

The *cursinho* industry and the advancement of the
neoliberal agenda for access to education in Brazil: a case
study in the city of Goiânia

by

Sabrina Fernandes

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral
Affairs in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Political Economy

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

© 2012, Sabrina Fernandes



Library and Archives
Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-93632-0

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-93632-0

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to examine the relationship between the advancement of the neoliberal agenda for education in Brazil and the “cursinho” industry of preparatory services for the university entrance exam. It utilizes a class-based theoretical critique of neoliberalism to investigate how the cursinho industry has affected access to universities and what it entails for inequality at the intersections of class, race, gender, and schooling background. The case study of the "cursinho" industry in the city of Goiânia, holder of the highest urban Gini coefficient of Latin America, uses field surveys and in-depth interviews with university students and “cursinho” representatives. It seeks to demonstrate how “cursinhos” have become normalized as a determinant factor to access public universities and, as a private mediator, have contributed to the marketization of education that affects educational inequality and the hegemonic position of the privileged classes.

Acknowledgements

My special thanks to Dr. Cristina Rojas, for her guidance as a supervisor was essential for the execution of this study, and to Dr. Justin Paulson, whose advice helped me to work through the challenges I encountered along the way. I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the Institute of Political Economy, Dr. Janet Siltanen, and Donna Coghill for the support given to me during my degree. I would also like to acknowledge Carleton University and the Universidade Federal de Goiás for assisting with the ethics clearance portion of this study. I am very grateful for the company of my peers at the Institute during our shared journey, and for my husband, Gordon Thomas, who was a pillar of patience and encouragement at every stage of this project. Finally, I offer my deepest gratitude to my family for their continuous love and understanding.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
List of Tables	v
List of Illustrations.....	vi
List of Appendices.....	vii
1 Chapter: Introduction.....	8
2 Chapter: Higher education and barriers of access in Brazil.....	13
3 Chapter: Theoretical perspectives on neoliberalism and education.....	29
3.1 Education as a public and social good.....	30
3.2 The neoliberalization of education	34
3.3 Hegemony, reproduction and normalization	42
3.4 Breaking the cycle: education as counter-hegemony	47
4 Chapter: Methodology	52
4.1 Methodological lens	52
4.2 Research design	56
5 Chapter: Case study - Neoliberalism and cursinhos in the city of Goiânia	66
5.1 The city of Goiânia as a case study of inequality	66
5.2 Cursinhos in Goiânia	70
5.3 Exploring inequality of access at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG).....	80
6 Chapter: Concluding remarks	119
Appendices.....	126
Bibliography	147

List of Tables

Table 1 - Goiânia, capital of Goiás, Brazil (2009/2010 numbers).....	67
Table 2 - Number and types of schools in Goiânia.....	69
Table 3 - Schools in Goiânia according to enrolment numbers.....	69
Table 4 - Dominant characteristics of preparatory course institutions in Goiânia	74
Table 5 - Chi-Square values and Likelihood ratios for selected variables	81
Table 6 – UFG <i>vestibular</i> data.....	89

List of Illustrations

Figure 1 - Map of Brazil	59
Figure 2 - Brazil's Gini 1976-2009	68
Figure 3 - Public and private schools in Goiânia.....	69
Figure 4 – <i>Cursinho</i> years of operation	75
Figure 5 - Monthly <i>cursinho</i> fee	76
Figure 6 - Students enrolled.....	76
Figure 7 - Time spent at <i>cursinho</i>	77
Figure 8 - Time spent at <i>específica</i> classes.....	78
Figure 9 - Monthly residential income	84
Figure 10 - Monthly residential income (<i>cursinho</i> only).....	85
Figure 11 - Race of survey participants.....	87
Figure 12 - Sex of survey participants.....	88
Figure 14 - Major preference of participants	91
Figure 15 – Number of attempts at the <i>vestibular</i> exam for current major	101
Figure 16 - Use of <i>cursinho</i> services by participants.....	104
Figure 17 - Types of <i>cursinho</i> services used by participants.....	104
Figure 18 - High school background of participants	110
Figure 19 - High school background of <i>cursinho</i> participants	110

