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Transition to High School: Policy Management of Student Flow Correction and Educational Trajectories[1]

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Abstract: This study analyzes the possible relations between a student flow correction policy in a public education system and the transition to high school. The study of students' educational trajectories was the resource used to understand the results of the policy management and its possible effects on middle school transitions to high school. The analysis used data from the School Census, the education system's enrollment base, and available official documents on the policy and its management. Initially, the context of the policy design and management - structured within a public/private partnership - and the educational trajectories of the entire population of students enrolled in the system studied in the fifth grade in 2010 are presented. Subsequently, the trajectories of those who reached high school in 2014 are presented. The results suggest that, although the correction of student's flow has favored entry into high school through projects of learning acceleration, the high repetition rate in the following year – the first year of the new stage of schooling - shows that access to high school may not correspond to a sustainable and well

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consolidated learning process, highlighting the limits of the controversial compensatory nature of the policy on screen.
Keywords: policy management; student flow correction; educational trajectories; high school
Transición para la enseñanza media: Gestión de política de corrección de flujo y trayectorias escolares
Resumen: El presente estudio analiza las posibles relaciones entre la gestión de una política de corrección de flujo en una red pública de enseñanza y la transición para la enseñanza media. El estudio de las trayectorias escolares de los alumnos se ha constituido como recurso para comprender los resultados de la política y sus posibles efectos sobre las transiciones escolares a la enseñanza media. En el análisis fueron utilizados datos del Censo Escolar de la base de matrículas de la red de enseñanza y los documentos oficiales disponibles acerca de la política y su gestión. Inicialmente se presenta el contexto del diseño y gestión de la política – estructurada en el ámbito de una asociación público/privada – y las trayectorias escolares de toda la población de alumnos matriculados en el 5º año de la enseñanza fundamental en la red de enseñanza estudiada en 2010. Posteriormente se presentan las trayectorias de aquellos que han llegado a la enseñanza media en 2014. Los resultados sugieren que, no obstante la corrección de flujo a través de los proyectos de aceleración del aprendizaje haber favorecido el ingreso en la enseñanza media, la elevada tasa de repetición en el año subsecuente – 1er año de esta nueva etapa de enseñanza – deja trasparecer que el acceso a la enseñanza media puede no haber correspondido a un proceso de escolarización sostenible y bien consolidado en términos de aprendizaje, evidenciando los límites del polémico carácter compensatorio de la política en debate.
Palabras-clave: gestión de política; corrección de flujo; trayectorias escolares; enseñanza media

Transição para o ensino médio: Gestão de política de correção de fluxo e trajetórias escolares
Resumo: O presente estudo analisa as possíveis relações entre a gestão de uma política de correção de fluxo em uma rede pública de ensino e a transição para o ensino médio. O estudo das trajetórias escolares dos alunos constituiu-se como recurso para compreender os resultados da política e seus possíveis efeitos sobre as transições escolares para o ensino médio. Na análise foram utilizados dados do Censo Escolar, da base de matrículas da rede de ensino e os documentos oficiais disponíveis sobre a política e sua gestão. Inicialmente apresenta-se o contexto do desenho e gestão da política - estruturada no âmbito de uma parceria público/privada - e as trajetórias escolares de toda a população de alunos matriculados no 5º ano do ensino fundamental na rede de ensino estudada em 2010. Posteriormente apresenta-se as trajetórias daqueles que chegaram ao ensino médio em 2014. Os resultados sugerem que, não obstante a correção de fluxo através dos projetos de aceleração da aprendizagem ter favorecido o ingresso no ensino médio, a elevada taxa de repetência no ano subsequente - 1º ano desta nova etapa de ensino - deixa transparecer que o acesso ao ensino médio pode não ter correspondido a um processo de escolarização sustentável e bem consolidado em termos de aprendizagem, evidenciando os limites do controverso caráter compensatório da política em tela.
Palavras-chave: gestão de política; correção de fluxo; trajetórias escolares; ensino médio

Introduction

In Brazil, the rate of age-grade distortion indicates the percentage of students of a certain school year, stage or level of education with age above the recommended. According to the Ministry of Education (MEC), the student shows distortion or age-grade discrepancy when a difference between the chronological age and the age expected to the school year attended is of two or more

years. The high rates of age-grade distortion[2] result essentially from two notable phenomena, which highlight historical education inequalities in the Brazilian scenario: grade retention and school evasion.

Studies at the end of the 1980s showed that the high rates of grade retention in Brazil were related to a deeply-rooted educational tradition that naturalizes and validates the grade retention as "a cultural component of the pedagogical praxis" and conceives the "fail" as a new chance of learning to students who did not learn in the proper period of time. At the time, the expression "Teaching of Retention" was used to illustrate the legitimacy of the grade retention and the historical and cultural roots of the allocation of school failure to a high number of students, particularly in the first grade, throughout decades within the education system (Ribeiro, 1991, p. 16).

Since the 1990s, the harmful effects of the grade retention over students and education systems were focused in the scope of the educational policies and were integrated to the government agendas, via programs and projects to correct the age-grade distortion and the educational flow (Franco et al 2007; Oliveira & Araújo, 2005; Souza et al, 2011). Such programs and projects, conceived as compensatory policies, started to be implemented by public school systems, through public-private agreements or partnerships, with the objective to accelerate and recover the learning of students who were in a state of educational delay and were piling up educational disadvantages (Prado, 2000; Parente & Lück, 2004, 2007).

Within the scope of educational management, it is worth noting during this period the technical and financial input of the Ministry of Education (MEC) and its regulatory role of quality standards in an intergovernmental relationship to balance the regional inequalities and induce cooperation mechanisms between the federal entities. The picture of resources reduction and of State downturn that characterizes the majority of the state action in Brazil in the 1990s (Draibe, 1998; Oliveira, 2005; Riscal, 2011; among others) corresponded to the choice of policy models of compensating nature, in contrast to the universal policies. It is in this context that the learning acceleration projects and programs are highlighted in a governmental agenda, associated to other policies directed to the regularization of the educational flow, as the schooling in cycles (especially in the initial grades of elementary school) and the automatic promotion also adopted simultaneously in several public school systems of the country (Mainardes, 2006; Souza et al, 2011).

It may be speculated as per the occurrence of a certain synchronism between the promotion of the equity and the acquisition of a greater efficiency of the system. While student flow correction policy advocates to correct the trajectory of students in educational delay, they also seek to efficiently integrate them in the regular flow in equitable conditions of learning through the articulation of partnerships with profit or non-profit private organizations, so as to also reduce the costs of failing and vacancies in the system. This hypothesis might explain the proliferation of these policies in public school systems of the country, particularly since the 2000s. In 2010, MEC announced that it allocated resources for student flow correction projects to 20% of the municipalities and to all states of the federation, according to the recorded demands in the respective Plans of Articulated Actions by managers of public school systems (Ministério Da Educação, 2009).

