


Funding and enrollment in Youth and Adult Education in Goiás: evolution or dismantling?

ARTICLE

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Abstract

In recent history, Brazil has experienced a period of dismantling and neglect of public social, science and education policies. In this context, Youth and Adult Education (EJA) may also have been impacted. The aim of this study is to evaluate the recent evolution of the value per student and the number of EJA enrollments in basic education and integrated technical education in the state of Goiás. The descriptive research was carried out using secondary data and evaluated the following variables related to the EJA: nominal and inflation-adjusted annual value per student; enrollment in basic education; enrollment in technical integrated to high school; and percentage of EJA enrollment in technical education. The results indicate that the value per student has remained close to inflation, although this does not necessarily imply an increase in investment. The decrease in enrollment in basic education and technical education integrated with secondary education is noticeable.

Keywords: Education Funding. Public Policies. Public Administration. Youth and Adult Education.

Financiamento e matrícula na Educação de Jovens e Adultos em Goiás: evolução ou desmonte?

Resumo

O Brasil tem vivenciado, na história recente, um período de desmonte e negligência das políticas públicas sociais, da ciência e da educação. Neste contexto, a Educação de Jovens e Adultos (EJA) também pode ter sido impactada. O objetivo deste estudo é avaliar a evolução recente do valor por educando e do número de matrículas da EJA no ensino básico e no ensino técnico integrado em Goiás. A pesquisa, de caráter descritivo, foi realizada por meio de coleta de dados secundários e avaliou as seguintes variáveis relacionadas à EJA: valor anual por educando nominal e ajustado pela inflação; matrículas no ensino básico; matrículas no técnico integrado ao Ensino Médio; e percentual de matrículas de EJA na educação profissional. Os resultados indicam que o valor por educando

se manteve próximo da inflação, todavia não implicando necessariamente em aumento no investimento. É sensível a diminuição de matrículas na educação básica e na educação técnica integrada ao Ensino Médio.

Palavras-chave: Financiamento da Educação. Políticas Públicas. Administração Pública. Educação de Jovens e Adultos.

1 Introduction

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Over the course of its existence, Youth and Adult Education (Educação de Jovens e Adultos – EJA) has gone through several ruptures, changes, debates and disputes in order to become an educational modality in Brazil. It can be said that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Federal Constitution of 1988 and Law No. 9.394/1996 – known as the Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação (Education Guidelines and Bases Law – LDB) – were important for the standardization and legal guarantee of the right to education for young people and adults, the actual implementation of which is still awaited (Silva; Silva; Santos, 2020).

The EJA is a modality of education aimed at people who have not completed basic education at the legally prescribed age. It is currently constitutionally guaranteed and aims to ensure that all people who did not have access to basic education at the legal age can access it. Based on the aforementioned, this research aims to analyze the value per student and the number of EJA enrollments in basic education and integrated technical education in the state of Goiás.

Initially, the manuscript explores the concept, emergence and purpose of the EJA, which, as a modality of education guaranteed by the Public Power, makes the State responsible for offering this education, including in this modality, and for guaranteeing people's access to and permanence in school. The next section presents the theoretical framework, which dialogues with the topic and the method used for the research; then there are the results and discussions that came out of this research and the final considerations.

Faced with a context of dismantling of social and educational public policies experienced by Brazilian education in recent history, with repeated cuts in the

resources allocated to education, the aim of this study is to analyze the recent evolution of the amount allocated per student and the number of EJA enrollments in basic education and integrated technical education in the state of Goiás. In order to meet the objectives of this study, a qualitative bibliographical study was carried out, collecting data to help understand the subject.

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2 Concept, emergence and historical aspects of Youth and Adult Education (EJA)

The LDB, established in 1996, defines Youth and Adult Education (EJA) as a modality of education that aims to provide schooling for people who have not had access to elementary or high school at the legally prescribed age, regardless of the reason.

With the advent of the Republic, a timid discussion began about the need to promote literacy among the adult Brazilian population, intensified by the requirement for voters to be able to read and write, which led to the reappearance of small night schools for adult education (Xavier, 2019).

In the 1920s and 1930s, influenced by the political and economic movements that were emerging in Brazil, adult education became a topic of discussion, but it was not seen as an autonomous issue of popular education, with distinct specificities (Xavier, 2019).

It is important to note that, historically, Youth and Adult Education in Brazil was born out of the union and commitment established between literacy and popular education. The former was conceived as a process of great length and depth, aimed at large contingents of the population, while at the same time helping these people to believe again in the possibility of changing and improving their lives by being able to read the world and, by reading it, transform it (Freire, 1976). Popular education was conceived as an instrument for the liberation of the subaltern classes, who were exploited and deprived of the minimum conditions for dignified and humane survival (Freitas, 2007).

