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Teaching work and emergency remote teaching: extension of workdays and free time expropriation

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ABSTRACT

The aim was to investigate the effects of remote work, as a result of the covid-19 pandemic, on the working hours and free time of teachers who work in the public education network in the state of São Paulo. Through descriptive research, of qualitative approach, interviews and questionnaires with teachers were carried out. The analysis was inspired by the Marxist theoretical framework about the processes of work, education, time, and technology in the capitalist mode of production. The results indicate that the pandemic impacted the working conditions of teachers in the public education network of São Paulo and deepened ongoing trends, such as precariousness, managerialism, extended working hours and the use of information and communication technology as a mechanism of control of teachers' time and work. Remote teaching remodeled the pedagogical dynamics and gave new contours to the journey, with advances in working time over free time.

KEYWORDS

educational politics; basic education; pandemic.

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TRABALHO DOCENTE E ENSINO REMOTO EMERGENCIAL: EXTENSÃO DA JORNADA DE TRABALHO E EXPROPRIAÇÃO DO TEMPO LIVRE

RESUMO

O objetivo foi investigar os efeitos do trabalho remoto, em decorrência da pandemia da covid-19, sobre a jornada de trabalho e o tempo livre de professores que atuam na rede pública de educação do estado de São Paulo. Mediante uma pesquisa descritiva, de abordagem qualitativa, realizaram-se entrevistas e questionários com professores. A análise foi inspirada no referencial teórico marxista sobre os processos de trabalho, educação, tempo e tecnologia no modo de produção capitalista. Os resultados indicam que a pandemia impactou as condições de trabalho docente da rede pública de educação de São Paulo e aprofundou tendências em curso, como a precarização, o gerencialismo, o prolongamento da jornada e o uso das tecnologias da informação e comunicação como mecanismo de controle do tempo e do trabalho dos professores. O ensino remoto remodelou a dinâmica pedagógica e conferiu novos contornos à jornada, com avanços do tempo de trabalho sobre o tempo livre.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

política educacional; educação básica; pandemia.

TRABAJO DOCENTE Y ENSEÑANZA A DISTANCIA DE EMERGENCIA: AMPLIACIÓN DE JORNADAS Y EXPROPIACIÓN DEL TIEMPO LIBRE

RESUMEN

El objetivo fue investigar los efectos del trabajo remoto, como resultado de la pandemia de covid-19, en las horas de trabajo y el tiempo libre de los profesores de educación pública en el estado de Sao Paulo. Mediante una investigación descriptiva, de enfoque cualitativo, se realizaron entrevistas y cuestionarios a docentes. El análisis se inspiró en el marco teórico marxista sobre los procesos de trabajo, educación, tiempo y tecnología en el modo de producción capitalista. Los resultados indican que la pandemia impactó en las condiciones de trabajo del profesorado y profundizó tendencias en curso, como la precariedad, el gerencialismo, la jornada laboral extendida y el uso de las tecnologías de la información y las comunicaciones como mecanismo de control del tiempo y trabajo de los docentes. La enseñanza a distancia ha reconfigurado la dinámica pedagógica y ha dado nuevos contornos para la jornada, con avances en el tiempo de trabajo sobre el tiempo libre.

PALABRAS CLAVE

política educativa; educación básica; pandemia.

INTRODUCTION

The deleterious effects of the covid-19 pandemic are piling up in the Brazilian reality. For teachers who managed to keep their jobs, the health crisis, which began in March 2020, can be understood as a milestone for when work was no longer taken home and the domestic environment became the priority location for this activity. In this context, the establishment of emergency remote teaching, in addition to bringing new constraints to the teaching work process, accelerated trends already underway in the Brazilian educational scenario, such as the incorporation of information and communication technologies (ICT), privatization, precarization, and extended work hours (Catini, 2020; Minto, 2021; Nepomuceno and Algebaile, 2021).

At the national level, the Note of Clarification from the National Council of Education [Conselho Nacional de Educação] (CNE), of March 18, 2020 (Brasil, 2020a), instructed the federal, state, municipal and district education systems, in accordance with Decree No. 9.057, of May 25, 2017 (Brasil, 2017), to authorize activities in virtual environments, comprising different levels and modalities of basic education and higher education. Following the same line, Provisional Measure No. 934, of April 1, 2020 (Brasil, 2020b), set forth that educational networks and institutions were exempt, on an exceptional basis, from the obligation to observe the minimum number of days of effective schoolwork, provided that the minimum annual work hours were completed. This provisional measure was enacted as Law No. 14.040, of August 14, 2020 (Brasil, 2020c), and changed the school year.

In the state of São Paulo, on April 27,2020, governor João Doria (PSDB) rapidly implemented an emergency remote teaching model throughout the teaching network of the São Paulo State Education Department [Secretaria da Educação do Estado de São Paulo] (SEDUC-SP), from the early years of elementary school to high school, which involved all basic-education modalities. Remote teaching has significantly reshaped teaching work. As for video classes, provided through the São Paulo Center for Education Media [Centro de Mídias de Educação de São Paulo] (CMSP) application, only a few dozen teachers who participated in a selection process began to teach classes to a total of 3.5 million students in a homogeneous and standardized way (São Paulo, 2021).

