

The Educational Policy 'São Paulo Faz Escola' in Rural Education

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ABSTRACT – The Educational Policy 'São Paulo Faz Escola' in Rural Education. This paper aimed to analyze the contradictions and implications on the organization of school work in the process of implementing the curriculum "São Paulo Faz Escola", in a rural school, in the region of Pontal do Paranapanema, Brazil. Anchored on the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the method of dialectical historical materialism, bibliographical, documental, and empirical research was used. The results demonstrated that the implementation of the curriculum led to a remodeling in the organization of school work towards the restriction of school and teacher autonomy in decisions about the direction of the school, by disregarding the specificities of subjects who live from/in the countryside.

Keywords: Educational Policies. Rural Education. 'São Paulo Faz Escola' Program. Organization of Work at School.

RESUMO – A Política Educacional 'São Paulo Faz Escola' na Educação do Campo. Objetivou-se analisar as contradições e as implicações na organização do trabalho escolar no processo de implantação do currículo "São Paulo Faz Escola", em uma escola do campo, na região do Pontal do Paranapanema. A ancorada nos pressupostos epistemológicos e ontológicos do método do materialismo histórico-dialético, recorreu-se à pesquisa bibliográfica, documental e empírica. Os resultados revelaram que a implantação do currículo ocasionou a remodelação na organização do trabalho escolar em direção à restrição da autonomia escolar e docente nas decisões sobre os rumos da escola, ao desconsiderar as especificidades dos sujeitos que vivem do/no campo. **Palavras-chave: Políticas Educacionais. Educação do Campo. Programa "São Paulo Faz Escola". Organização do Trabalho na Escola.**

Introduction

Historically, in Brazil, education in rural contexts has culminated in the denial and marginalization of the rights of rural populations (Bezerra; Silva, 2018; Paula, 2013). Given the context of inequality and social and economic marginalization, the struggle for rural education was established based on educational experiences developed outside the government and its respective education networks¹.

In the current investigation², it is worth noting that the first experiences came from the demand and struggle of the Social Movements of the Countryside, while still in the settlement phase (Caldart, 2009; Camini, 2009). As Antonio and Lucini (2007), Casagrande (2007), and Oliveira (2022) rightly point out, the countryside is characterized by an ethnic, cultural, social, and organizational diversity of subjects who, from the perspective of rural education, must be seen as subjects with rights, in addition to their situation of knowledge and culture being respected.

From this perspective, it should be mentioned that rural education emerges from the context of struggles and socio-historical demands of social movements, especially the Landless Workers' Movement (MST), through the desires and needs of rural populations, in their broadest sense, in addition to those related to work, knowledge, culture, and social struggles, as well as demands between class dispute projects, and also between agricultural issues.

According to Caldart (2009), the concept of rural education, adopted in this study, encompasses the perspective of an education focused on real life and the multiple relationships experienced by rural subjects. In addition, education has been a priority in the MST's work since its inception, a dimension expressed in the struggle for the universalization of the right to a quality public school, from childhood to university (MST, 2022). In the *Dictionary of Rural Education*, the Movement's Pedagogy takes the formative process of landless individuals beyond themselves and as the object of pedagogy (Caldart, 2012).

When analyzing the historical trajectory of the MST school education, since its genesis, at least three meanings of the movement's presence in schools stand out, namely:

- a) Landless families mobilized for the right to school, in the fight for a school that might make sense and make a difference in the lives of rural people;
- b) The MST, as a mass social organization, pressured by the mobilization of families and teachers, took upon itself to assume the task of organizing and articulating a specific proposal for the schools gained and, above all, of training educators in this perspective;
- c) The MST incorporated into its dynamics the defense that camps and settlements linked to this social movement should have schools (Cardart, 2012).

As an expression of tension with public authorities to guarantee the right to education, social movements influenced educational policies for rural populations (Braun, 2021; Casagrande, 2007). According to Bezerra and Silva (2018, p. 466), the “[...] Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education No. 9,394/96 (LDB 9,394/96, 1996) and National Movement for Basic Education in the Countryside” in 1998 contributed to the maturation of the concept of Rural Education as a right and as a public policy.

LDB No. 9,394/96 recognizes the diversity and uniqueness of the countryside based on the conception of an education that ensures curricular content, methodology, proper school organization (calendar), and adaptation to the nature of work in rural areas (Brasil, 1996).

In this context, in 1997, the movement for Rural Education emerged on the country's political agenda, following the 1st National Meeting of Agrarian Reform Educators (ENERA), an occasion on which concrete possibilities for creating a school for rural populations were developed (Bezerra; Silva, 2018; Caldart, 2009; Leite, 2017).

Ferreira (2015) and Silva (2008) highlight that the Movement for Rural Education gained notoriety in 1998, after the 1st National Conference for Basic Rural Education, in Luziânia-GO. In this regard, it is worth highlighting Resolution CNE/CEB No. 1, of April 3, 2002, which established the Operational Guidelines for Basic Education in Rural Schools, and recognized that social life and the use of rural space are fundamental to the diversity and identity of rural workers. Furthermore, the approval of complementary guidelines for the development of public policies to provide basic education in rural areas occurred amidst the struggle for the realization of the right to education, as exemplified by Resolution No. 2 of April 28, 2008 (Brasil, 2008).

