

## Basic education during the Covid-19 pandemic: criticisms of remote teaching\*<sup>1</sup>

Celso Francisco Tondin<sup>2</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0002-4588-0553

Deborah Rosária Barbosa<sup>3</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0002-1124-2086

Elenice Procópio Araújo<sup>4</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0001-9879-0693

Marielle Costa Silva<sup>5</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0001-8163-6016

Stela Maris Bretas Souza<sup>6</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0003-0882-252X

Welligton Magno da Silva<sup>7</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0001-8025-6206

Deruchette Danire Henriques Magalhães<sup>8</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0002-8987-0242

Aline Campolina Andrade<sup>9</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0002-9772-0287

Fernanda de Cássia Oscar Otaciano<sup>10</sup>

ORCID: 0000-0002-3137-5281

### Abstract

Remote teaching ensured social distancing for students and education professional during the Covid-19 pandemic, but received criticism from various sectors of Brazilian society,

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**2-** Universidade Federal de São João del-Rei (UFSJ), São João del Rei, MG, Brazil. Contact: celsotondin@ufsj.edu.br

**3-** Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), Belo Horizonte, MG, Brasil. Contato: deborahbarbosa@ufmg.br

**4-** Faculdade Anhanguera, Governador Valadares, MG, Brazil. Contact: elenicep.araujo@hotmail.com

**5-** Centro Universitário Católica do Leste de Minas Gerais (Unileste), Coronel Fabriciano; Centro Universitário de Ciências Gerenciais de Manhuaçu (Unifacig), Manhuaçu, MG, Brazil. Contact: psimarielle@gmail.com

**6-** Centro Universitário Católica do Leste de Minas Gerais (Unileste), Coronel Fabriciano, MG, Brazil. Contact: stela.maris.bretas@gmail.com

**7-** Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG), Belo Horizonte, MG, Brazil. Contact: welligthon@hotmail.com.br

**8-** Faculdade de Medicina de Itajubá (FMIT), Itajubá, MG, Brasil; Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Contato: deruchettedhm3@gmail.com

**9-** Secretaria de Estado de Educação de Minas Gerais (SEE/MG) - Núcleo de Acolhimento Educacional (NAE) - Superintendência Regional de Ensino (SRE) Nova Era - Polo Itabira, MG, Brazil. Contact: aline.linecampolina@hotmail.com

**10-** Centro Universitário Presidente Tancredo de Almeida Neves (Uniptan), São João del Rei, MG, Brazil. Contact: fernanda.oscar2@gmail.com



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including education and psychology institutions. Given the lack of academic discussion concerning the phenomenon, this article identifies and analyzes criticisms made by education and psychology institutes to remote teaching in basic education. A qualitative and documentary research was conducted with 34 documents, published between March 11 and May 11, 2020 by six entities. Content analysis extracted 143 excerpts, which were organized into five categories. Results show that remote teaching is detrimental to the teaching-learning process: limited or non-existent access of students and their families to technological resources; precariousness of teaching work; violation of the right to education; commodification of education; and stripping of the school's social role. Developed in a rapid and decontextualized manner, disregarding socioeconomic and racial markers, remote teaching increased teaching work and further expanded educational inequalities, which proved to be political and technical government strategies. Attacks on public schools increase in an ultraliberal and obscurantist context, but not without popular, democratic and libertarian resistance. This dispute is extended and updated in the pandemic context, as evinced by the institutional manifestations. Although they all present criticisms, these are neither homogeneous nor based on the same interests, with some showing concern for the market while others focus on constitutional rights.

## Keywords

Basic education – Remote teaching – Covid-19 – Pandemic.

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## Introduction

On December 31, 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported a severe respiratory condition initially identified in Wuhan (China), whose agent, the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), caused the Covid-19 disease (Zhou *et al.*, 2020). On January 30, 2020, the WHO declared a public health emergency of international concern. On February 6 of the same year, Brazil issued *Law No. 13,979* (BRASIL, 2020a), declaring a health emergency and instituting isolation/quarantine to prevent mass contagion. On March 11, with cases identified on all continents, the WHO declared a pandemic.

At that time, Brazil was living under the aegis of a government described as of neo-fascist political-ideological orientation, since it delegitimized democratic institutions and the rule of law; adopted a religious worldview and politics of a hygienist, moral, and salvationist nature; attacked science and educational institutions; defended individualistic values related to meritocracy and entrepreneurship; and was unfavorable to social policies (Filgueiras; Druck, 2018).

Based on denialist attitudes regarding the pandemic and science, the federal government acted in line with anti-scientific and anti-intellectual movements that contradicted WHO recommendations. A major consequence was a significant increase in the number of deaths and the worsening of social inequalities. In this scenario, how was education during social distancing?

On March 17, the Ministry of Education (MEC) published *Ordinance No. 343* (BRASIL, 2020c), authorizing schools in the federal education system to exceptionally replace in-person classes with classes that used information and communication technologies (ICTs). “Remote classes” began to be adopted at all levels of education. *CNE /CP Opinion No. 5* (BRASIL, 2020b), approved on May 29, addressed the “reorganization of the school calendar and the possibility of calculating remote activities to fulfill the minimum annual course load” (BRASIL, 2020b, p. 1). Importantly, the remote teaching adopted is not synonymous with distance education (DE), provided for in *Law No. 9,394 – Lei de Diretrizes e Bases* [Guidelines and Regulations for Education – LDB] (BRASIL, 1996) and regulated by *Decree No. 9,057* (BRASIL, 2017).

Regarding the criticisms against distance education and use of ICTs in education, research shows: its interference in teacher-student relations, disregard for the complexity of the pedagogical relation, loss in quality of teaching, violation of the right to education and worsened exclusion (Patto, 2013); commodification of education (Santos, 2019); challenges encountered by teachers in using ICTs and precariousness of their work (Cabral; File; Albert, 2019; Lee; Fürkotter, 2016; Zaidan; Galvão, 2020); deficit and/or unfeasibility of monitoring remote activities (Oliveira, 2020).