Emergency remote teaching and the indiscriminate use of technological resources over the course of the pandemic were adopted without due consideration of teachers' critical stances and of the accumulation of knowledge in the education field. The pandemic, on the one hand, was seen as a kind of "window of opportunity" by sectors linked to the education business, for the advancement of the so-called "modernization" process, expansion of technological tools in education, and greater openness for the intervention of private actors in public networks, in the provision of services, applications and digital platforms (Souza and Evangelista, 2020; Figueiredo Filho and Santos, 2021; Minto, 2021). On the other hand, the pressures for the face-to-face return elected teaching workers as the main target of criticism, which intensified the process of holding them accountable for the educational problems related to remote teaching.¹

¹ One example of this accountability assigned to teaching workers is expressed in a speech by the leader of the Government in the Federal Chamber of Deputies, deputy Ricardo Barros (Progressistas Party), during an interview to CNN, on April 20, 2021: "Only teachers do not want to work in the pandemic" (Uol, 2021).

In common sense, the argument that both male and female teachers worked little, worked less, or did not work at all during emergency remote teaching is based on the assumption that the more innovations and technological resources embedded in work processes, the fewer hours are needed for this activity and, therefore, the free time of these professionals would be greater. The assumptions of this research, however, object to this reasoning. It considers that the issues surrounding education and teaching work in the context of the pandemic need to be analyzed in light of the changes that are taking place in the contemporary work process (Minto, 2021).

Even before the covid-19 pandemic, in São Paulo state's education network, the precariousness of teaching work has become part of the reality of schools and goes hand in hand with the flexibilization of hiring methods. The reality of precarious work in this teaching network is not limited to the objective sphere; objective precariousness leads to the subjective one and impacts the daily lives of both male and female teachers as a whole (Linhart, 2014; Venco and Rigolon, 2014). Furthermore, the managerial logic, the meritocratic values, the principles based on efficiency and on economic rationality, typical of the neoliberal ideals that guide the "New Public Management", have accentuated the flexibilization and instability of forms of hiring, the degradation of labor relations and conditions, and the work intensification process (Souza, 2013; Venco, 2016; Barbosa *et al.*, 2020).

Thus, in times of acute crisis and profound transformations in labor relations, in social indicators and in the school, it is imperative to reflect on how the remote-teaching model has affected and given new contours to teaching work and to free time in São Paulo state's public education network. Researching the impacts of this process on the dimensions of everyday life gains relevance in a scenario where school activities have acquired other forms of organization and started to be carried out beyond habitual shifts and places. The objective of this research therefore consisted of investigating the effects of remote work, resulting from the covid-19 pandemic, on the work hours and free time of teachers within São Paulo state's public education network.

METHODOLOGICAL COURSE

By means of descriptive research, with a qualitative approach (Bogdan and Biklen, 2003), data were collected through the application of questionnaires involving teachers linked to the SEDUC-SP, in combination with semi-structured interviews held before the pandemic with teachers from that same education network.

Documents and legislation dealing with teaching work in the national context and in the state of São Paulo during the covid-19 pandemic were analyzed. The documents analyzed were: Note of Clarification from the National Council of Education (CNE), of March 18, 2020 (Brasil, 2020a); Decree No. 9.057, of May 25, 2017 (Brasil, 2017); Provisional Measure No. 934, of April 1, 2020 (Brasil, 2020b); and Law No. 14.040, of August 14, 2020 (Brasil, 2020c).

São Paulo state's teaching network hires employees in a flexible and heterogeneous manner, in accordance with the predominant categories of teachers in the last decade: category "A" teachers are public servants, job holders, tenured, and have

a career plan; "F" teachers occupy a function-activity position, were hired through Law No. 500/1974 and were tenured through Law No. 1.010, of June 1, 2007, which created the "São Paulo Pension Plan" [São Paulo Previdência – SPPREV]; category "O" teachers were temporarily hired through Law No. 1.093, of July 16, 2009, are not tenured and do not have access to various rights that regular teachers have, such as those related to career progression, bonus leave, among others; category "V" teachers, referred to as occasional teachers, are temporary and ruled by Law No. 1093, of July 16, 2009, but are in a more unstable and precarious condition, as they do not have fixed work hours and wages, and are paid per class taught (Venco, 2016; Barbosa *et al.*, 2020). The criterion for including participants was by convenience and involved teaching workers from all these categories throughout the fieldwork.

With a view to enriching comparisons and qualifying arguments, semi-structured interviews held in a period prior to the pandemic, between September and November 2015, with questions about teaching work and free-time use, were retrieved and analyzed. These interviews were carried out with 29 teachers working in São Paulo state's education network — 14 tenured teachers (11 category "A" teachers and three category "F" teachers), 11 temporary category "O" teachers, and four occasional teachers (category "V"). Among these teachers, 17 were female and 12 were male. Before the interviews were conducted, each teacher was in possession of a diary to record the use of their time (Aguiar, 2011) — printed or online version (each diary consisted of a survey with socioeconomic questions) —, in which they described the activities performed over the course of a typical work week. The diaries, in addition to providing a quantification of the time dedicated to each dimension of life, allowed for greater details on the use of time in each of the interviews.

