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Studies on Policies, Pedagogical Practices and Social Thought in Pandemic and Post-Pandemic Contexts

Arlete Ramos dos Santos

Orcid - <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0217-3805>

Natanael Reis Bomfim

Orcid - <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5122-9820>

Abstract: This article presents two studies, the first developed by the Group of Studies and Research in Social Movements, Diversity, Education in the Countryside and City (Gepemdecc) of the Southwest Bahia University; and the second, by the Interdisciplinary Research Group in Education, Representations and Sustainability (Gipres) of the State University of Bahia, during the pandemic context and post-pandemic context, with emphasis on policies, pedagogical practices and social thought. The first problematizes Rural Education in Bahia and through the Marxist theory approach aims to investigate educational policies and practices in rural schools in Bahia that occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic period and post-pandemic. The second starts from the social reality that presents, in its complexity, the subjectivation of peripheral youth who recognize and identify themselves through the potential of their experiences and socio-educational practices. It seeks to apprehend the social thought of these young people about COVID-19, in order to contribute to the guidance of pedagogical practices in schools in urban peripheries. They use qualitative research with documentary and empirical approaches that investigated, on one hand, teachers, managers, coordinators of rural schools, and on the other hand, young people from the peripheries of Salvador-Bahia. The results of the first point out concerns regarding public educational policies for the training of rural teachers; and the second points out how the social representations constructed by peripheral youth allowed exploring possibilities of interinstitutional and intersubjective articulations in the relationship of emerging knowledge from practices and experiences for the training of teachers in urban peripheries.

Keywords: pandemic, post-pandemic, public policies, teacher training, school and non-school spaces.

1 Introduction

In contemporary times, the world is still facing challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which spanned from 2020 to 2022. According to researchers Correia, Ramos, and Bahten (2020), among others, in an article published in the Journal of the Brazilian College of Surgeons, this unprecedented scenario had a global impact on education, health, and the economy, requiring immediate and unprecedented reactions from politicians and public administrators worldwide. These issues were widely debated in the media, hypermedia, and, above all, in the everyday conversations of various social groups.



For example, data from January 2025¹ indicates that, globally, there have been 695,781,740 confirmed cases of COVID-19, with 627,110,498 recoveries and 6,919,573 deaths. In Brazil, the Ministry of Health reports that, as of January 5, 2025, there were 39,073,544 confirmed cases and 714,597 deaths². Scientific explanations for the exponential increase in cases point to the relatively stronger immune system responses that react to infection by attacking lung cells, leading to pneumonia and septic shock. According to Harvey (2020, p. 13), the emergence of pandemics is related to:

[...] the modifications that capital makes to the environmental conditions of its own reproduction, but does so in a context of unintended consequences (such as climate change) and against autonomous and independent evolutionary forces that are constantly reshaping environmental conditions.³

COVID-19 highlighted class divisions, as some people were able to work comfortably from home in isolation, while other groups of workers had to make difficult choices between income and protection. This pandemic revealed that capitalist globalization appears biologically unsustainable in the absence of a true international public infrastructure, primarily due to the power of the pharmaceutical industry and the profit-oriented nature of healthcare. Although public funding was essential for the development of vaccines, they were monopolized by major pharmaceutical companies and aggressively protected under global trade rules—expressing a neocolonial outcome of monopolistic power and depriving Global South countries of the vaccines available in wealthier nations (Oxfam, 2024, p. 30).

In Brazil, especially in rural areas and urban peripheries, this phenomenon has deepened social inequalities, worsened socio-environmental and educational issues, and redrawn the boundaries of school and non-school spaces (Bomfim; Garrido, 2022; Freire, 2022). Inequities in access to education are particularly stark in rural areas and the urban outskirts, reflecting limited availability and lower quality of education, difficulties in access, and socioeconomic barriers. In rural areas, for instance, examples include: a lower supply and quality of education; a lack of resources and infrastructure (such as transportation, electricity, and internet); a shortage of

¹ Available in: <https://www.trt.net.tr/portuguese/covid19>

² Available in: https://infoms.saude.gov.br/extensions/covid-19_html/covid-19_html.html

³ This and all other quotes in this article were professionally translated from Portuguese into English.

professionals trained to meet the specific needs of rural education; and barriers to access.

In urban peripheries, indicators from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) for 2024 reveal that disparities in educational access remain stark across different regions of Brazil. For example: only 1.6% of residents in urban peripheries held a university degree; among youth aged 18 to 24, 57% of white individuals had completed higher education, compared to just 29.5% among Black and Brown populations. The illiteracy rate in the Northeast is twice the national average. The Southeast and South regions boast literacy rates above 96%.

When considering the reality of Brazilian public schools and internet access, these reflect broader social inequalities, commonly referred to as digital poverty. According to the IBGE (2019), about 4.1 million public school students lacked internet access, representing 12% of all students in the country, with the North and Northeast regions being the most affected. The mobile phone, the most widely used device for accessing digital resources, was available to only 64.8% of public school students. The study further revealed that out of every 20 students without internet access, 19 attended public schools. Research conducted by the Information and Coordination Center of .BR (NIC.br), in its Panorama of Schools report, indicates that although nearly 90% of Brazilian schools have an internet connection, fewer than 30% have equipment available for shared use. Among those that do, there is an average of one device for every ten students. However, despite challenges in accessing computers and broadband internet at home, studies have shown an increase in the use of digital technologies, with internet access rising from 71% of households in 2019 to 83% in 2024—equivalent to 61.8 million households with some form of internet connection.

In this context, new contours are being drawn in education within school spaces, and social learning networks have become crucial in addressing socio-educational challenges. This implies the need to debate how state practices are reconfigured at the margins, and how territorial governance policies aimed at poor and other vulnerable social groups are made legible—allowing us to understand how these margins are produced by the state itself (Cunha, 2023).

This social and academic debate involves education in/from the countryside and the city, and beyond educational policies (Copatti, 2024), it also encompasses elements of mobilization, transformation, and the development of critical awareness

among teachers and students. This occurs through the articulation of common-sense knowledge embedded in local community practices, progressing through school knowledge and culminating in scientific knowledge (Araújo, 2017; Araújo; Sousa, 2018; Bomfim; Correia, 2018). For instance, Brazil's official education guidelines—including the Law of Guidelines and Bases (LDB/9394/96), the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), and the National Education Plan (PNE) (2014–2024)—recommend developing educational content based on students' lived experiences, considering their life contexts and relationships in various social spaces, such as the family, school, neighborhood, and community (Correia; Lastória, 2024).