Despite adoption of remote teaching as a strategy for ensuring the continuity of school activities for much of the pandemic, we lack academic discussions regarding its effectiveness, particularly when the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) identifies that 4.8 million Brazilian children and adolescents (9 to 17 years old) lack internet access—17% of this population (Tokarnia, 2020). Also a survey by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2019) revealed that 98.6% of Brazilian women access the internet by cell phone.

Faced with this reality and the diversity of experiences in the educational system, we are called upon to produce knowledge that sizes the effects of the pandemic on pedagogical practices in a country marked by violence and inequities. In this context, critical school psychology (Patto, 1984, 1990) provides elements for reflecting on the difficulties and inequalities engendered by remote teaching, as it includes institutional, social, and intersubjective factors in its analysis. According to historical materialism, “a conception or theory is critical insofar as it transforms the immediate into mediate; denies ideological appearances; apprehends the totality of the concrete in its multiple determinations and understands society as a becoming” (Meira, 2003, p. 17).

As one of its sources, socio-historical and/or historical-cultural psychology states that the relation between human beings and society is one of reciprocal mediation, therefore “[...] psychological phenomena can only be properly understood in their fundamentally historical and social character” (Meira, 2003, p. 19), that is, the subject/society relation is dialectically reasoned and the conscious subject plays an active role in social transformation. This theory intersects with historical-critical pedagogy, whose dialectical perspective considers the articulation between education and society, recognizing its contradictory character and the possibilities of transforming the educational and social reality (Saviani,



2008). Moreover, our investigation required dialoguing with other references to produce discussions pertinent to the phenomenon studied.

A survey was conducted with Brazilian education and psychology entities (seen as relevant institutions/organizations in this sector), investigating their positions regarding remote teaching: how they define it; praises; criticisms; referrals for students, teachers and their families; claims for improvements; and implications for school structure and functioning (Tondin *et al.*, 2021). As difficulties and problematizations permeated their statements, this article analyzes the criticisms raised about remote teaching in basic education.

## Method

We conducted a qualitative and documentary research (Gil, 2008), as this methodology allows us to understand objects whose analysis demands historical and sociocultural contextualization (Figueiredo, 2007).

Data were collected by search and systematization of primary sources, that is, public documents not yet analyzed and available on the internet. The concept of a document includes writings, films, videos, photographs, etc. (Figueiredo, 2007), which are human constructions that show actions, opinions and ways of being.

We searched the e-mail addresses of thirteen entities, selected for their relevance and breadth of characteristics and purposes, ten of which operate in the field of education: Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa em Educação (Anped), Campanha Nacional pelo Direito à Educação (Campanha), Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores em Educação (CNTE), Conselho Nacional de Educação (CNE), Conselho Nacional de Secretários de Educação (Consed), Conviva Educação, Fórum Nacional Popular de Educação (FNPE), Ministério da Educação (MEC), Todos pela Educação e União Nacional dos Dirigentes Municipais de Educação (Undime); and three in psychology: Associação Brasileira de Psicologia Escolar e Educacional (Abrapee), Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Psicologia (Anpepp) and Conselho Federal de Psicologia (CFP).

Documentary search (n=86) used the following descriptors: “distance education,” “distance learning,” “remote teaching,” “education and ICT,” specifically “in basic education.” Selection criteria consisted of documents authored by the entity itself or signed by it, published between March 11, 2020 (when the pandemic was declared) and May 11, 2020 (when the survey ended). The present analysis focuses on 34 documents, 25 written and nine audiovisual, from six educational institutions: Anped (n=7), Campanha (n=12), CNTE (n=4), FNPE (n=1), Todos pela Educação (n=6) and Undime (n=4).