In fact, the EJA emerged as a result of multiple factors, such as the high rate of illiterate people in the country, the urgent need to educate the working class to meet the

demands of the labor market and the political situation of the period, and therefore as a real possibility for the working class to access education (Cruz; Sales; Almeida, 2023).

Educators have been concerned about the education of working people since the Manifesto dos Pioneiros da Escola Nova (Manifesto of the Pioneers of the New School), but it was not until the Federal Constitution of 1934 that primary education was established as a duty of the Union, which was responsible for drawing up the guidelines for national education and offering “free comprehensive primary education with compulsory attendance, extended to adults”, as well as promoting the compulsory linking of resources from taxes earmarked for financing the education system (Brasil, 1932).

We can see the embryonic debut of the formation of the EJA triggered by the Campanha de Educação de Adolescentes e Adultos (Campaign for the Education of Adolescents and Adults – CEAA), in 1947, arising from the regulation of the Fundo Nacional do Ensino Primário (National Fund for Primary Education – FNEP), which included the education of adolescents and adults with the allocation of resources, a project that ended years before the establishment of the military regime in the country (Xavier, 2019).

The decrease in investment in adult education contributes to the double denial of the right to education for the illiterate, at the legally prescribed age and in adulthood (Gadotti, 2013). Youth and Adult Education, in the 1971 Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional (Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education), was treated as Supplementary Education, with little legislative interest in the subject, which, replaced by the current LDB (Law n. 9.394/1996), took on a new guise.

Among the segments of national education, the EJA represents the most neglected in terms of investment of federal resources, even in the face of the heterogeneity of the students' characteristics and the social debt that the state carries, for failing to guarantee the education of millions of Brazilians who abandon basic education at school age to work for their own support or that of their families (Gouveia; Silva, 2015).

The EJA has the following composition: 62.2% of the total enrollment in this modality is made up of people under 30 years of age and 57.1% of these students are

male; while students over this age group are mostly female, accounting for 58.6% of enrollment (Silveira, 2023a).

The 2019 Censo Escolar (School Census) showed that the brown and black color/race predominates in EJA enrollment and reveals that, in elementary school, they account for 75.8% of students, while in high school they account for 67.8% (Censo Escolar, 2019). Adult education is related to a variety of circumstances, including: social vulnerabilities, economic poverty, interculturalism, gender inequality, migration, employability and others (Gadotti, 2013).

Nevertheless, the history of education in Brazil is influenced by the country's social, political and economic formation, in which education has never been a state priority, being offered indiscriminately to the entire national population, a result of its colonization process, which excluded enslaved people, women, manual workers, people with disabilities from the educational system, which caused in nineteenth-century Brazil a huge illiterate population and uninteresting for the economic interests of imminent capitalism (Silveira, 2023b).

Initially, the purpose of popular education¹ for the adult population was literacy, that is, the teaching of writing and reading, given that the right to vote, in the first Republican Constitution of 1981, was granted only to literate people who, in that historical context, represented the minority of the population; later on, the EJA took on the characteristic of preparing for the labor market, as the country's industrialization required workers with some education (Gouveia; Silva, 2015). By going against Freirean education, the EJA distances itself from providing integral human formation, disinterested in market interests, incapable of forming a conscious and emancipated citizen, because it only enables a mere repeater of hegemonic thinking (Gadotti, 2013).

Resuming education in adulthood can mean a subjective gain for the human being and a social gain, because, according to Freire (1976), promoting the subject's critical

¹ Popular Education, based on humanist principles and postulated by Freire, defended the liberation of the oppressed and the social transformation of the students, differing from EJA in the aspect of systematization, but both are included in the list of critical and therefore counter-hegemonic pedagogies.

education enables them to interfere in and transform their own reality. Similarly, the EJA offers people opportunities to improve their lives by becoming literate and completing the levels of schooling that are still lacking. It is therefore a learning opportunity with the potential to insert people into society as social actors.

In this direction, the Plano Nacional da Educação (National Education Plan – PNE), established by Law No. 13.005/2014, presents goals for educational progress, including for the EJA, one of which proposes raising the literacy rate to 93.5% of people aged 15 or over and eradicating illiteracy, as well as allocating at least 25% of enrollments in this modality of education to be integrated with professional education (Aguiar *et al.*, 2014).

