Social inequality and education in pandemic times

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ABSTRACT
The present work aims to show the dynamics of reproduction of social inequality within the educational system, highlighting the power relations intertwined in this scenario, especially in times of difficulties during the pandemic period, which led to an increase in social inequalities and conservation of the class dominant. Based on a survey carried out in two municipal public schools in São Bernardo-MA, one located in the rural area and the other in the urban area, which began in June 2021 until March 2022. Are developed by the school and that have an impact on combating the reproduction of social inequality, pointing out the difficulties faced by lower-class students during the pandemic in both rural and urban areas. The purpose is to describe and understand the impacts of the pandemic on access to education by students living in rural areas and students living in urban areas. In this way, we will look into and try to understand how this whole process is going, showing how teachers are dealing with this scenario of social inequality that was even more evident in this period of the pandemic and how students reacted to this new teaching modality. In this period of the research, it was possible to verify the difficulties of the teachers in handling the technological devices and in the process of evaluating the students. As for the students, the difficulties of accessing good quality internet and access to technological devices.

Keywords: Social inequality, Education, Pandemic.

1 INTRODUCTION

Social inequality is considered one of the biggest problems in the world, affecting the majority of the Brazilian population, and constituting itself as a present, evident and often neglected element in schools, it is perceived that this in the way that the curricular components are placed to students in an egalitarian way. However, in the daily school life, there is a diversity of subjects from different social classes, remaining at a disadvantage with this equality. In this scenario, such inequalities mainly affect the most basic rights of an individual, such as access to school, health, work, housing, that is, rights to a better quality of life, restricting access to equal opportunities.

In this sense, social inequality is legitimized in the school, an environment in which less favored people are more disadvantaged because they do not have access to certain cultural capital, recognized as valued by the dominant class, hegemonic and holder of the gears that hierarchize knowledge. Social inequality is a reflection of the unequal distribution of the economic capital of a given society, but also

of other capitals, such as social, cultural and symbolic[1]. Thus, it is up to school institutions to critically analyze to what extent they act as reproducers of social inequalities, or as transforming agents of this social context, linked to an unequal access to opportunities.

The interest in this topic arose after my insertion in the school environment in a short period in which I had the opportunity to teach in two schools, one in the seat of the municipality of São Bernardo, in the State of Maranhão, and another in the rural area of that same municipality. Moreover, my own school trajectory in a reflection of this context.

However, it is worth mentioning an experience similar to this research, in which I was part of a project PIBID, initiation program to teaching, of the Federal University of Maranhão, which I participated as a scholarship holder in the period from November 1, 2020 to April 30, 2022. This being directed to a state school of São Bernardo in which we applied questionnaires to the students and ended with the production of a booklet[2] entitled The racism present in the words and expressions in the Brazilian Portuguese. In this period we can observe how was the dynamics of the students of this school, in which part of them were from places in the rural area and how social inequalities affected in the period of the pandemic, we can also count on the contribution of the supervisor Jaison Castro of the project, in which he can tell us the difficulties faced during the pandemic and especially the lack of infrastructure of the school in the return to face-to-face classes. As in this research that was directed to municipal schools, they have common elements. At that moment, it was possible to perceive that access to certain capitals guaranteed success or failure at school – highlighting that the interest is not to present this relationship in a deterministic way, but that inequality is a determining factor in the lives of students.

Therefore, the schools [3] I chose to contribute to my research are from the city of São Bernardo-MA, located in the Baixo Parnaíba of Maranhão, which has approximately 28,825 people, according to 2021 data. The municipality has 84 years of political emancipation and has 43[4] municipal school units in general, being divided between headquarters and rural area, being 14 schools located in the headquarters and 29 schools in the rural area located in several villages belonging to São Bernardo, and has 492[5], official teachers. The school chosen from the headquarters for this research is located in

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[1] Symbolic capital is a credit, it is the power attributed to those who have obtained sufficient recognition to be able to impose recognition: thus, the power of constitution, power to make a new group, through mobilization, or to make exist by proxy, speaking for it as an authorized spokesperson, can only be obtained at the end of a long process of institutionalization, at the end of which a representative is instituted, who receives from the group the power to make the group. (BOURDIEU, 2004, p. 166).

[2] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cOU4I3C5nCnVZeR-_pH4ZYoeKwQ5xR4_/view?usp=sharing

[3] All the names of both schools and students, teachers and managers are fictitious

[4] Information collected at the Municipal Secretariat of Education, Technological Sciences and Innovation, of São Bernardo-MA. Obtained through the supervisor Maria Ivana Costa Santos- SEMECTI sector.

[5] https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/ma/sao-bernardo/pesquisa/13/78117

the center of the city and the school located in the rural area is 10 km away from the city where students are received from approximately 5 different locations in the school in the rural area.

The predominant religion is Catholic with approximately 82.99% [6] of the population practicing. And although evangelicals have gained more and more strength with the expansion of the number of churches, they still add up to only 11.08% of this population. The city is full of religious events and festivities being located in a strategic point where it borders Luzilândia, Magalhães de Almeida, and São Quitéria.

Given this diagnosis of social aspects, the purpose of this research becomes relevant to bring the discussion about the process of reproduction of social inequalities. Thus, we start from some questions: Is the school concerned with its role in social transformation? Do you fight so that, through it, your agents become mitigators of this inequality that haunts us so much?