**Table 1** – Documents grouped by entity

Institution	Document	Link
National Association of Graduate Studies and Research in Education (ANPED)	1. Live: EaD e Educação Superior de qualidade: (des)regulação e desafios	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0sZtZwaDBo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X0sZtZwaDBo</a>
	2. Live: Educação a Distância: universidade e pandemia	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWmuNdt7dAc&amp;list=PL4Nxn25kHcCgnSekcV1hDqD8yFsejCgpl&amp;index=2">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PWmuNdt7dAc&amp;list=PL4Nxn25kHcCgnSekcV1hDqD8yFsejCgpl&amp;index=2</a>
	3. Live: Isto não é uma escola ou é? Reflexões sobre o escolar em tempos de pandemia	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qRxFsuN4AA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qRxFsuN4AA</a>
	4. Manifestação contrária à Portaria 343/2020 – MEC	<a href="https://anped.org.br/news/manifestacao-contraria-portaria-3432020-mec">https://anped.org.br/news/manifestacao-contraria-portaria-3432020-mec</a>
	5. Manifesto ANPEd: Educação a Distância na Educação Infantil, não!	<a href="https://www.anped.org.br/news/manifesto-anped-educacao-distancia-na-educacao-infantil-nao">https://www.anped.org.br/news/manifesto-anped-educacao-distancia-na-educacao-infantil-nao</a>
	6. Posicionamento sobre o parecer do CNE que trata da reorganização dos calendários escolares durante a pandemia	<a href="http://www.anped.org.br/news/posicionamento-sobre-o-parecer-do-cne-que-trata-da-reorganizacao-dos-calendarios-escolares">http://www.anped.org.br/news/posicionamento-sobre-o-parecer-do-cne-que-trata-da-reorganizacao-dos-calendarios-escolares</a>
	7. Solicitação coletiva de suspensão do calendário do ENEM	<a href="http://www.anped.org.br/news/solicitacao-coletiva-de-suspensao-do-calendario-do-enem">http://www.anped.org.br/news/solicitacao-coletiva-de-suspensao-do-calendario-do-enem</a>
Campaign	8. Pelo fim do Teto de Gastos: entidades lançam apelo público e entregam documento ao STF	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/05/08/pelo-fim-do-teto-de-gastos-entidades-lancam-apelo-publico-e-entregam-documento-ao-stf/">https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/05/08/pelo-fim-do-teto-de-gastos-entidades-lancam-apelo-publico-e-entregam-documento-ao-stf/</a>
	9. Carta da Campanha à Sociedade Brasileira sobre o parecer do CNE que dá diretrizes para o calendário letivo de 2020	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/30/posicionamento-da-campanha-sobre-o-parecer-do-cne-que-da-diretrizes-para-o-calendario-letivo-de-2020/">https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/30/posicionamento-da-campanha-sobre-o-parecer-do-cne-que-da-diretrizes-para-o-calendario-letivo-de-2020/</a>
	10. Consulta CNE – Compilado de contribuições da rede da Campanha à proposta de parecer do CNE	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/acervo/consulta-cne-compilado-de-contribuicoes-da-rede-da-campanha-proposta-de-parecer-do-cne/">https://campanha.org.br/acervo/consulta-cne-compilado-de-contribuicoes-da-rede-da-campanha-proposta-de-parecer-do-cne/</a>
	11. Dia da Educação em tempos de pandemia: com decisões de olhos vendados para a realidade, não é fácil comemorar	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/28/dia-da-educacao-em-tempos-de-pandemia-com-decisoes-de-olhos-vendados-para-realidade-nao-e-facil-comemorar/">https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/28/dia-da-educacao-em-tempos-de-pandemia-com-decisoes-de-olhos-vendados-para-realidade-nao-e-facil-comemorar/</a>
	12. Educação a Distância (EaD) não resolve os desafios do momento e pode aprofundar desigualdades: nota conjunta com o Coletivo Intervezes	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/13/educacao-distancia-ead-nao-resolve-os-desafios-do-momento-e-pode-aprofundar-desigualdades-nota-conjunta-da-campanha-nacional-pelo-direito-educacao-e-do-coletivo-intervezes/">https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/13/educacao-distancia-ead-nao-resolve-os-desafios-do-momento-e-pode-aprofundar-desigualdades-nota-conjunta-da-campanha-nacional-pelo-direito-educacao-e-do-coletivo-intervezes/</a>
	13. Coletiva de imprensa: 21ª Semana Nacional em Defesa e Promoção da Educação Pública	<a href="https://youtu.be/-iEP0misWdM">https://youtu.be/-iEP0misWdM</a>
	14. Volta às aulas em São Paulo; meu querido diário...	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/analises/salomao-ximenes/volta-as-aulas-em-sao-paulo-meu-querido-diario/">https://campanha.org.br/analises/salomao-ximenes/volta-as-aulas-em-sao-paulo-meu-querido-diario/</a>
	15. Guia Covid-19 – Volume 2 – Educação e proteção de crianças e adolescentes – Para tomadores de decisão do poder público em todas as esferas federativas	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/acervo/guia-covid-19-volume-2-acessivel-educacao-e-protecao-de-criancas-e-adolescentes-para-tomadores-de-decisao-do-poder-publico-em-todas-esferas-federativas/">https://campanha.org.br/acervo/guia-covid-19-volume-2-acessivel-educacao-e-protecao-de-criancas-e-adolescentes-para-tomadores-de-decisao-do-poder-publico-em-todas-esferas-federativas/</a>
	16. Guia Covid-19 – Volume 3: Educação a Distância	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/acervo/guia-covid-19-educacao-distancia/">https://campanha.org.br/acervo/guia-covid-19-educacao-distancia/</a>
	17. Não é hora de trabalharmos juntos?	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/analises/fernando-cassio/nao-e-hora-de-trabalharmos-juntos/">https://campanha.org.br/analises/fernando-cassio/nao-e-hora-de-trabalharmos-juntos/</a>
	18. #Cuma? O que é Educação a Distância? E por que ela não pode substituir a educação presencial?	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/14/cuma-o-que-e-educacao-distancia/">https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/04/14/cuma-o-que-e-educacao-distancia/</a>
	19. 8 motivos para não substituir a educação presencial pela educação a distância (EaD) durante a pandemia	<a href="https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/03/26/8-motivos-para-nao-usar-educacao-distancia-ead-como-alternativa-para-substituir-educacao-presencial/">https://campanha.org.br/noticias/2020/03/26/8-motivos-para-nao-usar-educacao-distancia-ead-como-alternativa-para-substituir-educacao-presencial/</a>