Finally, an online questionnaire was applied, from September 29, 2020 to November 5, 2020, between the fifth and sixth months after remote work started in SEDUC-SP. The questionnaire was made up of 27 questions divided into four sections, aimed at SEDUC-SP teachers across the state. The first section sought to profile the respondents. The second was about whether or not the teacher was infected with SARS-CoV-2, followed by professional questions, such as in what city they worked, whether they were in emergency remote teaching or not, what their functional category was, whether they had multiple roles, at how many schools they were working, what their weekly workload was, and whether they had other paid activities. The third section comprised questions referring to a comparison of the work before and during the pandemic: how many shifts are worked at each moment; work frequency on weekends; increase, maintenance or decrease in work hours; number of worked hours; and performance of other mandatory activities. Finally, questions were asked about the teachers' subjective perception of leisure: perception of exhaustion at work, comparison with free time, satisfaction with leisure time, activities they would like to do, and the reasons why they do not do them.²

The questions in the fourth section were based on the research entitled "Brazilian people's leisure" [O lazer do brasileiro] (Stoppa and Isayama, 2017).

The disclosure and distribution of the questionnaire was based on the technique known as "snowball" (Vinuto, 2014) and counted on the collaboration of the participants themselves, who forwarded the questionnaire to other teachers. In total, 121 teachers completed the questionnaire and signed the Free and Informed Consent Form (FICF). All respondents said they were doing remote teaching at the time the survey was carried out. Answers were obtained from teachers in 30 cities in the state of São Paulo — in the capital region, within the state, and on the coast. Among the participants, 79 respondents were women, 41 were men, and one person identified as non-binary. Regarding the work regime: 76 teachers claimed to be category "A", the regular ones; 13 were category "F", the tenured ones; and 32 were in category "O", teachers working on a temporary basis. It is worth stressing that the absence of category "V", or occasional teachers, is not by chance and highlights the situation of vulnerability to which these professionals were subjected during the pandemic. Occasional teachers, who used to be essential for the operation of the network, lost their contracts during the pandemic, and part of the "O" category teachers, who worked as short-term replacements, also had their contracts terminated.3 With regard to professional status, 31 claimed to have more than one teaching position within the state network itself or in other educational networks; 81 worked at only one school, 28 of the respondents worked at two schools, ten teachers worked at three units, and two reported working at four or more schools; 29 of the totals said they performed other professional activities in addition to teaching, as shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1 – Category and professional status of the survey respondents.

Functional category	A (Regular) F (Tenured)		0 (Temporary)	V (Occasional)	
	76 (62.8%)	13 (10.7%)	32 (26.4%)	0.0 (0%)	
Do you have multiple positions?	Ye	es	No		
	31 (25.6%)		90 (74.4%)		
At how many schools do you work?	1	2	3	4 or more	
	81 (66.9%)	28 (23.1%)	10 (8.3%)	2 (1.7%)	
Do you perform another paid activity?	Yes		No		
	29 (24%)		92 (76%)		

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The use of different research techniques in the two stages of the fieldwork, interviews and use-of-time diaries before the start of the pandemic, and a questionnaire applied during the remote-work period, with a focus on appre-

³ Requests were made, via the Consumer Information Service [Serviço de Informação ao Consumidor] (SIC), for data on the number of temporary contracts terminated while the emergency remote teaching model was in force in São Paulo, but no response was obtained with the systematization of these numbers.

hending how time is spent, brought important data for investigating the effects of emergency remote teaching on the workload and on the free time of teaching workers in the education network in question. It is noteworthy that all stages of the research were approved by the Research Ethics Committee under CAAE No. 44670315.1.0000.5404.

TEACHING WORK AND THE PANDEMIC: NEW TECHNOLOGIES, OLD DILEMMAS

The debate and controversies around the implications of technological progress on work and on the set of social relations follow the economic, political, sociological, and philosophical thinking. The changes brought about by the Industrial Revolution from the 18th century onwards, with the advent of electricity, as well as Taylorist and Fordist management techniques, in the mid-19th and 20th centuries, and with technological innovations around productive restructuring as of the 1970s, impacted all dimensions of social life in a profound way and gave rise to numerous analyses on the relationship between technology and its ability to save work power and "liberate" both male and female workers, in the sense of even ensuring them more free time (Antunes, 2020).

From classic political economy and liberalism thinkers, such as Adam Smith (1996), to theorists defending greater State intervention in the economy, such as John Maynard Keynes, the dominant reflections on these processes, in general, carried positive interpretations of "technical progress" and of increased productivity as allies for the development of societies and for the improvement of human life conditions. In an essay entitled "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren", originally published in 1930, Keynes (1984) predicted that, in about 100 years (a period close to our current historical time), technological development, aligned with capital accumulation, would enable such a degree of increase in productivity that human beings would be freed from the burden of the labor activity to guarantee immediate survival and the most basic needs. According to this projection, no more than 15 hours a week dedicated to work would be necessary; humanity would finally live the time of freedom and could engage in activities that would guarantee a meaning to life (Keynes, 1984).

In his radical critique of capitalism, Karl Marx (2017, p. 445, our translation) announced that, in this mode of production, the machine "is a means for producing surplus value", and that, therefore, the constant revolutionizing of the capitalist productive forces never has the aim of satisfying human needs or relieving work effort, but rather increasing the surplus part of work hours and guaranteeing more conditions for extracting surplus value, both in its relative form, marked by the intensification of work, and in its absolute form, with extended work hours. Because capital can never completely dispense with living labor, since labor power is the only commodity that generates value, the tendency to replace workers with machines using new, more productive technologies is combined, in general, with another tendency for extending work hours.

