

Monitoring of the Upper Secondary Education Quality in Pará by the State Education Forum (2016-2018)¹

Monitoramento da qualidade do ensino médio paraense pelo Fórum Estadual de Educação (2016-2018)

Monitoreo de la calidad de la educación secundaria en Pará por el Foro Estatal de Educación (2016-2018)

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Abstract: This article discusses the process of monitoring Goal 7 of the Pará State Education Plan (PEE/PA) carried out by the Pará State Education Forum (FEE/PA) from 2016 to 2018, focusing on educational progression and learning in upper secondary education. The study adopts a qualitative approach and a historical perspective to examine the political and institutional framework of the FEE/PA, from its establishment to the effective implementation of the educational policy monitoring process. The sources analyzed include minutes from meetings of the FEE/PA and the Monitoring and Systematization Commission (CMS), action plans, regulatory documents, and monitoring reports produced during the period in question. Findings from the 2018 report, prepared by the FEE/PA, indicate that the procedures were implemented based on social quality indicators.

Keywords: State Education Plan; Pará State Education Forum; School progress; Education Policy.

Resumo: Este artigo discute o processo de monitoramento da Meta 7 do Plano Estadual de Educação do Pará (PEE/PA) realizado pelo Fórum Estadual de Educação do Pará (FEE/PA) no período de 2016 a 2018, com foco no fluxo escolar e na aprendizagem no Ensino Médio. O estudo adota uma abordagem qualitativa e uma perspectiva histórica para examinar a configuração política e institucional do FEE/PA, desde sua instalação até a implementação efetiva do processo de monitoramento da política educacional. As fontes analisadas incluem atas de reuniões do FEE/PA e da Comissão de Monitoramento e Sistematização (CMS), planos de ação, documentos normativos e relatórios de monitoramento produzidos no período

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em questão. Constatamos que, no relatório de 2018, elaborado pelo FEE/PA, os procedimentos foram efetivados a partir de indicadores de qualidade social.

Palavras-chave: Plano Estadual de Educação; Fórum Estadual de Educação do Pará; Fluxo escolar; Política Educacional.

Resumen: Este artículo aborda el proceso de monitoreo de la Meta 7 del Plan Estatal de Educación de Pará (PEE/PA), realizado por el Foro Estatal de Educación de Pará (FEE/PA), de 2016 a 2018, con foco en el flujo escolar y los aprendizajes en la Enseñanza Media. El estudio adopta un enfoque cualitativo y una perspectiva histórica para examinar la configuración política e institucional del FEE/PA, desde su instalación hasta la implementación efectiva del proceso de monitoreo de la política educativa. Las fuentes analizadas incluyen actas de reuniones del FEE/PA y de la Comisión de Monitoreo y Sistematización (CMS), planes de acción, documentos normativos e informes de monitoreo producidos durante el período en cuestión. Constatamos que en el informe de 2018, elaborado por el FEE/PA, los procedimientos se implementaron con base en indicadores de calidad social.

Palabras clave: Plan Estatal de Educación; Foro Estatal de Educación de Pará; Flujo escolar; Política Educativa.

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Introduction

This article aims to analyze the monitoring of Goal 7 of the Pará State Education Plan (PEE/PA), carried out by the Pará State Education Forum (FEE/PA) between 2016 and 2018, with an emphasis on educational progression and learning in upper secondary education, as outlined in strategies 7.2 and 7.3 of the document.

This study focuses on upper secondary education for two fundamental reasons. The first relates to one of the State's priority responsibilities as a federated entity, as the FEE/PA's role consists of more directly monitoring the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational policies related to the final stage of basic education, within the context of educational planning and management. The second relates to the low quality of secondary education in Pará, as evidenced by performance on the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) (2015–2017).

This is a qualitative study guided by a historical perspective, drawing on the work of Minayo (2001) and Bogdan and Biklen (1994). The elements of analysis are grounded in the framework proposed by Yin (2005), based on which we initially describe aspects that reveal the political and institutional structure of the agency from its establishment through the implementation of the monitoring process, which enabled us to understand how its institutional responsibilities and functions were developed.

Our sources included the minutes of the PEE/PA Monitoring and Systematization Committee and of the FEE/PA's Ordinary and Extraordinary Plenary Meetings, the FEE/PA Action Plans, the Monitoring Report (Basic Education), and the Monitoring Form, all covering the period from 2016 to 2018. These documents were subjected to content analysis, following the methods described by Bardin (2006) and Minayo (2001).

Based on the preliminary procedures adopted, an initial reading was carried out to become familiar with the content of each document selected for analysis. For electronic documents, keyword and phrase searches related to the research topic were performed using the "Find" function in Adobe Acrobat.

The significance of the research presented here lies in its contribution to improving the processes for monitoring the goals and strategies outlined in the Ten-Year Education Plans approved by the respective state governments, while also offering theoretical and practical insights to help rethink the dynamics of monitoring the quality of basic education.

In summary, the findings indicate that the monitoring carried out by the FEE/PA plays a fundamental role in the planning and management of educational policies—since it provides a means of tracking educational policies in the state of Pará—although it has not distanced itself from a perspective that reinforces the competitive logic of the market.