Social inequality affects thousands of students across the country every day. From the analysis made through this research, we seek to understand the difficulties produced outside the school, but that end up being reinforced within it. What is increasingly perceived is inequality becoming an element present in everyday school life, especially in small cities, where we can find different social groups that live daily and go through the crisis of social inequality, the pandemic propels us a more attentive view of the inequalities already existing. In a post-pandemic context ie we are no longer in a pandemic, due to the decrease and spread of the virus that occurred after a large number of people took the vaccine against Covid-19, showing effectiveness in the reduction and spread of the virus, in this sense we are already experiencing, currently the return of in-person classes that occurred in the first period of 2022, in this sense it needs greater attention, prioritizing students and giving full attention, because a city like São Bernardo, located in the interior of the State of Maranhão, the difficulties will be evident, even more whose socioeconomic indices indicate that:

> From the point of view of the average monthly income, workers in São Bernardo receive around 1.5 minimum wages. Households do not represent the guarantee of health security for the families that reside in them, with only 11.1% of them having adequate sewage treatment. Regarding the water supply, the service is partially offered by the Environmental Sanitation Company of Maranhão (CAEMA). In the urban area, 56% of the population has access to the piped water system. In the rural area, 47% of the population has adequate access to water through collective and individual wells, according to the Final Report of the Municipal Plan for Basic Sanitation and the Municipal Plan for Integrated Management of Solid Waste. In the situation we are currently facing, which imposes on us the need for new hygiene habits as a way of preventing the disease, these data are symptomatic of how the consequences of inequalities encompass various aspects. (COLASANTE & PEREIRA, 2021, p. 207)

In this sense, it is necessary to reflect on the understanding and perception of the social contexts, in which students are inserted, in this way, teachers, managers, that is, every school team plans its

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[6] https://www.estadosecidades.com.br/ma/sao-bernardo-ma_religioes.html

contents and its performance in the face of such an adverse scenario. It is a fact that each student is inserted in the different social space, and each space determines and enables each one, different lifestyle, because according to Bourdieu (2004) the perception of the social world is the product of a double structuring that can present different lifestyles and unequal possibilities as highlighted:

> The social space tends to function as a symbolic space, a space of lifestyles and status groups, characterized by different lifestyles. Thus, the perception of the social world is the product of a double structuring: on the objective side, it is socially structured because the properties attributed to agents and institutions are presented in combinations with very unequal probabilities: just as animals with feathers are more likely to have wings than animals with fur, so also those possessing a refined mastery of language are more likely to be seen in museums than those who are devoid of that dominance. (BOURDIEU, 2004, p. 160-161).

In fact, the social space in which we are inserted interferes with knowledge and development in the school environment. Throughout life the social space is a determining factor for our knowledge and, consequently, change the social reality and obviously that education is an important and main fact in this trajectory of the individual, even if the school is an environment initiated by the bourgeoisie, it is still the only hope for a person to achieve their goals as citizens and professionals.

Therefore, this work makes a path showing and evidencing the results of the research with reports and graphs collected in the pandemic period.

2 MAPPING OF THE METHODOLOGICAL PERCUSSION

This research began with the elaboration of the project, and was carried out in two schools of São Bernardo, one located in the rural area and the other in the urban area. This research was done with students from 10 to 15 years of different classes 5th year and 7th year and was also directed to some teachers of the basic network, using the quantitative and qualitative methodology, with the application of semi-structured questionnaires. In the first moment of the research was made a bibliographic survey in which I deepened and studied works that contributed theoretically to the analysis of the proposed theme and its enrichment, such as: Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Pedagogy of Autonomy, Writings of Education, among others. Works by authors such as Paulo Freire, Bourdieu, Passeron among many others. A second step was the search for the places to which the field research would be carried out, so we continue the stage of qualitative and quantitative research. The qualitative research according to Silveira and Córdova has the following characteristics:

> [...] objectification of the phenomenon; hierarchization of the actions of describing, understanding, explaining, precision of the relations between the global and the local in a given phenomenon; observance of the differences between the social world and the natural world; respect for the interactive character between the objectives sought by the researchers, their theoretical orientations and their empirical data; search for the most reliable results possible; opposition to the assumption that advocates a single model of research for all sciences. (SILVEIRA AND CÓRDOVA, 2009, p. 32).

In this research, we seek to understand the social factors related to the reproduction of social inequality in the school environment. In doing so, through the reality experienced, to which I dedicated myself to the greater objective of obtaining information and understanding the effects of the pandemic in the schools of São Bernardo/MA, obtaining information that supports actions that aim to understand and describe practices intertwined with the processes of vulnerability and precariousness, results of social inequality, put as results of this research.

The lack of expectation regarding the possibilities of social mobility from education was an element to be mapped in order to measure to what extent this lack directly affects school dropout and success, creating a vicious circle between family generations inserted in processes of social exclusion.

In the third moment, already with the choice of the basic schools of this research, I set out to present the theme to the principals of the schools in which the research was applied. Firstly, I contacted the management of the José de Farias Municipal School, being the contact, due to the pandemic, 100% online, using the social networking applications to contact the direction and several teachers of this school. However, I had help from a niece who studies at this rural school who maintained a link between me and the school's teachers.

In a first stage, the research was directed to teachers interviewed members of the public network in the rural and urban areas of São Bernardo. In this way, we seek to understand the role of the school in relation to social inequality and whether it really achieves the objectives or remakes the dynamics of reproduction of social inequality.

The research took place through questionnaires, sent to students and teachers of schools, conversations and reports through WhatsApp and some visits to the school, following all the safety protocols established by the World Health Organization, due to the SARS-CoV2 pandemic[7].

The interviews with the teachers of the schools, already mentioned in these lines, were seen as crucial, because, according to Lakatos and Marconi:

> The interview is an important work tool in the various fields of social sciences or other sectors of activity, such as Sociology, Anthropology, Social Psychology, Politics, Social Work, Journalism, Public Relations, Market Research and others (LAKATOS AND MARCONI, 2003, p. 196).

The interviews through questionnaires and reports of teachers were central points in this research, and were made through the research in the context of the pandemic, for the protection of the researcher, the interviewees and interviewees, respecting the sanitary security measures. Thus, these

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[7] SARS-CoV-2, also known as novel coronavirus, is a strain identified in 2019 that, unfortunately, has some genetic characteristics that make it more transmissible and capable of causing more severe clinical conditions.

different moments aimed to evaluate how each actor inserted in this context was affected and organized to elaborate strategies to cope with the health crisis, maintaining their teaching and learning activities.

The research had some difficulties, because in the course of the field research it was necessary to change from a school to which it had already been chosen as a field of research, due to problems related to the pandemic scenario. At this time I could not be in this school because of the high rate of Covid-19 cases, given this scenario I talked to the teacher who would help me in the research, and suggested that she put me in the online classes or in the groups that were the students to explain the questionnaires that would be sent to them, so the teacher accepted, However, a short time later the teacher said that I would have to speak to parents in person at school on the day of the delivery of the activities. But, I didn't feel safe and found myself in a moment of isolation for fear of Covid-19, so I ended up directing the research to another school.