Considering the continuity and the capillarity of such policy in the public school systems of the country, it seems relevant to investigate the possible influences of the policy on the reduction of the education inequalities. The present study shows part of the research performed on the relation

[2] According to information available in 2016 School Census, 21.2% of the elementary school students, enrolled in public school system showed age-grade distortion. In the high school the rate reached the level of 30.9%. It is worth noting that schools located in the countryside shows higher rates: 27.8% in elementary school and 30.4% in high school (http://portal.inep.gov.br/indicadores-educacionais).

between the student flow correction policy implemented in the municipal public school system of Rio de Janeiro and the educational trajectories of students enrolled in fifth grade of elementary school in 2010 to its possible educational outcomes in 2014[3] (Lima, 2016).

The study in view, of quantitative nature, is set in a convergence of the research fields of the Sociology of Education and of the Educational policies and show the data and analysis about students affected or not by the policy in the transition between the elementary school and the high school. The perspective is to present an inclusion approach, in which the study of the trajectories is constituted as a tool to analyze the influence of the policy on the educational trajectories and its possible outcomes in 2014, considering the profiles of students to investigate the reduction and/or maintenance of inequalities within the system and the perspectives of schooling effectively founded.

Therefore, the outcome[4] "high school" was analyzed, both because it is the foremost start point in terms of enrollments of students of the studied cohort in the period of 2010-2014 and by the tensions that involve the debate around the quality of teaching of this stage of basic education in the Brazilian scenario, culminating in the reformation of high school, approved by the Law no. 13,415/2017 (Lima & Gomes, 2013; Motta & Frigotto, 2017; Silva et al, 2016).

The case study in screen investigates a contemporary social phenomenon, analyzed in the context of public school system, from the cohort of students enrolled in the fifth grade of the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro in 2010. We believe that the analysis of the educational trajectories of this numerically expressive population, as we shall see, might contribute to amplify the understanding about the transition from the elementary school to high school, in a perspective in which the analysis of this particular case might illustrate, deepen or question the previous results of researches, albeit the procedures adopted are of a quantitative nature (Fonseca, 1999; Günther, 2006; Yin, 2005).

The work is organized in six sections, in addition to this introduction. In the following section we will discuss the correlation between the State reform and the addition of the student flow correction projects in the educational agenda both in the 1990s and from the 2000s, as a component of the recent educational agenda referred in the Committed Goals of All for Education Plan and in the Plan of Articulated Actions, presented as mechanisms inducers of the quality of education, referred in the Basic Education Development Index[5]. In the third section it is presented the contributions of the Sociology of Education to the study of the educational trajectories. Subsequently the research field is analyzed, the context, and the characterization of policy. In the fifth section it is presented the data and the methodological procedures. In the sixth section it is analyzed the educational trajectories of students, which the outcome in 2014 corresponded to the high school, and in the last section the final considerations are presented.

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[3] In the original research, semi-structured interviews were performed with the managers in the central and intermediate levels of the management of the municipal education, with the purpose to understand the process of elaboration of the policy agenda, as well as to establish information of the documentation sources and to complement the data analysis of the enrollments bases and of classes of the School Census.

[4] The outcomes of trajectories in the year of 2014 were paired in the two groups of students of the research population (enrolled in student flow correction classes and not enrolled in student flow correction classes) and corresponded to the following status: 1) 9th grade; 2) High school; 3) High school in 2013 and out of the system in 2014; 4) Young and Adult's Elementary school; 5) 5th, 6th, 7th, or 8th grade of the middle school; 6) Student flow correction Project; and 7) Out of the system.

[5] The Basic Education Development Index is an indicator created by the federal government to measure the quality of education in public schools.

The Correction of the Age-Grade Distortion and of the Educational Flow in the Contexts of the Education Reforms from the 1990s

In the context of the second wave of education reforms in the Latin America, in the 1990s, the social policies in general, and the education in particular, were directed to: a) produce human capital of better quality; b) provide a more equitable distribution of opportunities; c) focus and compensate the more undermined social groups; d) operationalize the restructuring of the economic policy by means of the decentralization of financial process and of the incorporation of public-private partnerships in the management (Coraggio, 2007).

According to Peroni and Adrião (2008) these principles guided part of the educational policies of the period, which promoted the partnerships of the State with the third sector in the field of the educational policies, which enabled student flow correction programs developed via public-private partnerships in the scope of the basic education managed by states and municipalities to receive financial support from the Union for its local implementation. An overview of such mechanisms initially developed in the four initial grades of the public elementary school, for state and municipality education systems, was presented by Parente and Lück (2007). According to the authors, it was only from the year of 1997 that, through the Program referred as Learning Acceleration, the student flow correction actions or policies started to be spread in country level by the Ministry of Education (MEC) itself. The development of the Program was generally performed with the technical and financial support of the World Bank Group (GBM), through agreements established between MEC, non-governmental organizations, and the voluntary affiliation of school systems.

In the funding scope, MEC opened a line to provide financial support to the Program, via auxiliary action, within the Annual Work Plans (AWPs) of the National Fund for Educational Development (FNDE). The on-lending of financial resources to school systems that have voluntarily adhered to the Program was intended to the qualification teachers, reproduction, and distribution of the standardized teaching material devised by the private agent owner of the project. The first years of the Learning Acceleration Program were characterized by the increasing adherence of states and municipalities, and by the almost exclusive setting of the Ayrton Senna Institute as the main agent of the public-private partnership in national scope.

Parente and Lück (2004) have found that between 1999 and 2000 MEC recommended 1174 projects to the municipal and state departments of education, assisted 537367 students and qualified 32894 teachers. The number of schools with acceleration classes went from 1993 to 8044 between the years of 1997 and 1999, corresponding to an increase of 300% of coverage of the policy. Regarding the policy assessment, Parente and Lück (2007, p.18), highlight that, in general, "neither the processes nor the results of the programs are assessed, considering that decisions are made regarding the continuity, discontinuity or alteration of programs, based on much more isolated observations and opinions than global information objectively collected and properly analyzed and interpreted". According to the authors, without such practice, it is not possible to improve the work or recognize whether what has been done in the educational plan produces results compatible with the expenditure made (Parente & Lück, 2007).

Additionally, the analyses about the elaboration and implementation of the student flow correction projects, presented by Parente and Lück (2004, 2007) show that the objectives of the projects (to correct the age-grade discrepancy of students and the educational flow) might not be fully obtained. The technicians of different management levels that performed it, in practice, possibly were not always able to maximize the combination of political intent and administrative

action, making it clear, in Ball's perspective, as highlighted by Mainardes (2006), the inequalities between the text and practice arenas of politics.

In the new management of MEC, from 2003, it's worth noting the influence of the Development Plan for Education (PDE) and of the "Committed Goals of All for Education Plan" (Decree 6094, April 24, 2007) on the educational policy of the last decade, particularly on the implementation of student flow correction policies, articulated in view of the education quality whose structural components are the assessment and the accountability systems of the local managers.

In this context, MEC presented to the Brazilian society the Development Plan for Education (PDE) in 2007, as a strategic tool which composes the three axes of Government action: economic growth, social inclusion, and reduction of regional inequalities (Brasil, 2007, p. 5).