The Concept of Monitoring and the Debate on Quality in the Pará State Education Plan

The Pará State Education Forum (FEE/PA) was established pursuant to Resolution No. 004, dated October 22, 2012, issued by the State Department of Education (Seduc) and published in the State Official Gazette:

Art. 1: Establishes, within the State Department of Education, the Pará State Education Forum (FEE/PA), a permanent body, with the purpose of coordinating state education conferences, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of their resolutions, and promoting the necessary coordination among the corresponding education forums in the municipalities of Pará (Pará, 2012).

It is noteworthy that the FEE/PA was established through a regulatory instrument generally used to supplement existing educational legislation, which may indicate an institutional link between this body and the State Secretariat of Education. The text of the resolution is very clear in this regard, stating that this institutional framework is established within the scope of that Secretariat's activities. However, the aforementioned supplementary regulatory act appears to have had only a provisional effect on the institutional framework of the FEE/PA, given that the

Law approving the State Education Plan (2015–2025) conferred legal status and permanence on the body, granting it a state-level status, as expressed in Article 5:

The following is established within the scope of this Law, the State Education Forum (FEE), which, in addition to monitoring and evaluating the set of actions established by this State Education Plan (PEE), shall be responsible for coordinating the holding of at least two State Education Conferences, in coordination with the National and Municipal Conferences, by the end of the decade (Pará, 2015).

With this provision included in the aforementioned Act, this study argues that the effects of Resolution No. 004/2012 were automatically revoked, enabling the FEE/PA to assume a strategic role in the management of educational policy, with the responsibility to monitor and evaluate, as recommended by Article 5, the goals and strategies of the PEE/PA.

The initial composition of the FEE/PA consisted of representatives from Seduc-PA and members appointed by their respective entities⁵. Over time, other entities and social institutions have been incorporated into the body's current composition⁶; others, however, lost their seats due to infrequent attendance, most of whom belonged to social movements.

⁵ State University of Pará (UEPA), Belém High School Students' Union (UESB), Pará State Trade Federation (FECOMERCIO), Federal University of Pará (UFPA), Peace Project (PRO PAZ), Special Secretariat for Social Promotion (SEPROS), Federation of Industries of the State of Pará (FIEPA/SESI), Federal Rural University of the Amazon (PROEN/UFRA), Union of Private Educational Institutions of Pará (SINEPE-PA), Union of Public Education Workers of Pará (SINTEPP), Inter-Municipal Association of Parents and Students of the State of Pará (APAIEPA), Federal Institute of Pará (IFPA), State Secretariat of Sports and Leisure (SEEL), State Board of Education (CEE), Municipal Secretariat of Education (SEMEC), National Union of Municipal Education Directors (UNDIME), Belém City Council, Association for the Support of People with Special Needs (ADF-PA), State Secretariat of Culture (SECULT), Social Service of Commerce (SESC), Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals, and Transgender People (GLBT), and National Education Forum (FNE).

⁶ Legislative Assembly of the State of Pará (ALEPA), Association of People with Physical Disabilities of the State of Pará (ADF-PA), National Association for the Training of Education Professionals (ANFOPE), Center for Black Studies and Advocacy in Pará (CEDENPA), State Board of Education (CEE), State Council for the Rights of People with Disabilities (CEDPD-PA), National Campaign for the Right to Education; Brazilian Workers' Confederation (CTB), Unified Workers' Confederation of Pará (CUT/PA), Pará State Trade Federation (FECOMERCIO), Pará State Federation of Industries (FIEPA), National Education Forum (FNE), Pará Forum on Rural Education (FPEC), Federation of Teachers' Unions of Federal Higher Education Institutions (PROIFES), Federal Institute of Education, Science, and Technology of Pará (IFPA), Euvaldo Lodi Institute (IEL), State Department of Education (Seduc), Social Service for Industry (SESI), Union of Private Educational Institutions of Pará (SINEPE-PA), Union of Teachers in the Private School System of the State of Pará (SINPRO-PA), Union of Public Education Workers of Pará (SINTEPP), State Secretariat of Culture (SECULT), Social Service for Commerce (SESC), National Service for Industrial Training (SENAI), National Service for Commercial Training (SENAC), Brazilian Union of High School Students (UBES), State University of Pará (UEPA), Federal University of Pará (UFPA), Federal Rural University of the Amazon (UFRA), National Union of Students (UNE), National Union of Municipal Education Directors (UNDIME), National Union of Municipal Education Councils (UNCME)

Accordingly, the FEE/PA's Internal Regulations simultaneously established responsibilities related to the management and planning of educational policies, with direct references to the PEE/PA, which can be regarded as contributing to the democratization of educational policy management in Pará.

The monitoring discussed in this text refers to the systematic tracking of the goals and strategies of education plans, based on the definition of indicators, which must be grounded in quality standards and validated by social and educational sectors, with a view to social oversight. This perspective is consistent with the approaches proposed by Jannuzzi (2011), Cavalcante and Nogueira (2010), and Dourado et al. (2016).

The discussion on the topic of monitoring the State Education Plan—as one of the institutional responsibilities of the FEE/PA—when introduced during the body's plenary meetings, caused perplexity among its members. At the meeting on March 9, 2016, the following positions were noted:

The CEDENPA representative spoke at that time, stating that monitoring should serve to ensure payment of the minimum wage for teachers. The FEE coordinator, in turn, argued that the Education Plan needed to be monitored from the moment of its approval. The SINPRO representative expressed concern about this task, clarifying that he had not yet gone through this experience (Pará, 2017, p. 2).