Research from countries and regions that have experienced other epidemics, wars, and/or natural disasters suggests that the effects tend to last for extended periods. One likely consequence is the deepening of social inequalities and rising school dropout and disengagement rates, particularly among youth and those in more vulnerable conditions. Therefore, highlighting problems and research findings on educational policies and pedagogical practices in pandemic and post-pandemic contexts—affecting both school and non-school spaces—is essential for the success of educational programs and public policies. This is especially true when such studies take into account the actors involved and their socio-spatial realities.

Based on this premise, the present article aims to highlight two studies: the first from the Research Group on Social Movements, Diversity, and Education in Rural and Urban Contexts (Gepemdecc/UESB⁴), and the second from the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Education, Representations, and Sustainability (Gipres/Uneb⁵). The first study focuses on rural education in Bahia through a Marxist theoretical lens, aiming to investigate educational policies and practices in rural schools during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The second, grounded in the Theory of Social Representations as applied to education, understands the COVID-19 phenomenon as a psychosocial phenomenon. It is part of a broader social debate reflected in culture, institutions, social practices, interpersonal and mass communication, and individual thinking (Sá, 1998). Thus, the COVID-19 phenomenon constitutes an object of social representation, carrying cultural relevance and social depth. In other words, it holds

⁴ Southwest Bahia State University.

⁵ State University of Bahia.

importance and meaning for a social group of teachers, indicating how significant it is in their interactions and social practices.

From this problematization, we can infer that understanding the social thinking of peripheral youth about COVID-19 can help identify and interpret the internalized knowledge of this group regarding this represented social object. In turn, this content, as a sociocognitive image, can inform pedagogical practices in school and non-school settings within urban peripheries. Beyond the introduction, the text is structured into two sections highlighting the rationale, relevance, theoretical-methodological aspects, findings, and discussions of these studies, followed by some final considerations.

2 Gepemdecc Research on the Pandemic and Post-Pandemic Period in Rural Schools in Bahia

The Study and Research Group on Social Movements, Diversity, and Rural and Urban Education (Gepemdecc/Uesb), officially registered in 2012 with the Research Groups Directory of the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), has carried out multiple studies since its inception, mainly focused on educational policies and pedagogical practices, with a particular emphasis on rural education (Educação do/no Campo) within the state of Bahia. By integrating research and community outreach, the group has transformed the issues identified in its studies into extension activities aimed at supporting society, thereby fulfilling the university's tripartite mission of teaching, research, and extension.

In 2023, Gepemdecc launched a study titled "Educational Policies and Pedagogical Practices in Rural Schools in Bahia during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic⁶" which forms the basis of the results presented in this article. The study spans all 27 identity territories (territórios de identidade) of Bahia and includes research plans from theses, dissertations, undergraduate research, and final coursework projects.

The research conducted by Gepemdecc/Uesb revealed that the containment measures adopted during the pandemic led to a series of repercussions in educational practices worldwide, primarily due to the suspension of in-person classes as a means of preventing the spread of the highly contagious COVID-19 virus. This disruption

⁶ Project developed as part of the Research Productivity Grant project (CNPq).

imposed significant burdens on educational systems, which had to rapidly (re)invent themselves to prevent a complete halt in learning—a situation described as an "educational blackout" (Matias, 2023).

In-person classes across all Brazilian states were replaced by emergency remote learning from April 2020 to May 2021. COVID-19 was first reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019, and on March 11, 2020, it was declared a global pandemic due to community transmission on all continents. More than a month after the public health emergency was declared, the Ministry of Education (MEC) issued Ordinance No. 343 on March 17, 2020, allowing in-person classes to be replaced by digital learning during the pandemic. This was later superseded by Ordinance No. 544/2020, which maintained the suspension of in-person classes until December 31, 2020.

In 2021, classes gradually resumed in-person formats, as outlined by Opinion CNE/CP No. 6/2021, dated July 6, 2021, which established the "National Guidelines for the Implementation of Measures to Resume In-Person Teaching and Learning Activities and to Regularize the School Calendar." These guidelines were formalized by Resolution CNE/CP No. 2 of August 5, 2021. Many Brazilian municipalities developed strategies to maintain educational activities during the pandemic and continued them into the post-pandemic context⁷. It is worth noting that on May 5, 2023, the WHO officially declared the end of the pandemic, as announced by its Director-General, Tedros Adhanom. Despite the return to in-person classes beginning in August 2021, learning losses among students have not yet been fully addressed, prompting federal, state, and municipal governments—as well as various institutions—to seek alternatives to mitigate the effects.

The main objective of this research was to identify the educational policies and pedagogical practices adopted in rural schools in Bahia during the pandemic, as well as those that have been implemented in the post-pandemic period. According to Santos and Nunes (2020), before the COVID-19 pandemic, only 34% of rural schools in Brazil had internet access, which exacerbated educational inequalities during the health crisis. To continue providing instruction in rural schools, municipalities had to

⁷ To consult all Brazilian legislation related to the pandemic and the return to in-person classes, see: <https://gepemdecc-formacampo.com.br/Site-gepemdecc-2024/OBSERVATORIO/DASHBOARD-LEGISLA%C3%87%C3%83O/DASHBOARD-legislacao.HTML>

diversify their pedagogical approaches: in some areas, printed materials were distributed, while in others, digital platforms were used to conduct remote classes (Matias, 2023).

The research involved the analysis of legal documents (laws, decrees, opinions, and resolutions) that regulated educational processes during Emergency Remote Education (ERE) and the return to in-person classes. ERE refers to a temporary shift in formal instructional practices to alternative delivery modes and relies on fully remote teaching solutions. The goal under such circumstances is not to recreate a robust educational ecosystem but to provide temporary access to instruction and instructional support during an emergency or crisis (Hodges *et al.*, 2020).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with school principals, municipal education secretaries, presidents of local education councils, and teachers from rural schools—totaling 9 participants per identity territory. Given that Bahia has 27 identity territories, a total of 243 interviews were carried out. In addition, a questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms to rural school teachers, yielding 26,512 responses. The 93-question survey collected data on various aspects, including: participant profiles, professional development, teaching practices, pandemic and post-pandemic impacts, technology use in schools, implementation of the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) in rural schools, multigrade classrooms, school transportation, school infrastructure, school management, pedagogical practices, among others.

