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Pedagogical practices and social issues: school leaving in youth and adult Education

Práticas pedagógicas e questões sociais: evasão na Educação de Jovens e Adultos

Prácticas pedagógicas y cuestiones sociales: deserción en la Educación de jóvenes y adultos

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify, within academic literature, the factors contributing to school leaving in Youth and Adult Education (EJA in Portuguese). To achieve this, a survey was conducted in the Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD), using the descriptor “REASONS FOR SCHOOL LEAVING IN EJA” in titles and abstracts. The findings from 22 studies reveal that the factors contributing to school leaving in EJA are linked to two major categories: social issues—such as employment, family dynamics, lack of family support, motherhood, marriage, the need to choose between working and studying (with a tendency to prioritize work), early entry into the labor market, mobility challenges, and the physical and emotional toll of work; and school-related factors—such as inadequate pedagogical practices, absence of specific teaching materials, and a disconnect between the school curriculum and students’ lived realities. It is argued that EJA must be reconfigured through public policies that address the specificities and unique circumstances of the individuals who turn to this educational modality. These individuals, having had their access to education denied or interrupted by various factors, once again face social, economic, and cultural challenges in their efforts to continue their studies.

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Keywords: Youth and Adult Education. School Leaving. Academic Literature.

Resumo

Esta pesquisa teve por objetivo identificar nas produções acadêmicas os fatores que contribuem para a evasão na Educação de Jovens e Adultos – EJA. Para tanto, realizamos um levantamento na base de dados da Biblioteca Digital de Teses e Dissertações (BDTD), a partir do descritor “MOTIVOS EVASÃO EJA” no título e no resumo. Os resultados evidenciados nas 22 pesquisas apontam que os fatores que contribuem para a evasão na EJA estão atrelados a duas grandes categorias: 1a) questões sociais: trabalho, dinâmicas familiares, carência de incentivo familiar, maternidade, casamento, optar entre trabalhar e estudar, e acabam dando preferência para o trabalho, entrada precoce do mercado de trabalho, obstáculos de mobilidade, desgaste que o trabalho provoca; 2a) ligação com o espaço escolar: prática pedagógica inadequada, ausência de material didático específico, desconexão entre o currículo escolar e a realidade dos alunos. Acreditamos que é necessária a reconfiguração da EJA, com políticas públicas que considerem as às especificidades e particularidades dos sujeitos que recorrem a essa modalidade de ensino. Sujeitos estes que, após terem o acesso à educação negado e interrompido por diversos fatores, enfrentam novamente desafios sociais, econômicos e culturais para dar continuidade aos estudos.

Palavras-chave: Educação de Jovens e Adultos. Evasão. Produções acadêmicas.

Resumen

Esta investigación tuvo como objetivo identificar en las producciones académicas los factores que contribuyen al abandono escolar en la Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos (EJA en portugués). Para ello, se realizó un levantamiento en la base de datos de la Biblioteca Digital de Tesis y Disertaciones (BDTD), utilizando el descriptor “MOTIVOS ABANDONO EJA” en el título y el resumen. Los resultados evidenciados en las 22 investigaciones señalan que los factores que contribuyen al abandono en la EJA están vinculados a dos grandes categorías: cuestiones sociales —como el trabajo, dinámicas familiares, falta de apoyo familiar, maternidad, matrimonio, la necesidad de elegir entre trabajar y estudiar (con tendencia a priorizar el trabajo), ingreso temprano al mercado laboral, obstáculos de movilidad y el desgaste físico y emocional provocado por el trabajo—; y factores relacionados con el espacio escolar —como prácticas pedagógicas inadecuadas, ausencia de materiales didácticos específicos y desconexión entre el currículo escolar y la realidad de los estudiantes. Se considera necesaria una reconfiguración de la EJA mediante políticas públicas que contemplen las especificidades y particularidades de los sujetos que recurren a esta modalidad educativa. Sujetos que, tras haber tenido negado o interrumpido su acceso a la educación por diversos factores, enfrentan nuevamente desafíos sociales, económicos y culturales para dar continuidad a sus estudios.