The positions recorded indicate that the monitoring of education plans was still a relatively unfamiliar practice for the representatives of these organizations, particularly as a management practice for educational policies, which required continuous and systematic learning processes regarding methodologies to be consolidated by the competent bodies, such as the FEE/PA.

Given that monitoring was not a practice the participants had mastered, simply holding council members and representatives accountable was inadequate. The need for training became evident. Monitoring requires an understanding of indicators, databases, information flows, and impact assessment.

Following this line of reasoning, Dourado et al. (2016) argue that this perplexity, as previously demonstrated, is explained by the recent implementation of such procedures in the work context of government agencies, requiring public officials to establish parameters and mechanisms for the implementation and consolidation of these processes.

Nevertheless, despite the position presented by Dourado et al. (2016), the evidence suggests that the government bodies or authorities that should be fostering this debate in the management of educational policies, such as the State Board of Education (CEE/PA) and the

State Department of Education (Seduc), have failed to fulfill their institutional duties, nor have they provided the means and conditions for the FEE/PA to carry out, under more appropriate conditions, procedures related to the monitoring and evaluation of the PEE/PA.

However, the research conducted on FEE/PA documents revealed its institutional effort to build a consensus around a perspective considered most appropriate by the organizations and social movements that were represented in this public arena, with regard to monitoring and evaluation. This process was marked by disagreements due to its political nature, given that differing interests were brought to the surface, especially during the FEE/PA plenary sessions and the meetings of the Monitoring and Systematization Committee.

It is also possible to observe positions that treated monitoring and evaluation as if they were similar terms. A conceptual blurring between the terms “monitoring” and “evaluation” is evident in the discourses of institutional actors. While the Forum’s coordination team advocated for separating the functions—assigning the body only the role of monitoring and delegating evaluation to a broader inter-institutional commission—the *Fecomércio* representative maintained that the two actions are interrelated, with no need to separate them (Pará, 2016).

The monitoring perspective highlighted here diverges from the position of authors such as Dourado et al. (2016), for whom monitoring and evaluation are characterized by their inseparability. However, as Rezende (2013) emphasizes, it is necessary to distinguish between the two terms, since, in his view, the act of monitoring becomes much more important. Thus, it is understood that the implementation of evaluation, from a diagnostic perspective, must be systematically informed by data extracted from the procedures adopted in monitoring.

Our findings indicate that monitoring did not comply with the legal requirements regarding frequency, which had implications for the evaluation of the goals and strategies that should have been carried out in 2018, during the State Education Conference⁷. This finding suggests a monitoring process characterized by discontinuity, since only the 2018 Basic Education Monitoring Report was identified.

⁷ The 2018 State Education Conference, organized by the State Education Forum, was canceled by delegates who, at that time, were demanding better infrastructure and logistical conditions from Seduc. The cancellation of this important event for evaluating and deliberating on educational policies — following the implementation of the PEE/PA — represented a setback in the development of democratic debate surrounding the ten-year plan, for which direct responsibility lies with the executive branch in charge of educational policy. In our view, this fact served to confirm the lack of commitment on the part of right-wing governments to implementing democratic and participatory processes for evaluating public policies through broad social mobilization.

It is important to emphasize that the lack of a more systematic monitoring process can be attributed to the FEE/PA. However, with regard to the other bodies—Seduc, CEE/PA, and the Legislative Assembly’s Education Committee—it can be categorically stated that these bodies have not demonstrated the necessary interest in effectively overseeing the PEE/PA, which suggests a clear failure to comply with current legislation, especially the law that approved the plan in question.

To understand the perspective on educational quality presented in the PEE/PA (2015–2025), a survey of the references made to this topic in the plan was conducted, and it was found that there are many points of convergence and, in some cases, identically worded passages in relation to the National Education Plan (PNE) (2014–2024). This can be seen in Article 2, which discusses the guidelines adopted by the PEE/PA, referring, respectively, to improving the quality of education and meeting the needs for expansion—with standards of quality and equity—in Sections II and VIII of Law No. 8,186 of June 23, 2015.

Despite the similarity of the expressions of “quality” in the PEE/PA when compared to the PNE (2014–2024), it is acknowledged, *a priori*, that this is a polysemic and multifaceted concept, according to the perspective of the authors cited as references for this study, among whom Dourado, Oliveira, and Santos (2007) and Imbérnon (2016) are highlighted. In examining this theme in the PEE/PA, it is therefore considered that it is not easy to identify a precise definition or one that can fully encompass the multiple meanings attributed to the term “quality.”

Consequently, in an effort to achieve a more adequate understanding, a starting point is adopted based on what does not constitute quality, which suggests “a kind of negative definition,” as described by Cury (2014, p. 1055). Therefore, when referring to the PEE/PA, it can be stated that quality is not the lack of access to school; it is not the streamlining of courses through the implementation of educational policies as an alternative to overcoming the problem of student dropout rates; it is not the lack of resources and adequate conditions for teaching; nor is it the graduation of students from basic education, for example, without mastery of what the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) considers to be common basic knowledge (Article 22) and basic civic education (Article 32); among other aspects that have been used in educational planning to characterize the lack of quality in education.