The contemporary capitalism-development phase brings with it an acceleration of the pace of technological innovations, especially through the widespread incorporation of ICT, of digital, robotized machinery, and artificial intelligence in the various branches of industrial and agricultural production, as well as services. The dynamics of flexible accumulation, expanding around the world at the end of the 20th century, was boosted in the 21st century by the need for capital to respond to its own crisis and resume accumulation rates. The increments of the internet and digital platforms promoted a quality leap in productivity levels with a view to driving the extraction of surplus value and increasing profit rates. This process goes hand in hand with the intensification, precarization, flexibilization and deregulation of labor, deepening the volume of unemployment and the explosion of labor relations subjected to degrading conditions as an "alternative" to guarantee some income. There is a complexification of the relationship between living labor and dead labor, incorporated into the digital-machinic, framework and articulated with a brutal advance on contracts, wages, rights, living conditions and the work hours of male and female workers, the greatest example of which is the rapid growth of the uberization phenomenon (Antunes, 2018; 2020; Venco, 2019; Silva, 2020).

Maximizing the productivity of labor does not, by any means, contradict the extension of work hours; the technologies subsumed to capital save socially necessary labor, but allow expanding surplus labor, which renders workers permanently available to carry out labor activities. The boundaries of work and non-workspace and time become increasingly fluid and less delimited. For Dal Rosso (2008, p. 71, our translation), "Free time, non-work time, is then swallowed up by work. Labor-saving technology is failing to liberate those who work."

Mediation by digital technology corresponds to a core element of the paradigm of relations between labor and capital in the 21st century and oftentimes appears as a means for conferring a virtuous, progressive, and modernizing "varnish" to acute levels of labor exploitation and precariousness (Dal Rosso, 2008; Antunes, 2018).

In opposition to the complete elimination of labor by the digital-informational machinery, we are witnessing the advent and monumental expansion of the new proletariat of the digital age, whose jobs, more or less intermittent, more or less constant, have gained new impetus with the ICTs, which connect, through cell phones, the most different modalities of work. Therefore, instead of the end of work in the digital age, we are experiencing the exponential growth of the new service proletariat, a global variant of what can be called digital slavery in the 21st century. (Antunes, 2018, p. 35, our translation)

The changes and problems of education, of the school form in the pandemic, and of the teaching work processes need to be analyzed, in this way, in the light of the metamorphoses that take place in the contemporary world of labor (Minto, 2021). The use of technology and the political orientation to the use of digital

platforms in education, driven by the emergence of the so-called industry 4.0⁴ and by the growth of private conglomerates in the "educational business", had already gained space in public networks across the country in recent years (Venco, 2019; Catini, 2020; Silva, 2020). It is no wonder that the use of the term "Education 4.0" has grown in the literature that discusses the impacts of technological advancement in school (Veras and Rasquilha, 2019; Oliveira and Souza, 2020; Mometi, 2020). According to Barreto (2012), ICT, formulated and implemented with the objective of increasing productivity and profit, were appropriated or "recontextualized" in order to be used in education, with strong implications on the conception of pedagogical processes, the purpose of the school, and the work of teachers.

Teaching work has been completely reshaped in the face of this new education configuration and of the dynamics of capital even before the advent of the pandemic. Some axes of these modifications are very directly articulated with the transformations in the labor world on a global scale, at the time of productive restructuring, neoliberalism, and flexible accumulation. Thus, instability, a plurality of types of contracts, diffusion of temporary workers, flexibilization, increase in work hours (accumulation of roles), salary squeeze, variable remuneration (especially in the case of occasional teachers, who are paid per class taught), and policies on goal-based bonuses are characteristics that have been present for years in the reality of teachers in the state education network of São Paulo (Venco; 2016; Barbosa *et al.*, 2020; Silva, 2020).

Other marks of the reconfigurations in teachers' dynamics have to do with the specificities of educational work, in an accentuated pace of de-intellectualization, devaluation, parcelization, ideological and pedagogical control and — why not? — automation (Evangelista, 2017). As teaching handouts and technological resources gain centrality in educational policies and in the school routine, the work of teachers has been simplified, mechanized, and reduced to that of mere executors of methods, activities and platforms, which are built, to a large extent, from the expropriation of historically constructed teaching knowledge. According to Catini (2020, p. 7, our translation):

In addition to the large-scale expansion of labor productivity, the introduction of technology brings about a new division of labor involving students, tutors, brokers, etc. Labor is parceled out, and each male and female worker is expropriated of knowledge about the totality of the process and the outcome of labor.

For Minto (2021, p. 141, our translation), the incorporation of digital and informational technology in education is proclaimed, in general, as "neutral" and an expression of the "future", revealing the "fetishism produced by new technologies". Freitas (2018, p. 105, our translation) also draws attention to the fetishism

⁴ Industry 4.0 can be interpreted as a technical integration of physical and cybernetic systems in production, in logistics, in the use of the "internet of things" in services and industrial processes, including the consequences for the value creation process and for the organization of labor. (Antunes, 2018)

surrounding these instruments and conceives the education model emerging from this context as "neotechnicism".

This is the new face of technicism, which is now preparing to present itself as 'online learning platforms' and 'custom platforms', with adaptive technologies and 'embedded evaluation', in a process that expropriates the living labor of the teaching profession and transposes it as dead labor inside printed manuals and/ or learning platforms.