Below, we present a brief summary of the findings, specifically those related to the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic period, as obtained from the legal documents and questionnaire responses.

3 Some of the results presented

The understanding of Field Education, school closures, and the COVID-19 pandemic that underpins the research developed by Gepemdecc/Uesb is supported by the writings of Caldart (2009), Hage (2014), Souza (2020), and Santos (2020). Caldart (2009, p. 38) reaffirms the need to understand Field Education

[...] in its historicity, which implies seeking to grasp the contradictions and tensions that exist in the reality that produced and drives it, and that it also helps to produce and move; that are found in the 'state of things,' after all, and not merely in the ideas or among the ideas expressed about it. I understand that one of the constitutive characteristics of Field Education is that it has always moved along a 'razor's edge,' which can only be understood through

the analysis of the real contradictions in which it is involved and which, it bears repeating, are not contradictions limited to the field of pedagogy, but to the class struggle—particularly as it unfolds today in the Brazilian countryside, in all dimensions of its reality (Caldart, 2009, p. 38).

Added to these understandings are the reflections of Souza (2020), which highlight the enduring marks of historical Rural Education in the country's educational policies and practices, in contrast to the principles of Field Education developed within social movements and linked to the struggle for agrarian reform and for an alternative societal project. In other words, Field Education positions social movements as key protagonists, as they

[...] have advocated for and put forward the implementation of a political-pedagogical school and education project that is consistent with social transformation and with the counter-hegemonic strategies outlined by the rural working class, aiming to overcome the model conceived by the capitalist system (Santos, 2020, p. 6).

There is extensive legislation that guarantees the rights of rural populations and addresses their achievements in education, recognizing and legitimizing their struggles while taking into account their specific characteristics. These include: the Operational Guidelines for Basic Education in Rural Schools – CNE/CEB Resolution No. 1/2002 and Resolution No. 2/2008; CNE/CEB Opinion No. 1/2006, which acknowledges Alternating School Days (Dias Letivos da Alternância); CNE/CEB Resolution No. 4/2010, which recognizes Field Education as a specific modality and defines the identity of rural schools; Decree No. 7.352, of November 4, 2010, which establishes the National Policy for Field Education and the National Education Program for Agrarian Reform (Pronea), as well as Procampo, Pronacampo; Resolution No. 02/2023, which establishes the Pedagogy of Alternation; and Ordinance No. 1127, dated November 22, 2024, which creates Rural Quotas through SISU, among others.

Still, the pandemic exposed a denial of these rights, as it accelerated the closure of rural schools. In 2013, Brazil had 65,140 schools in rural areas; by 2023, this number had dropped to 45,280. Bahia was the state with the highest number of closures—it had 11,272 rural schools in 2013, but by 2022, the number had fallen to fewer than 7,000.

According to Silva and Santos (2022),

[...] the closure of rural schools has caused significant harm to children and adolescents, as distancing them from their cultural environment negatively affects their learning process. It demands considerable energy, determination,

and motivation to endure the journey to school, which reinforces the dynamics of social inequality in education.

It is observed that, in this case, the public authorities fail to guarantee the right to quality education in the place where individuals live, thus constituting a violation of the principles established in the 1988 Federal Constitution, as well as in the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA) and Law No. 12.960/2014.

According to the documents analyzed in the research conducted by Gepemdecc/Uesb, the official websites of all municipalities in the state of Bahia were reviewed to verify how the return to classes during the pandemic was regulated at the municipal level. These documents were based on the legal framework (Table 1) provided by the National Council of Education (CNE) and the State Council of Education (CEE).

Table 1 – Legislation on the return to in-person teaching during the Covid-19 period: CNE and CEE – regulatory frameworks

PANDEMIC/COVID-19 PERIOD: CNE AND CEE – REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS			
Regulatory frameworks for Field Education	Date created	Authorship	Subject/Summary
CNE/CP Opinion No. 6	06/07/2021	CNE	National Guidelines for the implementation of measures for the return to in-person teaching and learning activities and for the regularization of the school calendar.
CNE/CP Resolution No. 2	05/08/2021	CNE	Establishes National Guidelines for the implementation of measures for the return to in-person teaching and learning activities and for the regularization of the school calendar.
EEC Resolution No. 48	06/10/2020	CEE/BA	Standardizes procedures for planning the return to educational activities in Basic Education and Higher Education institutions, following actions resulting from State Decree No. 19.586, of March 27, 2020, and its updates, within the Bahia Education System.
EEC Resolution No. 20	07/06/2021	CEE/BA	Establishes regulations for the special regime of curricular activities in the state education system from Bahia, in the year 2021.
CEE/BA Resolution No. 44	24/08/2021	CEE/BA	It establishes regulations for the return to in-person learning in school education networks and institutions that are part of the state education system.

EEC Resolution No. 26	15/02/2022	CEE/BA	It reaffirms the return to in-person learning as a priority educational action, while providing for the circumstantial suspension of in-person school activities as a result of acts defined by local health authorities and, in the same way, extends, on an exceptional basis, the validity of Resolution CEE/BA No. 20/2021 to the year 2022.
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Source: prepared by the Working Group on Legislation (Gepemdecc, 2025).

The legislation presented in Table 1 highlights how both federal and state governments formalized the return to in-person classes in basic and higher education. Based on these documents, municipal school systems resumed face-to-face teaching. However, as part of our research, we examined the official websites of all 417 municipalities in the state of Bahia and downloaded the municipal decrees that formalized remote education, as well as those regulating the return to in-person classes. These documents were archived in a shared drive managed by Gepemdecc for future consultation and analysis of the research results.

We found that, in documents related to remote education, municipal administrators had declared a state of public calamity as a means of addressing the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The following documents were published by Municipal Education Councils (CMEs): 206 opinions validating the implementation of remote classes across various levels and modalities of education in these municipalities, along with protocols for the return to in-person classes; 235 opinions authorizing the continuation of the 2020–2021 academic year during the pandemic; 306 CME resolutions published on municipal websites regulating remote education activities; 306 resolutions establishing pedagogical and sanitary guidelines for the return to in-person activities in both rural and urban schools; and 96 complementary CME resolutions establishing the implementation of pedagogical proposals across different educational levels. These findings also indicate that not all municipalities in Bahia make such documents publicly available online. The content analysis of these documents will be presented in future publications.