The concept of quality mentioned in the PEE/PA is described in various ways, since both the text of the law that approved it and its respective annex organize references to the topic around three main themes, which allow for an analysis of its relationship to student progression and learning in upper secondary education, namely: quality improvement, quality

standards, and evaluation of educational quality. These pillars are presented with some elaborations from the perspective of educational management and planning.

Thus, the analysis showed that the PEE/PA uses the term “quality” on 28 occasions, employing expressions such as: quality standards, minimum quality standards, quality assessment, quality improvement, quality enhancement, and quality education.

Regarding the pillar referred to as “*quality standards*”⁸ (emphasis added), seven direct mentions were identified, among which item VIII of Article 2 of Law No. 8186, dated June 23, 2015, is highlighted, establishing a target to be considered in the orientation of education funding policies. The provision stipulates, for example, that the allocation of public funds in this area must be proportional to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), given the need to meet expansion requirements, the implementation of which is detailed in Goal 20 of the PEE/PA.

In addition to the text of the Law, references to quality standards were identified in the strategies associated with the goals related to full-time education (6.7), secondary-level technical and vocational education (11.6), the quality of higher education (13.7), and public investment (20.3), which demonstrates that this principle permeates all levels and types of education in Brazil and in the state of Pará.

Regarding upper secondary education, it is noted that Goal 3 of the PEE/PA calls for the universalization, by 2016, of school enrollment for the entire population aged 15 (fifteen) to 17 (seventeen), as well as an increase, by the end of the Plan’s term, the net enrollment rate⁹ at this educational level to 85% (eighty-five percent).

Although Goal 3 is directly related to providing educational services to the aforementioned population, it can be seen that this expansion must occur in accordance with a quality standard, as outlined, for example, in various strategies, such as: tracking and monitoring the access and retention of young beneficiaries of cash transfer programs (strategy 3.8); alternative forms of upper secondary education (strategies 3.12 and 3.22); ensuring adequate material resources and infrastructure (strategies 3.18 and 3.19); and inclusion policies (3.24), among others.

However, it is in Goal 7 that direct and even more explicit references to the quality standard to be achieved are found. It is also noted that this Goal seems to acknowledge the existence of a certain quality standard in basic education, which would simply need to be raised

⁸ According to Cury (2014, p. 1059), “a standard is characterized by a recognized model for assessing tangible or intangible assets, things, or even institutions.”

⁹ It refers to the ratio of the total number of students enrolled at the level appropriate for their age to the total population in that age group. This indicator aims to measure access to the educational system for those who are at the recommended age for each of the three levels. It indicates the percentage of the population enrolled at the level appropriate for their age group (Saraiva, 2010, n.p.).

across all its stages and modalities. It should be emphasized, however, that improvements in school retention and learning would be achieved by meeting the IDEB averages.

From this perspective, this indicator has been established in the PEE/PA as the primary benchmark for the quality of basic education, covering all administrative units and school systems. Nevertheless, it is considered that IDEB is not sufficient to assess and certify the quality standard of the educational services offered to the population, since there are other factors and dimensions that need to be taken into account. Such factors can be strategic for raising the quality standard, provided they are addressed by public authorities, and include: the democratization of school management through the effective participation of all social actors involved in the educational process; the implementation of inclusion policies from a broad perspective; the development of meaningful pedagogical practices with interdisciplinary approaches; and the provision of adequate pedagogical resources and infrastructure in school settings, among others.

However, upon analyzing the set of 53 strategies related to Goal 7—established with the aim of improving IDEB performance—it is found that some refer more directly to upper secondary education, allowing for the inference that there is a call for the development and implementation of a specific quality paradigm, to be established and put into practice through public policies. Thus, the content expressed in the aforementioned strategies indicates, in some cases, the need for reforms to the current upper secondary education model, whose learning outcomes are considered meager. Consequently, it is found that the current PEE/PA aligns with the PNE (2014–2024) by advocating, for example, the need to establish and implement a National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) (strategies 7.1, 7.37); achieving a sufficient level of learning in relation to learning objectives (strategy 7.2); reducing failure, dropout, and age-grade mismatch rates (strategy 7.3), among others.

Ferretti (2018, p. 26), while acknowledging the problems in Brazilian secondary education, identifies, on the other hand, justifications that are based on misconceptions. As indicated by the statistics published in the mainstream media, the assessment made by the Law regarding the low quality of upper secondary education is correct (a problem that, in Brazil, is not limited to this stage of basic education and has been dragging on for a long time). However, the second justification, which is presented as a response to the first, is flawed because it attributes dropout rates and failure primarily to the curriculum's organization, without considering the other factors involved.

Consequently, although the law that approved the reform suggested that the problems surrounding the final level of public basic education could be solved primarily through curricular changes, the content of some PEE/PA strategies suggests moving beyond this narrow view, since Goal 7 implicitly encompasses a variety of topics that, depending on how

they are addressed and implemented, could have a significant impact on improving the quality of secondary education in Pará.

Among the aspects addressed, we identified those related to educational technologies (strategies 7.15, 7.16, 7.17, 7.18, 7.31); supplementary programs (strategy 7.19); school infrastructure and teaching resources (strategies 7.23, 7.24, 7.25, 7.26, 7.27, 7.28, 7.35); continuing education programs (strategies 7.32, 7.33, 7.34, 7.40, and 7.46); inclusive policies (strategies 7.36, 7.41); the coordination of programs in the areas of education and social policies (strategies 7.42, 7.43, 7.47, 7.48); and environmental education (strategies 7.49, 7.50, 7.52).