List of Appendices

Appendix A: List of acronyms.....	126
Appendix B: Fieldwork questions.	127
B.1 Interviews - Oral consent script.....	127
B.2 Campus survey.....	128
B.3 Industry telephone questionnaire.....	136
Appendix C: Survey data worksheets.....	138
C.1 Income distribution analysis.....	138
C.2 Public school data analysis.....	138
C.3 Private school data analysis.....	140
C.4 Chi-square test of intersectionality analysis: High school as main variable	141
Appendix D: Major of survey participants.....	145

1 Chapter: Introduction

This thesis investigates the industry surrounding access to higher education in Brazil. The standard method of examination that grants access to universities is called the *vestibular*. The exam is one element of a competitive scenario where every university designs its own vestibular and entrance is determined by factors such as school background and the competitiveness of the major chosen. In order to increase their chances of success at the vestibular, students often write multiple exams at different universities. This system is heavily criticized for reproducing inequalities that stem from the dual structure of the Brazilian education system and historical factors linked to class, race, and gender.

The Brazilian educational structure is rooted in a dual system in which formal education is carried out both by the public and private sectors, from day care to post-doctorate degrees. Publicly funded and managed basic education schools (preschool to high school) suffer from a bad reputation due to precarious infrastructure, underpaid teachers and overall poor performance on quality standards and the *vestibular*. Private basic institutions tend to fare better in these categories and higher tuition fees are associated with higher quality teaching and vestibular performance.¹ Whereas the tuition fees of private schools are not as prohibitive as in North America, very few members of the poorest classes can access them through scholarships or through material sacrifices, condemning the great majority of Brazilian children and youth to poor education and respective poor career prospects.

¹ Ângela Albernaz, Francisco H.G. Ferreira, Creso Franco, “Qualidade e Equidade na Educação Fundamental Brasileira” Departamento de Economia, PUC-Rio, Texto para Discussão no. 455, May 2002, 3-4.

At the higher education level, public universities hold higher prestige than private universities (with a few exceptions). The level of prestige corresponds to many elements such as competitiveness, and quality of faculty and research. Hence, Brazil showcases an inverted scenario where students who attend private high schools have higher chances of success at the *vestibular* and are disproportionately represented at public higher education institutions.² Meanwhile, students who attended public schools are further denied access to higher education due to a poor educational background as well as the inability to afford the tuition fees of private universities. This scenario creates a vicious cycle in which every year a smaller portion of public school students gains entrance to universities in comparison to those with a private school background, especially when it comes to universities that hold the most prestige for education offered and opportunities for job market success.

To increase their competitiveness at the vestibular exams of public universities, many students opt to enrol in private schools known for a vestibular-oriented curriculum and, if necessary, in special preparatory courses, denominated in Portuguese as *cursinho pré-vestibular* (or simply *cursinho*), which can be taken during or after high school. Cursinhos are defined by Mitrulis and Penin as “profit-oriented courses, divided by areas of specialization, and designed for the more favoured population segments, which for decades has enhanced the selective nature of higher education, validated as a true expression of equal opportunity and merit policies.”³ Since there are financial costs

² Maria Aparecida Ciavatta Franco, “Acesso à universidade: uma questão política e um problema metodológico” in *Educação e Seleção* 12 (1985), 10.

³ Eleny Mitrulis and Sônia Teresinha de Sousa Penin. “Pré-vestibulares alternativos: da igualdade à equidade.” *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 36, no. 128 (2006), 273. (my translation)

associated with both private school and *cursinhos*, it is my intention to examine how the *cursinho* industry influences the unequal structure of the Brazilian educational system and how it has become normalized as an extension of the traditional school system, causing the inclusion of some students and the exclusion of others from quality university education. This will be done through a representative case study of the *cursinho* industry and its students in the city of Goiânia, Brazil. Informed by a theoretical understanding of the impacts of neoliberalism and hegemony on social structures and education, I attempt to answer the research question: How is the *cursinho* industry advancing the neoliberal agenda for education and access to it in Brazil?