Regarding the data provided by the research participants in the questionnaires, it is important to note that the form was sent exclusively to teachers working in rural schools. These are educators involved in the Formacampo/Uesb extension program

for the continuing education of rural teachers, coordinated by Gepemdecc⁸. As previously mentioned, we received 26,512 responses that reflect aspects of both the pandemic and post-pandemic periods.

As for the participants' profiles: 51% are over 40 years old; 49% live in urban areas and 51% in rural areas; 72% earned their undergraduate degrees from private institutions, and 28% from public universities. In terms of gender, 86% identify as female, 14% as male, and 2% as intersex. Regarding race and ethnicity, 56% self-identify as mixed-race (pardos), 26% as Black (pretos), and 12% as white; the remaining respondents chose not to answer.

On educational background: 38% hold a completed undergraduate degree, 19% have incomplete higher education, 31% have completed a degree with a specialization, 2.5% hold a graduate degree (stricto sensu), and 6% have only completed teacher training at the secondary level or finished high school.

The data reveal a feminization of the teaching profession. However, this phenomenon must be analyzed more broadly, considering all relevant factors. Almeida (2006) explains that the devaluation of the teaching profession is closely linked to the feminization of the field, as men initially resisted the entry of women into the profession. The fact that most teachers live in rural areas is significant in terms of understanding students' lived realities, as this helps educators better incorporate the identities and labor practices of the communities they serve (Santos; Santos, 2024). Nevertheless, this requires adequate initial and continuing teacher education. The data also indicate that many teachers still do not hold higher education degrees, highlighting the need for more robust continuing education programs for rural schools.

When asked whether they possessed both theoretical and practical knowledge about Field Education, 58.7% of respondents said no, and only 38.3% said yes. This clearly demonstrates the urgent need for continuing education on this specific educational modality, to be addressed both by municipal education departments and universities, through courses, workshops, extension projects, and graduate programs (lato and stricto sensu).

Although the questionnaire and interviews explored many aspects of both the pandemic and post-pandemic periods, due to space limitations, we present a summary

⁸ To learn more about the Formacampo Program, visit:
<https://gepemdecc-formacampo.com.br/Site-formacampo-2025/formacampo-2025-inicio.html>

in Table 2 focusing only on the pedagogical strategies and practices developed during these two periods. This allows us to assess how the pandemic impacted classroom teaching and what mechanisms were created to ensure the continuity of pedagogical work once the pandemic ended.

Table 2 – Pedagogical Strategies and Practices Used During the Pandemic and Post-Pandemic in Field Schools

What pedagogical strategies and practices did field schools in your network/education system adopt during the pandemic?	What pedagogical strategies and practices used during the pandemic period in your education network/system continued to be adopted after the pandemic period in field schools?
1. - Online classes; - Paths of Education Program; - Recorded classes broadcast on local TV; teaching kits and teaching shifts; - Delivery of remote activities, classes and guidance in groups of <i>WhatsApp</i>; - Use of handouts; - Delivery of tutorials and individualized support; - Home printed activities; - The minimum curriculum was produced, which covered essential skills; - Development and distribution of learning trails; - An Action Plan with an educational and pedagogical focus was adopted, organized into six strategic axes, namely: Communication, School Feeding, Training, Educational Management, School Return and Daily Actions; - Home Class Project: Non-face-to-face pedagogical activities, prioritizing skills and content; - Pedagogical monitoring through digital platforms; - Parents' meetings to provide guidance on learning recovery; - Hiring motorcycles for home delivery activities; - Sending activities via free and digital applications; - Sending activities via health vehicles; - We leave activities at health centers or school offices for students to pick up; - We installed internet in field schools.	- Classes at Youtube; - recomposition of learning in the opposite shift; - Didactic sequences of pedagogical intervention; - Support plan; - Remote meetings; - Planning for everyone's health care; - Deal with students' difficulties; - Maintains a hybrid period; - The groups of <i>WhatsApp</i> continued for information; - Continuing to work with technological tools and learning strategies. - The warning continues about the importance of using masks in viral cases, etc. - Classes returned with an innovative look, modern methodologies, but in the face-to-face system; - Classes to recompose learning with activities produced based on priority skills; - Use of free virtual platforms; - Formation of groups to work through applications. - Carrying out sensitive listening of our students, through: conversation circles, reading circles, dances, theatrical presentations, music, panels with graphics, images, recycling workshops, in addition to textbooks, among other resources.

Source: adapted from Santos, Souza and Nunes (2024).

Com base nas respostas dos sujeitos apresentadas no Quadro 2, observamos um movimento contraditório sobre o trabalho docente com uma reconfiguração das relações de trabalho que demonstram precarização da docência, pois, com o uso das tecnologias digitais aparece uma sobrecarga de trabalho que atingiu o precariado professoral (Silva, 2020) contratado, mas também, “[...] desestabilizou os professores concursados, uma vez que muitos municípios tiveram cortes de horas extras, de auxílio transporte e outras” (Santos; Souza; Nunes, 2024).

As evidenced in Table 2, the new work dynamic imposed by the pandemic context challenged teachers, and even those who had no knowledge of digital technologies were forced to implement virtual pedagogical practices mediated by technological tools such as computers, smartphones, and the internet, among others. According to the data on this issue, 55.3% of teachers reported having basic knowledge of digital technologies, 33.3% had intermediate knowledge, and only 9.6% stated that their knowledge was advanced. Moreover, 87% said they had never taken a course on the use of technological tools in schools, and 74.2% reported that they are not provided with support or resources in their school environment for the use of educational technologies. Despite the lack of internet access in many rural schools, the majority of teachers (85%) paid for internet out of their own pockets to be able to work during the remote learning period. This reveals an "uberization" of education—an expansion of profit in the market through the restructuring of capital's productive bases, with workers themselves bearing the costs of the technological tools required for their work (Antunes, 2018).

The teacher, as a worker and owner of the means of production (equipment and inputs), bore the costs of their activity during the pandemic, as it became "uberized"—and continues to do so in the post-pandemic period—relieving employers of the responsibility for providing the means of production. In this context, teachers have not only become responsible for creating a new form of education (hybrid, dynamic, planned, and focused on content and skills development) aligned with the logic of capital—even without adequate training in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)—but are also held accountable for the results (Santos; Souza; Nunes, 2024, p. 16).

These changes became part of the daily work routine across all sectors, and capital appropriated the free time made possible by the use of technology, transforming it into surplus value (Marx, 1980). This has led to the increasing exploitation of the working class in education through the creation of work groups on the WhatsApp

application, the expansion of online platform usage, video recording, the implementation of active methodologies, among other practices.