The recovery of actions and programs essential to Rural Education, includes Decree No. 7,352/2010 (Brazil, 2010), which provides for the Rural Education Policy and the National Education Program in Agrarian Reform (Pronera). Through this, educational projects were developed aimed at beneficiaries of the Agrarian Reform, legally based on article 205 of the Federal Constitution (Rodrigues; Silva, 2016). In addition, as a result of these struggles and political articulations, the National Rural Education Program (Pronacampo) was created, linked to SECADI, in 2012 (Bezerra; Silva, 2018).

Oliveira, Gonçalves, Melo, Fardin and Mill (2022, p. 20) show that, in order to think about rural education, one must start from the assumption of an “[...] education that modifies both pedagogical practices, the curriculum and teacher training, and professional and social qualifications, being aimed at men and women in the countryside as the main social actors”.

Caldart (2012), Leite (2017), Ribeiro (2013), Ribeiro and Paraíso (2015), and Werlang and Pereira (2021) highlight that the Pedagogy of Movement assumes an extremely important role for the working class, especially because it constitutes a specific time and space of sociocul-

tural processes that significantly influence the formation and strengthening of the subjects involved in the process.

According to Caldart (2012), the pedagogical components contemplated by the Pedagogy of Movement are based on the struggle, organization, collectivity, land, work, agroecology, culture, and history of the subjects. Regarding the philosophical principles of education, in the MST (1996, p. 10), the following stand out:

- 1st) Education for social transformation. Class education, massive, organic to the MST, open to the world, focused on action, open to the new.
- 2nd) Education for work and cooperation.
- 3rd) Education focused on the various dimensions of the human person.
- 4th) Education with/for humanist and socialist values.
- 5th) Education as a permanent process of human formation/transformation.

Currently, the MST is organized in 24 federative states, in the five regions of Brazil, with 450 thousand families having conquered land through the struggle and organization of workers, in opposition to the conservative logic of the State and the agrarian structure in the country, today represented by agribusiness entrepreneurs (MST, 2022).

It is understood that it was in the process of fighting for land, based on organized actions by the MST, that the first sociocultural and educational elements emerged, capable of contributing in a substantial and profound way to the construction of organized learning based on a concrete reality. This learning, in turn, became a cultural identity, which characterizes the landless as subjects able to transform their own history, especially to remake themselves as rural subjects (Caldart, 2009; Machado, 2012).

From this perspective, Caldart (2012) points out that, when analyzing current Brazilian society and the school model that the Brazilian elite propose for the working class, such logic is opposed to the pedagogy of the movement. The MST increasingly insists on integral human formation, while contemporary schools continue to subordinate themselves to the immediacy of the market³, by denying the vaunted institutional autonomy and claim to universality.

It is worth noting that the Pontal do Paranapanema region, located in the state of São Paulo, the context of the school discussed in this article, currently has more than seven thousand settled families and the largest concentration of schools in settlement areas in Brazil, being the focus of training and qualification courses through public policies, including companies linked to agribusiness in the region, such as Odebrecht (MST, 2021).

Educational initiatives in the Pontal do Paranapanema region convey the dispute over training projects. On the one hand, there are actions that enable the involvement of collectives from universities, the MST Education Sector, the Territorial Development Board, munic-

ipal/state public authorities, and unions and professionals working in the municipal and state education systems, in defense of the collective construction of rural education. On the other hand, there is the movement of companies linked to agribusiness, which serve the interests of capital, in the training of the workforce and in the dissemination of political and ideological values in tune with the market perspective, such as the distribution of teaching materials to elementary and high school students, as well as in the provision of continuing education for teachers (Gonzaga; Francisco; Alaniz, 2021).

Thus, it is important to emphasize that the educational reforms promoted in official schools⁴ and in rural schools, from the mid-1990s onwards, aligned with neoliberal assumptions, resulted in, among other aspects, the implementation of the São Paulo State Curricular Proposal (PCESP) in 2008, entitled the “São Paulo Faz Escola” Program. The aforementioned program was part of a set of measures adopted for basic education, which contributed to the change in the daily routine of schools in the state education network during the period of its validity from 2008 to 2019⁵, in rural schools in the State of São Paulo.

Therefore, the current research aims to analyze the contradictions and implications in the organization of school work in the process of implementing the “São Paulo Faz Escola” curriculum, in a rural school, in the Pontal do Paranapanema region.

Method and Methodological Procedures

The current research is based on the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the historical-dialectical materialism method. Thus, it is necessary to understand the elements that make up two large philosophical categorical complexes of the method, namely: work as the foundation of social being and the scientific method of understanding concrete reality and its system of necessary mediations. For Marx (2016), knowledge is the result of the human process of domination, appropriation, and transformation of nature through work. For it to be included in the assumptions of materialist dialectics, it must be understood as rooted in the material and social reality produced by human subjects in cooperation.

Furthermore, Martins (2019) points out that research, from the aforementioned perspective, essentially looks at the social, historical, and cultural context of individuals, based on their human relationships for a transformation of society, since it seeks to understand the object in its totality, historicity, and complexity. The author agrees that the adoption of the historical-dialectical materialism method “[...] eliminates the need to adopt qualitative approaches to legitimize the scientific nature of its research methods, as it has an epistemology that is sufficiently elaborated for scientific work” (Martins, 2019, p. 25).