One of the great challenges of the school of the headquarters was the receipt of the questionnaires of the students that when distracted the teacher of the chosen class ended up returning the same along with the activities that received for the correction, even being already aware of the research, which ended up hindering this return. Therefore, it was necessary to send a new submission along with the students' activity book, in which we had to wait, remembering that, as Gil points out, in quantitative research there are also problems in receiving the data:

> It is impossible to deny that the social scientist deals with variables that are difficult to quantify. It is also difficult to disagree with the claim that the great advance of a science can be determined by the accuracy of its measuring instruments. However, the problem of quantification in the social sciences, if analyzed with the deserved depth, will prove to be much less critical than it appears. (GIL, 2008, p.23)

It is impossible for us researchers to remain totally alien to what we research, since we are immersed in many social issues, issues that we are directly inserted in the day to day. In reality, what we have to understand that even directly involved we have to be attentive to what we want to bring to our reader, because according to Gil:

> Faced with social facts, the researcher is not able to be absolutely objective. He has his preferences, inclinations, particular interests, whims, prejudices, takes an interest in them and evaluates them based on a personal value system. Unlike the researcher who works in the world of physical things – who is not naturally involved with the object of his study – the social scientist, when dealing with facts such as criminality, social discrimination or school dropout, is dealing with a reality that may not be foreign to him. Your values and your personal beliefs inform you in advance about the phenomenon, indicating whether it is good or bad, just or unjust. (GIL, 2008, p. 24).

However, in a research, when choosing our object of study, it consists of being directly involved in the theme or by the curiosity that mobilizes us to want to study them, even to try to understand a certain research context and the subjects inserted. Especially in the school in the rural area, Escola Jose

de Farias, where I obtained part of my school trajectory in which at first I had a conversation with the principal, I presented the research proposal and was available to talk to the teachers and students where I had a great return of the questionnaires that were sent to the students in June 2021, Having a better return in a class of 23 students of the 7th grade, because, I received 20 of the questionnaires sent, already in the class of the 5th year I received only 7 questionnaires of a class of 20 students of the rural area already in the urban area class of 20 years I received 10 questionnaires answered, however in this school hears some problems causing the sending of these questionnaires twice which may have caused in the receipt of these questionnaires this is a probable hypothesis.

From this same school it was possible to attend some online classes, which allowed me to understand more the dynamics of the activities of this school. In this same school, the teachers were very receptive in answering my questions through the questionnaires and WhatsApp conversations, unlike the school in the urban area where I had some problems regarding the return of the questionnaires from both students and teachers. I do not know if due to the wear and tear of the moment, the accumulation of activities during the pandemic, in view of this, at the Maria do Rosário School, the return of the questionnaires was lower than expected. In a class of 20 students the return was 10 students, class of the 5th grade, however, it is worth mentioning that living in the city of this school facilitated to collect some information, finally, I got the desired information on the proposed theme.

Despite the pandemic, it was possible to carry out the research with the support of questionnaires and social networks, having access to informal conversations with some teachers, where I was able to discuss all the challenges of this period, as well as the numerous difficulties faced in the course of school activities.

This research is of paramount relevance, because researching something that involves education goes beyond our expectations. Thinking about the educational system contributed to focus not only on the data, but also on the works of authors who deal with the theme in order to enrich this work. Therefore, the research has brought us a range of opportunities, at the same time that we seek to pass on to the reader a relevant work we also learn more and more from the research. As Freire points out:

> There is no teaching without research and research without teaching. These what-to's are found in each other's bodies. While continuous teaching, seeking, searching. I teach because I seek, because I have inquired, because I inquire and inquire into myself. I research to verify, verifying, intervening, intervening educates and educates myself. I research to know what I do not yet know and communicate or announce the news. (Freire, 1996, p.14)

Therefore, research becomes increasingly important, because through it, at the same time that we learn, we teach a lot, because everything we find in the research we try to pass on to the reader,

that is, to communicate the novelty as Paulo Freire pointed out. This is the purpose of this research, to bring readers the whole process and difficulties in teaching during the pandemic, starting from two schools in different contexts, with data collection both among teachers and among students. So we were able to get a better sense of what went on in education during the pandemic.

3 EDUCATION AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN BRAZIL

Social inequalities in Brazil continue to be a major problem that we have to face daily, since it is the reality of millions of Brazilians, and with the current crisis caused by the pandemic generates numerous uncertainties and directly impacts people with greater social vulnerabilities. The inequality that is already rooted in Brazil, has taken on greater proportions caused by the crisis, this social abyss to which we find ourselves begins when the poor distribution of income that directly impacts education, causes educational inequality. It is evident that those who have a higher concentration of income, have greater access and success in education, because they have greater advantages and access to elements that contribute to their learning, that is, the individual with a higher concentration of income has access to the cultural capital most valued in school, because it provides him with certain advantages. But what would be cultural capital is a set of knowledge or skills acquired in the social environment that we are inserted, Bourdieu uses this concept for class analysis in society, that is, uses to understand how culture reflects on the living conditions of the student, on school success and society in general, and how this is reflected in social inequalities.

> "The notion of cultural capital imposes itself primarily as an indispensable hypothesis to account for the inequality in the school performance of children from different social classes, relating the "school success", that is, the specific benefits that children of different classes and class fractions can obtain in the school market, the distribution of cultural capital among classes and class fractions. Bourdieu (2015, p. 81).

This concept of cultural capital is extremely important because it shows us the size of social inequalities and how they act in the process of maintaining them and from it that determines the success of a student in the school environment

The school serves both to diminish or reproduce social inequality, however it is not the role we expect from it. However, it ends up happening within these institutions certain issues such as: distinctions, differences and inequalities. In this sense, the school also separates and classifies individuals as follows:

> It took it upon itself to separate the subjects—making those who entered it distinct from others, those who did not have access to it. It also divided, internally, those who were there, through multiple mechanisms of classification, ordering, hierarchization. (LOURO, 1997, p. 57)

The school also serves to separate the different subjects from each other, to dictate rules, behaviors consciously or unconsciously. In addition to playing a role of paramount importance, we can not fail to highlight that it is through it that the student has the chance to change his reality, becoming a critical citizen, but we also have to be alert with the power that the school exerts over the individual, because according to Louro:

> The school delimits spaces. Using symbols and codes, it affirms what each one can (or cannot) do, it separates and institutes. It informs the "place" of the little ones and the big ones, of the boys and the girls. Through his paintings, crucifixes, saints or sculptures, he points out those who should be models and also allows the subjects to recognize themselves (or not) in these models. (LOURO, 1997, p. 58)

Certainly, the school is welcoming and starts to have a role of reduction of inequality extremely important in the life of the individual, but unconsciously also reproduces it due to its genesis. As Louro (1997) points out, the school delimits spaces, separates individuals according to their differences and classes, because the school is the fruit of the bourgeoisie and there are remnants of the initial role of the school focused on a certain class, although it has already changed, because today the school is directed to all.