In order to analyse access to higher education in relation to the *cursinho* industry and social inequality I make two arguments:

First argument – The normalization of *cursinho* attendance advances a neoliberal agenda for education.⁴ Students who wish to gain access to tertiary education are more and more inclined to attend *cursinho* and/or a related service in addition to high school in order to enhance their preparedness for the vestibular exam. This has promoted an individualized, private sector oriented view of education.

Second argument – The neoliberal agenda for education contributes to the inequality of access to universities. This inequality faced by students is intersectional, which entails that marginalization of access to university in Brazil is determined by many factors that may vary across the country, six of which are central to this study: sex, race, ethnicity, class, school background, and *cursinho* attendance.

⁴ Defined in Chapter Three.

These arguments lead to an intersectional analysis of the marginalization of students together with an interrogation of hegemonic thought that contributes to normalizing institutions and inequality in society. Unequal access to higher education is explored not only as a sign of broader inequality in society but it also helps to historically reproduce it.

Chapter Two of this thesis provides a review of the themes surrounding access to higher education in Brazil. It takes into account research that deals with the exclusive nature of the vestibular exam and the increasing divide between the public and private educational sectors. Chapter Three puts the literature into perspective through a theoretical analysis of the neoliberalization of education and its transformation into a private, excludable, good. The theory explores the relationship between neoliberalism and human capital doctrine as well as how they are reproduced in society as hegemonic power. Finally, it connects hegemony to the maintenance of status quo and the cyclical reproduction of inequality. Chapter Four provides the methodological context for the realization of this study while complementing Chapter Three by bringing intersectionality into the conversation as an important lens for shaping fieldwork methods. These methods are explained for all three phases of the case study and the instruments of data analysis are outlined.

This thesis culminates in Chapter Five, the case study on inequality of access to education in the capital city of Goiânia, in the state of Goiás, in Brazil. It provides a background on the city, its scenario of high inequality, and an overview of its educational sector. It then proceeds to the analysis of the fieldwork and the data gathered, which is interrogated in light of the theory explored in Chapter Three. The last part of the chapter

is dedicated to the overall analysis of the fieldwork data in relation to reproduction of inequality in Brazil and the role of the *cursinho* industry. Chapter Six provides a conclusion together with implications for policy and future research.

2 Chapter: Higher education and barriers of access in Brazil

The literature on the Brazilian education system in the past twenty years focuses on its inherent inequality and its possible explanations. More recently, these explanations revolve around an understanding of neoliberalism and the dominance of markets around access to education. Birdsall and colleagues suggest that the Brazilian educational system lags behind because it reflects the high-income inequality in its society.⁵ In addition to a state that has chronically neglected the educational sector in its annual budgets, the wealth is concentrated in the hands of a small elite that refuses to pay higher taxes to subsidize public schools. The result is a political system that views schools more as a source of jobs than of good public education.⁶ This is partly due to the view of education as a source of “human capital stock.” It promotes policy directed at managing wage inequality, rather than broader social inequality, due to the focus on education as a requirement for employability. The result of the human capital view is the demotion of postsecondary education to an indicator of future labour market success and a tool for reducing wage-based inequality, while the value of education for social and political formation, eliminating poverty, and overcoming overall socioeconomic inequality is put aside.⁷ The human capital perspective is heavily criticized in the literature on Brazilian education because of its connection to neoliberalism. This critique is reviewed in this

⁵ Nancy Birdsall, Barbara Burns and Richard H. Sabot, “Education in Brazil: playing a bad hand badly” in *Opportunity foregone: education in Brazil*, ed. Nancy Birdsall et al. (Washington: Inter-American Development Bank, 1996), 8.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Stacy Dickert-Conlin and Ross Rubinstein, “Introduction” in *Economics inequality and higher education: access, persistence and success*, ed. Stacy Dickert-Conlin et al. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007), 1.

chapter together with the literature that deals with the preparatory courses that surround access to university in Brazil, hereafter referred to as “*cursinhos*.”