National Confederation of Education Workers (CNTE)	20. CNTE lança mensagem à sociedade brasileira sobre as ações governamentais adotadas nesse período da pandemia da Covid-19	<a href="https://www.cnte.org.br/index.php/menu/comunicacao/posts/noticias/73023-cnte-lanca-mensagem-a-sociedade-brasileira-sobre-as-acoes-governamentais-adotadas-nesse-periodo-da-pandemia-da-covid-19">https://www.cnte.org.br/index.php/menu/comunicacao/posts/noticias/73023-cnte-lanca-mensagem-a-sociedade-brasileira-sobre-as-acoes-governamentais-adotadas-nesse-periodo-da-pandemia-da-covid-19</a>
	21. Vídeo: Coletiva de imprensa: Educação Pública em tempos de Pandemia – 21ª Semana Nacional em Defesa e Promoção da Educação Pública	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iEPomisWdM&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iEPomisWdM&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
	22. Nota pública CNTE: O calendário escolar (inclusive do Enem) e a aplicação de aulas não presenciais na educação básica	<a href="https://www.cnte.org.br/index.php/menu/comunicacao/posts/notas-publicas/73024-o-calendario-escolar-inclusive-do-enem-e-a-aplicacao-de-aulas-nao-presenciais-na-educacao-basica">https://www.cnte.org.br/index.php/menu/comunicacao/posts/notas-publicas/73024-o-calendario-escolar-inclusive-do-enem-e-a-aplicacao-de-aulas-nao-presenciais-na-educacao-basica</a>
	23. Nota pública CNTE: O currículo escolar em tempos de pandemia do coronavírus	<a href="https://www.cnte.org.br/index.php/menu/comunicacao/posts/notas-publicas/72981-o-curriculo-escolar-em-tempos-de-pandemia-do-coronavirus">https://www.cnte.org.br/index.php/menu/comunicacao/posts/notas-publicas/72981-o-curriculo-escolar-em-tempos-de-pandemia-do-coronavirus</a>
National Popular Education Forum (FNPE)	24. Live: Educação pública em debate	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaWXRuZR5IM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaWXRuZR5IM</a>
All for Education	25. Educação na pandemia: CNE fala sobre diretrizes para o aproveitamento do horário letivo no contexto da pandemia	<a href="https://www.todospelaeducacao.org.br/conteudo/Educacao-na-Pandemia-Diretrizes-para-o-aproveitamento-do-horario-letivo-pos-pandemia-esta-quase-pronto-diz-CNE">https://www.todospelaeducacao.org.br/conteudo/Educacao-na-Pandemia-Diretrizes-para-o-aproveitamento-do-horario-letivo-pos-pandemia-esta-quase-pronto-diz-CNE</a>
	26. Nota técnica: Ensino a distância na Educação Básica frente à pandemia da Covid-19	<a href="https://www.todospelaeducacao.org.br/uploads/posts/425.pdf?1730332266=&amp;utm_source=conteudo-nota&amp;utm_medium=hiperlink-download">https://www.todospelaeducacao.org.br/uploads/posts/425.pdf?1730332266=&amp;utm_source=conteudo-nota&amp;utm_medium=hiperlink-download</a>
	27. Políticas educacionais na pandemia do Covid-19: o que o Brasil pode aprender com o resto do mundo?	<a href="https://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/413781585870205922/pdf/POLITICAS-EDUCACIONAIS-NA-PANDEMIA-DA-COVID-19-O-QUE-O-BRASIL-PODE-APRENDER-COM-O-RESTO-DO-MUNDO.pdf">https://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/413781585870205922/pdf/POLITICAS-EDUCACIONAIS-NA-PANDEMIA-DA-COVID-19-O-QUE-O-BRASIL-PODE-APRENDER-COM-O-RESTO-DO-MUNDO.pdf</a>
	28. Vídeo: Roda Viva   Priscila Cruz   No Roda Viva, a jornalista Vera Magalhães recebe Priscila Cruz, presidente da ONG Todos pela Educação	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJEKzpbXXzg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJEKzpbXXzg</a>
	29. Webinar: O desafio da volta às aulas: a visão dos professores	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVURuNEZUnE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVURuNEZUnE</a>
	30. Webinar: O desafio da volta às aulas: contribuições para o debate público	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWKDe0W9a4&amp;t=7s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWKDe0W9a4&amp;t=7s</a>
National Union of Municipal Education Directors (Undime)	31. Especialistas orientam sobre cuidados com as crianças durante a pandemia	<a href="https://undime.org.br/noticia/24-04-2020-11-02-especialistas-orientam-sobre-cuidados-com-as-criancas-durante-a-pandemia">https://undime.org.br/noticia/24-04-2020-11-02-especialistas-orientam-sobre-cuidados-com-as-criancas-durante-a-pandemia</a>
	32. Nota pública: Uso da Educação a Distância (EaD)	<a href="https://undime.org.br/noticia/30-03-2020-23-55-nota-publica-uso-da-educacao-a-distancia-ead">https://undime.org.br/noticia/30-03-2020-23-55-nota-publica-uso-da-educacao-a-distancia-ead</a>
	33. Pais e educadores discutem estratégia de ensino infantil em casa	<a href="https://undime.org.br/noticia/20-04-2020-15-30-pais-e-educadores-discutem-estrategia-de-ensino-infantil-em-casa">https://undime.org.br/noticia/20-04-2020-15-30-pais-e-educadores-discutem-estrategia-de-ensino-infantil-em-casa</a>
	34. Webinar: Como a Undime se posiciona durante a pandemia?	<a href="https://undime.org.br/noticia/12-04-2020-17-44-webinar-como-a-undime-se-posiciona-durante-a-pandemia">https://undime.org.br/noticia/12-04-2020-17-44-webinar-como-a-undime-se-posiciona-durante-a-pandemia</a>

Source: Own elaboration.

Data treatment used content analysis (Bardin, 2010), a tool that enables understanding meanings by creating analytical categories that help in interpreting the findings, without getting lost in the heterogeneity of their object. A total of 143 excerpts were extracted from the 34 documents and organized into five categories: physical and instrumental

infrastructure and inequalities in access; precariousness of teaching work; right to education; commodification of education; and stripping of the school's social role.

## Results and discussion

### Physical and instrumental infrastructure and inequalities in access

The pandemic context has intensified existing inequalities in Brazil (Santos, 2020). In this category, this is explicit in the criticism of limited or non-existent access to internet and other technological means, which is the reality of many Brazilian families, demarcating socioeconomic, racial and cultural inequalities. In addition to the digital divide, families in situations of vulnerability face precarious infrastructure in their homes for studying, lack of basic sanitation and lack of food. Content analysis identifies 44 excerpts from 28 documents: 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 (Anped); 8 to 13, 15, 16, 18 and 19 (Campanha); 24 (FNPE); 20 to 22 (CNTE); 26 to 30 (Todos pela Educação); and 31 to 34 (Undime).

These factors produce ethical-political suffering in a process of inclusion-exclusion (SAWAIA, 2012), because even though remote teaching has been based on a discourse of learning continuity, access to ICTs is unequal and violations of rights against children and adolescents have increased during the pandemic.

In this regard, Campanha (15) states that “People in the most vulnerable situations tend to suffer the most and distance education [remote teaching] has challenges similar to those of school failure.” It is therefore essential to build critical movements against the measures adopted. After all, if school failure is a historically contingent production crossed by political, economic, social, cultural, pedagogical, etc. determinants (Patto, 1990), the damage to development and learning, tangible in all social strata, is much more intense in the working classes.