The important role that the school plays in the lives of individuals primarily of social development, but goes much further. Therefore, the need for community participation in the role of knowing the school environment is extremely important to have a sense of the real role of the same in the lives of students and the community in general.

3.1 THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON THE REPRODUCTION OF INEQUALITIES

The year 2020 was marked by the emergence of the first case of infection by the COVID-19 virus in Brazil, and by the calamitous situation of a pandemic with global consequences. According to the WHO COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus[8] and has the following symptoms fever, tiredness and dry cough, loss of taste or smell, nasal congestion, conjunctivitis, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, chills or dizziness may also occur. In Brazil, the spread of this virus has caused schools to close their doors, as well as other educational institutions (universities and educational institutes, for example). In this alarming scenario, institutions had to adapt, migrating to a remote mode of teaching, following the norms of municipal and state decrees. Thus, by means of a decree: "Provides for the replacement of in-person classes by classes in digital media, for the duration of the pandemic situation of the novel Coronavirus - Covid-19, and repeals

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[8]Information taken from the website:
https://www.paho.org/pt/covid19#:~:text=A%20COVID%2D19%20%C3%A9%20uma,febre%2C%20cansa%C3%A7o%20e%20tosse%20seca.acesso on 10-06-2022.

MEC Ordinances No. 343, of March 17, 2020, No. 345, of March 19, 2020, and No. 473, of May 12, 2020." Given this, it was necessary a new organization of the school calendar, in which it was necessary to establish new procedures to think about how they would adopt the classes, which until that moment had been stopped, seeking to minimize possible damage to students.

However, the challenges had only just begun, because the new model that would have to be implemented, an emergency model, required educators to invest and adapt time. In addition, for it to occur successfully, students would have to have access to technological means to avoid possible harm and obtain a higher performance. Unfortunately, however, not all students have access to the internet network, which makes the work of teachers even more difficult.

As research points out, access to the global network of communicators by the Brazilian population is limited, being reduced to a small portion of the population. In addition, in Brazilian homes, there is a shortage of access to certain electronic objects, such as computers, cell phones and tablets. With the worsening of the economic crisis, and the increase in unemployment among the population, access to these products has become even more difficult and precarious.

According to data from the Continuous National Household Sample Survey (PnaC), in 2019, the state of Maranhão had the 2nd lowest percentage of internet access, with 67.4‰ of households having access to the world wide web.[9]

Given this, the educational system began to have a fundamental role in the process of resistance to the reproduction of social inequalities, because schools exercise strategies that enable better conditions to advance in life, socially and economically. For this to happen, education professionals need to escape the risk of maintaining traditional teaching methodologies and of wanting only to deposit knowledge, that is, to treat the student as chests where totally passive knowledge is deposited, as Paulo Freire highlights with his concept of banking education. In it, the author points out that: "In this way, education becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositaries and the educator the depositor" (FREIRE, 1987, p. 33).

Even today, in the twenty-first century, this teaching model highlighted by Paulo Freire (1987) is still reproduced, and given what we are experiencing in this pandemic context, this teaching model has nothing to add to students, especially those who go through greater difficulties related to social inequalities, especially the inequality of access to the internet.

If we compare students from urban areas with students from rural areas, we can observe that the chances of students from rural areas or places far from the city to achieve school success is much

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[9] For more details, visit the following report:
https://g1.globo.com/ma/maranhao/noticia/2021/04/14/maranhao-tinha-o-2o-menor-percentual-de-domicilios-com-internet-do-pais-em-2019-diz-ibge.ghtml accessed November 6, 2021.

lower, and this work seeks to identify precisely these difficulties. Therefore, in order to map a range of factors that interfere in the dynamics of reproduction, we chose to conduct qualitative research, with the application of questionnaires, tabulation and presentation of data.

One of Brazil's biggest problems is social inequality, and with the Covid-19 pandemic, this has only further widened this inequality, especially those who were already most vulnerable, including a large number of students – our main focus.

Social inequality leads us to think and reflect on how big this inequality is and how much it distances people. Brazil is among the most unequal countries in the world. This fact is accentuated, mainly, in the school banks and is directly interconnected to the economic issue. In this way, the lack of money intensifies disparities in access between social strata, reflecting success or failure in school. According to Bourdieu (2015), the school has a prominent role in the process of reproduction of social inequality. The author points out that:

> It is probably because of an effect of cultural inertia that we continue to take the school system as a factor of social mobility, according to the ideology of the "liberating school" when on the contrary, everything tends to show that it is one of the most effective factors of social conservation, since it provides the appearance of legitimacy to social inequalities, sanctions cultural heritage and the social gift treated as a natural gift (BOURDIEU, 2015, p. 45).

While it is preached that the school serves to reduce social inequality, it also reproduces this inequality, legitimizing it through school failure. Therefore, if the student leaves the educational system and inserts himself in precarious jobs, he begins to dedicate himself to underemployment, or, even if at the end of the school career he does not succeed, he becomes the main responsible for his failure before society, without being inserted in all this unfavorable social context that contributes to the reproduction of inequalities.

Often the school preaches one thing and its collaborators do another, often treating the students as mere "chests", as already mentioned and presented by Paulo Freire (1987) in his concept of banking education. The only action offered to students is to receive knowledge, which for Paulo Freire causes a distortion in education:

> In the "banking" view of education, knowledge is a gift from those who think they are wise to those who think they know nothing. A gift that is based on one of the instrumental manifestations of the ideology of oppression – the absolutization of ignorance, which constitutes what we call the alienation of ignorance, according to which it is always found in the other. (Freire, 1987, p. 33).