Palabras clave: Educación de Jóvenes y Adultos. Abandono escolar. Producciones académicas.

Introduction

Youth and Adult Education (EJA in Portuguese) is a modality of education guaranteed by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (Brazil, 1996), which establishes in Article 37 that...

[...] será destinada àqueles que não tiveram acesso ou continuidade de estudos nos ensinos fundamental e médio na idade própria e constituirá instrumento para a educação e a aprendizagem ao longo da vida. § 1º Os sistemas de ensino assegurarão gratuitamente aos jovens e aos adultos, que não puderam efetuar os estudos na idade regular, oportunidades educacionais apropriadas, consideradas as características do alunado, seus interesses, condições de vida e de trabalho, mediante cursos e exames. § 2º O Poder Público viabilizará e estimulará o acesso e a permanência do trabalhador na escola, mediante ações integradas e complementares entre si¹.

The legislation therefore recognizes Youth and Adult Education (EJA) as a right for those who, for various reasons, were excluded from the educational process at the expected age. At the same time, it establishes guidelines that direct education systems to offer learning opportunities that respect the specific living and working conditions of these individuals. However, ensuring access and continued attendance goes beyond simply offering enrollment slots: it requires understanding who the target audience is, their life paths, needs, and unique characteristics.

In this regard, Arroyo (2006) emphasizes the importance of understanding who the subjects of EJA are, to tailor education to their specific needs. This involves the development of materials aimed at this audience and, above all, appropriate training for teachers, who often feel unprepared to work with young people and adults without infantilizing the teaching process.

It becomes necessary to reconfigure education for this modality in a way that considers the profile of EJA learners, who have different needs from those in regular education. Furthermore, there is an urgent need for pedagogical practices and teaching materials that reflect the specificities of this educational modality. It is important to remember that adult literacy is distinct from the process of childhood literacy; thus, adults should not be reduced to the condition of children, nor should children be reduced to the condition of adults. Adequate materials are required for all stages and modalities of education (Pinto, 1993).

Another challenging aspect is the heterogeneity of learners, as it is common to find, within the same classroom, individuals who are already able to engage with the proposed content alongside others who are still unable to read or write. Regarding this heterogeneity, it is also important to highlight the wide age range of learners, which spans from 15 to 90 years old, an aspect that educators often struggle to manage (Freire, 1987). This educational modality encompasses individuals with diverse life histories, who pursue a dream, a form of escape, a personal goal, a certificate, or even the opportunity to form friendships.

Given these specificities, which are often overlooked, we are faced with empty classrooms in Youth and Adult Education, reflecting not only the absence of students but also the lack of welcoming environments, structured curricula, and adequately prepared teachers. These factors significantly hinder school retention.

These issues often result in high school leaving rates and, more notably, the closure of classrooms. Caporalini (1991) defines school leaving as an action taken by the student when they abandon their studies due to social, economic, pedagogical factors, lack of motivation, among others.

¹ it shall be intended for individuals who did not have access to or continuity in primary and secondary education at the appropriate age and shall serve as a tool for lifelong education and learning. §1 The education systems shall ensure, free of charge, appropriate educational opportunities for young people and adults who were unable to pursue their studies at the regular age, considering the characteristics of the student population, their interests, living and working conditions, through courses and examinations. §2 The government shall facilitate and promote the access and continued attendance of workers in school through integrated and complementary actions.

It is important to highlight that during the pandemic, the number of school leavers among EJA students increased, due to factors such as: difficulty accessing remote learning platforms; challenges in balancing work and school; lack of access to technological devices and digital platforms, among others.