It is important to highlight the strategic importance in this process of the alliance between PDE (Development Plan for Education) and "Committed Goals of All for Education Plan" (Decree 6094, April 24, 2007). This is because the Goals Plan acted as an instrument of agreed accountability and collaboration between the Union, the states, and the municipalities, conditioning technical support and voluntary transfers from MEC to adherence to the PDE and commitment to the 28 guidelines established in the Decree, objectively referred in IDEB (Basic Education Development Index).

The integration of IDEB[6] to Goals Plan, as the educational quality index comprising flow and performance, strengthen the thesis that in Brazil, it demands the articulation between efficiency and equity in order to improve the education quality. Thus, the age-grade distortion is now recognized as an issue to be measured in the national scope *pari passu* with the school results of students. It is worth highlighting that one of the objectives of IDEB is to inform about the educational flow and the efficiency rates, in order to increase the approval rates, reduce the failure and the evasion.

In line with Goals Plan, MEC established the Plan of Articulated Actions (PAR), a proposal of multidimensional, strategic planning intended to states and municipalities focusing in the improvement of educational markers. In the scope of the constitutive planning of PAR, the student flow correction is inserted in the "Pedagogical practices and learning assessment" dimension. According to the result of the diagnostic assessment of such dimension, performed by the state or municipality, MEC recommends the technical and/or financial support via the registration of an action related to the student flow correction, offered by social organizations, Civil Society Organization of Public Interest (OSCIP), public or private institutions and/or companies, that was assessed by Basic Education Department – SEB/MEC, and deemed pre-qualified in the scope of the Educational Technologies Pre-Qualification Public Notice that Promote Basic Education Quality (Brasil, 2008, p. 33). The next section presents the contributions of the Sociology of Education that guide the analysis of the educational trajectories.

Contributions of the Sociology of Education to the Study of the Educational Trajectories

According to Nogueira and Fortes (2004, pp.59-60) educational trajectories are "different trajectories that individuals or groups of individuals perform within the education systems". For the authors, these trajectories may be more or less successful, both in absolute and relative terms. In

[6] The Basic Education Development Index was created in 2007, in the scope of the Goals Plan and of PDE, intended to measure the quality of the basic education and establish goals for the improvement of the efficiency (flow) and performance.

absolute terms, the success of the routes is related to the distance traveled by students in order to reach certain point of the system in a certain period of time (in the case of the herein research the period taken in account was 2010-2014), as well as to the speed used to reach this point and the degree of social prestige of the point reached. In relative terms, the authors assert that the issue is more complex. It is necessary to establish the individual educational trajectories in relation to the statistical probability of these trajectories, taking in account the social origins of students.

In fact, dedicated studies of the Sociology of Education, tributaries of the *surveys* of the 1960s, such as the Coleman Report (1966) and the works of Pierre Bourdieu (1998), restate that the social origin has strong influence on the performance of students and the school destinations. Even though the weight of the social origin is stated, it was identified in previous researches factors related to schooling process, education systems, educational policies that explain part of the academic results, and may decrease or reinforce the differences between the social groups, thus affecting the educational trajectories and its outcomes (Brooke & Soares, 2008; Crahay, 2009; Dubet, 2008;).

National studies converge into conclusions that in addition to the family background familiar, and the intra school factors sociodemographic aspects such as color/race, gender, region of the country and place of residence are constituted as factors that influence the educational trajectory, and seem to largely guide the social destination of a considerable number of children and youth of the country (Alves et al 2007; Louzano, 2013; Oliveira & Soares, 2012; Ribeiro, 2011).

For Dubet (2008) the educational trajectories result from a hierarchy interwoven process arising both from the education arbitrage and the context, and of the social origin of the student. According to the author, the republican school could not counteract the effects of the social inequalities over the education inequalities. In this regard, the advances obtained in terms of distribution of educational opportunities are not reducing the origin inequalities and are allowing equitable trajectories. The initial differences tend to be highlighted during the educational trajectories by factors associated to the educational policies, education systems, schools, and to cultural inequalities between students.

Analyzing data from PISA 2009, Crahay and Baye (2013) noted the effects of policies of different education systems on the reduction or the amplification of the weight of the social origin over the success in school and over learning. The authors emphasize that the grade retention on a large scale is notably constituted as a factor that distinguishes the education systems in relation to the school failure and the stigmatization of students who showed a farther social origin from the school culture. They conclude still that "in the level of the education systems it is possible to jointly aim the efficiency and a reduction of the social inequalities of success" (Crahay & Baye, 2013, p. 879), supporting the hypothesis of an important correlation between the educational trajectories and the capacity of education systems to implement policies that reduce the education inequalities and improve learning, in way as to provide an equal and effective education.

In the Brazilian context, the Brazilian Plan for Education (PNE 2014-2024) established as a goal for 2016, the universalistic of access to high school to a population of 15 to 17 years, and the amplification of the net rate of enrollment to 85% until the end of its validity. Among these strategies instituted for the compliance of the goal, the PNE established the maintenance and amplification of "student flow correction programs and actions of elementary school, through of the individual monitoring of the student with outdated school efficiency [...] in order to reposition them in the school cycle in a way compatible with their age" (Brasil, 2014). It is worth noting that between 2009 and 2016 the net rate of enrollment in high school presented an increase of 16 percentage points. This impulse in the enrollments rate regarding previous periods might be related both to the inducing role of FUNDEB, and to the promotion of student flow correction projects and others policies that may have contributed to accelerate the compliance of the legal precept of the

universalization of the access, although the distance from the goal set by PNE, and of the realization of the full right to education.

In this regard, Esteves (2018, p. 28) notes that, based on data from 2001 to 2015 from Pnad/IBGE, if on one side the rate of access to high school was marked until 2015 by slowness in entry and accommodation, especially of the population belonging to the poorest quartile of the Brazilian population and to the most vulnerable regions of the country, on the other side, it was incorporated during the period a "huge contingent of young people comprised the percentage of the poorest 25% of Brazilians, of Black race/color and living in rural areas, among others" . The opening of the system to a portion of the historically excluded youth from high school points to the composition of a more heterogeneous and plural audience, in addition to the reduction, albeit slow, of the deficit in democratizing access to this section of the population. On the other side, according to Krawczyk, (2011, p.756) the conditions for staying in high school face obstacles for those who place expectations on it for the project of future life. Such obstacles, according to the author, are mainly related to "the training and remuneration of teachers, the conditions of infrastructure and school management, public investments made, among others". According to Bodião (2018), the supply conditions (facilities, equipment, etc.), in addition to teacher training, incompatible with the area of activity, are some of the problems that have not yet been solved, and that compromise the reduction of the neck in high school with a quality standard. According to the author, criticisms of the structural duality of this teaching stage, low markers of proficiency and approval contributed to the sanction of the High School Reform and the consequent enactment of the Law no. 13,415/2017. The Reform instituted among other changes the flexibility of the curriculum through the provision of training routes, the expansion of the school day academic load, agreements with private educational institutions to promote distance learning, and the inclusion of professionals with notorious knowledge to perform the technical and professional training of students.