In view of the adopted perspective and the main objective of the proposed study, bibliographical, documentary, and empirical re-

search was used; the latter using the semi-structured interview technique and systematic observation in a public school in the countryside, in a municipality in the interior of the state of São Paulo.

It is worth highlighting that the research was carried out in a rural school (Escola do Campo), located in the municipality of Pontal do Paranapanema, in the interior of the state of São Paulo. Through a process of struggle and conquest by the settled residents, a school was created in and for the countryside that would meet the demands of their children with a view to access to and the right to education. The school serves the stages of Elementary Education, High School, and Youth and Adult Education (EJA). The choice of this school is justified:

- a) For having been gained by the struggle of settled families;
- b) For being located in an area with a significant number of rural settlements;
- c) Although located in a rural area, it reproduces a curriculum focused on the urban context, which does not consider the specificities of rural subjects.

The fight for Agrarian Reform in the Pontal do Paranapanema region resulted from the organization of settled families fighting for public schools for their children, such as the school under study. In fact, this school exclusively serves children of settlers in Elementary School (I and II) and High School, from the following areas: King Meat, Canaa, Sao Bento, Haroldina, Santa Apolonia, Estrela D'Alva, Santa Clara, Antonio Conselheiro, Paulo Freire, Arco-íris, Santana, Santa Cruz, and Alvorada. In addition, the region is made up of 117 rural settlements⁶, which include seven thousand rural families who live off food production, in an area of 170 thousand hectares of land collected by the Agrarian Reform (MST, 2021).

Regarding bibliographic research, we used the survey, selection, and analysis of specialized literature, consisting of scientific articles published in the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), in addition to theses and dissertations identified in the Theses and Dissertations Database of the Portal of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) and in the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD).

Studies with an analytical focus on the history of the struggle for land and/or education in Pontal do Paranapanema, and the Curriculum of the State of São Paulo were selected. In this process, the following intersection was adopted, with the help of the Boolean operator "AND": ("Rural Education do Campo" AND "Curriculum"). The inclusion and exclusion criteria for the works were: a) time frame 2003-2022, b) published in Portuguese. Table 1 was structured with the information obtained through this survey.

Table 1 – Theses, Dissertations and Articles in the Capes Theses and Dissertations Database, BDTD, and *Scielo*

Intersection	Time Frame	(T)*	(D)*	(A)*	Total	Selected	BDTD	CAPES Theses and Dissertations Bank	<i>Scielo</i>
Rural Education AND Curriculum	2003-2022	78	247	-	325	05	X		
		32	114	-	146	02		X	
		-	-	07	07	03			X
TOTAL					478	10			

Legend: *T = theses, D = dissertations, and A = articles.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Table 1 shows a total of 478 works found on the three platforms, which are considered collections of great support and/or reference for the national and international academic area. Five, two, and three academic productions were selected, respectively, from the BDTD, Capes Theses and Dissertations Bank, and Scielo that met the criteria and purposes of this investigation, made up of 05 master's dissertations (Braun, 2021; Durval, 2020; Leite, 2017; Paula, 2013; Silva, 2008), 02 doctoral theses (Casagrande, 2007; Ribeiro, 2013), and 03 scientific articles from Postgraduate Programs in Education (Antonio; Lucini, 2007; Ribeiro; Paraíso, 2015; Werlang; Pereira, 2021) were selected, totaling 10 academic productions, except for the dissertation that guided the current article.

The documentary analysis consisted of the survey, selection, and analysis of official documents related to the proposal of the “São Paulo Faz Escola” Program. These include the ordinances that define guidelines on the proposal and the steps that direct teachers in their teaching practice, such as the Curricular Proposal of the state of São Paulo (São Paulo, 2008b); the Curriculum of the State of São Paulo (São Paulo, 2010); Resolution SE No. 92 of December 19, 2007, which establishes guidelines for the curricular organization of Elementary and Secondary Education in state schools (São Paulo, 2007); the Goals Plan of the Curricular Proposal of the State of São Paulo (São Paulo, 2008a); and Resolution SE No. 76 of November 7, 2008, which provides for the implementation of the Curricular Proposal of the State of São Paulo for Elementary and Secondary Education in state schools (São Paulo, 2008c). In addition, documents related to public educational policy for rural education were discussed at the federal level, since there is no regulation in the state of São Paulo on the subject.

In addition, the school's management team was consulted about the documents related to the implementation of the “São Paulo

Faz Escola" Program Proposal, ordinances that define the guidelines on the new proposal, guidelines that regulate the actions of teachers and the school's pedagogical project. However, it was emphasized that the only guidelines that the school has and follows are those from the Teacher's Notebook (Currículo São Paulo Faz Escola), which contains learning situations and how teachers should work on the content in the classroom. Thus, in the current study, the survey and analysis of the documents mentioned above were found on the website of the Department of Education of the state of São Paulo.

In view of the above, we refer to Evangelista and Shiroma (2019, p. 84-85), given that documentary analysis provides an understanding of "[...] the content and meaning of what" is materialized in educational policies, that is, "they are sources that offer clues from which we can extract evidence of the capitalist project", in the hope of understanding its real determinations.