In view of this, the Todos pela Educação organization stated that “[...] availability of internet for the most vulnerable communities [...] must be more flexible to try to increase student access to the network and seek to reduce potential effects on educational inequality” (28). But would access to internet be an effectively inclusive measure, given the multiple factors that produce inequalities? Sawaia (2012) calls attention to exclusionary inclusion processes and, in this perspective, understood that this is a relevant but palliative measure, a mockery of inclusion (which was nevertheless denied by the federal government).

The absence or inadequacy of mediation and pedagogical support for remote activities has had detrimental effects not only on students' learning, but also on their mental health and that of their families and teachers. We must also mention the marked inequalities between private and public schools: “[...] those who have access to internet and a computer at home can have classes, remote teaching, but those who do not, which most of the Brazilian population, are left without access to education” (FNPE, 24). Anped adds: “[...] private schools have seen a lot of work. Poor schools, on the other hand, saw the opposite: there has been a certain renunciation” (3). While in private schools, remote teaching has produced an overload of activities and emotional strain for students and families, in public schools, especially those located in socially vulnerable contexts, the



existing disparities have increased and new forms of exclusion, including digital and technological, have been produced.

Socioeconomic class inequalities were mentioned more than racial inequalities. According to Costa (2020), the color and race intersection can indicate, in the case of health, the impacts of the pandemic on the black population, which has less access to health systems and curative procedures, while the white population has greater access to preventive procedures and treatments.

Racial markers also affect education. Remote teaching disregarded the social, economic and cultural heterogeneity of the population, especially Indigenous, *quilombolas*, *ribeirinha* and fishing workers, family farmers, settlers. Moreover, inequalities “are crossed by profound racial inequality” (Campanha, 10) in access, permanence and completion at educational levels. During the pandemic, the question “for what and for whom is the school” was updated and can only be answered by contextualizing education within the framework of capitalist society and its historical contingencies (Freire, 1967; Frigotto, 2000; Gadotti, 2006; Saviani, 2008).

Finally, the processes that produce inequalities have had a greater impact on black and poor students in public schools, spaces that tend to silence the (re)production of racial and social stereotypes and discrimination. Patto (1990) argues that the school legitimizes the logic of meritocracy, individualizing school failure and exonerating the educational system; and during the pandemic was no different. Under what conditions did teachers face this updating of school failure as an individual process of students?

## **Precariousness of teaching work**

This category presents tools for the effectiveness of the pedagogical process that have been neglected by the state, contributing to weaken educational policies. It brings together positions that highlight: teachers’ lack of familiarity with and training in using ICTs, their functions and tools; insufficient tools to materialize activities; and working relations resulting from these arrangements, which produce difficulties in professional adaptation. Grouped together are 26 excerpts from 18 documents that portray aspects of remote teaching that make teaching work more precarious: 2, 3, 4 and 6 (Anped); 11 to 15, 18, 21 and 24 (Campanha); 24 (FNPE); 20 (CNTE); 26 and 27 (Todos pela Educação); 32 and 33 (Undime).

They highlight requests for teachers to produce content and materials, improvise in technological mediation, monitor attendance and answer students’ questions via platforms or social networks. Principals and supervisors were required to monitor teachers. This caused “mental health pressure” and exhaustion in teachers and damage to their work (Anped, 2), which also resulted from the “overlapping of functions at home” (Campanha, 11) since they had to carry out professional and domestic activities, child rearing and take care of family life. As Moronte (2020) points out, these are new demands without the appropriate resources, and they are required to sustain a work performance.

Abonizio (2012) points out that the precariousness of teaching work has increased since the 1990s in Brazil, with the implementation of neoliberal policies as part of



the global capitalism reorganization. Nowadays, Silva (2019) points out that the high unemployment rate results in employment relations ruled by even more precarious contracts. She uses the term *uberization* of work to refer to a form of outsourcing in which workers are subordinated to companies without minimum guarantees, which has also affected teachers in remote teaching. This phenomenon increased the alienation and exploitation of teaching work insofar as it was decided without teacher participation, in a fragmented manner and inadequate conditions (improvements were provided individually by each professional), resulting in meaningless work.

According to Moronte (2020), *uberization* occurs when employers absolutely control the work—particularly its products—provided by technologies, and when the expected results are not achieved, all the effort expended is disregarded and workers are asked to dedicate themselves more, with an increase in their tasks and working hours. This process reveals the overexploitation of contemporary work, which removes its meaning as a source of humanization and constitutive of the social being, and asserts the aspects of degradation and alienation. The dimension of producing socially useful things—which satisfy human needs—is lost in order to strictly meet the demands of capital (Navarro; Padilha, 2007).

Data from Campanha, FNPE, Anped, Todos pela Educação and Undime indicate that this new form of structural violence has become more pronounced during the pandemic. Many teachers had neither the training nor the tools to carry out remote work, but their employers demanded that they acquire them. This confirms Moronte's finding (2020): in home office, workers bear the costs of equipment, electricity and internet.

Assis (2020) denounces the home office may be a legacy of the pandemic, stressing that its advocates claim that it represents an opportunity for workers to familiarize themselves with the mobile “world of work of the future.” After all, if digital tools, which allow us to connect without needing to be physically present, are strategies for maintaining intellectual or technical activities, why not maintain them in the post-pandemic? Would this be the case with teaching?

In a scenario of the MEC's management protecting the market interests surrounding distance education, to what extent will education professionals be affected? For Zaidan and Galvão (2020), teaching work is unlikely to return to previous conditions in the post-pandemic period, given the reduction in costs for employers that workers have absorbed. They also point to the insidious insertion of work into all the times and spaces of teachers' daily lives at home, without their employers guaranteeing the structure to do so, a problem highlighted by Anped: “[...] education systems and institutions do not have the necessary conditions for the materialization of distance education [remote teaching]” (6); nor can teachers be held responsible or subjected to improvised forms of technological mediation.

The precariousness generated by careless implementing remote teaching, backed by common sense arguments and a purely instrumental rationality, ends up weakening pedagogical work. How does this affect the right to education?

## **Right to education**



This right involves building educational systems that enable all students to access and remain in public schools as citizens (Gadotti, 2006), using pedagogical tools that enhance critical and scientific reflection, aiming at human emancipation (CFP, 2019).