The review of inclusion and exclusion in society by Gracindo et al promotes the argument that the state politics of education behave strategically within a neoliberal framework⁸, which calls for investment attention geared towards human capital development; that is, focused on workforce formation for capitalist production, instead of social formation.⁹ Contrary to the human capital view of inequality, which argues income inequality can be solved simply by promoting equal opportunities, the authors explain that the relationship between education and any inequality is entrenched in the schooling universe, which privileges knowledge and pedagogies designed for the elites. As a consequence, inequality is reproduced and consolidated in the schooling system not only through access but also through content and mentality that targets the upper classes as their object, excluding members of the lower classes both structurally and pedagogically. Thus, educational exclusion unravels through the capitalist system, which supports education as long as it is a certain type that can reproduce labour while legitimizing economic domination through cultural and educational domination. The result is the promotion of education as workforce training by the state. In fact, Plank et al show that a treatment of education solely as workforce training may result from an alignment between politics and private interest, which fosters the divide between public and private

⁸ The scope of neoliberal influence on education and its theoretical explanations will be explored more thoroughly in the next section.

⁹ Regina Vinhaes Gracindo, Sonirza Correa Marques, and Olgamir Amância Ferreira de Paiva. “A contradição exclusão/inclusão na sociedade e na escola,” *Linhas Críticas* 11, no. 20 (2005): 5-25.

education in Brazil.¹⁰ The state refuses to provide education that can lead to positive social outcomes that go beyond job creation, such as the potential behind using knowledge for promoting critical consciousness, as will be explored in Chapter Three from a Freirean and Gramscian perspective. It can be argued that it is this potential for a generating a counter-hegemonic process that threatens class and capitalist power that acts as an incentive for the state to keep education as a source of training only.

The increase in private institutions and the presence of markets around access to higher education are evidence of the commodification of education in Brazil. Six out of the seven largest universities in Brazil are private, including private “chain” universities such as the Estácio de Sá University campuses throughout the country.¹¹ As a consequence, the elite has access to both private and public universities through income and/or better private school background that increase their competitiveness at the vestibular exam.¹² The state acts as a partner in the maintenance of private instead of public education by financing private institutions through direct and indirect government transfers.¹³ Tristan McCowan points out that the government has been known to provide incentives such as tax breaks and low-interest loans for private sector investment in education, a follow-up to World Bank recommendations, which has not gone unnoticed

¹⁰ David N. Plank, José Amaral Sobrinho and Antonio Carlos da Ressureição Xavier, “Why Brazil lags behind in educational development” in *Opportunity foregone: education in Brazil*, ed. Nancy Birdsall et al. (Washington: Inter-American Development Bank, 1996), 122.

¹¹ McCowan, Tristan. “The growth of private higher education in Brazil: implications for equity and quality.” *Journal of Education Policy* 19 (2004), 7.

¹² Romualdo Portela de Oliveira, “A transformação da educação em mercadoria no Brasil”, *Educação Social* 30 (2009), 740.

¹³ David N. Plank, et al, “Why Brazil lags behind in educational development” in *Opportunity foregone: education in Brazil*, ed. Nancy Birdsall et al. (Washington: Inter-American Development Bank, 1996), 122.

by the industry given the rise of companies specializing in advising business on how to enter the educational market.¹⁴

At the basic education level, the state's refusal to improve public schools is now subsidizing the reproduction of the middle class (especially upper middle class) through a model where the rich(er) have multiple options to access higher education, while the poor are conditioned to remain poor and uneducated.¹⁵ José Pinto calls this a process of elitization of higher education spaces, since, instead of expanding the capacity of public institutions, the state has focused on palliative measures for democratizing access to higher education (i.e.: affirmative action programs), which do not address the problem adequately and maintain the dominance of the private education sector.¹⁶ In order to understand the marginalization of some in favour of the elite's access to education, it is also necessary to understand how individuals or groups can be marginalized in different ways. Different experiences of marginalization will be explored from the view of intersectionality in Chapter Four.