4 GIPRES Research in Urban Peripheries

The Interdisciplinary Research Group on Representations, Education, and Sustainability (GIPRES), established in 2012, is registered with the CNPq and certified by UNEB. It seeks to expand its presence within the Department of Education, Campus I, and is affiliated with the Graduate Programs in Education and Contemporaneity (PPGEDUC) and Territorial Studies (PROET). The group is recognized as a space for discussion, research, knowledge systematization, and training focused on the Theory and Method of Social and Spatial Representations applied to Education, under the guidance of interdisciplinarity. In this context, a key research focus is Education in Urban Peripheries, articulated with Scientific and Geographic Education. GIPRES aims to develop qualitative research through collaborative and solidarity-based approaches, within both formal and informal educational settings in urban peripheral areas. The research subjects include schoolteachers and students, as well as marginalized youth involved in local community collectives.

Our studies are guided by three lines of investigation:

1. Socio-spatial Representations as theory and method applied to education, with a focus on Geographic Education, Citizenship, and Innovation;
2. Socio-spatial Representations as a framework for guiding pedagogical practices and formative processes;
3. Social Representations and Socio-educational Practices of Youth in Urban Peripheries, focusing on the analysis of socio-educational practices and the identity construction of young people in relation to their territory, exploring the links between lived curricula and formal school curricula.

Theoretically, the studies led by GIPRES/UNEB are grounded in the social representations of marginalized youth, aiming to reinterpret concepts through a new lens on their image and to understand socio-educational knowledge and practices as formative processes of subjects in both school and non-school spaces within urban peripheries (Santos, 2017; Bomfim; Correia, 2018; Pimentel; Bomfim; Santana, 2021; Bomfim; Garrido, 2022). During the pandemic and post-pandemic periods, other studies have shown that, in both formal and informal educational spaces, many young

people have harnessed the potential of social design and software—such as websites or applications focused on communication and information management—as well as artificial intelligence networks, to support their social interactions, knowledge production, and networked learning (Moreira, Santana; Santana; Bengoechea, 2019).

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This context motivated us, in 2021, to construct the research project entitled: "Social Representations of Youth About COVID-19 and Socio-educational Practices in Urban Peripheries," funded by CNPQ and awarded as a research productivity scholarship. Thus, at GIPRES, it is considered an umbrella project and has been structured with other undergraduate research, master's and doctoral scholarship projects, as a way to enhance teaching practices that articulate elements of the school curriculum with the practiced curriculum or networked curriculum in Urban Periphery communities.

For this study, we chose the Theory and Method of Social Representations applied to Education, understanding that the COVID-19 phenomenon can be translated as a psychosocial phenomenon that is part of social debate and is present in culture, institutions, social practices, interpersonal and mass communications, and individual thoughts (Sá, 1998). This means that the COVID-19 phenomenon constitutes an object of social representations, as there is cultural relevance and social thickness, therefore it has importance and meaning for a social group of peripheral youth, their interactions and social practices.

Through this problematization, theoretically, we can infer that apprehending the social thought of these youth about COVID-19 may allow us to identify and understand

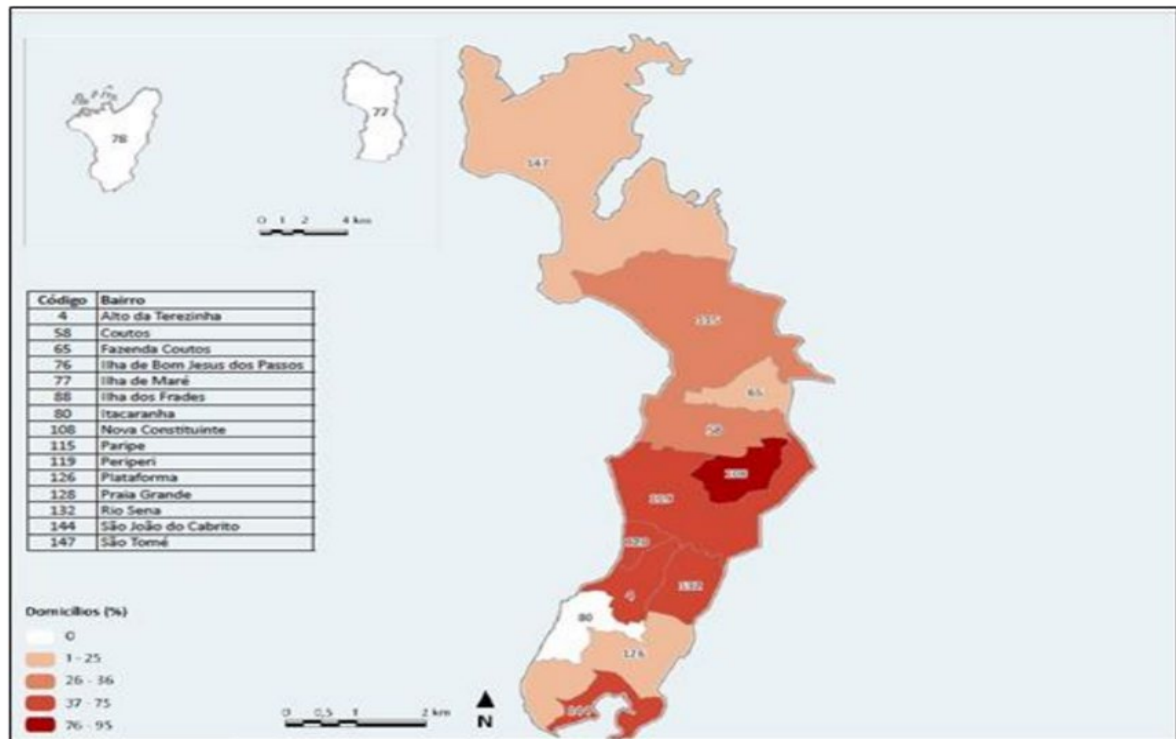
the knowledge internalized by their group about this socially represented object. In turn, this content as a sociocognitive image can contribute to guiding pedagogical practices in school spaces of urban peripheries. Therefore, the question that is formulated is: What are the social representations about COVID-19 constructed by youth from urban peripheries? How can the content of these representations contribute to guiding pedagogical practices in schools of urban peripheries? To this end, we defined the following specific objectives: To apprehend the content of social representations about COVID-19 constructed by youth from urban peripheries; to analyze the possibilities of contribution to guiding pedagogical practices⁹ in schools of urban peripheries.