The covid-19 pandemic, therefore, accelerated, deepened, and placed on a new level the trends that were already underway in recent educational reforms, such as the privatization of education and the centrality of the means for educating to the detriment of content, by postulating a massive insertion of technologies as the "only way out" in the face of the pandemic context. These changes are accompanied by the precarization of teaching work, which goes through, as will be discussed next, a process that empties the role of teachers and a sudden increase in work hours.

EMPTYING OF THE ROLE AND INCREASE IN TEACHING WORK **HOURS**

In the state of São Paulo, the emergency remote teaching model, organized around platforms linked to CMSP, has significantly reshaped teaching work. According to the platform's official website (São Paulo, 2021, n. p., our translation),

[...] the SEDUC-SP launched the SP Media Center [Centro de Mídias SP], a platform composed of two open digital channels and an application that allows access to different types of content for teachers and students in the state education network, with data sponsored by São Paulo's state government. The SP Media Center aims to contribute to the training of professionals in the network and expand the provision of a technology-mediated education to students, in an innovative and quality way, making it possible to broaden the horizons of traditional education.

"Traditional teaching", as the São Paulo State Education Department call, would be that which is exclusively face-to-face and in which the work of both male and female teachers would have a prominent position in the teaching-learning process. In the "technology-mediated education" model, a teacher's role was reformulated. A few dozen teachers who participated in a selection process began to teach recorded classes, which should be accessed by all students; while the approximately 190 thousand teachers in the state network were involved in the development of remote activities for the classes to which they were linked, such as delivering work plans, reports, grades, and results, based on the reality of remote work (São Paulo, 2020).

Under such constraints, we can reflect that teaching work ceases to be a process that involves planning, preparation, execution, monitoring, and evaluation

to become a compilation of systematically renewed activities (even if there is no expressive feedback from students in relation to the activity developed previously), proposal of tasks that had already been prepared and stored on digital platforms, a session for doubts about content addressed out of the teacher-student dynamics, demands and supervision in order to ensure that students perform technical activities that were not built from the interaction between teachers and their classes. Thus, the fundamental activities in the teaching-learning relationship that have been historically formulated and carried out by teachers are fragmented and outsourced to the application, through platforms and other didactic and technological resources. Knowledge and mastery of the entire pedagogical process then vanish.

This does not mean that this technological mediation is solely or primarily responsible for the emptying of teaching work. Since the last decade of the 20th century, there has been a process of reducing a teacher's job to a technical role, which aims to fit educational objectives into the requirements of the market economy (Souza, 1999). In SEDUC-SP, policies such as the Promotion System for Teaching Staff Members, merit evaluation, Bonus for Results, the São Paulo State Education Development Index [Desenvolvimento da Educação do Estado de São Paulo] (IDESP), and the São Paulo Faz Escola program itself, which led to the implementation of the teaching material entitled "Teacher's Notebooks" and "Student's Notebooks", and the recent implementation of the Inova Educação program and the National Common Curricular Base [Base Nacional Comum Curricular] (BNCC) are part of this process and already expressed the attempt to control the work of teachers and led to the latter's subsequent loss of autonomy.⁵ However, the structuring around CMSP established a new downgrading and emptying of the role, by which teachers were placed in an extremely passive position before the school and the very educational process (São Paulo, 2021).

The labor simplification process, according to Minto (2021), increasingly facilitates the replacement of a teacher's living labor by technological and digital apparatuses, that is, by dead labor. As stated,

[...] a change that, little by little, equates teaching work with other forms of work that are increasingly devoid of any guarantees and rights and that, additionally, have their content modified in order to meet the demands of 'modernity': indistinction between work time and life time; loss of work specificity, requiring one to be available to 'fill in gaps'; need for one to set their own working conditions, paying for them with the meager income they enjoy. (Minto, 2021, p. 142, our translation)

The emptying and automation of teaching work, however, does not lead to a reduction in work hours; on the contrary, the time dedicated to work increases and becomes saturated by time-consuming activities over which teachers have less and less control and which, therefore, are endowed with less pedagogical and educational meaning.

⁵ In addition to the High School Reform, the implementation of which took place after the writing of this article.

The immanent law of capitalist production extends and intensifies one's work hours. Nonetheless, in order to contain the "vampire thirst" of capital for "the living blood of labor" (Marx, 2017, p. 329, our translation), the demand for a delimitation of the work hours considered normal was one of the first goals of the working class's struggles since the beginning of capitalism and spanned centuries. In the context of the particularities of teaching work in the state network, which trains children and adolescents to work under the capitalist dynamics, the struggle to limit work hours has been going on for a long time and has as one of its milestones the national law on teaching wage floor — Law No. 11.738, of July 16, 2008 (Brasil, 2008) —, which sets a minimum compensation and establishes the need for 1/3 of the work hours to be completed with extra-class tasks. During the covid-19 pandemic and the duration of remote teaching, the state of São Paulo did not comply with legal requirements and started to pay only one bonus for teachers with a salary below the wage floor, in addition to considering teaching work hours on an hour/minute, rather than an hour/class basis.6

A fact showing that the tendency to excessive work hours was already present before the implementation of emergency remote teaching. The systematization of the work hours recorded in the diaries on the use of time, five years before the covid-19 pandemic, already showed that teachers in all functional categories were working longer than what was reported in the interviews and then what was determined as to their official work hours. It is no wonder that 21 of the 29 interviewed teachers considered their work hours to be excessive. One of the reasons for this, and a direct result of precarization and low compensation, was the widespread practice of holding more than one position.