When detailing the fieldwork carried out at the school, aspects associated with infrastructure, the organization of school activities, the existence of projects focused on the specificity of the field, and/or other alternative projects to the official curriculum were considered. Due to the influence they have on defining the direction of rural education at a local level, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six teachers, a principal, and a pedagogical coordinator; totaling eight subjects. Table 2 presents the school professionals⁷ who participated in the research:

Table 2 – Profile of school professionals who participated in the research

Participants	Age	Education (graduation)	Training (specialization)	Teaching Experience	Periods in which they currently work	Schools where they work	Class groups attended per week	Number of students attended per week
P1	55	Mathematics and Physics	-	26 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	01	-	150
P2	25	Languages and Pedagogy	-	03 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	02	18	400
P3	45	Languages	Special Education	17 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	02	09	120
P4	45	Languages and Pedagogy	-	20 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	02	11	160
P5	47	Art and Pedagogy	Psychopedagogy	16 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	02	22	500
P6	49	Mathematics	-	25 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	01	06	130

EQG1	50	Pedagogy	-	3 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	-	-	-
EQG2	33	Physics and Biology	Territorial development	6-10 years	Morning, afternoon, and night	-	-	-

Source: Prepared by the authors.

As portrayed in the profile of the school's professionals, all teachers work daily, in three periods (morning, afternoon, and evening), in addition serving a high number of students weekly. Four professionals work in two schools, one of which is the school that is the object of our study.

It is important to quickly highlight that such data obtained regarding teaching working conditions reflect aspects of life, in relation to social, cultural, and economic issues, and that these workers experience precarious work, based on the intensification of their work (Pivezan; Dal Ri, 2019).

In the data analysis process, using the considerations of Galvão, Lavoura and Martins (2019, p. 64), it is emphasized that, “[...] the method, for Marx, is the expression of the logical movement of thought in different degrees of determination and development, allowing us to grasp objective reality in the form of an ideal reflection”. Therefore, for Marx, knowledge is the result of the human process of domination, appropriation, and transformation of nature and for it to be included in the assumptions of materialist dialectics it is necessary for it to be understood as rooted in reality, produced by individuals, for individuals, and with individuals. It is known that education is a phenomenon specific to human beings, therefore, understanding the nature of education involves understanding human nature.

The method implies “[...] a certain position (perspective) of the researching subject: the one in which the researcher places himself in order to, in his relationship with the object, extract from it its multiple determinations” (Paulo Netto, 2011, p. 53), that is, the more one saturates, the more the essence and depth of the object is revealed.

The current study was based on core categories of the historical-dialectical materialism method for data analysis, such as contradiction, totality, and movement (Evangelista; Shiroma, 2019; Paulo Netto, 2011), and the following analytical units were elaborated in order to capture some of the syntheses of the multiple determinations of the phenomenon: curricular reform in the education network of the State of São Paulo: the implementation of the “São Paulo Faz Escola” Program; the process of implementing the Official Curriculum in the Rural School; the lack of participation of the school community in decisions about the organization of pedagogical work; and the impact of curricular standardization on working conditions and teacher autonomy⁸. In addition, these dimensions were addressed as a result of the reorganization of work at school, resulting from the implementation

of the São Paulo State Curriculum Proposal. These units will be detailed in the analytical process, in order to contemplate the dialecticity of the object investigated.

Curricular reform in the education network of the State of São Paulo: implementation of the “São Paulo Faz Escola” Program

In Brazil, in the 1990s, Mário Covas was elected to govern the state of São Paulo, beginning his term in office with the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB) in January 1995. In that state, in order to overcome a supposed crisis in public administration, new guidelines were formulated with the aim of rationalizing public spending. Since that period, influenced by neoliberal reforms, changes have occurred that have impacted the educational sphere, such as, for example, the almost universalization of Elementary Education and the growth of the teaching staff and students in the state of São Paulo. According to Moura (2013), the main actions of the Covas government focused on the implementation of the São Paulo State School Performance Assessment System (SARESP), Continuous Progression, and the decentralization of school administration and management, with the aim of the state introducing mechanisms to control the vaunted educational quality and exercising a regulatory role over education.

In view of the above, it is worth noting that neoliberalism brings an ideological paradigm that guides economic development within the framework of capital. Educational policies, from this perspective, are proposed based on recommendations from international organizations, such as the World Bank (WB), through a globally structured agenda for Education (Haddad, 2008). Of note, in Brazil, and not unlike in the context of the state of São Paulo, neoliberal structural adjustments were adopted, such as privatization, outsourcing, and the standardization of curricula in line with external assessments (Moreira, 2015).

According to Nunes (2014), since the 1990s, external assessments have been of central importance in the state of São Paulo. In the following decade, the performance indices identified by the Basic Education Assessment System (SAEB), National High School Exam (ENEM), and São Paulo State School Performance Assessment System (SARESP) were low. In order to overcome the problem that had arisen, the government of José Serra (PSDB), in 2007, proposed a curricular reform for state public schools and, consequently, for state schools located in the countryside. This educational reform, aligned with neoliberal assumptions, resulted in the implementation of the São Paulo State Curriculum Proposal, through the “São Paulo Faz Escola” Program. This proposal was part of an arrangement of measures adopted for basic education that changed the daily routine of public schools, as in the reality investigated, which serves Elementary Education (I, II) and High School.