In view of the aforementioned, the dismantling of public policies to combat illiteracy symbolizes the view of education as a cost rather than an investment, and fails to take into account that an individual's education does not only have an impact on the individual sphere, but also on the social sphere (Gadotti, 2013). Guidelines that are in line with the frequent educational reforms that focus on competitiveness and competition in education are far removed from the social values that underpin the Democratic Rule of Law, as they view society as a big market, whose logic is not emancipatory human formation, but profit (Freitas, 2018).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 recognizes the right to education as a right of all and to the “full development of the human personality”, while the Federal Constitution in force in Brazil establishes education as a social right, since it is part of the foundations and objectives of the Republic expressed in articles 1 and 3 of the Carta Cidadã (Citizen's Charter) (Brasil, 1988). The Constitution of the Republic in force stipulates that the public authorities have a duty to make efforts to eliminate illiteracy and promote the application of at least fifty percent of the resources included in article 212 of the Constitution to universalize primary education (Brasil, 1988), even so, in 1996, when the Fundo de Desenvolvimento do Ensino Fundamental e Valorização do Magistério (Fund for the Development of Primary Education and Valorization of the Teaching Profession – Fundef) was established, the EJA was ignored.

The EJA was not integrated into the funding policy established by Fundef, which demonstrates the political lack of interest in prioritizing adult education over regular primary education, even in the face of the composition of the EJA. This fact was not fully overcome with the implementation of the Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica e de Valorização dos Profissionais da Educação (Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals – Fundeb), which allowed resources to be directed to this type of education, but limited them to 15% of the fund's total resources for the EJA, without taking into account the amount really needed to provide quality education for this public (Cruz; Sales; Almeida, 2023).

Fundef is a kind of fund that redistributes resources from the federal entities to elementary education. It was established by Constitutional Amendment 14 in 1996 and ran until 2006. At the national level, this fund was implemented on January 1, 1998 and, as an innovation, it promoted a change in the system of financing basic education in the elementary years, linking a portion of public resources directly to education. As for Fundeb, which replaced Fundef, its implementation was intended to cover the whole of basic education, which included the EJA, and added the allocation of resources for educational investment.

The 2020 Censo da Educação Básica (Basic Education Census) showed that, according to the race/color criteria, the main subjects in the EJA modality are black or brown people, with 74.9% at elementary level and 68.1% at high school level, data based on the self-declaration contained in the student enrollment, in which only 23.0 of the EJA students at elementary level and 30.7 at high school level declared themselves to be white (DEED/INEP, 2020).

Law No. 9,424/96, which established Fundef, presented obstacles to the calculation of enrollments in elementary school of young people and adults for the purposes of calculating the land benefit and directed public resources to the promotion of the education of children and adolescents up to the age of 14, curbing the expansion of initiatives for the education of young people and adults in elementary school (Haddad, 2007).

Once Fundef was abolished, due to its incompleteness, since it excluded kindergarten, high school and EJA from access to resources, Fundeb was created, which is also characterized by being a fund of an accounting nature that receives and promotes the management of public resources from taxes intended for the maintenance and development of basic education in all its phases, including EJA (Cruz; Sales; Almeida, 2021). The criteria for the distribution of Fundeb corresponds to the number of enrollments in each segment of education, according to the priorities of the federal units, limited to 15% of the total of each state, municipal and district fund for the EJA modality (Cruz; Sales; Almeida, 2021).

In 2005, the Federal Government started a program to integrate the EJA and technical professionalization, through Decree 5.478/2005, called the Programa de Integração da Educação Profissional ao Ensino Médio na Modalidade Educação de Jovens e Adultos (Program for the Integration of Professional Education into High School in the Youth and Adult Education Modality) and offered to participants in this modality of education. This creation had repercussions on the incidence of enrollments for this modality, driven by the provisions of Goal 10 of the Plano Nacional de Educação (National Education Plan – PNE) 2014/2024, whose objective was to offer at least 25% of enrollments in youth and adult education, in elementary and high school, in the form integrated with professional education, however the progress in meeting this goal was simple and the setback was punctual, with an impact mainly in the North and Northeast of the country (Pinto, 2021).

Furthermore, for clarification purposes, the Brazilian state is a federal republic. In this form of political-territorial organization, different levels of government coexist with relative political and administrative autonomy, but share common rules between them. Along these lines, Elazar (1987) defines federalism as a political system in which the different governments form a pact based on their autonomy and interdependence.

Federalism, therefore, is characterized by the existence of multiple centers of power and different decision-making spaces. Thus, power is not concentrated in a single sphere of government and there is no predominance of one instance over the other. In this sense,

federal systems should not have arrangements that contribute to the centralization of power and decision-making at one level of government or whose decentralization leads to the absolute autonomy and isolation of the federated entities (Gutierrez; Farias; Terto, 2021).