Admittedly, the state's attention to universities and overall access has increased since 1980. University institutions have expanded in number and capacity, but the dominance of private universities has diminished access potential and demonstrates the expansion of the private educational sector. This has caused a "distortion in educational politics where private universities now house 72.2% of the places for higher education in

¹⁴ McCowan, Tristan. "The growth of private higher education in Brazil: implications for equity and quality." *Journal of Education Policy* 19 (2004), 8.

¹⁵ Gustavo Lins Ribeiro, "Neoliberalism and higher education in Brazil," *Working Paper 384* (Brasília: Universidade Nacional de Brasília, 2005), 4.

¹⁶ José Marcelino de Rezende Pinto, "O acesso à educação superior no Brasil" in *Educação Social* 25 (2004), 752

the Southeast region and 42.9% in the poorer Northeast” (1999 numbers).¹⁷ The growth in private university enrolment is accompanied by an increase in the proportion of upper class members in higher education in the 1990s¹⁸, whereas the proportion of students from lower classes at universities decreased during the same period. That is, while the rise of new private universities may have increased the supply of higher education, inequality has prevailed because not all students have the ability to pay for university fees.¹⁹ For Silva Júnior, this is the result of capital-driven state reforms, which reinforce the private commodity provider facet of higher education institutions.²⁰ The transformation of education into an excludable private good naturally limits access. Access to higher education only met 2.6% of the demand in 1996 and only 11.8% of young adults (18-25 years of age) were enrolled in some kind of higher education program.²¹

The literature connects this access deficit to the exclusive character of the vestibular system. In fact, some authors suggest that the vestibular was created to intentionally limit access and contain the demand for higher education within the

¹⁷ Kempner, Ken, and Ana Loureiro Jurema. “The global politics of education: Brazil and the World Bank.” *Higher Education* 43, no. 3 (2002): 340.

¹⁸ Since a large share of the literature on this matter was published in the early 2000s, most concrete figures refer to the 1980s and 1990s in Brazil.

¹⁹ McCowan, Tristan. “The growth of private higher education in Brazil: implications for equity and quality.” *Journal of Education Policy* 19 (2004), 13.

²⁰ João dos Reis Silva Júnior, “Mudanças estruturais no capitalismo e a política educacional do governo FHC: o caso do ensino médio.” *Educação Social* 23 (2002): 226.

²¹ Heloisa Suzana Santos Tomelin, “Access to higher education in Brazil,” Master’s Thesis, (Athens: Ohio University, 2002).

constraints of the supply upheld by the state.²² Jacques Schwartzman argues that the vestibular system increases the socio-economic selectivity of students at university, invalidating the principle that access to public education should be democratic.²³ A study by Nadir Zago illustrates this statement by analysing access to higher education and degree completion of low-income students.²⁴ Her research suggests that the vestibular can intensify a student's comparative disadvantage. Zago's study is specific to the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) and data collected about the 2001 vestibular entrance exam. Although she did not find a strong direct correlation between the sociocultural aspects of family history of university students and vestibular approval, this absence can be explained by a bias related to the fact that 89% of applicants are rejected at the exam – that is, a large amount of students whose backgrounds could demonstrate a correlation were not part of the sample because they were precluded from being university students. However, she did find that family income and schooling history were indicative of the high inequality of access to higher education.²⁵

She writes that some students also felt a disconnect between the type of education received at public schools and the one received at the first years of university, indicating that although they were successful at the vestibular exam and entered university, the public school background did not prepare them sufficiently for the university curriculum.

²² Pereira (2007) in Cícero Santiago de Oliveira, “Os pré-vestibulares populares como espaço de educação poléfrica de jovens adultos: o caso do práxis” Master’s Thesis (Santa Maria: Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, 2009), 64.