Above all, it is essential to emphasize that the challenges faced by these students in remote education were not experienced in the same way by all. Everyone went through this period in a unique manner, shaped by their social, economic, and personal circumstances. Nicodemos (2022, p. 41) points out that...:

[...] a pandemia nos propiciou viver a EaD, ou melhor, o ensino remoto, aligeirado, da forma como foi colocado, e na EJA temos, de novo, o retrato do não acesso dos alunos. Minha pesquisa atual mostra dados alarmantes: turmas com 30 alunos do Ensino Médio, nas quais 1 aluno acessou a plataforma disponibilizada pela rede estadual, às vezes nenhum acesso.²

This scenario reveals in a clear way the digital exclusion experienced by a large portion of EJA learners during emergency remote education. Nicodemos (2022) highlights not only the precarious conditions of access to virtual platforms, but also how this modality was imposed without consideration for the specificities of these individuals, who have historically faced barriers to educational continuity and learning.

The data presented reinforce the urgent need to investigate the factors that lead to school leaving at this stage of education, as the challenges brought by the pandemic have only intensified preexisting inequalities. Based on these premises, our objective is to identify, within academic literature, the factors that contribute to school leaving in Youth and Adult Education (EJA).

Method

The research presented in this article, qualitative in nature, aligns with studies known as state of knowledge, which are considered as “[...] identificação, registro, categorização que levem à reflexão e síntese sobre a produção científica de uma determinada área, em um determinado espaço de tempo [...]”³ (Morosini, 2015, p.102).

Qualitative research is defined as one that prioritizes the analysis of microprocesses through the study of individual and group social actions, conducting an in-depth examination of data, and characterized by heterodoxy in its analytical approach (Lüdke; André, 1986).

In this context, we conducted a survey in the Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD) database using the descriptor “MOTIVOS EVASÃO EJA” (“REASONS FOR LEAVING EJA”) in the title and abstract, which yielded 31 results, three of which were duplicates. From the remaining 28 studies, we selected those aligned with the central focus of this research, which aims to address the causes of school leaving in the EJA modality.

Based on this criterion, six studies were excluded for not addressing the theme of this research or failing to reveal factors contributing to school leaving in EJA. This selection was conducted through a more detailed reading of the descriptions and data analysis in studies whose abstracts did not provide sufficient information. As a result, we identified 22 studies that offered relevant contributions regarding the reasons that lead learners to leave school in this educational modality.

² The pandemic led us to experience Distance Education (EaD), or rather, remote learning—implemented hastily and without adequate structure. In the context of Youth and Adult Education (EJA), we once again see the stark reality of students' lack of access. My current research reveals alarming data: high school classes with 30 students, in which only one student accessed the platform provided by the state education network—sometimes, not a single access was recorded.

³ identification, documentation, and categorization that lead to reflection and synthesis on the scientific production within a specific field, over a defined period.

Description and Data Analysis

Upon analyzing the abstracts of the selected studies, we identified that the factors contributing to school leaving in EJA are linked to two main categories. The first category encompasses factors related to social issues: employment, family dynamics, lack of family support, motherhood, marriage, the need to choose between working and studying—often prioritizing work—early entry into the labor market, mobility challenges, and the physical and emotional strain caused by work. The second category includes factors associated with the school environment: inadequate pedagogical practices, lack of specific didactic materials, and a disconnect between the school curriculum and the students lived realities.

In the table below, we list the studies related to the first category.

Table 1 – Academic studies identifying factors related to social issues that contribute to dropout in EJA