It should be highlighted that, as a result of this reform, the bonus policy gained visibility, paid according to the results in standardized performance assessments, that is, standardized assessments and tests began to define student performance in a verticalized and centralized manner. The new proposal for public education worsened educational problems, such as the increase in the number of students per classroom, the lack of teachers, low salaries, the scrapping of schools, and the automatic approval of students, in view of the change in failure and dropout rates. In other words, the quality of education began to be measured by indices obtained by students' performance in standardized assessments, added to flow indices, such as approval, failure, and school dropout (Nunes, 2014).

In 2008, through Resolution No. 76/2008, the State Department of Education (SEE) established the Curricular Proposal of the State of São Paulo as a mandatory reference for the Elementary and Secondary Education stages of all schools in the state public education system (São Paulo, 2008c), based on the justification of improving the quality of education provided for by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN). Furthermore, the proposal aimed to complement and expand the National Curricular Guidelines (DCN) and the National Curricular Parameters (PCN).

The so-called curriculum implemented by SEE is organized by competencies and skills, enabling students to face the social, cultural, and professional conflicts of the contemporary world (São Paulo, 2010). The official curriculum was structured based on the following principles: "[...] the school that also learns; the curriculum as a space for culture; skills as the axis of learning; the priority of reading and writing skills; the articulation of skills for learning; and contextualization in the world of work" (São Paulo, 2010, p. 10). The organization of the curriculum by competencies and skills enhances the technical dimension of the curriculum and is prescriptive to teachers, decharacterizing it as a political and pedagogical instrument for organizing the school's work.

However, the considerations of Goulart and Moimaz (2021) are valid, as this type of curricular change, in fact, consists of a change in the conception of school which, in turn, aims to become solely a place for training the workforce, no longer based on technique and professionalism, but on self-entrepreneurship, as central to current flexible and precarious work relationships.

In this sense, this type of curricular change actually changes the concept of school, especially its social function. Having a prescribed curriculum contributes to the lack of involvement and participation of the community, so that this perspective goes against the possibility of building a school with the required specificities of the subjects for learning.

The process of implementing the Official Curriculum in the Rural School

As highlighted, albeit briefly, in the methodological outline section, the implementation of the Official Curriculum of the State of São Paulo (COESP) in rural schools, the object of this research, occurred in 2008 (São Paulo, 2008b), based on Resolution SE No. 92, of December 19, 2007, which established guidelines for the curricular organization of Elementary and Secondary Education, in state schools (São Paulo, 2007); of the Goals Plan of the Curricular Proposal of the State of São Paulo (São Paulo, 2008a); and of Resolution SE No. 76, of November 7, 2008, which provides for the implementation of the Curricular Proposal of the State of São Paulo for Elementary and Secondary Education, in the state network (São Paulo, 2008c). The following is the testimony of a participant, in order to illustrate the tone of that moment:

In 2008 we *received a paper* that measured 1m x 0.80 cm, *horrible to handle* and we received no support [...]. *To this day we do not know what to do* and some situations came up with didactic sequences for us to follow, *but there was no guidance* [...]. About 20 days passed and two guidance notebooks arrived [...] telling us what we had to do, however despite being proposed [...], 95% of the things they proposed were not available at school (Interview, P4, 2017, our emphasis).

It can be seen from this statement that the teachers, at the time, did not participate in the selection of the material sent to the school; such a measure violated the autonomy of teachers and the possibility of developing an educational project for the field, whose freedom of teaching is guaranteed by the constitutional principle regulated by art. 206, Clause II, of the Federal Constitution – CF (Brasil, 1988). In other words, curricular standardization contributed to the removal of school autonomy, including that of teachers, in the elaboration of their political-pedagogical project, by centralizing decisions about educational directions in external decisions (Silveira; Mizuki, 2011).

When asked about training or qualification courses for the use of the curriculum, one teacher responded: “There were several Technical Workshops (OTS), but at the time the people who taught these workshops knew as much as we did about the curriculum material” (Interview, P4, 2017). In turn, another stated:

[...] we end up going back to this *material*, to the way it is being carried out in the classroom. There are principles [...], guidelines on *how to work*, *the issue of time management*, *the issue of studying the material*, so something is offered to everyone, in order to pass it on to the school. It is a passing on, one passes it on to the other (Interview, P2, 2017, our emphasis).

It should be pointed out that, for the most part, teachers did not receive training or qualification courses to learn about or work with the curriculum, from the State Department of Education or even the Education Directorate, at the time of implementing this new proposal. The central issue arising from this problem is related to decision-making, because it is noticeable that this type of training does not seem to indicate continued education, but rather training for the use

of the curriculum. It is noteworthy that teachers did not even have autonomy over their teaching practice, as everything was prescribed and determined by external actors. Such a measure violates the 1988 Federal Constitution, which highlights, in art. 206, as general principles of academic freedom the importance of “[...] II – freedom to learn, teach, research, and disseminate knowledge; [...] pluralism of ideas and pedagogical concepts existing in public and private educational institutions” (Brasil, 1988).