The considerations made by Bodião (2018) raised contradictions between some propositions of the Law and the technical and financial conditions of the school systems. In this regard, the *Policy to Promote the Implementation of Full-Time High Schools,* advocated in the Reform, as well as the offer of different training routes, tend to be implemented (if so) in a scenario of deep inequalities between federated entities, but, above all, between public and private school systems, contributing to the redesign of a dual high school.

In next section it will be briefly described the public school system of the city of Rio de Janeiro which sets the field of research, the context which favors the implementation of the student flow correction policies, as well as its characterization.

The Research Field, the Context and the Characterization of Policy

The field of this research is the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro, which serves from the early childhood education (6 months to 5 years) to elementary school (first-ninth grade), and to Youth and Adults Education (EJA). According to information in its official web page, the Municipal Department of Education of Rio de Janeiro (SME) in 2015 had 654,454 students enrolled in 1,003 regular schools of elementary school, 247 public daycares, 213 Areas for Child Education (EDIs), and 162 partner daycares.

According to Santos (2014), from 2009, the management model that started to guide the structuring and functioning of the municipal public school system highlighted the partnerships and agreements with social entities and organizations under private law for the implementation of policies, projects, programs, and actions, presented as solutions for the educational problems of the school system. The elaboration of the educational agenda of the municipal management initiated in 2009 sought to develop a diagnostic assessment of the school system and in parallel focused the

assessment of results articulated to an accountability policy, as shows Paes de Carvalho, Oliveira and Lima (2014). In this context, the Municipal Department of Education promoted a diagnostic assessment in partnership with the Ayrton Senna Institute – whose technical knowledge of "solutions for the educational problems", of planning, monitoring and assessment of school systems had the endorsement of MEC - to measure the difficulties of learning and the levels of literacy of students in order to assist policies capable of promoting the improvement of the educational markers of the school system. According to the diagnostic assessment applied in 2009, 13.6% of the students from the fourth to sixth grade of the elementary school were characterized as functional illiterate, and 22% of the students of the sixth grade of the municipal schools system showed age-grade distortion. In line with this diagnosis, the Municipal Department of Education proposed the integration of student flow correction projects into the "School Reinforcement Program" release in the beginning of 2009, via partnerships with the Ayrton Senna Institute (IAS) and the Fundação Roberto Marinho (FRM)[7]. It is important to clarify that the parameters used by Municipal Department of Education for the disclosure of the rate of age-grade distortion in the 6th grade of elementary school that guide the design of the policy do not correspond to the official data published by MEC/INEP regarding such school year in 2009, as will be verified below.

In the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro, the incorporation of the FRM technologies to the "School Reinforcement Program" intended to enable the extension of the student flow correction to the final grades of the elementary school through the promotion of learning acceleration to students from the sixth to ninth grade of elementary school with age-grade distortion of two or more years. On the other side, the technologies of Ayrton Senna Institute focused on literacy and correcting the age-grade distortion of students enrolled in the early grades. It is worth noting the encouragement to the termination of the elementary school of students enrolled in the sixth grade that showed age-grade distortion: for these students the policy envisages the conclusion of the last four grades of the elementary school in 2 years, through the enrollment in student flow correction projects in sequential school years. It is highlighted that, according to data of the MEC/INEP, in 2009, in the year of the implementation of policy, 39.9% of the students of the sixth grade showed age-grade distortion in the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro. In 2010 this percentage reached 40.6% of the students enrolled in such school year, showing that the "grade retention culture" (Costa Ribeiro, 1991) strongly acted upon the flow and the educational trajectories.

Regarding to this, we can raise the hypothesis that, in addition to the policy being guided by the principles of equity, in order to establish the correction of the age-grade distortion, reduce retention, and promote the learning of students who are behind in school, their objectives were also aligned with the interests of optimizing public resources in terms of regularizing the school flow, indicated by the emphasis on the termination of elementary school in two years and the consequent transition to high school.

Regarding the educational technologies developed by IAS and FRM, intended to learning acceleration, we record the criticisms of a set of researches that highlight the standardized nature, and the intervention in educational and school management, as well as in the autonomy of teaching work, in addition to weakening of democratic management, achieved in the country's democratization process (Chaves, 2012; Pereira, 2011; Peroni, 2012; Peroni et al., 2009).

From the point of view of the director of IAS (2000, p. 146), the nature of the program is intentional, based on the adoption of monitoring and controlling mechanisms of a presumed quality standard, in order to eliminate retention in schools. According to her opinion, "these materials are

[7] These institutions offered educational technologies intended to the literacy and learning acceleration of students who showed age-grade distortion and delay in learning, endorsed by MEC (Brasil, 2009).

strongly structured in order to ensure that even an inexperienced teacher or with insufficient preparation – as is the case with many teachers in Brazil – is able to provide the student with a quality program". In addition to standardized booklets, the Institute is responsible for "training" and regular supervision of teachers, in addition to mastering the student assessment. According to the Ayrton Senna Institute's website, the technologies and materials corresponding to the correction of age-grade distortion are intended for audiences other than the initial grades of elementary school. In this perspective, the "Se Liga" and "Acelera Brasil" projects have the objectives of literacy or accelerate the learning process, respectively, so that the student recovers school discrepancy time.

In the next section we will present the data used, and the methodological procedures of the present study.

Data and Methodological Procedures

The information used in there herein study arise from three sources of data: 1) the enrollments bases of the 2010 to 2014 School Census; 2) the bases of classes of the School Census of the same period; 3) the enrollments base of SME, member of the Academic Control System (SCA) of the year of 2010[8], collated to the official documents regarding the policy that explained the guide lines for its implementation at schools (Rio De Janeiro, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2011).

The enrollments and classes bases of the School Census provide data concerning the profiles of students (gender, race/color). In order to capture the grade retention of students it was used a variable pertinent to the stage and the grade of school in which the student was enrolled in, pursuant to the enrollments base of the School Census. In the analysis of trajectories, the bases of classes of the School Census made it possible to identify the classes of student flow correction projects organized by SME-RJ between 2010 and 2014 and to link students' enrollments to projects based on the names/numbers of classes compared to the guidelines (Ordinances and Resolutions of SME-RJ) of enrollments each year. The educational delay was verified through the discrepancy levels of students by the discrepancy variable created for each schooling year of elementary school (first-ninth grade) in the enrollment bases from 2010 to 2014.[9] For the study of trajectories, each discrepancy variable was categorized into three levels: no discrepancy, 1 year of discrepancy, 2 years or more of discrepancy.

We consider the year 2010 as the beginning of the students' trajectory, since we could capture enrollments in student flow correction from this school year in which the projects started to be implemented in the school system and registered in the class base of the School Census with specific codes. The year 2014 was set as the final situation of the outcome analyzed in the model, as it corresponded to the year of plausible outcome, in a situation of regular flow, for students enrolled in the fifth grade in 2010, that is, those entering the fifth grade in 2010, who had a regular trajectory without failing, would finish the ninth grade of elementary school in 2014.