I have two jobs as a way to increase my income, that's why I work more hours. The vast majority of the teachers, as a way to make more money, end up looking for other schools, other places [...]. (Interviewed teacher 22, Nov. 2015)

In addition to an accumulation of positions, the extra work taken to the domestic environment is also a practice that has accompanied teaching work for

As of May 30, 2022, after this research was conducted and the article was submitted, the so-called "new teaching career" came into force, instituted by Complementary Law 1374/2022 (São Paulo, 2022), which, among other measures to reformulate the position and career plan of São Paulo state's teaching professionals, changed the work hours of temporary teachers and of regular ones who adopt the new proposal, requiring that the work hours that used to be completed outside the school and intended for Pedagogical-Work Classes in Free Choice Locations [Aulas de Trabalho Pedagógico em Local de Livre Escolha] (ATPL) be now completed inside the school unit, as they were recategorized as Diversified Pedagogical Activities [Atividades Pedagógicas Diversificadas] (APD). In addition to prolonging permanence at school and making lesson preparation times more flexible, the "new career" began to consider a teacher's wage as "subsidy" instead of "salary" and removed acquired rights, such as five-year and six-month payments.

years and that contributes considerably to excessive work hours, as reported in the interview excerpt below:

A lot, a lot! If you don't take work home, you can't develop your activities. Thus, the state [SEDUC-SP] provides that part of the service be done at home, but that's not enough [...]. Of course, a teacher who has more time plans their classes faster than I do. But in my case, there's a number of hours outside the period that we do at school, this work that we take home is much greater than the number of hours we are supposed to complete. (Interviewed teacher 5, Nov. 2015)

Rodrigues *et al.* (2020) reported an extension of teaching work hours due to a pressure for productivity goals to be met. Work, even before the pandemic, had already become part of a teacher's weekends, breaks and interruption periods in the school year. In the same sense, Souza *et al.* (2020) highlight that the emergency remote teaching model through digital platforms has changed the work routine of teachers at different educational levels and intensified the use of technology. The boundaries between work and non-work time ceased to exist, which forced various improvisations in domestic and family life.

Despite the history of long work hours among male and female teachers in SEDUC-SP, the survey carried out by means of the questionnaires, in 2020, showed a generalized increase in overload and work hours comparing the periods before and after the pandemic. Prior to the start of remote work, 53 teachers (43.8%) used to perform teaching-related activities on the weekends always or frequently, whereas, in the remote period, this number rose to 93 teachers (76.8%). On all shifts — morning, afternoon, evening, including early morning —, the number of teachers reporting school activities being done under the remote model grew. Moreover, it was possible to identify an increase in work hours: for 97 teachers (80.2%), the length of their work time increased during the pandemic;⁷ for 20 (16.5%), it remained the same; while for only four (3.3%), it decreased. A total of 85 teachers, 70.3% of the participants, worked eight hours or more per day (40 hours or more per week, on average). Among these, 36 (29.8%) said they worked between 10 and 11 hours a day, and 19 teachers (15.7%) said they worked 12 or more hours every day, according to Chart 2.

⁷ The research organized by the Study Group on Educational Policy and Teaching Work of the Federal University of Minas Gerais [Grupo de Estudos sobre Política Educacional e Trabalho Docente da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais] (GESTRADO/UFMG), in partnership with the National Confederation of Workers in Education [Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação] (CNTE), with public school teachers across the country, reported that 82.4% of those who were carrying out non-face-to-face activities noticed an increase in their work hours. It is also worth noting that this same survey reported that 89% of the teaching workers had no experience with remote teaching (GESTRADO, 2020).

Chart 2 – Work hours before and during the pandemic.

	Before the pandemic			During the pandemic				
Average weekly work hours	12 h	24 h	30 h	40 h or more	12 h	24 h	30 h	40 h or more
	9 (7.2%)	21 (16.9%)	22 (17.7%)	72 (58.1%)	4 (3.3%)	9 (7.4%)	23 (19.0%)	85 (70.3%)
As for work length before and after the pandemic, have your work hours:					Increased	Remained the same	Decreased	I cannot tell
					97 (80.2%)	20 (16.5%)	4 (3.3%)	0 (0.0%)
When do you usually work	Morning	Afternoon	Night	Early morning	Morning	Afternoon	Night	Early morning
during the day (as to lesson preparation)?	102 (84.3%)	106 (87.6%)	50 (41.3%)	7 (5.8%)	113 (93.4%)	115 (95.0%)	98 (81.0%)	22 (18.2%)
Do you do teaching-	Always	Often	A few times	Never	Always	Often	A few times	Never
related work on the weekends?	16 (13.2%)	37 (30.6%)	56 (46.3%)	12 (9.9%)	47 (38.8%)	46 (38.0%)	22 (18.2%)	6 (5%)

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

A crucial point about the São Paulo state government's emergency remote teaching model was the strict control over a teacher's work time, described not only in the traditional Class Diaries and weekly reports, but now accounted for by the application installed on each teacher's personal cell phone (São Paulo, 2021), which records every minute that the worker stayed connected and then generates statistics on each teacher's attendance for school management and for the Education Department itself. Attendance control through technology comes along with threats of pay cuts, of absences being recorded, and breach of contract, in the case of temporary teachers, if they are not "logged in" for long enough to the platform.