In light of the aforesaid, according to Abrucio (2010), two types of actions have been developed to strengthen intergovernmental relations between the Union, states and municipalities: the creation of funds and the design of federal programs aimed at establishing national parameters to combat inequalities. As far as education is concerned, this implies the Union, states, Federal District and municipalities working together to guarantee this right.

3 Methodology

The aim of this descriptive study was to evaluate the recent evolution of the value per student and the number of EJA enrollments in basic education and integrated technical education in the state of Goiás. The time frame used was 2007 to 2021. This choice was based on the availability of the variable analyzed in public documents.

Data was collected using public documents gathered directly from the websites of the authorities involved. The data was collected in December 2022, with the following variables: annual value per student of regular EJA and EJA integrated with technical education; EJA enrollment in Brazil and in Goiás; and percentage of EJA enrollment in relation to total technical education enrollment in Goiás.

The value per student variable, available from 2007 to 2022, was collected from the website of the Fundo Nacional de Desenvolvimento da Educação (National Fund for the Development of Education – FNDE), with regard to statistical data on the number of enrollments and the distribution of Fundeb resources, and was divided into regular EJA and EJA integrated with technical education (Fundeb, 2022). The values were adjusted by the Índice Nacional de Preços ao Consumidor Amplo (Broad National Consumer Price Index – IPCA), developed by the IBGE, using 2007 as the base year, the indicators were collected from the website (IBGE, 2022).

Enrollment variables were collected for Brazil and the state of Goiás from the Censo da Educação Básica (Basic Education Census) of the Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira (Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research – INEP), available for the period 2015 to 2021, at both levels, aggregated for elementary and high school (INEP, 2022).

In Goiás, in addition to enrollment data for basic education, data was also collected for technical education from 2015 to 2020, i.e. enrollment for technical courses integrated with high school at the federal, state and municipal levels (INEP, 2022).

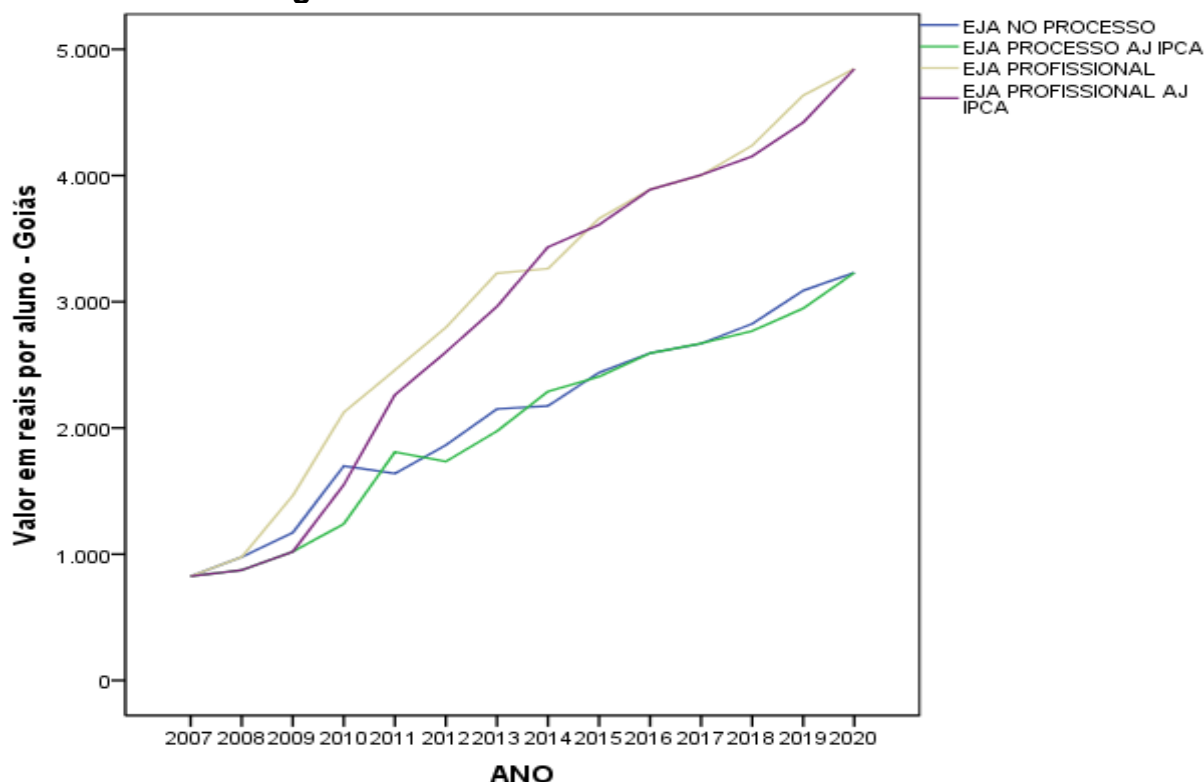
In order to evaluate technical education more specifically, data was collected on the percentage of EJA enrollments in relation to total enrollments – EJAEP at the Instituto Federal Goiano. It was not possible to collect from other federal education institutes. The EJAEP was collected from the management reports made available by IFGOIANO for the period 2017 to 2021 (IFGOIANO, 2022).