Despite the wealth of data housed in the School Census bases, one of its limits is the lack of variables that may capture or estimate the socioeconomic levels (SEL) of students. In order to

[8] The enrollments base of SME of 2009 hosted data of the students enrolled in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade of elementary school. Considering that the analysis of the trajectories was initiated in the fifth grade, we used the data of the students who were approved in the fourth grade, and of the students failed in the fifth grade to the end of 2009, corresponding to the research population: students enrolled in the fifth grade in 2010. To compose the enrollments base of 2010 used in the present study, the enrollments of the sixth grade were dismissed.

[9] The reference date used was December 31, according to the criteria established by MEC-INEP for calculating the student's age.

circumvent this limit, we initially used the 2009 SME enrollment base as a third data source, considering the advantage it offers to obtain sociodemographic data from students (such as NIS[10], for example). Additionally, this base makes it possible to incorporate the student's Identification Code into the bases of the INEP School Census; a variable then used as a link between the three researches databases, enabling its aggregation into a single database in an aligned manner per student.

In the enrollment base of SME of 2009[11], we selected all students who were in the fourth or fifth grade in 2009 and who were enrolled in the fift grade in 2010, who then became the 2010 database, integrating the population[12] whose educational trajectories were investigated in the research. After the treatment of duplicates, we excluded from the base the enrollments that did not have the INEP code, checking in advance if the withdrawal would not affect the analysis, causing a biased loss of data[13]. The variables of the SME enrollment base with the INEP code were then migrated to the class and enrollment base of the School Census that would receive data for 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014[14].

For the study of trajectories, enrollments from the fifth grade in 2010 were selected, corresponding to students who passed from the fourth to the fifth grade (37,348) and those who failed in the fifth grade (3,128) from the 2009 enrollment base. Thus, the investigated population now has 40,476 enrollments corresponding to the total number of students enrolled in the fifth grade in the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro in 2010 that had an INEP code[15]. The analysis developed then focused initially on this group of students and their eventual insertion in the student flow correction policy of SME, registered through their enrollment in one or more student flow correction classes throughout the educational trajectory of the final four years of Elementary School (2011 to 2014)[16].

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[10] The NIS, Social Identification Number, has been used in national surveys as a proxy for poverty, as it is associated with the risk of social vulnerability, due to being related to the Single Registry for Social Programs of the Federal Government, whose beneficiaries are notably families that are in the poverty or extreme poverty range.

[11] Originally the database had 183,319 cases, referring to: 54,107 enrollments in the fourth grade, 54,275 enrollments in the 5th grade, and 74,937 enrollments in the sixth grade. However, we found that 47,280 (26%) of the cases did not have an Identification Code of INEP and that there was a high incidence of duplication.

[12] Since this is a study that investigates the population, randomization would not be enough to verify selection bias.

[13] We compared the sociodemographic characteristics of the two groups of students, in order to observe the equivalence of students with and without INEP code from the fourth and fifth grade, who were part of the enrollment base in 2009, considering that these students would be eligible for the fifth grade in 2010. Since the withdrawal would not prejudice the analysis, the enrollments that did not have the INEP code were dismissed.

[14] In this migration 15,030 cases were "lost", most likely due to the evasion of enrollments in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of schooling in the school years of 2010 to 2014. The cases related to enrollments of the fifth grade in 2010 (which had initially been "lost" between 2010 and 2014) were integrated into the base, thus constituting the group of 4,224 students characterized by the "out of the system" outcome. It is important to note that these cases are not restricted to evasion, but also relate to the students' moving to other states of the Federation and deaths, among other situations whose details cannot be captured by the research.

[15] Duplicate cases and/or cases that did not have INEP code were removed, as already explained.

[16] Such classes were recognized in the school system as "project classes", a name that simultaneously expressed a link to IAS and FRM in the elaboration, and a mark referring to partnerships in the policy implementation process.

In order to establish a relationship between the population and the research profile presented here (school outcome in high school), we initially registered the two sets of students in the population, classified as follows: 1) students who were not enrolled in a student flow correction class and therefore enrolled only in regular classes in 2011, 2012, and 2013[17]; 2) students who were enrolled in student flow correction classes in any of these years of the analyzed period. The following table presents the sociodemographic data that characterize these students.

Table 1

Sociodemographic characteristics of students in 5th grade in 2010, whether having attended student flow correction classes or not between 2011, and 2013

Enrollments in 2011, 2012, and 2013 →		**Enrolled in regular classes**		**Enrolled in student flow correction classes**	
Sociodemographic Characteristics ↓		***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
Gender	Male	16,224	47.2	3,555	58.0
	Female	18,126	52.8	2,571	42.0
Color/Race[18]	White	12,503	36.4	1,830	29.9
	Not white	19,982	58.2	3,918	63.9
	Undeclared	1,865	5.4	378	6.2
Mother's Education	Illiterate	493	1.4	155	2.5
	Incomplete Elementary school	9,280	27.0	2,194	35.8
	Complete Elementary school	13,017	37.9	2,212	36.1
	Middle school and Higher	7,366	21.4	671	10.9
	No Information	4,194	12.3	894	14.7
Father's Education	Illiterate	517	1.5	140	2.3
	Incomplete Elementary school	7,713	22.5	1,568	25.6
	Complete Elementary school	11,185	32.6	1,796	29.3
	Middle school and Higher	6,455	18.8	608	9.9
	No Information	8,480	24.6	2,014	32.9
Vulnerability Marker (NIS)	No	19,109	55.6	3,066	50.0
	Yes	15,241	44.4	3,060	50.0
Total		**34,350**	**100**	**6,126**	**100**

Source: Enrollments base of 2010 SME and School Census. Elaborated by the authors.

[17] From this point of the research, we started to guide the study of trajectories considering the year 2011 as the first year of transition of schooling years. In this regard, the year of 2010, used as the beginning of the trajectory of all students, in view of the enrollments in the fifth grade, will no longer be used in the analysis.

[18] Regarding the race/color, we adopted in this work the grouping between whites and non-whites (Indigenous, Brown, Yellow, and Black) that will be hereinafter observed in the analyses. In other segments of the text, the percentages of the undeclared were dismissed, which remained on average in the range of 6%.

The data in Table 1 indicate that, regarding the gender, although the male gender prevails (58%) in the group of students enrolled in student flow correction, the female sex predominates (52.8%) among those who attended only regular classes. Regarding race/color, students enrolled in student flow correction are predominantly non-white (63.9%), and the disparity between whites (29.9%) and non-whites is quite notable. In contrast, in the group of students who remained only in regular classes throughout the period analyzed, the percentage of non-whites (58.1%) is lower, and the difference between whites (36.4%) and non-whites is less prominent.

Regarding the education of mothers, both between students enrolled in student flow correction, and between those who were not enrolled, in percentage terms prevailed the mothers who have completed Elementary school[19]. In contrast, the mothers of students who did not go to project classes are more educated: 21.4% of them completed middle school or third-level, while only 10.9% of the mothers of students enrolled in student flow correction participated in it. The data seem to confirm the conclusions of several studies (Alves & Soares, 2009; Nogueira, 2005; Riani & Rios-Neto, 2008) that have shown the relation between the education of parents and the school success of students. Such studies emphasize that the cultural capital transmitted by families and the education of parents (especially mothers) favor the longer trajectories of students. In the case of the studied population, the higher education level of the families of students who never enrolled in student flow correction classes confirms the knowledge accumulated in the literature of the area.