The urgency for research on social representations about COVID-19 in the field of education in/of urban peripheries is relevant in two dimensions. In the epistemological dimension, when results, based on knowledge constructed from lived experiences of youth, can advance knowledge in order to mobilize reflections about their social thought and behavior in non-school spaces. And in the didactic-pedagogical dimension, when apprehending social thought and understanding the behavior of these youth in the face of COVID-19 can guide pedagogical practices in school spaces. Therefore, presenting the problematization, the chosen theory and specific objectives, it is necessary to describe the methodological paths of the investigation, results and discussion, and some final considerations.

This research is qualitative in nature, which in Amado's (2014) conception seeks a systematic approach sustained by theoretical, ethical and empirical principles. This means it is conducted by researchers who use scientific rigor to answer the formulated questions and achieve the specific objectives. It had as its locus the neighborhoods of Lobato, Coutos, Plataforma, Periperi and Paripe located in the Railway Suburb of Salvador (Figure 1).

⁹ According to Bomfim and Correia (2018), it refers to the unofficial curriculum that inevitably emerges as a tactic within the school environment. It is the curriculum developed and produced by students, teachers, and the broader community, which permeates institutionalized content and practices.

Figure 1 - Map of Salvador's Railway Suburb



Source: IBGE (2010).

In this urban periphery, according to IBGE (2022), the percentage of the youth, adult and elderly population is respectively 29%, 40% and 7%. It is also characterized by extreme social inequality, violence, fragilities in the educational context, among other psychosocial phenomena connected mainly with youth issues.

Since we had already conducted a mapping research of youth collectives in 2021 (Bomfim; Santana, 2021), our insertion allowed us to locate the leaders, and subsequently, through contact by telephone/WhatsApp and email, the sociodemographic questionnaire (Google Forms) was sent to the 30 identified leaders. Thus, 20 young people/leaders, aged between 19 and 32 years, residents of the neighborhoods of Salvador's Railway Suburb agreed to participate in the study according to the conditions established in the Free and Informed Consent Form.

Given the above, the structure of the methodological path of the investigation is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 – Methodological Approach of the Investigation

Theoretical and Methodological Approach	Access to the Sociocognitive Aspects of Social Representations	Methods of Analysis of the Collected Data
Structural Approach to Social Representations (Abric, 1994)	Sociodemographic Questionnaire and TALP	AnCo-REDES and Social Network Analysis (Lopes, Vilela, & Pereira, 2018)
Processual Approach (Moscovici, 1961; Jodelet, 1997)	Semi-structured Interview in a Focus Group	Content Analysis Method (Bardin, 2016)

Source: Prepared by the Author (2024)

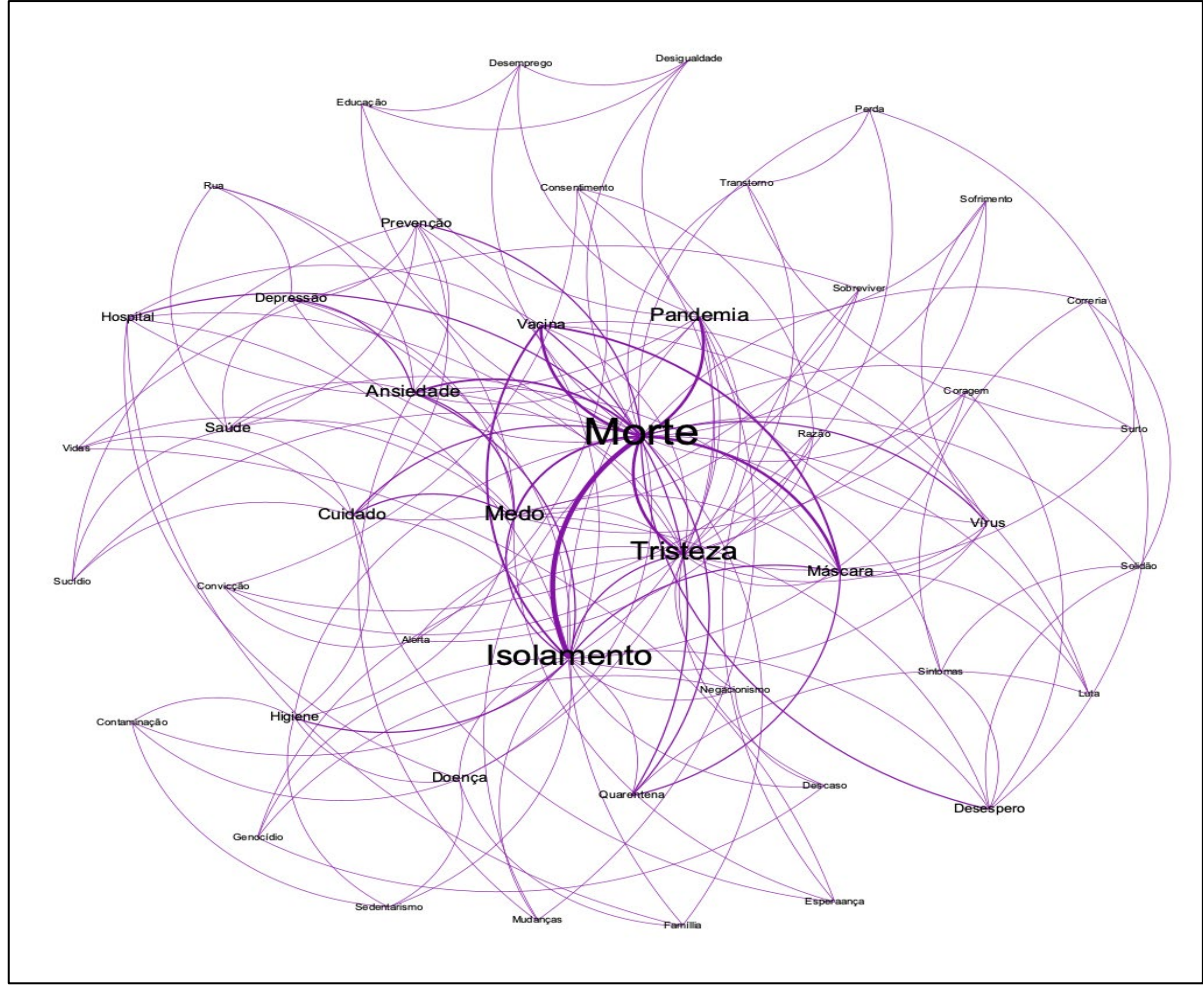
In the first stage of the investigation, we administered a sociodemographic questionnaire, where participants were asked to answer questions regarding personal identification (age, gender, and schooling) and collective identification (name, year of creation, number of young people, and length of participation). The profile indicates that 20 young individuals lead the mapped collectives (Bomfim; Santana, 2021), predominantly male, attending high school, over 25 years old, and having participated in these collectives for more than 16 years. This means that most collectives were formed between 2008 and 2024 and host an average of 30 young people.