In this sense, a prescribed curriculum contributes to the lack of community involvement and participation, so that this perspective goes against the possibility of building a school with the specificities of social actors. Furthermore, the training perspective does not consider collective decisions and reflections. “The condition of thinking from the place where one lives and seeking from there – from one’s problems, one’s needs, from life in fact, provides subsidies for the development of the educational process, moves towards giving meaning, a critical stance and the search for autonomy” (Werlang; Pereira, 2021, p. 8).

As Nunes (2014) highlights, the process of implementing the official curriculum of the state of São Paulo reveals that the technicians and specialists hired by the SEE to develop it left aside the desires and needs of the school communities in order to meet the demand for economic rationalization.

The lack of participation of the school community in decisions about the organization of pedagogical work

It is worth highlighting the importance of school management who include the participation and involvement of collective subjects in decision-making regarding the organization and functioning of the institution, capable of defining the political and pedagogical directions of the school. In this way, “[...] the quality of education is linked to the collaborative vision of the school, in which the manager/director, pedagogues, teachers, students, employees, parents, the community, among others, constitute the concept of the school community that outlines democratic school management” (Fialho; Tsukamoto, 2014, p. 2).

In fact, the democratic management of schools is one of the constitutional principles, in art. 206, item VII of the CF/1988 (Brasil, 1988). LDBEN No. 9,394/1996, article 3, item VIII, defines that “[...] education will be provided based on the following principles: [...] VIII – democratic management of public education, in accordance with this Law and the legislation of education systems” (Brasil, 1996).

In the rural school investigated, regarding the preparation of the school PPP, there was some difficulty in defining who participated in this process. One of the teachers, since arriving at the school, did not have access to the aforementioned:

The school has one, but if you ask me [...], I don't know it. It's something that the management team should have done at the beginning of the year – in the planning,

it was to show all the teachers the political-pedagogical project, but they didn't do it. It *should have been reorganized at the beginning of the year*, because it no longer has the same clientele that it had last year. [...] So, it was done, but the Supervisor has already left here, she was Director a few years ago and, if it was done at her time, this PPP needs to be reorganized by teachers, student groups, school community – this is democratic management (Interview, P5, 2017, our emphasis).

In this statement, the teacher even emphasized democratic management, when mentioning the participation/involvement of education professionals in defining the school curriculum. However, it is important to emphasize that, in the empirical research, the management team was asked for the school's PPP, given that it defines the direction of the work to be developed in the institution; however, we were informed that it was in the process of being reworked.

Another teacher pointed out that the PPP was built collectively by teachers, students, those responsible for students, and the management team:

Yes, it is. This proposal is discussed with parents, the school community, representatives of the Councils – APM, parents, teachers, students, where it is done collectively and democratically. There is a catch, in order to develop this pedagogical proposal, we have to be guided, and it is usually a document that comes from the Department of Education (Interview, P2, 2017).

Thus, there was a distancing from the principles of democratic management, especially in light of the words of P6: "This does not always happen, however, attempts are made to integrate community participation whenever possible. But, most of the time, decisions are made by managers" (Interview, P6, 2017).

The testimonies reinforce the lack of dialogue and collective decision-making at school. For Garcia and Correa (2011, p. 8), the pedagogical and administrative autonomy of the school, enshrined in the LDB/1996, echoes the defense that:

[...] the organization of work in each school unit must derive not only from what is legally established as a guideline for an entire network, but from a series of decisions taken locally. It is assumed that the legislator understands the need for professionals and users to participate as subjects in the school educational process, which is to say, considering the entire set of activities that involve the organization of work.

It is possible to infer the contradictions announced in the interviews with the participants, especially with regard to the process of constructing the school's PPP. It is considered that, if the document was prepared based on a guiding document from the SEE, this movement, in itself, contradicts the principle of democratic management, which presupposes that the school community defines the main lines of the school curriculum, even if it considers the scientific knowledge necessary for a certain stage of schooling. Defining the curriculum implies defining the approach to school knowledge, the gradation and form of organization of time and space, values, ethnic-racial and gender relations, and theoretical, philosophical, and epistemological assumptions, as well as the relationship between the school organiza-

tion and the social context, the way of life and work in the field, in addition to considering, above all, the hidden curriculum contained in the way in which relationships are structured within the school unit and in the didactic work.

Regarding the spaces for collective decision-making on planning the school unit, allocation of financial resources, curriculum, alternative proposals, and lesson planning, the teachers interviewed emphasized that these moments occur in meetings with the Parent-Teacher Association (APM), in planning and (re)planning, and the Collective Pedagogical Work Class (ATPC), as exemplified in the following statement: “Yes, there are dates in our calendar, such as planning and re-planning, where we discuss, but things are already half-ready, and we have to follow those themes that are ready” (Interview, P4, 2017).

The statements of the teachers interviewed reinforce, once again, the absence of collective decision-making in the school. In the conception of Dal Ri and Vieitez (2010), the main category of official democratic management is the idea of participation, which provides the opening of a space for the administrative-pedagogical action of the school community, of parents of students, however this activity has a restricted effect, within the scope of the jurisdiction (Dal Ri; Vieitez, 2010). Even though there are discussions about pedagogical aspects of the school, they do not refer to decisions that define the curriculum; on the contrary, they encompass operational decisions aimed at carrying out pedagogical work. In the state of São Paulo, decisions about pedagogical policy are the exclusive responsibility of the SEE.