The data was tabulated in an electronic spreadsheet and presented in descriptive line and bar graphs and discussed in the light of the literature on the subject.

4 Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the results of the research. Graph 1 shows the results of the variables in nominal values and adjusted for inflation by the IPCA for EJA regular and integrated with technical education.

Graph 1 – Nominal and inflation-adjusted values per annual student in regular and integrated technical education from 2007 to 2020

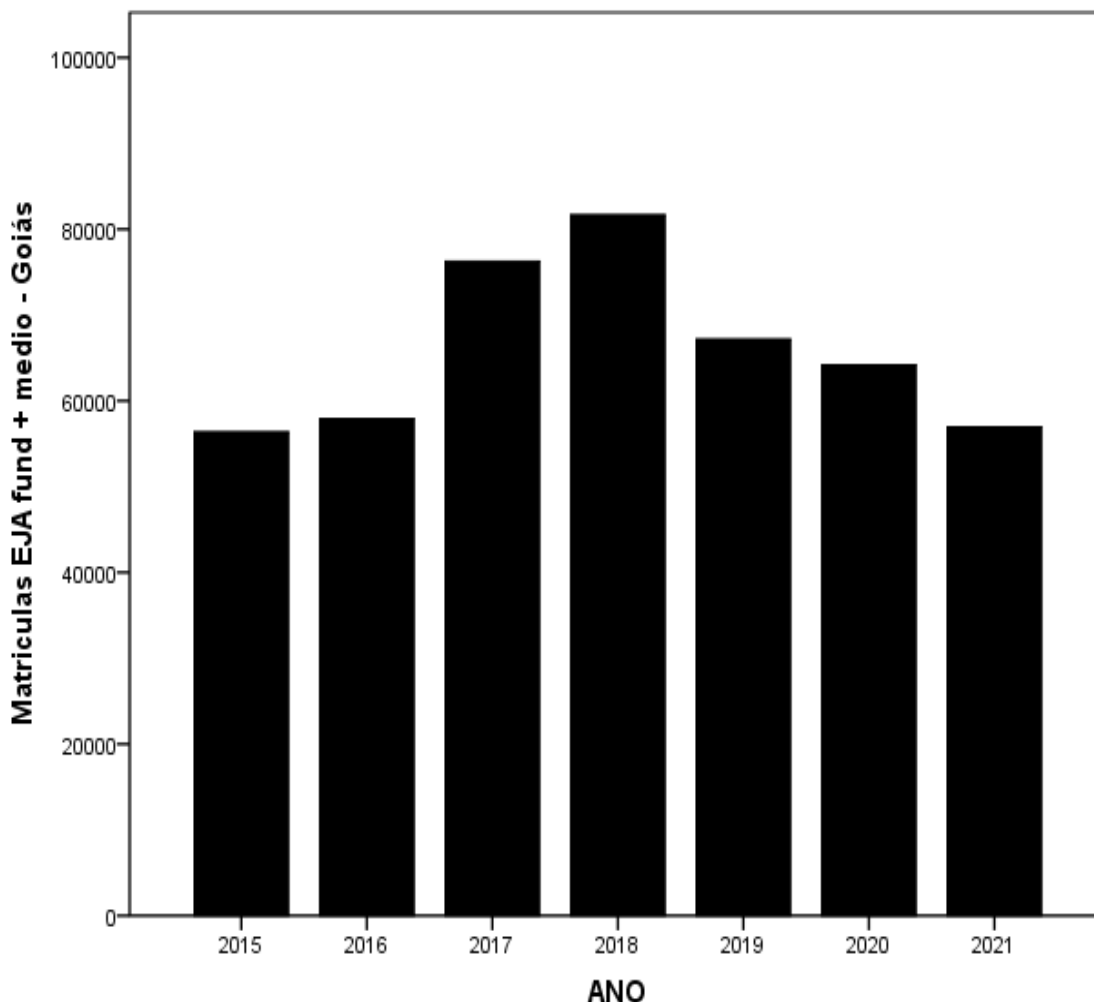


Source: Fundeb (2022); IBGE (2022).