²³ Jacques Schwartzman, “A Seletividade Sócio-econômica do Vestibular e suas Implicações para a Política Universitária Pública” in *Educação e Seleção* 19 (1989), 108.

²⁴ Nadir Zago, “Do acesso à permanência no ensino superior: percursos de estudantes universitários de camadas populares” in *Revista Brasileira de Educação* 11 (2006), 229.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 229.

She also finds that the disadvantages of public school students and low-income students are present not only in relation to vestibular success, but also affect a student's chances of successful completion of their university degree. In addition, students who think they have an educational deficit due to a public schooling background tend to view their first experience of writing the vestibular exam as a training opportunity, since it is common to believe they cannot succeed at the first try.²⁶ It is also common for students to go through financial sacrifices and/or request help from family members to pay for *cursinho* classes due to the belief that *cursinho* attendance will help to repair their educational deficit and increase their chance of approval at the vestibular. The students' expectations also play a role in their choice of major, with priority given to less competitive subject areas whereas students from elite private schools tend to target more competitive majors with higher financial return.²⁷ The author suggests that this difference in choice patterns can be observed not only at university but also at the *cursinhos*, where more expensive *cursinhos* that cater to the elite focus on preparing students for the exams of prestigious majors such as medicine, law, and engineering. These institutions exist in contrast to "popular" *cursinhos*, which charge lower tuition fees or none, cater mostly to public school students, and enrol students considering less competitive and prestigious majors like biology or linguistics. This suggestion will inform the research methods of this study by putting forward the relationship between prestige, subject area at university, and *cursinho* fees.

²⁶ Ibid, 231.

²⁷ Ibid, 232.

Estimates from 2001 suggest the presence of at least 800 “popular” *cursinhos*,²⁸ many of which are the result of community outreach programmes by public universities. Not only are these numbers not precise given the absence of a registry for *cursinho* institutions, but they are also outdated, which suggests how the topic has been rarely explored as the main focus of a study. Although I was unable to find more aggregate numbers for both private and “popular” *cursinhos* in the literature, it is safe to suggest that their number has grown over the past ten years given the deepening divide between the private and public educational sectors and the increased competitiveness of the vestibular exam.²⁹ Further in relation to “popular” *cursinhos*, Zago writes that their overall efficacy is low because many of their students are unable to attend classes and/or fall behind on the material due to their public school educational deficits and financial constraints.³⁰ Nonetheless, this type of *cursinho* is a response to the increasing demand for additional preparatory opportunities by students of lower classes.

Thus, a consequence of the highly competitive nature of the *vestibular* is that many students, from both private and public school backgrounds, resort to attending *cursinhos* in hopes that *cursinho* attendance will improve chances of success at the exam.³¹ In turn, *cursinho* institutions benefit from this belief, having already grown substantially due to the gaps left by the public schools and the exclusion-based format of the *vestibular*

²⁸ Zago, Nadir. “Cursos pré-vestibulares populares: limites e perspectivas.” *Perspectiva* 26 (2008): 152.

²⁹ This thesis also deals with the challenge of compiling data about *cursinhos*. Chapter Four will outline the variety of methods that were used to estimate the size of the *cursinho* industry for the case study.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 162.

³¹ José Leopoldino das Graças Borges and Beatrice Laura Carnielli, “Educação e estratificação social no acesso à universidade pública” in *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 35 (2005), 125.

exam.³² Since private schools are considered to be of higher quality and the overwhelming majority of *cursinhos* is maintained by the private sector and carries prohibitive user fees, *vestibular* success is also economically determined. The high demand for *cursinhos* indicates which students have the socioeconomic resources necessary to gain access to higher education institutions, public or private. Overall, the majority of successful freshmen attend *cursinhos* in addition to private schools, as well as private language courses, and usually have access to computers and other forms of gathering information.³³ As previously mentioned, the correlation between individual preparedness and income results in a scenario where most students from lower classes choose to compete and enrol in less competitive majors at university. This reproduces inequality also at the workforce level, where the highest paid jobs are occupied by those who graduated from prestigious universities and with majors to which access is highly competitive.

