the government of Jair Bolsonaro (2019-2022), sought to transform public schools into militarized units, transferring resources and management responsibilities to military personnel chosen by the Ministry of Defense. This public policy emerged from a campaign promise by Bolsonaro, with the justification of improving school performance, safety, and student behavior rates.

The PECIM, as previously recorded, was established by Decree No. 10,004, of September 6, 2019, detailing objectives such as strengthening participating schools, contributing to the National Education Plan, improving the quality of basic education, and reducing school violence. However, the implementation of the program has generated criticism about the stigma of public schools as undisciplined and violent environments, arguing that the problems faced are the result of external variables, such as social vulnerability and precarious infrastructure, which are independent of school management.

The civic-military model contrasts with the educational principles guaranteed in the Federal Constitution of 1988, which promote equal conditions, freedom to learn and teach, pluralism of ideas, free public education and democratic management. The transformation of public schools into civic-military schools adopts a closed model, where students and teachers who do not adapt to militarized management can be excluded, hurting principles such as educational freedom and plurality.

Teaching professionals in civic-military schools lose autonomy and importance, being replaced by military personnel without educational qualifications and without public competition, which disqualifies the role of the educator and contradicts democratic management. The school should be a space of democracy, plurality and diversity, where pedagogical action is conducted by education professionals, and not by an authoritarian hierarchy.

Obviously, producing knowledge goes beyond the simple assimilation of dominant values, whether civilizing or military-educational. The debate on the National Program of Civic-Military Schools (Pecim) is often limited to discussing the lack of competence to meet the demands of neoliberal capitalist production or to promoting improvements in basic education, according to the National Education Plan. In this context, the mission of education is seen as the maintenance of the status quo, serving the interests of the ruling class with the support of the Ministry of Defense, without considering education in its own epistemology. This type of education is a product of alienation and perpetuates this alienation, making an epistemologically autonomous education impossibleⁱⁱ. Education, therefore, must question the dominant assumptions of the society in which it is inserted.

In conclusion, the transformation of public schools into civic-military schools promotes the denial of inclusive and democratic education, undermining the autonomy and active participation of students, which are essential for the educational process. The choice of the political-pedagogical project must be based on diversity and democratic management, so that education fulfills its role of promoting citizenship and human emancipation.

CONCLUSION

The National Program of Civic-Military Schools (PECIM) reveals a significant political bias, being widely seen as a political-ideological measure implemented by former President Jair Messias Bolsonaro. This program aimed to benefit the military and imprint a conservative and moral character to Brazilian education.

Public policies must serve as instruments through which the State materializes constitutional norms, either directly through its organs or indirectly through organized civil society, with the objective of achieving the common good and guaranteeing the people the enjoyment of fundamental rights. Education, in particular, must promote equality, citizen engagement, and combat any type of exclusion and discrimination.

However, it is crucial that the processes of formulation and governance of educational policies are democratic, transparent, and inclusive, involving the participation of citizens and education professionals in a true democratic management of education (Cássio, 2019, p. 79).

Although the Civic-Military Schools (EsCM) have their pedagogical character governed by civilian teachers, they have singularities and specific political configurations of a civic-nationalist doctrinal orientation. Through rites, rituals and solemnities, these schools seek to achieve conservative indoctrination and the unquestionable acceptance of the norms imposed on students. The military language, the expressions used in the regiments and manuals, as well as their hymns and songs, reinforce a submissive behavior and a positivist conception linked to the precepts of the traditional excluding family, conservative morality and hierarchical civism.

In the militarist ideology, the subjectivity of the individual is shaped by authoritarian and orderly ideologies that seek, at any cost, to preserve the current order, even if it is unjust and unequal. The basis of their orientation is hierarchy and discipline. In contrast, citizen discipline must be based on democratic values, legitimate authority, and the overcoming of social problems, aiming at a more just and fraternal society.

Military education, being an education by adherence to a closed, indisputable and unquestionable model, does not develop full citizens, but forms child soldiers. Education must make the transition in the child's mind from the private to the public sphere, bringing ideas of equity, justice, diversity and a common good with democratic nuances. In an authoritarian and militarized school, the child loses the notion of public interest, respect for plural diversity, and the limits of the private sphere (Santos, 2021).

School management should be the responsibility of education professionals, duly trained, competitive and specialized in the areas of education, exercising their functions in a secular, civil and plural way. The organization of the educational environment and the educational action in the educational units must be conducted by these professionals.

The Civic-Military Schools create a differentiation in schools in terms of infrastructure, such as libraries, courts, laboratories and cultural projects, promoting a selection of students and improving the working conditions of the staff by obeying the hierarchy of relations. However, this approach can lead to segmentation and exclusion, rather than promoting inclusion and educational equity.

In conclusion, the transformation of public schools into civic-military schools can be seen as a setback to authoritarian models of education, compromising fundamental principles of democratic and inclusive education. It is essential that the management of education is conducted by qualified professionals, respecting diversity and promoting the active and democratic participation of the entire school community.

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