A total of 37 excerpts from 19 documents (1, 4, 5 and 6 - Anped; 8, 9, 10, 13, 17 and 19 - Campanha; 24 - FNPE; 20, 22 and 23 - CNTE; 25, 26 and 28 - Todos pela Educação; 32 and 34 - Undime) denounce the violation of the right to education, since remote teaching tends to undo access, permanence and quality in the teaching-learning process. Data shows that the school calendar should be reorganized only after the period of social distancing, prioritizing life and health and considering this teaching as complementary (and not a school day).

In exceptional situations, the LDB allows for remote activities at primary and secondary levels, except for early childhood education. Anped is attentive to this stage of education: “its use is not foreseen in educational legislation because it is, above all, inadequate” (5). Campanha contests the legitimacy of this type of teaching for all basic education because there is no “legal basis for this unrestricted use of distance education.” It also attests to the lack of “standards, rules and conditions for the modality to take place” (13). As for secondary education, Campanha believes that “distance education is unfeasible” (19), highlighting the social problems that produce inequalities in addition to the issues of (re)organizing infrastructure capable of ensuring effective conditions for pedagogical adequacy, inclusion and support for teaching and learning.

Although they are tools for minimizing the damage caused by the pandemic, ICTs should be adopted with caution, as they can accentuate the disparities between privileged and poorer social strata. Campanha cites the Federal Supreme Court’s stance on the issue: remote education contributes to intensify the “[...] violation of the rights of children and adolescents” (8), and this worsens in the case of students in situations of high social vulnerability.

Based on Patto (2013), it can be said that the defenses of remote teaching are visibly evolutionist, as they conceive the historical process as a linear, natural succession of successive stages. As such, those who defend it arbitrarily do so under the aegis that we are at the scientific stage of human rationality and, therefore, of progress. This overvaluation of instrumental rationality masks power relations in unjust societies and disregards the historical production of inequalities that impact on the quality of teaching and the lives of students, corroborating to maintain the status quo.

From this perspective, for the Fórum de Gestores de Educação Especial do Espírito Santo, cited by Campanha, it is impossible to see “[...] in distance learning a respectful and harmonious way of guaranteeing education” (10), because it does not constitute a space for plural experiences and differences. For Campanha, when the CNE uncritically adopted this measure, disregarding the contributions of civil society, the State positioned itself by “[...] a shallow opinion disconnected from reality, indicating the use of remote classes and activities disregarding the necessary conditions for it” (9).

With *Opinion No. 5* (BRASIL, 2020b), the CNE affirmed that replacing the course load exclusively in person, in the post-pandemic, could cause several losses, making remote teaching a strategy for fulfilling the school year. Conversely, Anped stated that

“[...] compliance with the course load cannot be a priority, nor can it be standardized” (5) since the school year does not necessarily have to coincide with the calendar year. Adding that implementation of the strategy was decontextualized and that “the state of public calamity cannot be used as a pretext to violate constitutional rights and, in particular, the right to quality education” (6).

Constructing an ideological discourse goes through the rule of competence, from which prior norms “[...] decide who can speak and listen, what can be said and heard, where and when this can take place” (Chauí, 2016, p. 249). The MEC and the education departments—legitimized places where educational discourses are constructed—legislate, regulate and control pedagogical work. However, with the scattered implementation of remote teaching, questions are being raised about rearrangements in these institutional spaces of power—where neoliberal values of constructing pseudo-formations abound—and about which educational ideas these silences conceal.

Under these circumstances, the MEC was almost silent about coordinating educational policies. It simply ratified the aforementioned opinion on May 29, 2020, which led to a scenario of “[...] lack of minimum national parameters on what types of activities should or should not count for equivalence purposes” (Todos pela Educação, 26), as well as disjointed and ambiguous guidelines. In other words, the educational bodies have failed to fulfill their role and have excluded those who could speak with authority, as is the case with the entities whose contributions appear in this and other works (Tondin *et al.*, 2021). But this place of power will never remain empty. Who is occupying it?

## **Commodification of education**

This discussion raises aspects of the relation between remote teaching and the commodification of education, phenomenon in which the right to education is transformed into a service/commodity for profit, reducing the school to a technical-administrative issue and relegating pedagogical, ethical, and social aspects to the background (Avelar, 2019). Public-private partnerships (PPPs), compromise of pedagogical principles and control of access to navigation data are developments of this relation, points that make up dispute networks that aim to strengthen the neoliberal project. A total of thirteen excerpts from eleven documents touch on this topic:

Campanha denounces private organizations as “merchants of illusion” (13) who sell digital platforms and content, profiting from public resources. This “market paradigm” (Anped, 4) transforms education into a commodity (FNPE), generating disparities between public and private education, with negative effects on the popular strata (CFP, 2019). CNTE points out that the mass hiring of virtual tools reveals the “[...] dangerous business appetite to dispute the ‘educational market’ and the pedagogical conceptions of public schools” (20). Todos pela Educação presents criticisms, but in a different tone: remote activities would be simply a “formality” (29). Zaidan and Galvão (2020) shed light on this less critical tone towards market interests in education, given that the Todos Pela Educação organization manages partnerships between business institutes/foundations and the MEC.



Undime, the association of municipal education secretaries, is silent on the issue of commercialization, while CNTE, Campanha, FNPE and Anped highlight the drastic advance of PPPs. These “partnerships,” which reduce education to an economic input that can be quantified by performance indexes (Cara, 2019) and promote distance education as a cost-cutting policy (Santos, 2019), acquired legitimacy during the pandemic announcing the possible naturalization of this modality post-pandemic (Zaidan; Galvão, 2020). Additionally, Campanha criticizes privatization and its impacts on teachers, who have been transformed into “Youtubers” (14), further shedding light on education as a service provision (Zaidan; Galvão, 2020).

This configuration refers to what Catini (2019) points out as the capture of education’s form and function by capital, and what Sibilia (2012) calls the transformation of pedagogical subjectivity into media subjectivity. This author points out a division of knowledge-power between teachers and students, in which the former go from being mediators of knowledge to mere transmitters; and the student-clients, consumers of the material posted on the platform.