Subsequently, at a scheduled time and within the collective, we applied the Free Word Association (FWA) technique¹⁰ (Appendix A). The FWA data was processed using GEPHI/Cfinder software, version 9.4, and analyzed by the AncoRed Method (Lopes; Vilela; Pereira, 2018), which seeks to organize and structure social representations. In this method, the central core is the most stable and resistant element to change, while peripheral elements are more flexible and allow for individual variations within the representations. The empirical material generated by the software was a graph whose semantic networks in Social Representations (SRs) were analyzed. Thus, we aimed to identify the most influential terms, assisting in the verification and treatment of the structural sociocognitive system of language elements, in order to apprehend the content of social representations about COVID-19 constructed by young people from urban peripheries.

¹⁰ An experimental method that seeks to identify the structure and organization of the elements that constitute Social Representations (Abric, 1994). It is carried out by asking participants to quickly and spontaneously say five words that come to mind when they think of "COVID-19." Then, they are asked to rank these words from 1 to 5, in order of importance — from the most to the least important — as a way of testing the centrality or tendency of the elements toward the central core (Abric, 1994).

In the second stage, within the Focus Group, and to analyze the possibilities of contribution to guiding pedagogical practices in schools in urban peripheries, we applied a semi-structured interview (Appendix B), with a pre-defined script, which was analyzed using Bardin's (2016) discourse content method. To support the interpretation of the semantic network generated from this analysis, the following table presents the English translations of the main terms (nodes) identified in the original Portuguese-language graph, along with their approximate locations for reference.

Figure 2 – Semantic Network on “Coronavirus”



Source: Prepared by Gipres (2024)

Table 4 – Translation of Nodes from the Pandemic-Themed Semantic Network Graph

Portuguese Term	English Translation	Approximate Location in the Graph
Morte	Death	Center (largest and most central)
Isolamento	Isolation	Below “Death”, lower central area
Tristeza	Sadness	Right of “Death”
Medo	Fear	Left of “Sadness”
Ansiedade	Anxiety	Left of “Fear”
Pandemia	Pandemic	Above “Death”, central top

Portuguese Term	English Translation	Approximate Location in the Graph
Máscara	Mask	Right of "Sadness"
Desespero	Despair	Bottom right
Doença	Disease	Bottom left
Cuidado	Care	Left of "Fear"
Saúde	Health	Left of "Care"
Hospital	Hospital	Left of "Health"
Depressão	Depression	Upper left
Prevenção	Prevention	Above "Depression"
Educação	Education	Top left
Desemprego	Unemployment	Top center left
Desigualdade	Inequality	Top center right
Perda	Loss	Upper right
Sufrimento	Suffering	Right of "Loss"
Corpo	Body	Below "Suffering"
Vírus	Virus	Right of "Pandemic"
Contaminação	Contamination	Bottom left corner
Higiene	Hygiene	Left of "Contamination"
Genocídio	Genocide	Far bottom left
Quarentena	Quarantine	Central bottom
Negacionismo	Denialism	Right of "Quarantine"
Transformo	Disorder	Above "Pandemic", slightly right
Consentimento	Consent	Between "Pandemic" and "Education"
Esperança	Hope	Bottom right, below "Neglect"
Descaso	Neglect	Above "Hope"
Família	Family	Bottom center
Vagina	Vagina	Near "Death", above "Fear"
Sintomas	Symptoms	Below "Virus"
Rua	Street	Top far left
Vida	Life	Left of "Health"
Suicídio	Suicide	Far bottom left
Solidão	Loneliness	Right side of the graph

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Through the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the structure and organization of the Social Representations (SRs) system, the corpus formed by the word evocations, in response to the inducing term "COVID-19," totaled 100 words, with 38 distinct words forming the semantic network (Figure 2) with 38 vertices and 129 edges that make up the main network. This network presents the structural elements of an SR, according to the Central Core Theory (Abric, 1994). The Gephi software's Graph and the AncoRed Method provided us with models and algorithms that enable the visualization of social networks (Lopes; Vilela; Pereira, 2018).

Thus, through the semantic networks generated by the words, we were able to employ general network metrics and identify the most influential terms in the organization and structure of these representations (Table 4).

Table 5 – Structure of Social Representations Resulting from the Network Generated by the Inducing Term “Coronavirus”¹¹

Elements of the Structure of Social Representations	Vertices (Words)	Degree centrality (C_g)	Eigenvector Centrality (E_c)
Central core $C_g > k$ and $E_c \geq 0.75$	Death	32	1
	Isolation	14	0,82
First periphery $C_g > k$ e $0.60 \leq E_c < 0.75$	Sadness	20	0,65
	Fear	15	0,63
	Anxiety	11	0,57
Elements of contrast $C_g > k$, e $E_c \leq 0.45 < 0.60$	Pandemic	13	0.55
	Mask	09	0,46

Source: The authors (2024)

The central nucleus ($C_g > k$ and $E_c \geq 0.75$) of the SR is composed of the terms with the greatest influence in the network. That is, the words or vertices, Death and Isolation, have the highest density of their connections with other vertices in the network, defined by the E_c value, being in all terms greater than or equal to $E_c \geq 0.75$, a condition that justifies the elements found as the central nucleus of SR about "Coronavirus," through the AnCo-REDES model (Lopes; Vilela; Pereira, 2018). According to Abric (1994), the central nucleus is related to the collective memory of the belonging group about the object, is homogeneous, stable and resistant to changes. The term "Death" has the highest connection density with other vertices, having $E_c = 1$, followed by the term "Isolation," respectively with E_c of 0.82.