In this case, students become oppressed, seen as mere objects by teachers, coming from social classes different from their own and possessing a superior cultural capital. Students who let themselves

be oppressed, end up students affected by practices that reproduce symbolic violence, [10]seeing their traditional knowledge, linked to their origins, belittled and causing psychological damage, because symbolic violence occurs without the need for physical violence invisibly, most often in a gentle way that is used as social processes for domination that can cause irreparable damage, that is, moral and psychological damage to the individual. According to Bourdieu (2015) it is a process of coercion.

Students, when they arrive at schools, already bring with them cultural capitals observed by teachers or members of their family, as a kind of natural, innate gift, when they are actually the result of socialization processes. The structuring social hierarchy of a society as unequal as ours legitimizes certain cultural capitals and devalues others. Given this, we can understand that everything will depend on the capital acquired by the individual, that is, social capital.

> Social capital is the set of current or potential resources that are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relations of interknowledge and interrecognition or, in other words, to the attachment to a group, as a set of agents that are not only endowed with common properties (likely to be perceived by the observer, by others or by themselves), but they are also united by permanent and useful connections. (BOURDIEU, 2015, p. 75).

The social capital of the individual directly impacts on the success in his life trajectory, and this same social capital will depend on his relations and even on the economic and cultural capital acquired, and this, within the educational system determines even the performance of the student as to success or failure. Thus, as he points out:

> The notion of cultural capital is imposed, firstly, as an indispensable hypothesis to account for the inequality of school performance of children from different social classes, relating the "school success", that is, the specific benefits that children of different classes and class fractions can obtain in the school market, to the distribution of cultural capital among classes and class fractions. This starting point implies a break with the assumptions inherent both in the common view that considers school success or failure as an effect of 'natural aptitudes' and in theories of 'human capital'. (BOURDIEU, 2015, p. 81):

The student inserted in the social context of lower strata of society, will have lower chances of acquiring a socially valued cultural capital, not acquiring a previous baggage of knowledge sufficient to have a school development considered successful. With this, he already enters school with a

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[10]Symbolic violence is that coercion that is instituted through the adherence that the dominated cannot fail to grant to the dominant (therefore, to domination), when he has only to think about it and to think about himself, or rather, to think about his relationship with him, instruments of knowledge shared among themselves and that give rise to this relationship as natural, because they are, in fact, the embodied form of the structure of the relation of domination; or, in other words, when the schemes employed by him, in order to perceive and appreciate himself, or to perceive and appreciate the dominant ones (high/low, male/female, white/black, etc.) (BOURDIEU, 2001, p. 206-207).

disadvantage and this can lead to school failure, in addition to the feeling of being in a place of which he is not a part. There is also an aggravating factor of him feeling responsible for his own failure.

In this issue of the legitimacy of social inequality in the educational system, it is necessary to think about the improvement of public policies and improve teacher training, in order to provide students who live daily the difficulties related to socioeconomic inequality, a better assistance in school. Thus, there is no agreement with the legitimation, and even the reproduction of social inequality in school.

According to Bourdieu. "You will agree easily, and perhaps too easily, with all of the above. But to restrict ourselves to this would mean refraining from questioning ourselves about the responsibility of the school in perpetuating social inequalities." (BOURDIEU 2015, p. 58). The school for a long time was put to assume a role in the mitigation of social inequality, and through it we hoped that education would guarantee to the individual the equality of opportunity between all and all.

The competence we attribute to the school is transformative and democratic, but, according to Bourdieu (2015) the school is not neutral and ends up favoring the reproduction and dissemination of the ideology of the ruling class. At this point, it should be noted that we know that we do not all have the same cultural capital. This fact makes us vulnerable and disadvantaged in school, especially with regard to school growth. On cultural capital Bourdieu (2015) underlines the following:

> In reality, each family transmits to its children more through indirect than direct ways, a certain cultural capital and a certain ethos, a system of implicit and deeply internalized values, which contributes to defining, among other things, attitudes towards cultural capital and the school institution. Cultural heritage, which differs in two respects according to social classes, is responsible for the initial difference of children from the school experience and, consequently, for the success rates (BOURDIEU, 2015, p. 46)

In fact, we all receive a certain cultural capital, but this changes when we have new experiences, we know new cultures, we frequent places different from the usual ones (such as: museums, theaters, cinemas, libraries, etc.), and all this modifies the access we had to the cultural capitals of origin. Therefore, it is perceived that socioeconomic vulnerability, and the lack of private and public equipment that provides access to this cultural knowledge, affects the distribution of these capitals. Given this, we can think about how better public policies help more people have access to equal opportunities.

Due to this, the school distinguishes and privileges those who have a certain cultural capital, because it interconnects the school and has a fundamental role in the construction and training of students. This ends up selecting privileged students, since, generally, the person who has access to the largest cultural capital, also has economic and social capital. According to Bourdieu (2015), this causes a disadvantage to the most disadvantaged.

> In order to favour the most favoured and the most disadvantaged to be favoured, it is necessary and sufficient for schools to ignore, in the context of the content of the teaching which it transmits, the methods and techniques of transmission and the criteria for evaluation, the cultural inequalities between children from different social classes. In other words, treating all students, no matter how unequal they may actually be, as equal in rights and duties, the school system is led to give its sanction to the initial inequalities before culture (BOURDIEU, 2015, p. 59).

Hence the need to guarantee the right to all, regardless of social class. In this sense, it becomes necessary more and more investments in the training of teachers, because knowing that social inequalities, especially socioeconomic inequalities, interfere directly in the school performance of a good part of the affected students, and even with numerous transformations over the years in the advances in relation to education, the school can and should be an agent of transformation of the student's life.

According to the Federal Constitution of 1988: "Art. 205. Education, the right of all and the duty of the State and the family, will be promoted and encouraged with the collaboration of society, aiming at the full development of the person, his preparation for the exercise of citizenship and his qualification for work". But is this right really being put into practice, guaranteeing a quality education to all? Next comes the article that provides for teaching: "Art. 206. The teaching will be given based on the following principles: I - equality of conditions for access and permanence in the school". That is, equality of conditions for all. However, on a day-to-day basis, what we are seeing are inequalities leveraging more and more. The reality is that we do not all have the same equality of conditions for staying in schools, so much so that there ends up being a large dropout rate. What happens is that often the student can not keep up with colleagues and ends up giving up his school career.