One way to capture social vulnerability of students is through information that indicates whether the student has NIS. Among students enrolled in student flow correction projects, 50% of these students had NIS while 44% of those who were not enrolled in student flow correction did not have NIS. Referred studies in the field (Carvalho, 2004; Ferraro, 2007; Louzano, 2013; Osório & Soares, 2005; among others) have reaffirmed that non-white, male students, with lower socioeconomic levels, whose mothers are poorly educated, tend to have less long-lived and more rough trajectories. The evidence from these surveys shows that Black boys, for example, tend to have a higher chance of grade retention and school delay. In the present study, as shown in Table 1, this scenario corresponds to students enrolled in student flow correction projects.

In this regard, it is worth highlighting the research carried out by Xavier and Alves (2014) that estimated the relationship between the composition of students in schools and the performance levels. The evidences indicated that the composition by race/color explains more strongly the performance than the socioeconomic level of the school. According to the authors, a plausible explanation is the low expectations regarding the success of these students in the school context, which would cause a tendency of academic leveling down. This phenomenon reflects not only that sociodemographic differences are directly related to social inequalities, but also that these differences account in large part for the school divides between the social groups that enter school.

It is worth mentioning that during the analysis of data from the School Census in the present research it was possible to observe the maintenance of notable differences between the percentages of age-grade distortion of white and non-white students enrolled in student flow correction. Regarding the two sets of students (enrolled in regular classes and in student flow correction classes), a significant difference between these is the age-grade distortion noted in the beginning of the educational trajectory in 2010. According to data of the School Census, among the students not enrolled in student flow correction 1.6% showed more than 2 years of discrepancy. In the set of students enrolled in student flow correction this percentage reached 26.9% of the students, but

[19] Although, according to Law 9394/1996, the nomenclature has been changed, and the Elementary school (combination of the old primary course and junior high school of nine years duration) currently corresponds to the elementary school, while the Middle school corresponds to high school, we kept the names used in enrollment base of SME.

35.9% did not show age-grade distortion. Considering that the policy focused exactly on students with school delay, this unexpected result seems to show that other factors other than age-grade distortion explain the referral to student flow correction or project classes. The hypothesis that is raised is that school agents have different expectations in relation to these groups, and based on them interpreted and intervened distinctively in the policy implementation processes. However, since this is a research that sought to investigate the possible effects of politics on the trajectories of students, we did not focus on this analysis.

In the following table it is noted the distribution of the enrollments per school outcome in 2014, according to the sets of students (enrolled only in regular classes and enrolled in classes of student flow correction projects).

Table 2

Distribution of the enrollments of students who attended the 5th grade in 2010 as per the school outcomes in 2014, whether or not they were enrolled student flow correction classes between 2011 and 2013

Enrollments in 2011, 2012, and 2013 →	**Enrollments in regular classes**		**Enrolled in classes of student flow correction projects**	
School Outcome in 2014 ↓	***No.***	***%***	***No.***	***%***
High school	23	0.1	1,664	27.2
Class of Student Flow Correction Project	728	2.1	1,611	26.3
Out of the System	2,631	7.7	1,337	21.8
5th or 6th or 7th or 8th grade of the elementary school	5,402	15.7	967	15.8
In high school in 2013 and out of the system in 2014	0	0	256	4.2
EJA - Elementary school	284	0.8	198	3.2
9th grade	25,282	73.6	93	1.5
Total	**34,350**	**100**	**6,126**	**100**

Source: Enrollments base of 2009 SME and 2010 to 2014 School Census. Elaborated by the authors.

As shown in Table 2, with regard to the distribution of enrollments among students in regular classes, the highest percentage is concentrated in the outcome corresponding to the ninth grade of elementary school, with 73.6% of students. It is presumed that the educational trajectory of these students was stable, without failing, considering that in a regular flow the expectation for these students was the arrival to the ninth grade in 2014.

In the set of students enrolled in student flow correction classes, the percentage of students not in the system in 2014 stands out, which is equivalent to 21.8% of this group. However, it is worth noting that this subgroup involves several situations: in addition to the evaded students, students who supposedly may have died or moved to another state in the Federation. The data from the School Census used did not allow clarifying such distinctions, since they registered enrollments per unit of the Federation only.

Another aspect that deserves discussion is the similarity between the percentages of students whose outcomes in 2014 correspond to the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade of elementary school in both groups of students. Regardless of students having attended student flow correction classes or not, this outcome, which corresponds to repetition, shows for both groups percentages close to 15%.

Regarding the high school outcome, the focus of the present work, since the students in the subgroup that achieved this outcome in 2014 were older than those who did not attend student flow correction in 2010, we consider that the resource of learning acceleration in this policy would have favored this outcome by correcting the trajectory and its school flow. Thus, the high school outcome for students of student flow correction projects would express the success of the intervention that would have helped them to finish elementary school in a shorter period of time, enabling the extension of schooling with the consequent enrollment in high school. In this sense, this outcome would be a measure of success in the student flow correction policy implemented between 2010 and 2014.

However, it cannot be guaranteed that the transposition of the barrier from the final grades of elementary school to high school alone will guarantee learning or educational success, the permanence in the education system and the prolonged progress in the education system. Studies have pointed to high repetition, dropout and evasion rates, as well as low proficiency in this educational stage (Lima & Gomes, 2013; Silva et al., 2016). In the next session, we will analyze the trajectories of students enrolled in student flow correction projects that achieved this outcome in order to discuss some effects of the policy implemented in the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro between 2010 and 2014 on these students.

Finally, it is worth highlighting the limits of the methodology used in this study, in particular those related to the distance of this research from an almost experimental design[20]. For this reason, we did not intend to globally capture the impact of student flow correction projects on trajectories of students, but rather we seek to establish the possible relationships between policy management in the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro, and the trajectories of students enrolled in the fifth grade of elementary school in 2010 who have reached high school in 2014. In this sense, the choice of studying educational trajectories is based on the potential that this approach can offer to explain the relationship between a given education system, the management of a policy and its possible effects.

Outcome of the Trajectory in High School: Discussions and Results

For students enrolled in student flow correction between 2010 and 2014, the outcome of the trajectory in high school was predictable, considering the relationship between the age-grade distortion rates of these students, and the perspective of learning acceleration, inherent to the student flow correction projects, and the policy that articulated them in the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro. However, this outcome seems to result not only from the adequacy of the student's age to the expected teaching stage, but also from the promotion of the termination of elementary education through an intensified acceleration process, which also seems to underlie the administrative objectives of the policy.