The results demonstrate that youth from school and non-school spaces in Salvador's Railway Suburb, as social beings and in their juvenile condition, participate in collectives (social groups) connected in networks and lead cultural activities, whose pandemic and post-pandemic period had significant impacts on their sociocultural activities that we call socio-educational practices. This inference is reinforced by the ideas of Varela, Raposo and Ferro (2018) about sociabilities, cultural exchanges and knowledge sharing, and they conclude that music is at the center of trajectories and in the construction of social identities of young Black people, who live with high rates of violence but actively participate in groups, collectives and/or associations with cultural activities in the territory of the current Municipality of Amadora.

¹¹ Note: according to the metrics ($\langle k \rangle$, C_g , E_c) established by the AnCo-REDES model, with $\langle k \rangle = 7.3$.

In the first periphery ($C_g > k$ and $0.60 \leq E_c < 0.75$) appear the terms "Sadness," "Fear" and "Anxiety," with E_c between 0.65 and 0.57 respectively. For Abric (1994), peripheral elements are dependent on individual characteristics and contexts and confer flexibility and dynamism to SR. Therefore, the central system is normative, while the peripheral ones are functional, are hierarchized and can be closer or further from the CN, thus attributing greater or lesser significance to the content of the SR. In other words, the results indicate that "Sadness" "Fear" and "Anxiety" were feelings that took hold of these youth and prevented some from exercising their socio-educational practices in sharing networks.

The contrast elements found were "Pandemic" and "Mask" which are further from the CN, that is, with less significance in relation to the content of these representations. However, applying the equation $C_g > k$, and $E_c \leq 0.45 < 0.60$, we verify that the vertex "Mask," despite presenting lower degree centrality ($C_g=9$) and lower eigenvector centrality ($E_c=0.46$), has greater significance to the content of the SR, in relation to the vertices Death and Isolation which are candidates for the CN. Therefore, with "Fear" as an element of the first periphery and "Mask" as contrast, they are the most living and concrete parts of the structure and organized system of SR content, we think that through these elements we can access the beliefs and values that these youth present in their sharing networks.

Finally, in the second periphery are the elements most distant from the CN. These are subject to changes, therefore considered unstable, and are part of the life context and social practices. In the semantic network (Figure 1) it was possible to highlight some terms in function of the CN vertices, such as: "Vaccine" and "Care."

In the conversation circle, when the question was posed: how did the Coronavirus pandemic impact your sociocultural activities, unanimously, the youth who are part of the collectives mapped between the period from 2014 to 2018, where those 20 leaders integrate groups located in the Suburb neighborhoods of Plataforma (6), followed by Paripe (5), Periperi (4) and Alto do Cabrito (3). Those with the smallest numbers are located respectively in the neighborhoods of Lobato (1), Coutos (1) and São Tomé de Paripe (1) and practice educational actions that are inserted in multilanguages, such as: theater, dance, artistic languages like photography, literature and performances.

We found, according to the narratives of these youth who lead the collectives, that the Coronavirus Pandemic generated in most members an unease and, at the same time, a search for greater interaction of participants in producing art and education with community residents, in a perspective of doing something that would highlight the periphery. In this process, according to the youth, the network expands as one social actor, or more, presents themselves, invites or invite others, in an opportunity to organize their own groups.

Therefore, through structural and processual approaches, the results from the mapping of collectives and the content of SR about COVID-19 allowed us some reflections. In the epistemological dimension, we managed to advance the concept of education in urban peripheries, not as a modality of education, a special topic defined by CNPOQ, but rather as a tool for mobilization, transformation, consciousness-raising by stigmatized students/youth. In this sense, we can affirm that Education in Urban Peripheries can be considered as acts of investment by peripheral youth. Those who recognize themselves and identify with/in the peripheries and act as protagonists through their socio-educational practices. Therefore, in this study, we define Education in urban peripheries as a social space occupied by socio-geographical actors who think, feel and act in their living space.

In the didactic-pedagogical dimension, the results allowed us to generate some guidelines defined as guiding with descriptors such as teachers – themes – contexts – in the application of the formative process of subjects in schools of urban peripheries. Therefore, the results generated impacts in university spaces, in schools of/in peripheral contexts, as a modality of pedagogical knowledge and human resource training; experiences and practices as indicators to foster public policies in the scope of education in urban peripheries.

5 Some Considerations

The results point to the first group (Gepemdecc/UESB): 1) the precariousness of teaching work that occurred during the pandemic continued in the post-pandemic period, increasing cases of illness; 2) many municipalities created quite successful methodological alternatives for teaching and organizing pedagogical work with the use of technology and continue implementing them in the post-pandemic period; 3) the majority of investigated municipalities improved school infrastructure during the

pandemic, mainly through the acquisition of technological services, such as computer laboratories and broadband internet, contributing to minimize educational inequalities between rural and urban areas; 4) the pandemic generated a negative impact on learning, and in the post-pandemic period, there are various experiences of learning recomposition happening in Bahian municipalities.

From the studies of the second group (GIPRES/UNEB), three points stand out: 1) scientific productions around the theme of pandemic and post-pandemic COVID-19 impacts and the participation of peripheral youth are rare; 2) difficulties in the applicability of pedagogical practices that respect the knowledge and actions of young people in school and non-school spaces; 3) the need to rethink public policies capable of protecting rights, developing and boosting the potential of youth in urban peripheries.

Therefore, the results of these studies point to concerns regarding subjects and their learning in school and non-school spaces, and notably fall on reflection about public policies and educational programs, from their formulation, implementation and effectiveness, especially for those that produce guiding principles that: respect subjects in rural and urban areas and the valorization of their knowledge; strengthen the formative process of teachers and students; establish the relationship between University/school/local community.

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MINI BIOGRAPHY

Arlete Ramos dos Santos

PhD in Education from the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG), Postdoctoral fellow in Education and Social Movements (UNESP), Professor in the Department of Human Sciences, Education, and Language (DCHEL), Professor in the Graduate Program in Education at the State University of Southwest Bahia (UESB). Coordinator of the Study and Research Group on Social Movements, Diversity, Field and Clty Education (GEPEMDECC/CNPq), CNPq Productivity Scholarship holder, Level 2.

e-mail: arlerp@hotmail.com

Natanael Reis Bomfim

PhD in Education from the University of Quebec in Montreal. Postdoctoral fellow in Urban Peripheries Education from ULisboa. Full Professor in the Department of Education and the Graduate Program in Education and Contemporaneity at UNEB, and coordinator of the Interdisciplinary Research Group on Representations, Education, and Sustainability.

e-mail: nrbomfim@uneb.br

Translator: Igor Tairone Ramos dos Santos