In order to seek democratic education, that provides the individual with the training to act as a citizen, inside and outside the school walls, an education model is needed that is not based on skills and abilities that are restricted to the concept of individual adaptation to the job market (Leandro Filho; Francisco; Alaniz, 2020). To this end, it is necessary to break with the traditional paradigm of school administration and create new actions and strategies that include the participation and broad involvement of the school community in the school's strategic decision-making, which implies changing both the organization of pedagogical work and the hierarchical power structure established in the school.

Based on this observation, it is important to consider that, by introducing the standardization of the curricular organization and the work developed within the scope of school units, the curriculum prescribed by the state of São Paulo ignores the specificities of the school and, in particular, those of the countryside, as well as the form of productive organization of the surroundings, the desires and expectations of its professionals and the settled community in relation to education.

According to the Operational Guidelines for Basic Education in Rural Schools, the use of rural space is essential for the diversity and identity of these subjects, in defining the direction of Brazilian society

(Brasil, 2002). According to Dal Ri and Vieitez (2010) and Souza and Cruz (2018), MST schools and the public schools over which it holds ownership are organized with the aim of meeting specific particularities and needs, since they have two fundamental functions that need to be highlighted: the training of activists and professional staff for the development of its program, such as the development of productive processes in agrarian reform settlements.

Contrary to the official school, which is based on standardized teaching, the rigidity of teaching practices and the lack of involvement of school subjects, in the MST schools investigated by Dal Ri et al. (2019), Leite (2017), and Lima (2020), education and teaching are understood based on the links related to the social movement and work in the settlements and in the organization of the school.

Impact of curricular standardization on working conditions and teacher autonomy

The fact is that educational projects that define the direction of Education, in the Brazilian scenario, must be in tune with community development projects, so that the knowledge and skills produced in the classroom help students to actively participate in social transformation projects, including the production of new social, cultural, and technological knowledge, for the development of each region (Leandro Filho; Francisco; Alaniz, 2020; Lima, 2013; Werlang; Pereira, 2021).

However, this is not a reality in the rural school under study, since, based on the interviewees' statements, it was revealed that it is mandatory to use COESP and materials from SEE in all schools in the state education network and in rural schools. "The teachers, at least here at the school, all the teachers use it. There is no way I can say that I do not want to work with this curriculum material and that I will adopt another one" (Interview, P2, 2017).

It is mandatory and teachers who do not use it are called to account. There are possibilities to use other materials and not other proposals. To use another proposal, you have to sit down and have this dialogue, because there is already a *ready-made proposal*. In fact, I don't know if you saw our notebook, but the teacher's proposal, in addition to the ready-made curriculum, the ready-made proposal, we have our PTD (Teacher Work Plan ready for each two-month period), including *scheduled classes*, how many classes I can use at most on that activity. I can't go over, because if I don't I get to the end of the year and they haven't seen that competence and skill that will be required in SARESP [...]. I can include or attach other materials, but I have to comply with the curriculum. So, sometimes, there's no time left, because I have to deal with that [...]. (Interview, P4, 2017, our emphasis).

Thus, there is an obligation to use the curriculum and, even though there is freedom to use other materials and/or resources, the teacher must comply with what is proposed by the SEE, so it is up to the teacher to make the necessary adjustments for rural education. However, participants emphasized that there is no time for this process to occur continuously. "The degree of freedom is a little unclear,

because the curriculum has to be worked on, so the time to be able to use other materials is automatically restricted” (Interview, P6, 2017).

Casagrande (2007) and Piovezan and Dal Ri (2019) report that, nowadays, teaching workers are faced with an advanced process of estrangement, of alienation from their work, both in the dimension of the product and the work process. Due to the resulting structural changes in capital, in the world of work, there is a deepening of the process of alienation, inherent to all work in the capitalist system, varying over time, even though it is known that workers always use the most varied strategies to circumvent attempts to control their own work. As Bezerra and Silva (2018, p. 473) explain, they denounce “[...] the precariousness of initial and continuing training to deal with the specificities of the context and social life [...] in the countryside”.

In this sense, the limitation of teaching autonomy, present in the adoption of standardized materials, cooperates with the logic of technicality. “The result of the centralizing action of the State is that the autonomy of teachers and of the school itself has either already disappeared or is on the verge of extinction.” (Vieitez; Dal Ri, 2011, p. 149). Silveira and Mizuki (2011, p. 84) add, “[...] there is a minimum of freedom that the school needs to have to choose the content and teaching methods, without which the pedagogical nature of its school intervention is compromised”.

Teacher accountability policies pressure teachers to obtain increasing performance from their students on standardized tests, since such performance is associated with the payment for their work, through the bonus policy, as in the state of São Paulo, where teacher attendance and IDESP grades are taken into account. “By achieving at least part of the target defined by IDESP, the school also receives payment of the Performance Bonus, which is proportional to the unit's result, taking into account the attendance frequency of the server” (São Paulo, 2013). These aspects help to insert restricted materials into the classroom, with the aim of ensuring alignment between what will be taught and what will be assessed. “In this scenario, the teacher's creativity is not welcome, because it disrupts the organization of the work, which was previously established” (Ribeiro, 2008, p. 5).