3.2 EDUCATION CHALLENGES FOR RURAL AND URBAN STUDENTS AMID THE PANDEMIC

The teachers, when asked about the challenges faced by students in the rural region during the pandemic, pointed out that they were already experiencing numerous difficulties in the educational system in these locations due to the lack of infrastructure of the schools not being the same as those of the headquarters. Most of them live a different reality from students from the urban area, a reality that often limits the movement of these students to other environments, bad roads are one of the biggest problems making it impossible to contact with cultural capitals concentrated in central regions of the state and country. For in fact when we move to other localities and cities, we obtain and acquire certain knowledge.

The school in the rural area that I conducted the research serves students from several nearby villages, each with its own realities, which makes it even more difficult in the distribution and

application of activities. Among the difficulties of these students, is the lack of a good internet or the inexistence of it, a fact that makes the work of the teacher unfeasible, since the remote classes were mediated by the use of the world wide web of computers and by applications accessed by it, in relation to the urban area this issue of the internet was more viable considering that the situation of the internet was better than the localities of the rural zone however the report The Secretary of the School of the Urban Zone was that one of the great difficulties was the delivery of the activities that many parents did not go to the school so had to move to them for the delivery of the activities.

Some teachers chose to teach classes on *Google Meet and Zoom*, however, with the existing difficulties, not everyone could access the classes due to lack of internet access. As we have already highlighted, not all students have the necessary technological equipment to attend classes online. In one of Professor Luzia's reports, she highlighted that the difficulties were diverse, pointing out that:

> The difficulties at the beginning of the pandemic were greater, and diverse, one of them was in the elaboration of activities because a diagnosis of the students had not yet been made, difficulty in knowing the applications to use in video editing and when I found it still had the technical issue of having to learn how to handle them and the issue of textbook activities, because there were activities that were not proposed for the classroom, and in the question of evaluation it was difficult, because it is not really known if it was these students who did their activities, because this control was not available. Despite creating WhatsApp groups, many students did not do the activities, as they were asked to put the activities in the group, which often did not occur. (Interviews with Teacher on 07/12/2021, through WhatsApp)

Despite the numerous difficulties listed by Professor Luzia, she stresses that in the year 2021 the classes were quieter and more profitable than in the previous year, since the students could have a certain notion and had accumulated experiences of the previous year.

The teachers' statements point out that schools in general, located in the headquarters of São Bernardo or that are part of this municipality encounter and face similar problems, but the inequalities of students from the rural area have become more evident in this context of pandemic, since the conditions of these schools are more precarious and the lives of these students are conducted in another way. The alternatives found were right at the beginning of the pandemic, in June 2020, to start with remote classes, setting up an activity schedule, in which parents or guardians would go to the school to pick up these activities and return them on the date set by the teacher for correction. All the information passed on to them was through WhatsApp groups. With this, another big problem arises, who would help these students who do not have internet and often not even technological devices? Being that many of these parents had no way to help their children in the accomplishments of the activities, having to resort to other alternatives. As reported by a 5th grade student, a student from the rural area.

> I did not have online classes, there is only WhatsApp group to ask possible questions and it is being very difficult, because my mother has little schooling, does not see right and had no way to help me, having to resort to my aunt, and as I had no cell phone, at first, my sister who lives in São Luís was the one who took all the information, because she was in the WhatsApp group and passed on all the information about the delivery and receipt of activity. (Interview with student at his residence on 09/10/2021)

She points out that the hardest thing was not even taking *classes online*, like other classmates from the same school. It is noticed that even having several applications that helped in *online* classes during the pandemic, some teachers, for some reason stopped using them and were only with WhatsApp groups , for information or doubts, that often, the student ended up not remedying them.

However notices differences in the planning and execution of activities during the pandemic, during this research I realized that in the same school the activities were different while some teachers preferred to teach *via google meet* others chose only to use the WhatsApp application to ask questions which ended up harming some students, even more being that they hardly took doubts either by shyness or lack of internet. According to the 7th grade student, classes took place on average a half hour, with participation at most 10 students from a class of 23 students who hardly participated, which resulted in a class without interaction (Interview with student in his residence 01/10/2021).

The challenges are greater in schools that already have IDEB[11] below the desirable, which is the case of this school in the rural area. With IBEB 4.5 in 2019, the target was 4.9 and they failed to reach it, remaining on alert. With the pandemic, most likely, the likelihood of the situation worsens further. In this period, for every 100 students of this school, 11 were not approved. Thus, this school needs to improve and achieve the expected grade, 6.0. However, it becomes more difficult with the reduced communication and interaction difficulties during the pandemic.

In this process of emergency teaching, in a way, this process of evaluation of students becomes more complicated, and they do not have control of who is actually doing these activities. In a report, Professor Mário points out that the evaluation process is more complicated, but that it occurred through the receipt of the activity notebooks:

> The main form of evaluation was the receipt of the activity book that initially happened every 15 days, then became one per month, but that has no way to make a faithful evaluation. We also evaluate the participation in the online classes and also counts a lot the correct frequency of the delivery of the activities (Interviewee made with teacher day 13/10/2021, through WhatsApp).

This evaluation process is very complicated, the activities have to be well elaborated, since the teacher has no control over the activities sent for performance at home, the teaching and evaluation process is crucial to measure the student's learning, becoming fragmented:

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[11]https://qedu.org.br/cidade/5295-sao-bernardo/ideb/ideb-porscolas?dependence=3&grade=1&edition=2019.