There is thus an advance towards algorithmic management, a work model with the same managerial principles that guide the operation of digital platforms and which serve as the basis for new frontiers of exploitation and domination over the labor activity (Amorim and Moda, 2019). If the reality of teaching work in SEDUC-SP was already marked by the situation of "quasi-uberization" (Venco, 2019), with precarious and flexible forms of hiring, the reality of emergency remote teaching and attendance control using technology expands, for the entire category, a form of organization and control in which teachers have to be available for work at all times.

This availability is reinforced by frequent access to messaging applications, such as WhatsApp. Widespread for the exercise of the teaching activity during the pandemic, these apps, always linked to one's phone number, require that a

teacher's contact, oftentimes private, be made available both to school management and to all students and guardians. This situation reinforces the full-time availability of male and female teachers for school demands and causes the workspace and time boundaries, and other dimensions of life, to be obliterated, with an atrocious advance of work on the other dimensions of everyday life, as discussed by Minto (2021).

REMOTE TEACHING WORK: EXPOPRIATION OF LIFE

The impacts of remote work for teachers are not limited to changes in the period that was usually worked and the significant increase in work hours. As we understand labor as a central category for human relations, the other spheres of a teacher's daily life will be impacted by the changes that occur during their work hours. From this perspective, it is observed, from the questionnaires, that, in addition to working more hours and with new tools, 89.1% of the teachers who participated in the survey were unable to "disconnect" from work, never or just for a few times, after finishing their activities, as shown in Chart 3.

Chart 3 – Work-related disconnection, free time, and leisure satisfaction.

Can you "disconnect" from	Always	Often	A few times	Never
work (not think about it) after finishing your activities?	1 (0.8%)	12 (10%)	73 (60.8%)	34 (28.3%)
During the pandemic, would	Increased	Remains the same	Decreased	I cannot tell
you say that your free time:	9 (7.4%)	12 (9.9%)	95 (78.5%)	5 (4.1%)
From a scale of zero to ten, what	0 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 8	9 to 10
is your level of satisfaction with your leisure activities?	49 (40.5%)	58 (47.9%)	12 (10.0%)	2 (1.6%)
Is there any leisure activity you	Yes		No	
would like to do in your free time, but which you do not do?	117	(96.7%)	4 (3.3%)	

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The total of 89.1% of teachers who were unable to disconnect from work in the present research is almost double comparing it with the survey conducted by the Institute of Applied Economic Research [Instituto de Pesquisa Econômica Aplicada] (IPEA) within the scope of the Social Perception Indicators System [Sistema de Indicadores de Percepção Social] (SIPS), which showed that 45.4% of the respondents, in a sample made up of the economically active population, could not disconnect from work (Campos, 2012). This condition among teachers is linked to the reality of remote work and the advancement of ICT, but also to the very pressures of capital, which seek to naturalize the request for the labor activity to be carried out even outside workplaces and work time; a lack of the right to disconnect from work, accentuated by the remote model, leads to a dynamic of life in which other social times are invaded by the work sphere (Cardoso, 2017).

[...] if the use of ICTs appears, initially, anchored on a liberating discourse, we see that technological advancement, while allowing work to be done at a long distance, implies some control in the same way, that is, through "online" connection allied to work goals and objectives. (*ibidem*, p. 71-72, our translation)

The right to disconnect concerns a worker's own health and, above all, their right to other dimensions of life that are manifested in their non-work time (Souto Maior, 2003). On the opposite direction, remote work has not exacerbated only the trends of objective precariousness, that is, it was possible to observe the growth of the subjective dimension of precariousness. It is not just about a precariousness restricted to flexible forms of hiring, or to the more general aspects of the degradation of teaching work, since remote work has affected several functional categories in SEDUC-SP as a whole. After all, for Linhart (2014), as managerialism advances, this form of precariousness also reaches public service itself and those with stable jobs.

Subjective precariousness can be understood as:

[...] the feeling of not being "at home" at work, of not being able to trust your professional routines, your networks, the knowledge and skills accumulated thanks to experience or passed on by older ones; it is the feeling of not mastering your own work and having to constantly make an effort to adapt, to achieve the established objectives [...] It is the feeling of isolation and abandonment. It is also a loss of self-esteem, which is linked to the feeling of not fully mastering the job, of not being up to the task, of doing a bad job, of not being confident in taking on your position [...]. The result is oftentimes fear, anxiety, a sensation of insecurity (commodiously called stress). (Linhart, 2014, p. 46, our translation)

The subjective manifestations of precariousness are not new to the remote work resulting from the covid-19 pandemic. As already pointed out by Venco and Rigolon (2014), this form of precariousness is a striking trait among teaching workers and increases as the managerial logics in SEDUC-SP deepens. However, it is possible to state that constitutive elements of subjective precariousness, such as the fact of not being able to rely on professional routines; the feeling of not mastering the job; the need to constantly strive to meet objectives; and the very feeling of isolation and abandonment have been raised to another level after the implementation of emergency remote teaching. There is, therefore, the establishment of a perverse relationship for teachers between their inability to disconnect from work and subjective precariousness. Thus, the impossibility of teachers adapting entirely to the uncertainties of remote work reflects, in addition to a longer time spent working, in a constant mental connection with this activity.