Graph 1 shows that, until 2008, the amount paid out to EJA students in the process was the same as the amount paid out to EJA students in education integrated with technical education. Since then, there has been a shift and a trend away from the value per EJA student in the two modalities. In the case of EJA integrated with technical education, the values per student were higher than those adjusted for inflation until 2013. In general, the values per student are close to the inflation-adjusted value.

Graph 2 shows elementary school enrollment from 2015 to 2021 for the state of Goiás. If, on the one hand, the values per student follow a trend of keeping up with inflation, on the other hand, there has been a continuous decrease in EJA enrollments in Goiás since 2018.

Graph 2 – EJA enrollment in basic education in Goiás



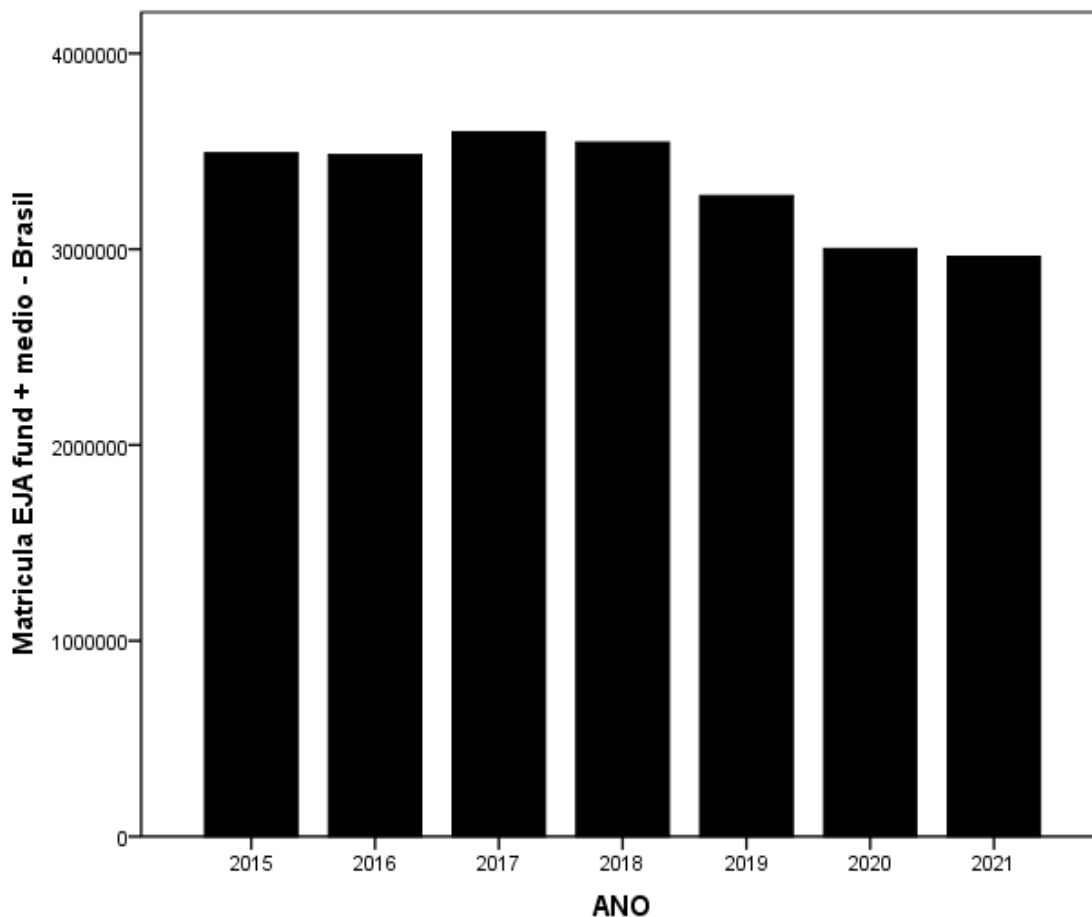
Source: INEP (2022).

There has been a downward trend, which seems to be consistent with the enrollment data for basic EJA education in Brazil, as shown in graph 3. Enrollment peaks in 2017 and thereafter there is a downward trend.