Although the PEE/PA presents a set of strategies aimed at fulfilling Goal 7, the plan makes no reference to a more explicit funding policy that would provide the conditions for sustaining and implementing these strategies. On the contrary, while the National Education Plan (PNE) established in its Goal 20 the expansion of investment in education, the State Education Plan limits itself to using the verb “contribute” to the expansion of investment at the national level, thereby absolving itself of the legal responsibility to expand investment at the state level. Another element that is consistently absent from the plan is the Cost of Initial Quality Education (CAQi).

Implementation of the Monitoring Process: Strategies, Indicators, and Methodology

In order to effectively monitor the strategies and goals of the PEE/PA, the FEE/PA Internal Regulations—based on the organizational structure of the National Education Forum (FNE)—established two permanent working committees, in accordance with Article 21 of the aforementioned document, namely: the Monitoring and Systematization Committee (CMS) and the Mobilization and Outreach Committee (CMD). These committees were formally established within the FEE/PA through Administrative Order No. 055/2016 (Seduc).

Since our focus is on the monitoring carried out by the FEE/PA regarding Goal 7 of the PEE/PA, our attention is primarily directed toward the responsibilities of the CMS, which, according to Article 22 of the Internal Regulations, is tasked with:

- II- Monitor educational indicators by establishing an observatory for this purpose: a) monitor indicators for basic and higher education; b) monitor indicators of quality in basic and higher education; c) monitor indicators of educational equity (income, race, gender, sexual orientation, generational factors, physical, sensory, and intellectual conditions, rural/urban status, and others); d) monitor and discuss compliance with public education policies.
- III- Coordinate with observatories that monitor educational indicators (Pará, 2016).

It is noted that the CMS is responsible for a set of duties defined in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of Pará's educational policies, in addition to others related to the agency's internal work dynamics. Among these, the monitoring of basic education indicators in Pará is highlighted, an aspect that, in the present analysis, is inseparably linked to the monitoring of the PEE/PA's goals and strategies, since these are central components of this process, according to Jannuzzi (2005). The documents analyzed confirm that the monitoring process only began to be institutionalized in January 2016, with the formation of the aforementioned Commission, which was then established by Administrative Order No. 055/2016 (GAB/SAEN/Seduc), comprising the following entities: National Union of Municipal Education Councils (UNCME/PA), National Association for Teacher Training (ANFOPE), Social Service for Industry (SESI), State Secretariat of Culture (SECULT/PA), and State Secretariat of Education (Seduc/PA).

Following the entry into force of Administrative Order No. 055/2016 (GAB/SAEN/Seduc), FEE/PA has taken a more direct stance on the issue of overseeing the goals and strategies of the PEE/PA through the Commission designated for this purpose, which, by virtue of this legal instrument, is endowed with "an advisory, propositional, and monitoring and evaluation role regarding the goals and strategies of the State Education Plan of the State of Pará (PEE/PA), in collaboration with the municipalities" (Pará, 2016).

The documents reviewed confirm that there was an institutional effort to identify ways to address this need, although this effort was marked by uncertainty and even disruptions. According to the minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on April 12, 2016, this problem is attributed to the lack of a quorum at the meetings, which reportedly contributed to further delaying the implementation of the monitoring process: The FEE/PA coordinator informed the members present that the monitoring tool proposed by the FEE Monitoring and Systematization Commission would be defined at that meeting, in order to actually start monitoring the State Education Plan.

The information contained in the aforementioned minutes suggests institutional vulnerabilities in the monitoring of the PEE/PA's goals and strategies, whether due to the absence of appropriate instruments or the lack of feedback from its members regarding the proposal presented by the CMS. The minutes of the FEE/PA plenary meetings, such as the minutes from March 9, 2016, pointed to the need for coordination with the municipalities, even noting that the monitoring of the Municipal Education Plans (PMEs) would be carried out in accordance with the guidelines of the Secretariat for Intersectoral Coordination and Education Systems (SASE/MEC) to build a coordinated education system. In this regard, this debate continued to occupy the agency's work agenda, as evidenced by the following record:

[...] Still speaking, the FEE Coordinator emphasized that, based on SASE's guidelines and using the forms and tools provided, the first work agenda was developed, along with mechanisms for monitoring the PEE and the PMEs. (Pará, 2016, p. 1).

However, it is evident that this approach to monitoring and evaluating educational policies in Pará did not materialize during the period analyzed. The lack of engagement and participation by the municipalities detracted from a planning process based on the premise of coordination among federal entities.