[20] The quasi-experimental research designs involve research designs analogous to experimental designs that seek to establish a causal relationship, with the potential to evaluate certain policies, programs or social interventions. However, they fail to comply with some basic assumptions of experimental research designs such as: randomization in the allocation of control and experimental groups. Yet, even without the guarantee of the maximum equivalence between the two groups through randomization in the quasi-experimental models, the maximum similarity between the control and experimental groups is sought, so that the two groups can be compared (CANO, I. 2006, p. 69). In the case of the present study, since we analyzed the trajectories of an entire cohort of students, and because it is not an experimental or quasi-experimental research design, there was no requirement for randomization.

In the following chart we present the characteristics of students enrolled in regular classes and of students enrolled in classes of student flow correction projects/learning acceleration between 2011 and 2013 that were enrolled in high school in 2014, according to data of the School Census.

Chart 1

Characteristics of students who achieved the outcome in high school in 2014, enrolled only in regular classes and enrolled in classes of student flow correction projects in the previous three years (2011 to 2013)

Characteristics			**Trajectories with outcome in high school in 2014**	
			Students enrolled in classes of projects between 2011 and 2013	**Students enrolled only in regular classes between 2011 and 2013**
			% of the total (1,664)	**% of the total (23)**
Gender	Male	%	57.4	43.8
	Female		42.6	56.2
Race/ color	White	%	28.1	31.8
	Not white		64.5	63.1
Mother's Education	Illiterate	%	2.8	4.3
	Incomplete Elementary school		36.1	30.4
	Complete Elementary school		35.2	34.8
	Middle school and Higher		10	17.4
	No record of information		15.8	13.1
NIS	Have NIS	%	49.2	40.9
Age-grade distortion	Age-grade distortion of 2 or more years in 2010	%	40.1	73.3

Source: Enrollments base of 2010 SME and 2010 to 2014 School Census. Elaborated by the authors.
Note: Regarding race/color, the data referring to the "undeclared" category was dismissed.

An initial contrast to be noted in Chart 1 is the reduced number of students (23) who were not enrolled in student flow correction classes and who reached high school in 2014, which, as already noted, would correspond to what was expected. Although many (73.3%) have age-grade distortion, these students did not participate in the student flow correction policy. Although aware that the small number of students in the second group contrasts with the group of students, these were kept in the analysis to make it possible to compare their characteristics with those of students enrolled in classes of student flow correction projects that achieved the same outcome in 2014.

Considering that students enrolled in the fifth grade in 2010 would only reach high school in 2014 through learning acceleration, it is plausible to assume that these students reached this outcome through some other acceleration-inducing mechanism, not corresponding to the correction of the flow classes of the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro in the period from 2011 to 2013. Based on information from the School Census, we can say that the mechanism that would apparently explain these trajectories was the movement of these enrollments of students among the EJA, and the regular classes of elementary school. In this sense, EJA could be characterized as the trajectory used to reorganize the school flow, maintaining these students in the education system, granting them with the elementary school termination more quickly, and enabling their enrollment in high school in 2014.

The two sets of students who reached high school in 2014 (those who were enrolled in student flow correction projects, and those who were not and had only attended regular classes) had high percentages of grade distortion in 2010, at the beginning of the trajectory: 73.3% and 40%. Chart 1 shows that students enrolled in student flow correction projects are more vulnerable, given that the percentage of NIS is higher among them. Further, it prevails in this set male students and the mothers who are less educated, in opposition to students who were not in classes of student flow correction projects.

For the analysis of the educational trajectories, we considered the transitions between the school years according to the School Census (2011 to 2013) of 1,664 students who were enrolled in student flow correction classes during such period of time. In Chart 2 presented below, the transitions are expressed in the lines and correspond to the school year/stage/modality attended by the student in the school years, noting that in any situation the school outcome in 2014 corresponds to enrollment in high school.

Chart 2

Educational trajectory of 1,664 students who were enrolled in the 5th grade in 2010, enrolled in classes of student flow correction projects between 2011 and 2013, and reached to high school in 2014

Transition between school years		Subtotal	
Year	**Education**	**No.**	**%**
2011	5th grade	160	9.5
	6th grade	1,504	90.5
2012	6th grade	1,361	81.7
	7th grade	284	17
	8th and 9th grade	18	1.1
	EJA	1	0.2
2013	8th grade	579	34.9
	7th or 9th grade	8	0.5
	EJA	5	0.4
	High school	1,072	64.2

Source: 2010 SCA and 2010 to 2014 School Census database. Elaborated by the authors.

In Chart 2 the school years are presented in the first column, and in the second column the schooling years, stage or modality of education in which the students were enrolled in each year. The distribution of 1,664 enrollments corresponds to fraction of the total of 40,476 students enrolled in the fifth grade in the municipal school system of Rio de Janeiro in 2010 that had an INEP code, and were in high school at the end of the trajectory in 2014. The distribution of enrollments in the different schooling years of this subgroup of students who were enrolled between 2011 and 2013 in

student flow correction classes, and reached high school in 2014 is shown in the table lines, and reveals the school transitions between school years from 2011 to 2013 in which these students attended to one or more student flow correction classes, but also remained formally enrolled in classes in the regular school system, as recorded by the School Census. The data suggest heterogeneous and irregular school transitions, showing that for these students' high school was achieved in a rather tortuous way. It is noteworthy that in 2012, 81.7% of the total students who reached high school in 2014 were retained students in the sixth grade. The trajectory suggests that in the case of these sixth grade students, the student flow correction policy probably focused primarily on acceleration with the purpose of elementary school termination. From this point of view, the policy seems to have favored, at first, this group of students, by reducing the age-grade distortion, and access to high school since 2013, when 64.2% of them (or 1,072 of 1,664) reached this stage of basic education.

Considering this accentuated aspect of learning acceleration, barely visible in the initial formulation of the policy, it seemed important to verify whether this outcome provided a favorable educational trajectory for the schooling process of students who reached the first grade of high school in 2013.

In this sense, Table 3 exposes data related to the outcomes of students who were in high school in 2014, considering the schooling year, the modality and the stage of education attended in 2013 according to data from the School Census.

Table 3

School status of the 1,664 students who were enrolled in student flow correction between 2011 and 2013, and whose educational trajectories are characterized by the enrollment in high school in the year of 2014

Year/Grade in which the student was in 2013	**Stage/Grade attended by the student in 2014**				**Total**
	High school - 1st grade	**High school - 2nd grade**	**Non-serial High school**	**In-person EJA High school**	
Elementary school of 9 years - 7th grade, 8th grade or 9th grade	583	1	2	1	587
	35.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	35.3%
High school - 1st grade	**634**	421	4	3	1,062
	38.1%	25.3%	0.3%	0.2%	63.7%
High school - 2nd grade	0	1	0	0	1
	0%	0.1%	0%	0%	0.1
High school - non-serial	1	0	8	0	9
	0.1%	0%	0.4%	0%	0.5
In-person EJA - final years	4	0	1	0	5
	0.3%	0%	0.1%	0%	0.4
Total	**1,222**	**423**	**15**	**04**	**1,664**
	73.3%	**25.5%**	**0.9%**	**0.3%**	**100%**

Source: 2010 SCA and 2010 to 2014 School Census database. Elaborated by the authors.