This information can be compared with the data presented by the Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílio (National Household Sample Survey – PNAD), carried out by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography

and Statistics – IBGE). The survey shows that between 2016 and 2018, the average number of years of study for people aged 25 and over was 9.6 years.

Graph 3 – EJA enrollment in basic education in Brazil

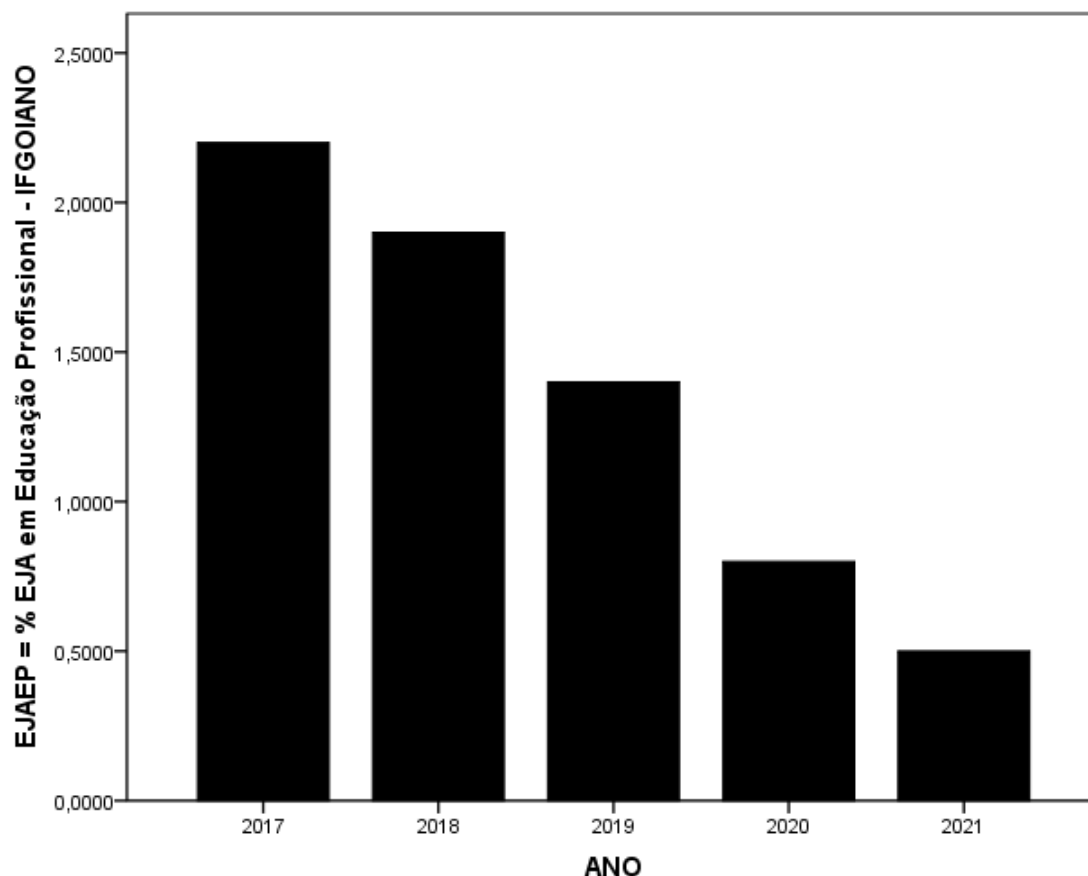


Source: INEP (2022).

This same downward trend occurs at the federal level, which can be seen when we analyze the data on the percentage of EJA enrollments in technical education in relation to the total number of enrollments at the Instituto Federal Goiano, which is the main institution offering technical and professional education at the federal level in the state of Goiás.

Graph 4 shows a continuous decrease in this proportion from 2017 to 2021.