In the 1st Monitoring Report of 2018, which addresses basic education goals, CMS members defined a minimum work agenda comprising a set of activities aimed at meeting this institutional demand for monitoring, seeking alignment with SASE/MEC guidelines:

Figure 1 – CMS Minimum Work Agenda (2017/2018)

ATIVIDADES PROGRAMADAS
Apresentação da Proposta de Monitoramento e Avaliação do PEE
Constituição da Comissão apresentação de suas atribuições
Apresentação dos Instrumentos de Trabalho da Comissão e de suas atribuições.
Definição da Equipe Técnica da Comissão
Apresentação de uma proposta de metodologia de monitoramento
Análise dos dados da educação paraense pela Equipe Técnica do FEE.
Seção de Estudos do Plano Estadual de Educação, com a releitura do diagnóstico.
Definição de Indicadores das Metas do Plano Estadual de Educação, com base nos estudos realizados pela Comissão e análise dos dados da educação paraense.
Definição dos Grupos de Pesquisa para subsidiar técnica e cientificamente o trabalho de monitoramento e avaliação.
Análise dos Indicadores das Metas do PEE (Monitoramento e Avaliação).
Elaboração de Relatórios acerca da análise dos indicadores, com a indicação de ações a serem desenvolvidas pelo poder público competente, a partir das metas.
Divulgação dos Resultados do Monitoramento e Avaliação das Metas do PEE.

Source: Monitoring Report on the PEE/PA Goals, 2018.

In our view, the CMS initiative reflects, in terms of internal organization, an institutional effort presented by SASE/MEC to implement a national policy for overseeing the ten-year educational plans, although there has been some pushback in this regard.

Despite the influence exerted by the national authority regarding the monitoring to be carried out at the state level, the so-called “scheduled” activities listed in the aforementioned report demonstrate initiatives aimed at developing a distinct approach to the work, as follows:

[...] formulation of a monitoring and evaluation proposal; development of working tools; establishment of a technical team to provide the necessary support for monitoring activities; analysis of the goals and strategies of the State Education Plan, with the definition of corresponding indicators; coordination with research groups at institutions of higher education for the scientific analysis of the data (Pará, 2018, p. 8).

Although there have been initiatives that suggest a certain degree of institutional autonomy with regard to monitoring, it can be observed, on the other hand, that the proposal defined by the CMS, according to the meeting minutes, aligns directly with the recommendations of SASE/MEC and consists of three distinct stages: organization of the work plan, analysis of the State Education Plan, and ongoing monitoring of goals and strategies (Brazil, 2016).

Therefore, to organize its work processes, the CMS used a form, which came to be titled the State Education Plan Monitoring Form, structured in three parts. The first part addresses aspects that can be considered part of the identification of the PEE/PA.

Figure 2 – Part A of the PEE/PA Monitoring Form

FICHA DE MONITORAMENTO DO PLANO ESTADUAL DE EDUCAÇÃO				
PARTE A	Estado		UF	
	Plano Estadual de Educação	(número da lei e data)		
	Períodos de Avaliação previstos	(anos da avaliação)		
	Comissão Coordenadora	(nome)	(Ato legal – nº e ano)	
	Equipe Técnica	(nome)	(Ato legal)	

Source: FEE/PA Secretariat, 2016.

The second part focused on a careful re-examination of the Plan, in accordance with the recommendation from SASE/MEC, and sought to organize the goals and strategies in chronological order. This methodological approach is documented in the minutes of the working meetings, from which it is observed that the procedure implemented did not encounter any resistance or objections from CMS members.

Figure 3 – Part B of the PEE/PA Monitoring Form

PARTE B	Metas	Prazo	Estratégias	Prazo	Previsões Orçamentárias
	(descrição da meta)		(descrição da estratégia)		
			(descrição da estratégia)		
			(descrição da estratégia)		

Source: FEE/PA Secretariat, 2016.

During CMS meetings, it is evident that its members recognized the need to analyze the Multi-Year Government Plans (PPAs), as well as the Budget Guidelines Laws (LDOs) and the Annual Budget Laws (LOAs). However, the reports reveal difficulties in this regard, due to the need for more technical knowledge regarding planning and public budgeting, since it was necessary to understand, for example, how the PEE/PA targets were implemented in the state's planning and budgeting instruments. This finding corroborates the perspective of Dourado et al. (2016) and Jannuzzi (2011), who argue that difficulties related to procedures of this nature are also linked to the underdeveloped culture of monitoring and evaluating social plans and programs within the context of government management.

Regarding the third stage of the Commission's proposed work (Continuous Monitoring of Goals and Strategies), its members considered Part C of the form, shown below, as a reference for the procedures to monitor the goals and strategies of the Pará State Education Plan:

Figure 4 – Part C of the PEE/PA Monitoring Form

PARTE C	Meta 1: (descrição da meta)												
	INDICADOR 1A	(descrição do indicador)											
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Meta prevista												
	Meta executada no período												
	INDICADOR 1B	(descrição do indicador)											
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	Meta prevista												
	Meta executada no período												

Source: FEE/PA Secretariat, 2016.

At this stage, as evidenced by the monitoring tools used, the definition of indicators came to be considered essential for the effective implementation of work related to the PEE/PA's goals and strategies, which sparked a fruitful debate among CMS members. The accounts contained in the meeting minutes revealed support for the development of these indicators through broad mobilization and public participation, with the aim of ensuring the democratization and transparency of the monitoring process. In this regard, it is understood that these positions corroborate the perspective of Dourado et al. (2016, p. 458), according to whom the definition of social indicators is an indispensable condition for ensuring transparency, access to information, and the effective fulfillment of goals and strategies.