> The evaluation, as a diagnostic act, aims at inclusion and not exclusion; inclusion and not selection (which necessarily leads to exclusion). The diagnosis aims to assess things, acts, situations, people, in order to make decisions in order to create conditions for obtaining a greater satisfactoriness of what is being sought or constructed. (LUCKESI, 2012, p. 162- 163)

In this construction of knowledge, the evaluation process receives numerous criticisms, especially with the application of tests, but which are necessary. According to Luckesi: "The current practice of school evaluation stipulated as a function of the act of evaluating the classification and not the diagnosis, as it should be constitutively" (LUCKESI, 2012, p.34). In a way, during the pandemic, this feature has become unviable and unreliable, because according to Luckesi:

> The school practice usually called learning assessment has little to do with evaluation. It consisted more of tests/exams than assessment. Tests/exams have the purpose, in the case of school learning, to verify the level of performance of the learner in certain content (understanding by content the set of information motor skills, mental skills, convictions, creativity etc.) and classify them in terms of trial / failure (for this, we can use various levels, such as: higher, middle-upper, middle, middle-lower, lower, no income; or grades ranging from 0 to 10, or something similar). (LUCKESI, 2012, p. 168-169)

In a way, the evaluation process is based on the performance and successes in the evaluation, the so-called (tests) which leaves at a disadvantage those who go through difficulties, reproducing social inequalities. However this evaluation process is given in an egalitarian way to all students, in this sense it turns out to be an unequal process being that in these school institutions to a diversity of subjects.

4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The following data is the results of questionnaires sent to students and teachers and data collection by WhatsApp. Below, I present data from this research through graphs according to the data collection that was carried out in two schools of São Bernardo-MA.

The first graph refers to three questions directed to students, how they evaluated the effectiveness of teachers in guidance and pedagogical support during remote teaching, in which most answered excellent, and the second is related to the student's own learning in which they answered well, and the third consists of how they evaluated remote teaching during the pandemic, in which, in general, the majority highlighted as good as shown in graph 1, below.

Figure 1.
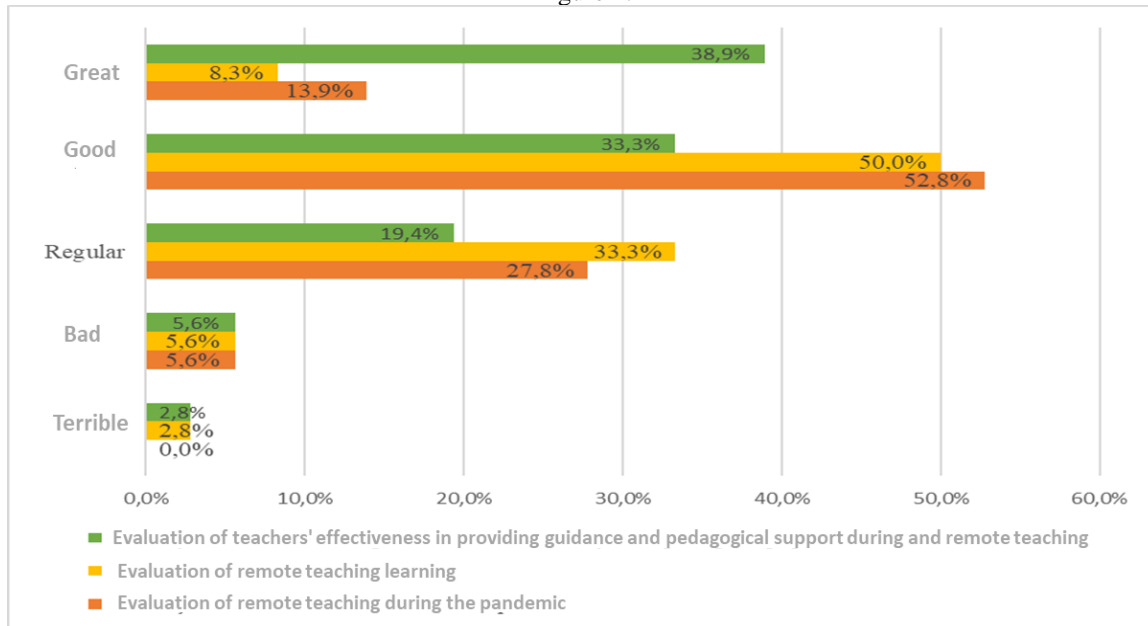
The devices and materials that were used during the pandemic were multiple. Although many students still did not have cell phones, they used their parents' or a close relative's to obtain information or connect to online classes. Let's look at Chart 2 below for the devices used during online classes during the pandemic.

Figure 2.
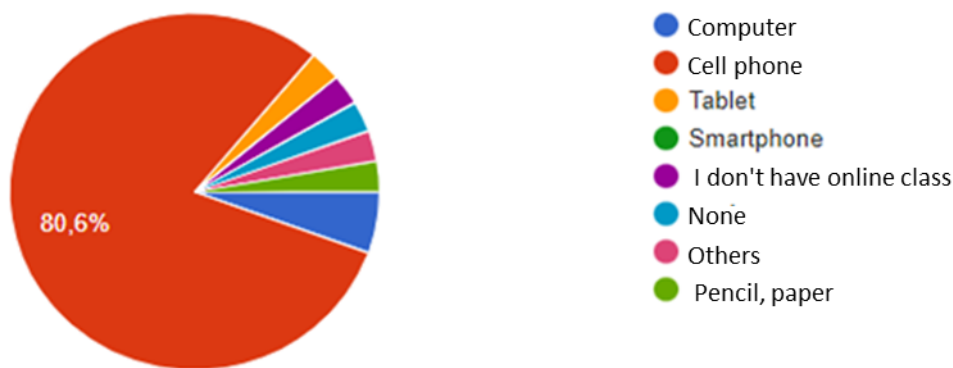
Despite the variety of devices, the graph points out that the most used device was the cell phone. Despite this, a small portion of students said they did not own any devices or did not have online classes, a worrying fact since classes have been operating during the pandemic virtually.

The duration of the online classes were the most varied according to the application that the teacher was using, and with the availability of the internet, but most of the time it was 30 to 50 minutes,

because it is difficult to hold the attention of students in classes in the virtual format for a long time as shown in graph 3.

Figure 3.
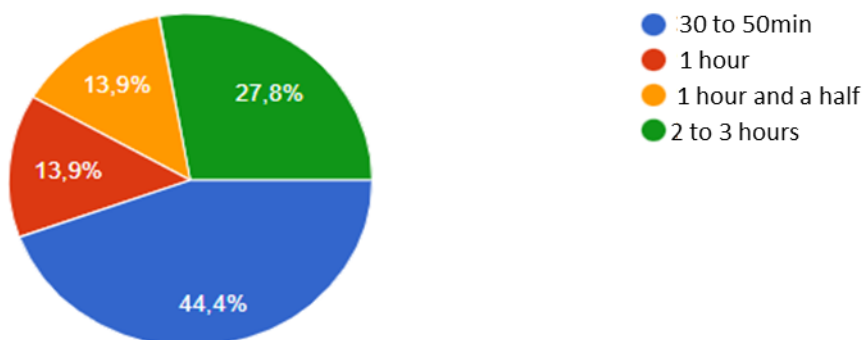
When asked if the school provided the necessary resources for learning at home, that is, for remote classes, most students, as shown in the next graph, answered yes, causing a divergence in the responses of teachers who answered that they did not get any help regarding resources for this teaching model during the pandemic. As pointed out earlier in the text, according to the teachers, they had to reinvent themselves with their own resources, however, when the students were asked if the school provided the necessary resources for learning at home came the surprise, because most answered yes as shown in graph 4.