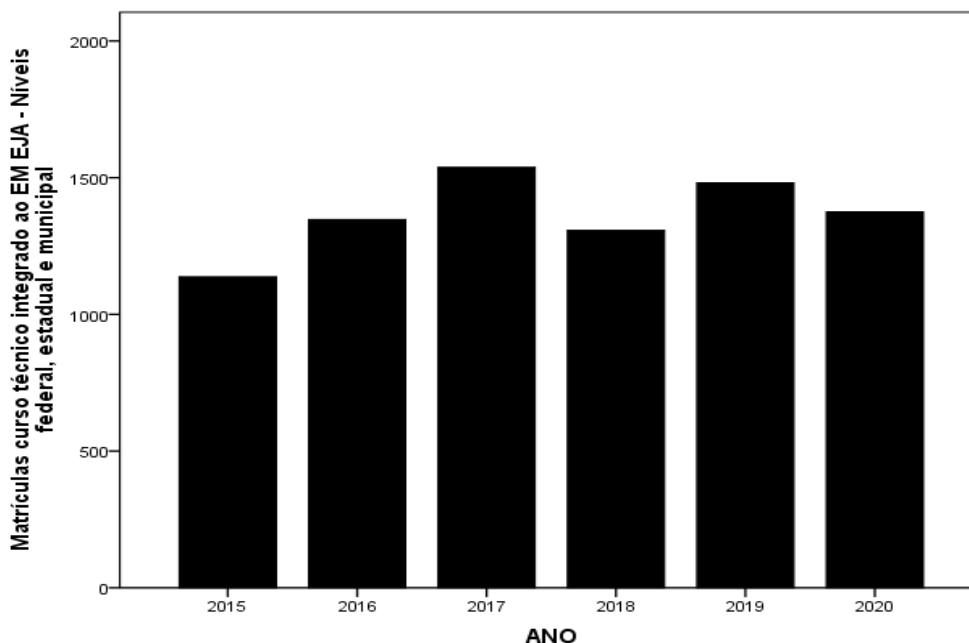
Graph 4 – Percentage of EJA enrollments in technical education for IFGOIANO



Source: IFGOIANO (2022).

Consistent with this declining panorama, graph 5 shows EJA enrollments in technical courses integrated with high school at the federal, state and municipal levels offered in the state of Goiás.

Graph 5 – EJA enrollment for integrated technical courses to basic education in Goiás



Source: INEP (2022).

Despite a brief upturn in 2019, there has been a clear downward trend since 2017, which may be due to several factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic. For Di Pierro (2024), a significant proportion of EJA students did not have access to communication and information technologies, which was a means that schools found to communicate with students during the period of the pandemic when schools remained closed. Although most young people and adults have access to cell phones, they don't have access to broadband or data packages that allow them to access platforms, so the technological resources were insufficient.

In addition, it is important to note that there is also the situation of people living in precarious housing, large families, everyone indoors, environments not suitable for studying and communication equipment shared between children and adults in the family. Furthermore, the economic crisis triggered by the pandemic has forced all family members to look for ways to survive. Numerous studies carried out before the pandemic already revealed the great educational inequalities that manifested themselves both in the

conditions of infrastructure, equipment and the quality of the professionals in the schools that students attended and in the educational results obtained (Ortigão; Aguiar, 2013; Alves *et al.*, 2013; Soares Neto *et al.*, 2013; Soares; Delgado, 2016; Ferrão *et al.*, 2018; Ernica; Rodrigues, 2020).

5 Conclusions

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The aim of the study was to evaluate the recent evolution of the value per student and the number of EJA enrollments in basic education and integrated technical education in the state of Goiás. The research takes place in a recent period of Brazilian history, which is experiencing a dismantling and neglect of public policies in general and, specifically, the subject of this study, EJA educational policies.

Youth and Adult Education (EJA) in Brazil reflects the social, cultural and economic transformations that have shaped the country's history. It arose from the need to provide basic education to the adult population, often excluded by the conventional education system. Initially focused on literacy and basic knowledge to meet the demands of an ever-changing society, EJA has progressed to encompass a wider range of formal education, including technical education.

In addition, there are still pending educational policies and inadequate provision that hinder access to education. For example, at the political level, there is a lack of coordination between the federal, state and municipal governments. A fragmented approach, insufficient funding and the tendency to form very large classes are problems that do not contribute to meeting demand.

As we have seen, monitoring the number of EJA enrollments offers insights into access to and demand for this type of education in Goiás. The variation in enrollment over time may reflect demographic changes, educational policies, as well as the effectiveness of strategies to promote and support youth and adult education. The essay not only provides a technical and statistical analysis, but also contributes to the public debate on

the continued importance of the EJA and the need for robust investment in education for all segments of the population.

Nevertheless, it is hoped that the conclusions will highlight not only the quantitative trends in the value per student and the number of enrollments, but also the challenges faced by the EJA in Goiás due to the political context. Recommendations could include the need for greater funding, more robust education policies and a renewed commitment to youth and adult education as a fundamental right and an investment in the future of the state and the country.

It is necessary to point out some issues that can be used as a basis for future debates on the financing of the EJA in Brazil: initially, the need for the participation of all those involved in the EJA and, subsequently, the need for more investment in policies for the expansion, permanence and success of the students who are part of it. It is also understood that EJA researchers will have other issues to discuss, and these are just perceptions based on this study.

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