The Commission's work agenda included the definition of indicators, which is considered of fundamental importance for the establishment or implementation of a

process for monitoring and evaluating ten-year education plans. The FEE/PA demonstrated an understanding of this need, as evidenced by the statement from Seduc representative Márcia Aguiar Ribeiro, who affirmed that: “[...] before the end of the 2016 fiscal year, obtain highly meaningful indicators in the monitoring and evaluation of the State Education Plan” (Pará, 2016, p. 3). It is also noted that “the CMS discussed and analyzed the indicators included in the PEE/PA” (Pará, 2016, p. 1), without, however, clearly defining the category of these indicators.

Monitoring of Goal 7 of the PEE/PA

In this section, we seek to better understand the monitoring of Goal 7 of the Pará State Education Plan, with an emphasis on educational progression and learning in upper secondary education, given that these aspects are related to improving the quality of this stage of basic education. To this end, we first highlight the provisions of the Pará Ten-Year Education Plan, through strategies 7.2 and 7.3 of the aforementioned Goal:

- 7.2) ensure, within the scope of its authority, that:
 - 7.2.1) by the fifth year of this PEE’s implementation, at least 70% of elementary and upper secondary education students have achieved a sufficient level of learning in relation to the learning rights and development objectives for their grade level, and at least 50% have achieved the desirable level;
 - 7.2.2) by the final year of this PEE, all elementary and secondary education students have achieved a sufficient level of learning in relation to the learning rights and development objectives for their grade level, and at least 80% have reached the desirable level;
- 7.3) contribute to reducing failure, dropout, and age-grade mismatch rates in elementary and secondary education by 50% in the first five years and by 80% by the end of this Plan’s term (Pará, 2015, p. 20).

Through careful reading of the strategies, it is possible to identify references to specific issues, such as students’ learning rights and development objectives in relation to their grade level, as well as the reduction of failure, dropout, and age-grade mismatch rates.

In this regard, Strategy 7.2 is divided into two sub-strategies. Sub-strategy 7.2.1 establishes that, by the fifth year of the PEE/PA (2020), at least 70% of students must reach a sufficient level of learning, and at least 50% must reach the desirable level. Sub-strategy 7.2.2, on the other hand, stipulates that, by the final year of the Plan (2025), 100% of upper secondary education students will reach the sufficient level and 80% will reach the desirable level.

Strategy 7.3 also establishes specific targets to be met, aiming to reduce failure, dropout, and age-grade mismatch rates by 50% in the first five years, from 2015 to 2020, and by 80% by the end of the Plan's term in 2025.

Upon examining the FEE/PA's monitoring of Strategies 7.2 and 7.3 under Goal 7, it is noted that the data presented in the PEE/PA Goals Monitoring Report (2018) rely on indicators referred to as "social quality" indicators, comprising the IDEB scores for elementary and upper secondary education. However, these indicators do not correspond to the meaning attributed to them by authors such as Jannuzzi (2009, 2011), since they do not take into account relevant aspects of the target audience's socio-educational reality, as demonstrated by the national indicators for monitoring Goal 7:

Indicator 7A: IDEB for the early years of elementary school.

Indicator 7B: IDEB for the final years of elementary school.

Indicator 7C: IDEB for upper secondary education. (Emphasis in original) (Pará, 2018, p. 54).

Therefore, variables that influence the evaluation results are disregarded; these results are then transformed into indices or percentages produced by the evaluating state, adopting an essentially managerial perspective. In this approach, the concept of quality is grounded in a technical rationale, as suggested by Silva (2009).

Another point to be questioned regarding the indicators relates to the dimensions of quality reported in the PEE/PA Goals Monitoring Report (2018), which include aspects such as the average promotion rate at each educational level and student performance on the National Basic Education Assessment System (Saeb):

Goal 7 of the State Education Plan (PEE) focuses on improving the quality of education, proposing a gradual increase in the Basic Education Development Index (Ideb). The Ideb is a composite indicator created in 2007 by the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research (Inep), published biennially and composed of two dimensions of quality: the average promotion rate at each educational level and student performance on the national assessments of the Basic Education Assessment System (Saeb) (Pará, 2018, p. 54).

The meaning attributed to quality in the highlighted passage is vague and imprecise, failing to consider that the dimensions that are both constituent and constitutive of quality would need to be linked to the conception of education as a social practice (Dourado; Oliveira; Santos, 2007).

As a result, the quality implied by these indicators would be achieved exclusively through student performance, reinforcing the notion of the "effective school," evaluated based

on basic inputs. This conception aligns with the concept of quality promoted by multilateral organizations of global capitalism, such as the OECD and UNESCO, which adopt the triad of inputs, processes, and outcomes (Dourado; Oliveira; Santos, 2007).

In adopting the monitoring and evaluation approach outlined in the aforementioned report, the CMS aligns itself with a planning framework similar to that of total quality management, since monitoring is understood as a process of systematically tracking school quality and performance, as established in Strategy 7.3 of Goal 7 of the PEE/PA. Regarding upper secondary education, the document presents the following information:

Pará reduced the rate by 1.3 percentage points (p.p.) over five years (2012–2017), according to estimates from the Pnad-c survey. According to this survey, in 2017, school enrollment stood at only 88.5% of this age group, meaning that approximately 61,043 adolescents are out of school and have not completed basic education (Pará, 2018, p. 29).