Campanha states that resources and platforms offered to schools “free of charge” hide commercial interests of “[...] collecting, processing, using and selling data on user behavior to generate profit” (16). What is said to be free constitutes “opportunism” (Campaign, 19), financed by the data of service users. Campanha and Anped point out that the absence of legislation to protect access to internet means that private data becomes public. This characterizes a breach of fundamental rights in online browsing: privacy (Boff; Fortes, 2014).

Possible company access to data seems to update the panopticon as a disciplinary apparatus (Foucault, 2016; Sibilia, 2012) capable of regulating and making visible what should remain only between students and teachers. Anped uses the Foucauldian concept to criticize this movement in which “everything is visible and measurable” (3), since computer and cell phone cameras regulate the behavior of students and teachers.

This reality strengthens the control society, which unlike the disciplinary society goes beyond regulating bodies and making them productive. To favor the commodification of life, it institute new practices for the self and the management of private processes (Sibilia, 2012). They thus invade privacy and promote harmful effects on singularities and attacks on freedom, issues that speak to the school’s role.

## **Stripping of the school’s social role**

Assuming that “the school is an institution whose role consists in socializing systematized knowledge” (Saviani, 2008, p. 14), this category analyzes the stripping of its social role by replacing in-person classes with remote activities. They point out: loss of uniqueness during the learning process; precariousness of cognitive processes; limitation of interpersonal relations; and significant impacts, especially for early childhood education. A total of 25 excerpts from 18 documents touch on this topic: 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 (Anped); 12, 15 and 18 (Campanha); 21 to 23 (CNTE); 24 (FNPE); 26 and 27 (Todos pela Educação); and 31, 33, 34 and 36 (Undime).

According to Campanha, Anped, Undime and CNTE, remote teaching robbed education of exercising its libertarian role, of promoting autonomy and respect for the various realities and ways of learning. By excluding educators and students from the debate, it violated the principles of democratic management (CNTE), made dialogue non-existent and “sped up the formative process” (Anped, 4).

For Frigotto (2000), the school is responsible for educating beings to transform the world, which only happens when education is liberating. On the other hand, the excerpts show that remote teaching has mitigated or even extinguished the possibilities of building autonomy and awareness of students and teachers about their social roles in transforming reality.

Campanha and CNTE highlight the importance of pedagogical mediation in learning. They argue that remote teaching hindered culture appropriation, as this is only possible by the interrelationship between educators and learners, through collective construction in/of the educational process, which goes beyond offering content by virtual means. Once mediation—the primary teaching function—saw its role reduced in remote teaching to that of tutoring, of delegating tasks to students and their families, a problem-solving education was no longer possible, further stripping the teaching function as Facci (2004) puts it.

Sharing contents devoid of reflection and dialogue is based on “information” processes rather than “formation” for emancipated citizenship (Freire, 1967; Gadotti, 2006; Saviani, 2008). Citizenship lacks the school as a space for “interaction, exchange of experiences, constant learning” (Undime, 34) realized via social contact, which, according to Vygotsky (1991), are fundamental for developing higher psychic functions (language, thought, memory, attention, logical reasoning, emotions, etc.). These, before being internalized, need to be experienced in relations. Remote learning, therefore, compromised children’s development, especially those in early childhood education, due to “passivity” and “isolation” (Undime, 34), excessive screen exposure and precarious adult mediation. CNTE states that basic education has its own time and space conditions, which require “eye-to-eye” mediation (21), encounter, interdisciplinarity of knowledge, family-school relations and education based on group experience—all unfeasible at a distance.

Todos pela Educação understands that fully remote activities are less effective than in-person experience and recognizes the existence of unequal conditions in access and learning among students. However, they argue that educational technologies can have positive effects by reducing vacant classes and thus remote learning is a “realistic alternative” (26). Anped, on the other hand, signed a document collectively suspending the National High School Exam (Enem), claiming that in-person teaching was the “minimum” (7) to be ensured before its application; and argued that remote teaching is not “a mere substitute” (4) for in-person teaching, highlighting that learning and development were reduced to merely transposing content to virtual environments, “[...] disregarding the knowledge already systematized in educational institutions by education professionals and scientifically validated” (6).

Such criticisms reinforce the importance of in-person teaching and the school as a public space for intense negotiations of differences (Seffner, 2013) and sharing of social and cultural experiences, favoring the sense of collectivity (Guzzo, 2006).



## Final considerations

A crisis, such as the one caused by Covid-19, can accentuate pre-existing ones in education. A state of exception emerged during the pandemic, leading to strategies developed in a rapid and decontextualized manner, disregarding socioeconomic and racial markers. As a result, remote teaching has made teaching even more precarious and increased educational inequalities, which are shown to be political and technical government strategies insofar as they uphold the status quo, as was of interest to the federal government and its premise of education as a privilege of the elites.

Education and school are objects of continuous dispute. Attacks on public schools increase in an ultraliberal and obscurantist context—envisaged by a government whose agenda is rather pre-modern than liberal—, but not without popular, democratic and libertarian resistance. This dispute—intensified after former President Dilma’s impeachment (exemplified by the National Common Curriculum still in the Temer administration)—is extended and updated in the pandemic context, as evinced by the institutional manifestations. Although they all present criticisms, these are neither homogeneous nor based on the same interests, with some showing concern for the market (Todos pela Educação) while others focus on the constitutional rights of students, their families and professionals (Anped, Campanha, CNTE, FNPE and Undime, the latter within the limits of a governing body).

Merely offer ICTs to those who lack them can mean exclusionary inclusion, since so-called inclusive initiatives can produce a perverse or marginal inclusion, concealing alienation, control, discipline and invisibility practices that generate exclusion. If the importance of ICTs as mediators of pedagogical interactions is undeniable, one cannot adopt them in an unrestricted and non-reflexive manner, under penalty of creating new alienating forms of education and production of ways of being and relating to technologies, which underlie alienated and consumerist subjectivities. On the other hand, critical thinking offers elements for raising awareness, which presupposes understanding the relations between human beings and technology as a product of capitalist society, and thus the debate on ICTs can result in practices based on human rights.