ANO	AUTOR	TÍTULO	VINCULAÇÃO	TESE/ DISSERTAÇÃO
2011	LARA, Pedro José de	Educação de Jovens e Adultos: perspectivas e evasão no município de Cáceres - MT	Unoeste	Dissertação
2011	OLIVEIRA, Iraldirene Ricardo de	A evasão no PROEJA ministrado pelo Instituto Federal do Espírito Santo – Campus Santa Teresa	Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro,	Dissertação
2012	SILVA, Francisco Claudio de Sousa	Realidades da educação de Jovens e Adultos no Ensino Fundamental-Presencial no Município de Itaituba (PA): desafios da gestão, do planejamento e das políticas educacionais na efetivação do direito à educação em escolas da cidade e do campo.	Unicamp	Tese
2012	SANTOS, Vilson Pereira dos	Educação de Jovens e Adultos: um estudo sobre trajetórias interrompidas.	Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás	Dissertação
2012	FERNANDES, Andreia da Paixão	Memórias e representações sociais de jovens e adultos: lembranças ressignificadas da escola da infância e expectativas no retorno à escola	Unicamp	Tese
2016	SALES, Elenilce da Costa	Evasão na EJA sob o olhar dos alunos de três escolas do Amazonas	Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora	Dissertação
2018	SANTOS, Paula Gonçalves Rezende dos	A visão do aluno da modalidade EJA integrada à educação profissional sobre seus processos de ensino e aprendizagem.	Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás	Dissertação
2018	NEPOMUCENO, Marcia de Souza Leite	Motivação e desempenho acadêmico entre alunos do primeiro ciclo de Educação de Jovens e Adultos	Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie,	Dissertação
2018	MATOS, Marcilene Conceição do Amaral	Investigando a evasão dos alunos na Educação de Jovens e Adultos (EJA) na modalidade de ensino semipresencial	Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora	Dissertação
2018	FERNANDES,	Evasão e estratégias de	Universidade Federal de	Dissertação

ANO	AUTOR	TÍTULO	VINCULAÇÃO	TESE/ DISSERTAÇÃO
	Maria Aparecida de Lima Braga	permanência na EJA do Ensino Médio semipresencial: retratos de uma escola.	Viçosa	
2018	ALMEIDA, Sônia Maria de	(Re)Pensando o PROEJA no IFMT – Campus Várzea Grande a partir do olhar do(s) professor(es)	Universidade Federal de Goiás	Dissertação
2019	XAVIER, Maria do Perpetuo Socorro Ramos	Estudo sobre persistência e evasão escolar em EJA no Nordeste, Castanhal- PA: análise e preposições.	Universidade Federal do Pará	Dissertação
2020	SILVA, Loise Carla Siqueira da	Itinerários desviantes: um estudo sobre intermitências na EJA	Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte	Dissertação
2020	GOMES NETO, Ceciliano	Evasão e fracasso escolar juvenil em uma escola do Seridó Oriental Paraibano	Universidade Federal de Campina Grande	Dissertação
2021	BUZIOI, Josiane Regina de Souza	Afetividade e permanência na Educação de Jovens e Adultos – Anos Iniciais	Universidade Católica de Campinas	Dissertação
2021	FRAGA, Aline dos Santos	O que te faz continuar? fatores de permanência na Educação de Jovens e Adultos	Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos	Dissertação
2022	RIBEIRO, Arlerson Noite	Concepção de ser humano no Programa Nacional de Integração da Educação Profissional com a Educação Básica na Modalidade de Educação de Jovens e Adultos (Proeja): uma investigação no Curso Técnico em Logística do Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Amapá	Universidade Federal do Amapá	Dissertação

The study conducted by Lara (2011) aimed to understand the expectations of incoming students upon enrolling in the EJA program, as well as the reasons that led students to drop out during the initial grades. The results indicated that among the various causes mentioned by the students who dropped out, work-related issues were the main reason given to justify leaving school. Family problems also account for a significant portion of the leaving causes, ranging from a child's imprisonment to jealousy from a spouse. Among the respondents who cited this reason, all were women or mothers. Health problems were also identified as a contributing factor to school abandonment.

The study by Oliveira (2011) aimed to examine school leaving in the PROEJA, program offered by the Federal Institute of Espírito Santo, Santa Tereza campus, addressing it as one of the facets of social exclusion in the context of EJA. The results highlighted several contributing factors, including difficulty in understanding the content, fatigue from studying due to work, lack of transportation to reach the school, and issues related to motherhood and marriage that contribute to leaving school.