Although statistical surveys allow for an assessment of the educational reality at a specific point in time, monitoring should not be limited to numerical data. Rather than enriching and deepening the debate on educational problems, this trend prioritizes quantifiable aspects and reinforces the competitive logic of the market, as reflected in educational planning and management practices, as argued by Enguita (1995). From this perspective, the focus falls on outcomes, to the detriment of processes and the structural causes of exclusion in educational systems, as Estêvão (2013) points out.

The PEE/PA Goals Monitoring Report (2018) presents data that corroborate the challenges in providing educational services to the population aged 15 to 17, contradicting the claims of authors such as Beisiegel (2005) and Dourado et al. (2007), who point to advances in the expansion of compulsory education coverage. Therefore, the data presented below demonstrate the disparity between the state of Pará and other regions of the country:

In 2017, Pará reached a rate of 56.1% of adolescents aged 15 to 17 who were enrolled in upper secondary education or had completed that level of education. An analysis of the trend from 2012 to 2017 (based on the Pnad-c) shows an average annual increase of 1.41 percentage points. If this trend continues, Pará would reach 67.38% by 2025, which is below the established target of 85% (Pará, 2018, p. 30).

Although the debate highlights the need to rethink learning strategies aimed at students from low-income families attending the public school system—in order to promote more meaningful learning (Dourado; Oliveira; Santos, 2007) and encourage students to remain

in upper secondary education—in Pará, there is still a need to expand educational coverage in order to achieve the goal of universal education, which should have been reached by 2016.

Regarding the monitoring conducted by the CMS, despite analytical efforts focused on IDEB results in upper secondary education, the state's performance in relation to quality indicators could be considered dismal, as evidenced by the assessments conducted during the period shown below:

Figure 5 – IDEB Results for Upper Secondary Education (2015–2017)

		Projeção INEP- Pará					
		2015	2017	2019	2021	2023	2025
Ensino Médio	Meta	3,7	4,2	4,4	4,7	5,0	5,3
	IDEB observado	3,0	2,8	---	---	---	---

Source: Pará, 2018.

However, the adoption of a quality standard based exclusively on IDEB must be questioned from the perspective of educational management and planning, something that cannot be verified in the documents examined. It is understood that this aspect represents one of the greatest obstacles to the realization of the PEE/PA's goals and strategies; after all, achieving quality requires rethinking the benchmarks that are tied exclusively to commercial interests (Estevão, 2013).

In this sense, monitoring should encompass the funding and sustainability foundations of the PEE/PA's goals and strategies. However, we found that this debate was absent during the period analyzed, which compromised the development of an integrated perspective between teaching, learning, and the resources necessary to ensure educational quality. As Carreira and Pinto (2007) argue, such a quality standard would only be achieved through the adoption of the Cost of Initial Quality Education (CAQi).

In this way, Strategy 7.2, which relates to learning and educational objectives, could also help reverse the unfavorable IDEB results, but these results were not directly monitored. Although it is noted that the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) for upper secondary education was a topic of discussion, there was no in-depth examination of its content, which would relate to this strategy, especially with regard to the concept of learning. The debate was limited solely to the process of drawing up this document as a manifestation of upper secondary education reform, both at the national level and through an initiative by Seduc in the state of Pará, as recorded in the Minutes of the FEE/PA Plenary Meeting of January 30, 2018.

Concluding Remarks

In this paper, we analyze the FEE/PA's approach to monitoring the quality of upper secondary education, highlighting aspects that serve as indicators of the social quality of public education for low-income adolescents and young people. In doing so, we seek to emphasize aspects related to educational progression and learning in the final stage of basic education. The research shows that there has been a turnover of institutions and entities within the FEE/PA, demonstrating that the process of democratic development is marked by resistance and contradictions.

Thus, the research made it possible to identify the approach to monitoring adopted by FEE/PA, which emerged from a broad debate among its members, marked by points of convergence and divergence, aspects that we consider positive for the democratic process. The monitoring carried out by FEE/PA reflects a managerial approach, in that it sought to streamline the process, focusing more directly on measurable outcomes rather than on the process itself or on constructive criticism regarding the quality of educational services provided to the population of Pará. We would also add that FEE/PA faced difficulties in implementing monitoring procedures during the period analyzed, particularly due to a lack of infrastructure, difficulties in accessing the information necessary to track the FEE/PA's goals and strategies, and a lack of understanding of essential technical aspects.

With regard to the monitoring of Goal 7, specifically concerning school progress and learning, we found that, in the report produced by FEE/PA in 2018, the procedures were based on social quality indicators, but these do not reflect the substantive content of these analytical references, thus failing to address the perspective adopted in this study, which is to inform planning activities and the formulation of educational policies. Therefore, the work carried out by FEE/PA, through its specific Commission, focused more on the IDEB targets for upper secondary education, particularly in the most recent assessments of this stage of basic education (2015–2017), emphasizing quantitative results at the expense of processes and qualitative dimensions of educational management and schools. Given this, we consider that the monitoring carried out by FEE/PA is important for the planning and management of educational strategies—since it provides an opportunity to track educational policies in the state of Pará—although it has not moved away from a perspective that reinforces the competitive logic of the market.

In summary, we reaffirm that it is necessary to rethink the quality standard established in educational management and planning, which has come to be based solely on IDEB

indicators, and we advocate for the idea that the monitoring that matters to the most deprived segments of the population—that is, adolescents and young people from the working class—must be based on a democratically established quality standard, in order to change the current benchmarks, which are tied exclusively to capitalist interests.

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