I realize, well, it may not be that explicit demand, but I see a demand, for example, our coordinator comes to our classroom every week to watch the class, where there is a handout that has all the guidelines for her to analyze the teacher's class. In that teacher's class, there is a part that comes only from the support material, [...] there is each topic talking about whether the teacher is using the support material, whether the teacher is following the entire curriculum that is proposed (Interview, P3, 2017).

For Sanfelice (2010), educational policy is not only expressed by the way in which a new curricular proposal is introduced into the education network, but today, this topic is linked to other measures that demonstrate the same authoritarian stance, such as, for example, in the evaluation and bonus system for “productive” teachers. Furthermore, “[...] the teacher places himself in the position of a technician

who is responsible for the application and dissemination of instruments, seeking to obtain the best possible results from his students [...] there is no room for a critical analysis of pedagogical practice with a view to the theory-practice relationship" (Casagrande, 2007, p. 17).

According to Ribeiro (2008), assessments are based on the suggestions expressed at the end of each notebook, and are used, most of the time, as a copy. "In addition, pedagogical work must be based exclusively on the scheduled classes, making it impossible to propose any pedagogical work that is not developed in the classroom and during the timetable scheduled for each of the subjects" (Ribeiro, 2008, p. 3-4). This discussion can be seen in the following statements:

Sometimes, you want to implement and bring this reality and you don't have time to focus on the material that can be used to work with the curriculum and bring this more local perspective that is rural education [...] it becomes very difficult and, sometimes, it doesn't happen because of the need for material, time (Interview, P2, 2017).

They have a demand, because they say that the SARESP activities – external exam, when it comes, is based on this curriculum [...], all subjects are covered, skills and abilities are covered that all subjects can and should be worked on [...]. In addition, the coordinator receives a form [...], and answers whether we are using the textbook; whether we are using the Curriculum; whether we have the proposal there on the table; whether we have the daily reading book; whether we are sitting down to teach the class; whether we stand up; if the room is messy; how the room is organized; what kind of speech the teacher is using; if the teacher used gestures to explain; if he/she used another resource; what my voice is like [...]. In the end, she gives her opinion [...] (Interview, P4, 2017).

According to the testimonies, teachers are concerned about the demanding process of the SEE for the use of these materials in the classroom, such as the actions of the pedagogical coordinator. This conduct contributes to the control of teaching work, within the logic of meritocracy and performance evaluation proposed by the State.

As clearly demonstrated by Durval (2020), by trying to place students from completely different social situations in the same conditions, the school reproduces and naturalizes the logic of inequality and social injustice. Far from being considered an innocent and neutral element of disinterested transmission of social knowledge, the curriculum has implied power relations that contribute to the maintenance of relations based on the capitalist organization system.

Final Considerations

In order to guarantee the efficiency and effectiveness of schools, based on the achievement of indices and results, the state of São Paulo adopted the São Paulo Faz Escola Program for rural schools, which goes against the Operational Guidelines for Basic Education in the Countryside and makes it impossible to build a school based on the recognition and reality of the peasantry.

The official state school, based on standardized teaching, limits teaching practice, through materials produced by third parties (hired by the State Department of Education), external evaluations, time

management, especially in the issue of non-involvement and/or participation of school subjects and the school community in the organization of school work. Diametrically, rural education carried out by the MST is based on teaching based on links related to existing experiences in the countryside, experiences, knowledge, and expertise arising from the Movement, the camp, and the settlements.

The reductionist conception of educational reforms has further weakened public schools, in addition to increasing educational inequality, since it denies the critical training and autonomy of students, teachers, and the school. Therefore, against exploitation and expropriation, in the current scenario of Brazilian society, rural education opposes the conservative position defended by the State, that is, it defends an education focused on the real life of subjects who live in and from the countryside.

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Notes

- ¹ Research funded by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES).
- ² This article is an adaptation of Soares' dissertation (2018) and, therefore, uses excerpts and parts belonging to the aforementioned work.
- ³ The term is highlighted based on Freitas (2018), in order to analyze that education, when isolated from its social ties, begins to be seen as a purely market issue.
- ⁴ Official schools refer to the state public schools of São Paulo, which combine school practices with the reproduction of capital (Camini, 2009).
- ⁵ Currently, approved in August 2019 for the Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education stages, and in August 2020 for High School, schools in the State of São Paulo are faced with new support material, initial and ongoing training for educators and the evaluation matrices of the so-called "São Paulo Curriculum" (São Paulo, 2020).
- ⁷ For Braun (2021), the term settlement expresses the historicity of the class struggle, of the victory against capital, which is constituted as the result of political and social processes experienced by the Landless who, in spaces of agrarian reform, build a territory based on economic, political, and social relations in the struggle against the capitalist paradigm, promoting relations of struggle and resistance.
- ⁸ The term school professionals, used in this work, refers to the six teachers: (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6); Management Team – Director: (EQG1); and Pedagogical Coordinator: (EQG2).
- ⁹ Informed Consent Forms (ICF) were given to the participants of this research as recommended in research with human beings and processed by the Research Ethics Committee, in order to preserve the identity of all those involved. This research was approved under registration number CAAE: 66364717.2.0000.5515, on the Brazil Platform, and is linked to the Postgraduate Program in Education of the Universidade do Oeste Paulista (Unoeste).

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