Figure 4.
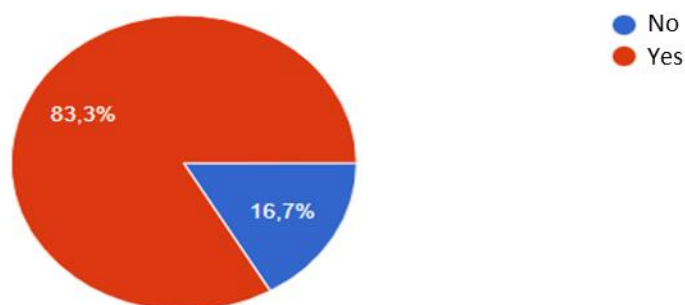
However, one of the biggest problems of teachers was precisely to get the attention of students and get a significant number of them in online classes, also because of the internet that was of poor quality or even *nonexistent*. What hurt them the most in this period of *online classes* was the issue of the fall and instability of the internet.

During this research, I was able to attend some *online* classes regarding the schools of this research and you can see that the number of students was very low due to the lack of connectivity, or a poor quality internet. Therefore, most of the time the number of students was lower than expected, as shown in graph 5. Most of the time, the number was 1 to 5 students, according to the students themselves.

Figure 5.
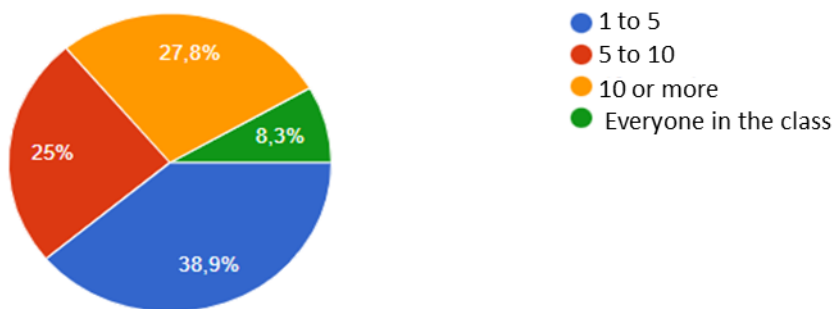
We asked teachers what was the biggest challenge they faced in their profession against the backdrop of the pandemic they were experiencing? According to Professor Rosa graduated in letters, is in the area of education for 15 years stressed that: one of the legacies that the pandemic had left for education is the increase in inequality in learning levels among students, since some have not adapted to distance learning and others do not even have access to the internet (Response obtained through data collection by questionnaires day 20 /12 / 2021).

Because the lack of internet was a relevant factor in the teaching model adopted during the pandemic, causing the absence of many students during online classes, according to Professor Rosa even more in rural areas education in rural areas still has much to develop especially in this pandemic period, rural schools, they are usually composed of only classroom without internet and without a good structure (Answer obtained through the questionnaires day 20 /12 /2021).

This session is extremely relevant to situate the reader in the analysis of some results, showing some elements of data collection, through the questionnaires resulting in graphs for a better understanding. Although this work was carried out in two schools with different contexts, before the perception of the teachers the schools go through similar structures, what changes is the context of life of the students in which most of the contributors of this research reside in the rural area of São Bernardo, where access to the internet is the main point of difference between them, and access to certain cultural capitals is more restricted by the effect of the peasant localities in which they reside, as it hinders access to other cities and consequently to other cultural knowledge.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The accomplishment of this research made it possible to understand and carry out the various steps of a research, starting with the programming, that is, by carrying out the project that is the initial point of the research, and then by means of bibliographic reading referring to the proposed theme and field research, made following a questionnaire model for students and teachers, and WhatsApp conversations with teachers. In this research the challenges were diverse from the availability of the schools to which I did the research to the data collection. However, it was of paramount importance for us to understand how the structure of the education system was during the pandemic.

In this sense, this research propelled me a new look at this process of research and learning, while we have to keep distance so that our common sense opinion does not influence, it is impossible not to involve ourselves directly or indirectly, even because when we choose the theme of a research it starts from a certain interest, so there is an involvement of the researcher with the proposed theme, but that we need to maintain our distance as a researcher without putting our own opinions, that is, using criticality.

Despite some difficulties in the course of this research, even more so because it is a research that began in the most critical period of the pandemic, where teachers were still adapting to the new teaching model, some difficulties were presented, such as the return of the questionnaires, but that ended up working and we can have the dimension of teaching in this period of the pandemic. Based on this research we can learn more about what was really happening in the educational system, being noticeable the importance that the teacher has in society, because he has the role and character of trainer of critical and intellectual individuals, but that it is necessary to take a closer look at the differences between his students so that everyone can have in fact an egalitarian and fair education. In this sense, it also needs improvements in public policies to have a better quality of technological structures and apparatuses in schools.

In this period of the research we can see the difficulties of the teachers in handling the technological devices and in the evaluation process, already the students the greatest difficulty was the access to a quality internet and the access to technological devices, even with all the difficulties the classes in remote format were the best option of the moment. In this sense, according to the teachers, the main difference between rural and urban schools, was access to the internet, in which rural areas were more difficult and often even non-existent, which ended up affecting the performance of students.

Therefore, despite the existing inequalities, education is the legitimate means for the transformation of the social life of the individual, because it goes beyond a simple knowledge, education is a primordial phenomenon for the formation as a critical citizen, because it allows the individual to grow and ascend professionally and intellectually, contributing to the transformation of

a more just and egalitarian society in fact, Despite the contexts we experience of social inequality, we must every day fight for a fair and quality education for all.

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