The study conducted by Silva (2012) sought to identify the challenges faced by school administrators within the Municipal Department of Education in the city of Itaituba, in the context of EJA, specifically in the in-person elementary education modality. The findings revealed that a significant portion of EJA students suffer from a lack of administrative support, which negatively affects the quality of education provided and ultimately leads to leaving school.

The study by Santos (2012) explored the causes of school leaving based on the life trajectories of students who left the EJA program at a municipal school in Palmas. The results portrayed EJA students as working individuals who often struggled to balance employment with their studies. As a result, many were forced to choose between work and education, prioritizing employment, a factor that leads to leaving school.

Fernandes (2012) sought to investigate different aspects related to the memory of students in EJA at the elementary level, exploring their recollections of childhood schooling and their current educational experience. The results indicated that the elements contributing to the discontinuation of studies notably included external social challenges and family dynamics shaped by past experiences of failure, which trigger school leaving within the educational context.

The study conducted by Sales (2016) aimed to identify the reasons contributing to school leaving in the EJA segment, with emphasis on the state of Amazonas. The findings revealed several motivating factors behind leaving school, such as work, family-related issues—including lack of encouragement from family to continue studying—health problems, geographic factors like relocation, personal reasons, and for women, pregnancy also emerged as a central factor influencing school leaving.

Santos (2018), in his study, sought to understand the perspectives of students enrolled in the integrated technical course in building construction, within the EJA modality, at the Federal Institute of Education of Goiás – Formosa Campus, regarding the factors that hinder their learning processes. The results highlighted work as the main factor contributing to school leaving. Early entry into the labor market, long working hours, and extreme fatigue due to extended workdays were identified as obstacles to the learning process.

The study conducted by Nepomuceno (2018) had three objectives: to describe the profile and motivation of students at AEJA Mackenzie; to analyze students' academic history in relation to their performance; and to determine whether students' motivation for the educational process is linked to their academic achievement. The results showed that lack of interest was not among the reasons for school leaving. Instead, work-related issues and lack of parental encouragement were the main factors. Data revealed that 64.4% of the students interviewed left school due to work.

Matos (2018) aimed to understand the challenges faced by school management in reducing school leaving rates at CESEC – *Centro Estadual de Formação Continuada “Doralice Alves Rodrigues”* – with the goal of proposing actions to minimize these rates. The results indicated that collecting data from students and school records can become a management practice to better understand the reality and act more effectively. The study identified several reasons for school leaving, such as working to support the family budget, lack of interest in studying, disengagement during classes, and lack of motivation from family members.

Fernandes (2018) identified factors that contribute to school leaving in Youth and Adult Education (EJA) at the high school level in the semi-presential modality, based on the *Centro de Educação Continuada Governador Bias Fortes* (CESEC), located in Muriaé, Minas Gerais. The research results indicated that the interruption of studies may be influenced by an intersection of factors, including social and economic elements, challenges in balancing work and study, personal issues such as family problems, social inequality, and even academic failure, which leads to student retention and hinders educational progression to higher levels.

The study conducted by Almeida (2018) aimed to understand the experiences of students enrolled in the technical course in condominium services, offered through the Youth and Adult Education Program (PROEJA) at the Federal Institute of Mato Grosso (IFMT), Várzea Grande Campus. The results revealed that the phenomenon of school leaving encompasses multiple dimensions, including political, socioeconomic, and cultural factors that make it unfeasible for students to continue their studies, resulting in either temporary or permanent school leaving. Family-related issues and work were also identified as key contributors to school abandonment.

Xavier (2019) explored factors that contribute to both school leaving and persistence in EJA at the elementary level in northeastern Pará. The results indicated that lack of time, fatigue, pregnancy, family

income, and geographic issues such as distance are factors that lead to school leaving. The data showed that 27% of the students interviewed did not remain in school due to “lack of time,” primarily because of work-related activities.