Table 3 shows the distribution of the enrollment situations of the subgroup of students enrolled in the fifth grade of elementary school in 2010 that were enrolled in student flow

correction classes between 2011 and 2013[21], and were enrolled in high school in 2014, set as end year of the analysis of the trajectories in this study. In the analysis, the stages, years of schooling and teaching modalities attended in 2013 were considered in order to note the transitions, as shown in the first column of the table. The last column shows the total of students enrolled in high school in 2014. The data is presented in absolute and percentage values.

In this table, we are particularly interested in analyzing the data relating to students, who reached the first grade of high school in 2013, corresponding to the second line of the table, therefore, supposedly subjected to a continuous process of acceleration during the final years of elementary school.

We highlight that, among the 1,062 students who were in the first grade of high school in 2013, 634 students, that is, 59.7% of this total, failed the following year. Although it is not possible to make assumptions about the condition of these students in terms of learning for entry into high school due to the lack of performance data, this percentage points to the questioning of the educational advantages that the acceleration of schooling expressed in the inclusion of these students in this educational stage basic education already in 2013 would have caused.

It is worth mentioning that, despite the context of implementing external assessments and accountability that converge with a public management model related to the second generation of "New Public Management", students enrolled in the classes of student flow correction projects were assessed only by partner entities in the policy implementation. Thus, it was not possible to find a connection between student performance data and external assessments, or those developed in the school system.

At the beginning of the studied educational trajectories, a number of factors, including not learning in due time and consequent failure in many cases, led these students to a high percentage of age-grade distortion. In this sense, entry into high school would be the most promising trajectory outcome, in accordance with the acceleration of learning proposed, and the expectation to guarantee the permanence in the education system in stage and years of schooling as close as possible to the expected for the ages at the end of the analyzed period in 2014.

As shown in Chart 1 of the previous section, 57.4% of the students in this outcome are male and 40.1% had age-grade distortion in 2010. Lima and Gomes (2013) using a longitudinal research through Census micro data found that the unfavorable effects of age-grade distortion can lead to dropout, especially among young men enrolled in public schools. On the other side, the rate of grade retention of these students in 1st grade of high school, as shown in the transition from 2013 to 2014, indicates that the access to this educational stage of might not be translated into a well-established schooling process in terms of learning. Despite the advocate for the student flow correction policy, entering high school does not appear to have completely broken with the previous experience of school failure. It is worth underlining that in the absence of external assessment of the performance of these students at the end of elementary school, it is not possible to estimate the extent to which student flow correction projects contributed or not to this result, which seems to often lead to new grade retentions – as our data shows – or dropout, as noted by a wide range of studies on the effects of grade retention (Crahay, 2007; Correa, 2013; Oliveira & Soares, 2012).

In the last movement of this study, we verified the relationship between the characteristics related to gender and race/color of students who were enrolled in high school in 2014 (passed and failed in 2013), and who were enrolled in student flow correction projects.

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[21] We restate that the study on view, whereby it involved all students enrolled in the 5the grade of elementary school in 2010 and focused more especially on the trajectory of the group of students in this cohort that were enrolled in student flow correction classes between 2011 and 2013, it did not demand "randomization" since it was not a sample, but the entire population characterized.

According to previous studies, in relation to the gender variable, among students who failed in 2013, 36.7% are male. In the group of approved students, we found a balanced distribution between the percentages of male (20%) and female (20.2%) students. Regarding gender/color, the highest percentage of students who failed the first grade of high school are non-white students, representing 39.6% of all students enrolled in the first grade in 2013. Among the approved ones, the percentage of non-white corresponds to 25.1% of the total. In this sense, we can admit that retained students, in addition to being more vulnerable to grade retention (retention attracts retention, as Paes de Barros and Mendonça (1998) and Oliveira and Soares (2012) recall, there are also those who show a higher risk of less long-lived and more rough educational trajectories. That is, the school transitions for non-white male students tend to be more irregular and heterogeneous, showing that access to high school was achieved in a rather tortuous way.

Final Considerations

Transposing the barrier of the transition from the final years of elementary school to high school represents an obstacle for a high number of young Brazilians, especially for those whose social and cultural disadvantages of origin are not compensated by the education systems and schools (Silva, 2003) Black and brown boys are more prone to dropout and grade repetition, proving that the characteristics related to gender and race/color are also boundaries for the equal distribution of educational opportunities and consequent progress in the schooling process (Carvalho, 2004; Ferraro, 2007; Louzano, 2013).

In this scenario, as pointed out by Ribeiro (2011), the end of elementary education stands out for being the transition that most contributes to the inequality of educational results in Brazil, having considerable repercussions on the progression in the education system and on the school flow.

In this study we found that, in the case of the municipal school system in Rio de Janeiro, the possible influence of the policy on the trajectories of students does not converge with the principle of equity and economic fundamentals that justify the student flow correction policy adopted by the school system in the period of 2010-2014.

In this regard, it does not seem to be too much to recall that among the strategies established in the PNE for the compliance of goal 3, which sets the increase in the net enrollment rate in high school with the purpose of its universalization, the maintenance and expansion of student flow correction programs and actions of fundamental education stands out. Considering the uninterrupted and increasing implementation of actions and policies of this nature in Brazil, especially with the support of non-governmental organizations, it seems important to warn, in line with Martins (2017, p. 73), that "however, there is no systematic survey of experiences and there is no national program, supported by the Union, destined to this objective".

In the study presented, the analysis of the trajectories between 2010 and 2014 of students enrolled in the fifth grade of the municipal schools system of Rio de Janeiro in 2010 was the resource used to investigate the possible relations between the correction policy of age-grade distortion implemented in this public school system and as educational transitions that led to the outcome in high school. In this way, we seek to contribute to a better informed debate that articulates the transitions between elementary school and high school in basic education, and the interventions already carried out through a student flow correction policy implemented in a large municipal network. The results suggest that, although the policy has favored the transition from the final years of elementary school to high school –when students are essentially assisted by the state school system – by accelerating the termination of elementary school, the high rate of grade retention in the first grade indicates possible weaknesses in the schooling process. Supporting

studies that associate sociodemographic factors to school failure, the data reveal that non-white male students are the most affected by grade retention in high school even though they have been benefited from the politics.

It also seems important to reflect on the repercussion of standardized pedagogical work on teaching work and student learning. In this sense, aspects related to the establishment of structured didactic materials, the centralized assessment in the institutions that support the projects, the organization of homogeneous classes, and the adoption of generalist teachers who work in the final years of elementary education, deserve further studies, since such aspects integrate the postulates on which student flow correction projects are organized and widely implemented in public school systems in Brazil.

Within the limits of the generalizations that the present study can elicit, we believe that the approach, the methodology used, as well as the discussions presented, can contribute to instigate new research that analyzes the relations between educational policies, educational trajectories, and education inequalities within the education networks and systems.

Finally, the findings seem to reinforce the relevance of testing and assessing public policies so that it can be continued or corrected and have a positive impact on the lives of citizens.

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