While the teaching reality is taken over by objective and subjective precariousness, it is to be expected that precariousness is extrapolated to the other dimensions of life, such as free time and leisure. Even before the covid-19 pandemic and the implementation of emergency remote teaching, Silvestre and Amaral (2019)

already observed the scarce free time and elements of precariousness in the leisure of teachers in the São Paulo state network, with this precariousness being always greater among teachers with unstable work regimes. The fact is that long work hours and low wages have always constituted barriers to leisure experiences and practices among teachers in SEDUC-SP.

No, I can't, we can never do it, because we don't have much time, for example, forty hours a week, and you have two positions, you can't have time available, you don't have money to do everything you'd like, so no! (Interviewed teacher 3, October 2015)

The reality of remote work further restricted the dimensions of free time and leisure, which limited the dimensions of life for teachers in all functional categories. Of the 121 respondents, 95 teachers (78.5%) stated that their free time decreased from the moment they began to work remotely. With regard to satisfaction with leisure activities, on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means totally dissatisfied, and 10 means totally satisfied, 89 teachers (73.5%) have a level of satisfaction with the leisure activities in which they engage lower than 5, according to data in Chart 3.

This dissatisfaction was reflected in the answers to the questionnaires. In total, an expressive number of 117 teachers (96.7%) said that they do not engage in the activities they would like to do in their free time. The pandemic scenario itself corresponds to a limiting context for leisure practices. However, in addition to the pandemic, a lack of time and of financial conditions are among the main alleged reasons why desired activities are not carried out.

For Cantor (2019), there is an expropriation of time that extends to all areas of life, and not only to the dimension of the factory environment, which is rigidly coordinated by chronometers and the "time is money" disciplinary motto in the early days of industrial capitalism. If the dynamics of capitalist accumulation is fundamentally based on absorbing the "greatest possible amount of surplus labor" (Marx, 2017, p. 307, our translation), the set of spheres of social life is subsumed to this imperative by the insatiable creation of surplus value. The movement of capital and its yearning for accumulation are totalizing, guided by unmeasured expansion and by the domination of all times and spaces. According to Cantor (2019, p. 47), in the contemporary world, the flexibilization of labor and the dissemination of new information technologies under the command of capital, such as the internet itself and cell phones, enable a "generalization of the expropriation of time"; the time for rest, eating, leisure, and culture is increasingly dominated by and subordinated to the accelerated, quantitative logic of capitalist production.

In summary, with the universalization of capitalism, what we are experiencing today is the full "subsumption of life to capital", which means that all aspects of life have been commodified and subjected to the tyranny of abstract time. In line with this assumption, capital broke the distance that separated free time, or life time, from work time. (Cantor, 2019, p. 48, our translation)

Among the investigated teachers, it was possible to identify a reduction in their free time, in addition to teaching-related work shifts being increasingly predominant in the evening, early morning and on weekends. In this sense, the trends observed from the implementation of remote work among teachers point to a dynamic of expropriation of life, with a greater lack of definition between work time and free time, and with a clear advance of work time on the other dimensions of everyday life.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

In a moment of impressive and unprecedented escalation of technological innovations and their massive application to school dynamics, the labor relations of both male and female teachers in the state education network of São Paulo have gone through a pronounced process of precarization, flexibilization, managerialism, and extension of work hours in recent years, with the intensification of this process during emergency remote teaching as a result of the covid-19 pandemic. The centrality of changes in legislation and the intensification of the use of ICT in educational policies during the pandemic period have driven the movement of expropriating teaching knowledge, which gave rise to learning platforms and digital teaching resources. Living labor was progressively replaced by dead labor, parceled out, with simplification, mechanization and automation of teaching work, in combination with an increase in overload and work hours compared to those referring to the period prior to the pandemic.

This scenario was attested by an increase in worked hours, including on shifts and days of the week when professional activities would not be carried out frequently before the pandemic. There is a tendency to speed up the pace and increase the amount of teaching work. The worsening of subjective precariousness within this segment is also evident, which is corroborated by less free time, by frustration and dissatisfaction with leisure activities, by exhaustion and fatigue revealed through the situation of a routine that is exhaustively consumed by work.

In this way, the myths are broken: any supposed "liberating", "neutral" and "positive" character of the technologies subsumed to capitalist accumulation falls to the ground, and so do the common-sense and depreciation discourses that chant that teachers worked less or, worse, did not even work at all during the pandemic. Under the so-called "technology-mediated education" model, which had its implementation sped up at a time of unfortunate health calamity, teachers in the state network of São Paulo worked longer hours and shifts and had less free time, including to mourn their dead.

The strength of the impacts caused by the intensive use of ICT on education and by an increase in teachers' work hours with the remote teaching model continues after the return to face-to-face classes in the state network. Beyond the exhaustion and discouragement of the category, the proposition of policies aimed at prolonging and increasing control over teachers' work hours has intensified, such as the "new teaching career", decreed by the then governor João Dória on March 30, 2022, and the expansion of the schools comprehended by the Full-Time Education Program [Programa de Ensino Integral] (PEI).

As a gap for future research, it is worth investigating whether the scenario of extended teaching work hours during remote teaching has favored the enactment of measures that extend them after the face-to-face return. There is also a need for more investigations to analyze the impact of intensifying the use of technologies in the long term on the boundaries between work and non-workspace and time for teachers in different states and contexts. Finally, attention is drawn to more research analyzing the advancement of privatization and the use of ICT in this new phase of capital accumulation, at a time of constant changes in the education field and marked social inequality.

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