Silva (2020) analyzed the reasons that led students to leave school in the EJA program, as well as the factors that motivated them to return to the educational environment. The findings revealed a direct relationship between work and school leaving, with work exerting a negative influence on student attendance. Physical exhaustion, combined with mental fatigue, made regular class attendance difficult. The strain caused by work led to fatigue, affecting academic performance and students’ willingness to attend school due to the overload from both work and school activities. These aspects represented significant obstacles to students’ continued enrollment. Regarding the factors that motivated their return, the results showed that students placed hope in education as a means of improving their personal and professional lives. Moreover, the perception that returning as a possibility made the act of leaving less painful.

Gomes Neto (2020) investigated the factors that trigger school failure and school leaving in Cubati, Paraíba. The results indicated that both school abandonment and failure are influenced by extra- and intra-school aspects, such as economic conditions, family issues, and public policies—factors that, either individually or collectively, contribute to school leaving.

Buzioli (2021), in her research, examined the role of affectivity and the dynamics of teaching and learning, based on the premise that these elements influence students’ persistence or withdrawal from school. The study was conducted in EJA classes in Campinas, São Paulo. The results showed that factors related to health, marital relationships, and motherhood—especially among women—had a significant impact on students’ ability to remain in school. Interviews revealed an incompatibility between work and study, with fatigue from long working hours standing out as a major contributor to school leaving. Additionally, the distance between work, home, and school, combined with the strain of daily routines, also compromised students’ ability to stay enrolled. These challenges, along with personal responsibilities, made it difficult for students to find time and energy to dedicate to their studies.

Fraga’s (2021) dissertation analyzed the factors contributing to student persistence in the high school level of EJA at the UFRGS Laboratory School. The results identified several factors affecting students’ ability to remain in school, such as financial difficulties, early entry into the labor market, and challenges in balancing study and work. In the focus group, some students also mentioned that marriage can contribute to school leaving.

Ribeiro’s (2022) dissertation aimed to explore the concepts surrounding the understanding of human nature and human development within the educational environment integrated into Basic Education. Although the study did not primarily focus on phenomena related to school leaving, the results addressed certain elements connected to this issue. Among them were challenges related to commuting—such as lack of accessibility—and difficulties students faced in adhering to class schedules, particularly regarding punctuality. Delays in attending classes, often caused by work demands, were identified as potential factors contributing to school leaving.

In Table 2, we present academic studies related to the school environment: inadequate pedagogical practices, absence of specific teaching materials, and a disconnect between the school curriculum and students’ realities.

Table 2 – Academic studies identifying factors related to the school environment that contribute to leaving school in EJA

ANO	AUTOR	TÍTULO	VINCULAÇÃO	TESE/ DISSERTAÇÃO
2011	ROCHA, Wellington Moreira da	Educação de Jovens e Adultos e a Evasão Escolar: o caso do Instituto Federal do Ceará	Universidade Federal do Ceará	Dissertação
2013	SILVA, Tássio Vitalino	Formação docente e conhecimento profissional: desafios para o ensino da	Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte	Tese

ANO	AUTOR	TÍTULO	VINCULAÇÃO	TESE/ DISSERTAÇÃO
		Matemática na EJA		
2013	COELHO, Hamilton Freire	O Ensino de Arte na Educação de Jovens e Adultos em escolas públicas de Ensino Médio de João Pessoa-PB	Universidade Federal da Paraíba	Dissertação
2015	BOSCO, Débora de Macedo Cortez	Educação de Jovens e Adultos: dos discursos de alunos evadidos à construção de uma proposta pedagógica e intercultural com as linguagens	Universidade Federal do Pampa	Dissertação
2017	SOUSA, Roselda aparecida de	Ausência prolongada dos alunos da EJA Semipresencial: um desafio à gestão.	Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora	Dissertação