Given the above, the pandemic moved schools further away from having the material conditions to fulfill its role in the intersectoral social protection network. After all, the more we strip schools from their social role, the more the right to education is weakened and racial, class and gender inequalities are worsened. Such a scenario calls us to insurgency and resistance against the adversities that plague the present, taking care that they do not dominate the future.

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**Celso Francisco Tondin** is a psychologist, PhD in psychology from the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul (PUCRS) and professor at the Department of Psychology, Federal University of São João del-Rei (UFSJ).

**Deborah Rosária Barbosa** is a psychologist, PhD in school psychology and human development from the University of São Paulo (USP) and professor at the Faculty of Philosophy and Human Sciences, Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG).

**Elenice Procópio Araújo** is a psychologist and educator, with a master's degree in psychology from UFSJ, a school psychologist at the Social Service of Industry (Sesi) of Governador Valadares and Ipatinga, and professor at Faculdade Anhanguera de Governador Valadares.

**Marielle Costa Silva** is a psychologist with a master's degree in psychology from UFSJ, a professor at the Catholic University Center of Eastern Minas Gerais (Unileste) and at the University Center of Management Sciences of Manhuaçu (Unifacig).

**Stela Maris Bretas Souza** is a psychologist with a master's degree in psychology from the Pontifical Catholic University of Minas Gerais (PUC Minas) and a professor at the Catholic University Center of Eastern Minas Gerais (Unileste).

**Wellington Magno da Silva** is a psychologist with a master's degree in psychology from UFSJ, a PhD candidate of the Postgraduate Program in Psychology at UFMG.

**Deruchette Danire Henriques Magalhães** is a psychologist with a master's degree in psychology from UFSJ, a PhD candidate of the Postgraduate Program in Psychology at Federal Fluminense University (UFF), a psychopedagogical coordinator and a professor at the School of Medicine of Itajubá (FMIT).



**Aline Campolina Andrade** é is a psychologist with a master's degree in psychology from UFSJ, a basic education analyst (psychologist) at the State Department of Education of Minas Gerais (SEE/MG), in which he is part of the Educational Reception Center (NAE) of the Regional Education Superintendence (SRE) Nova Era - Polo Itabira, MG, Brazil.

**Fernanda de Cássia Oscar Otaciano** is a psychologist with a specialist in didactics and teaching at the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Southeast Minas Gerais and a master's degree in psychology from UFSJ, and a professor at the Presidente Tancredo de Almeida Neves University Center (Uniptan).

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## ERRATUM

Erratum: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1678-4634202450264928enE> \_

In the article, Basic education during the Covid-19 pandemic: criticisms of remote teaching - DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1678-4634202450264928en> published in *Educação e Pesquisa*, v. 50, 2024, please, change:

The title: Professional learning of prospective elementary school teachers in supervised training

Please read: Basic education during the Covid-19 pandemic: criticisms of remote teaching

### Change all the abstract:

Professional learning has garnered considerable attention from researchers, as it forms a fundamental aspect of teachers' professional development. Such learning encompasses a range of essential elements, including acquiring knowledge about curriculum content, teaching methods, core values, attitudes intrinsic to the teaching profession, and the nuances of professional culture. Notably, supervised training stands as a significant context for the professional learning of prospective teachers, offering direct exposure to the teaching profession and opportunities for critical reflection on theoretical and practical experiences. In this study, we undertake an investigation of the professional learning experiences of prospective teachers within the Early Years of Elementary Education, employing a qualitative and interpretative approach. To achieve this objective, we conducted in-depth research with ten female students enrolled in an Education Undergraduate Program at the Federal University of the Fronteira Sul, Erechim Campus. Our focus was on examining their learning encounters during supervised training. The empirical data for the study encompassed narratives shared by the ten interns during sessions dedicated to teaching in Elementary School, alongside textual productions prepared by the students throughout their training. The analysis of the gathered data has revealed noteworthy learning outcomes concerning teaching in various dimensions. Firstly, it shed light on the process of lesson planning, characterized by its reflective nature, theoretical underpinnings, and comprehensive approach to devising learning pathways



for students. Secondly, the investigation illuminated the development of teaching skills, an intricate fusion of multiple elements that collectively facilitate effective classroom practices. Lastly, the study elucidated the dynamics of the school environment, perceived as an interactive, dynamic, pluralistic, and adaptable context conducive to the realization of successful teaching endeavors.

#### **Please read:**

Remote teaching ensured social distancing for students and education professional during the Covid-19 pandemic, but received criticism from various sectors of Brazilian society, including education and psychology institutions. Given the lack of academic discussion concerning the phenomenon, this article identifies and analyzes criticisms made by education and psychology institutes to remote teaching in basic education. A qualitative and documentary research was conducted with 34 documents, published between March 11 and May 11, 2020 by six entities. Content analysis extracted 143 excerpts, which were organized into five categories. Results show that remote teaching is detrimental to the teaching-learning process: limited or non-existent access of students and their families to technological resources; precariousness of teaching work; violation of the right to education; commodification of education; and stripping of the school's social role. Developed in a rapid and decontextualized manner, disregarding socioeconomic and racial markers, remote teaching increased teaching work and further expanded educational inequalities, which proved to be political and technical government strategies. Attacks on public schools increase in an ultraliberal and obscurantist context, but not without popular, democratic and libertarian resistance. This dispute is extended and updated in the pandemic context, as evinced by the institutional manifestations. Although they all present criticisms, these are neither homogeneous nor based on the same interests, with some showing concern for the market while others focus on constitutional rights.

**The Keywords:** Teacher professional learning; Supervised training; Teacher education undergraduate courses; Elementary School

**Please read:** Basic education – Remote teaching – Covid-19 – Pandemic.

Educ. Pesqui., São Paulo, v. 50, e264928enE, 2024.

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