Rocha (2011) conducted a study with the general objective of highlighting the relationship between pedagogical practice and school leaving, aiming to identify whether such practice influences students' decision to leave EJA, specifically in the PROEJA modality. The research also presents factors contributing to school leaving in high school courses at the Federal Institute of Science and Technology of Ceará (IFCE), in Fortaleza. The results revealed that, beyond students' individual difficulties, pedagogical practices and the lack of teacher commitment to PROEJA are directly related to school leaving. Additional factors such as teacher preparation and continuity in the classroom, and the lack of appropriate teaching materials, also contribute significantly to school leaving.

Silva's (2013) dissertation aimed to investigate the role of mathematics teachers in EJA, analyzing the methods employed, particularly in elementary education. The study focused on the development of didactic and pedagogical practices and the knowledge applied in teaching mediation. The results indicated that the disconnect between the school curriculum and students' realities exacerbates the issue of school leaving, based on the premise that EJA students expect the school to provide meaningful knowledge relevant to their lives, experiences, and sense of belonging.

Coelho (2013) conducted a study to analyze art education in high school, based on public EJA schools in João Pessoa, Paraíba. The study also investigated the profiles of teachers and students, as well as methodological approaches. The results revealed that the lack of appropriate teaching materials, classroom infrastructure, and suitable methodologies for art education, especially the limited school hours—are factors that contribute to school leaving.

Bosco (2015) investigated the feasibility of developing an intercultural pedagogical proposal within the context of EJA, emphasizing the expansion of language teaching through a dialogical approach, supported by interviews with current and former EJA students. The results indicated that factors leading to school leaving included monotonous pedagogical proposals, classes lacking interaction and dialogue, occasional student disengagement, infantilized behavior expressed by some students, personal demotivation, influence of work shifts, motherhood-related issues, and a sense of inferiority felt by older students in relation to younger classmates.

Sousa (2017) aimed to uncover the challenges faced by school management regarding the persistent absence of students in the EJA modality and presented aspects contributing to school leaving. The results showed that, in addition to external factors, internal issues related to school organization hindered students' access to educational opportunities.

The results show that the factors impacting school leaving encompass a wide range of elements, from difficulties related to balancing work and studies—due to fatigue and lack of time—to personal, political, and social issues. It is found that the factors identified by the research, both in the first category and in the second, are largely the same as those that previously led individuals to leave school: social, political, and economic

issues, or aspects related to pedagogical practice, such as an uncommitted teaching attitude and the use of inadequate didactic materials. In other words, the same elements that contributed to initial school exclusion continue to negatively affect their educational trajectories. Therefore, it becomes urgent to implement public policies that ensure not only access but also concrete conditions for remaining in school.

Final considerations

This study aimed to identify, in academic productions, the factors that contribute to leaving EJA. The results point to various determinants, including social, economic, family-related aspects and individual issues of the student. The impact of work stands out, as it often causes physical and mental exhaustion, since EJA students, due to low educational levels, often perform tasks that require significant physical effort, which leads to difficulty in balancing work and studies. Other reasons include the student's health issues, commuting challenges due to the distance to school, responsibilities related to motherhood, and even tensions in the family environment such as jealousy from a spouse. In addition, monotonous classes that fail to spark interest and curiosity in the student, along with infantilized didactic materials, were also factors that contributed to leaving EJA. The heterogeneity in the classroom, due to the age differences among EJA students, as well as the feeling of shame experienced by older students in relation to younger ones, also emerge as elements that influence school leaving.

Given the results obtained, it is considered necessary to reconfigure EJA through public policies that address the specificities and particularities of the individuals who turn to this educational modality. These are individuals who, historically, have had their access to education denied or interrupted for various reasons and who, upon resuming their studies, continue to face social, economic, and cultural challenges. Ensuring not only access but also the permanence and learning of these individuals requires an effective commitment to equity and social justice in the educational field.

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