However, income is only one of many factors that correlate with one's ability and chances of passing the *vestibular* exam, which challenges the explanation of inequality of access by Birdsall and colleagues, presented early on in this chapter, as simplistic. Wing and Honorato's study uses quantitative regression analysis in an attempt to predict which factors are more able to determine one's success rate at the *vestibular*.³⁴ They found that,

³² Cícero Santiago de Oliveira, "Os pré-vestibulares populares como espaço de educação política de jovens adultos: o caso do práxis," Master's Thesis. (Santa Maria: Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, 2009), 64.

³³ José Leopoldino das Graças Borges and Beatrice Laura Carnielli. "Educação e a estratificação social no acesso à universidade pública." *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 35 (2005), 126-127.

³⁴ N. G. Haig Wing and Luiz Honorato. "Determinantes socioeconômicos na probabilidade de aprovação no exame vestibular: uma análise entre os campi da

at the Federal University of Pernambuco in Brazil, age, religion, race, primary school, high school, and reading habits were not very statistically relevant, whereas income, *cursinho* attendance, place of residence, parents' level of schooling, and previous experience taking the *vestibular* exam were very statistically relevant for determining one's chance of successful access to university. Their model suggests that students who attended *cursinhos* are 1.73 times more likely to pass the *vestibular* in relation to students who did not attend *cursinho* on one of the campuses analysed, and 1.62 and 1.41 times more likely in the other two campuses.³⁵ The statistical relevance of each variable changed according to which major the student was pursuing, which confirms the correlation between subject area and other determining factors. This thesis takes the importance of looking at various determining factors together into account, and it will look at sex, race, class, schooling background, and previous *cursinho* attendance when investigating fieldwork data for intersectional inequality.

Similar observations are supported in Norma Zandoná's analysis of the socioeconomic background of successful university applicants.³⁶ In terms of socioeconomic factors, she finds that students who reported higher family income targeted medicine, law, business administration, and engineering for majors and were heavily represented in these courses and usually enrolled in morning and full-time classes. In contrast, students with lower reported income were found to target a wider

Universidade Federal de Pernambuco," *Planejamento e Políticas Públicas* 37 (2011), 104.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 118.

³⁶ Norma da Luz Ferrarini Zandoná, "O espaço do contrapoder: o acesso á universidade pública e o perfil socioeconômico educacional dos candidatos ao vestibular da UFPR", Phd Thesis, (Curitiba: Universidade Federal do Paraná, 2005), 98-100.

variety of majors, including many that do not carry the same prestige as medicine, for example, and more frequently enrol in night classes, which allow for the possibility of taking up a full-time job during the day.³⁷ It is important to note that majors designed to form future basic education teachers are among those of lower social prestige and tend to absorb university students from more deficient learning backgrounds, which Schwartzman points out to be a factor in the reproduction of the overall educational deficit.³⁸ Zandoná's research results help to invalidate the promotion by the individualistic component of human capital doctrine that the choice of major is purely personal and depends on the individual's choice of amount of human capital investment. The literature suggests and this thesis's case study will demonstrate that the elitization of certain majors contributes to *vestibular* applicants' view that by targeting majors with higher financial return they can offset their personal investment in private schooling. However, as Zandoná suggests, this cannot be seen as the only determining factor of one's career and educational path for there are a series of other aspects that determine choice and constrain educational possibilities based on income and schooling background. Although her methodology is confined to socioeconomic indicators and does not offer a comprehensive look on how gender and racial elements can factor in, her study confirms the presence of a supporting industry around the *vestibular*. In a way, *cursinho* attendance operates pre-selectively; that is, since the majority of *cursinhos* with high approval rates enrol students from privileged socioeconomic backgrounds, privileged students are over-represented at university in relation to less-privileged

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Jacques Schwartzman, "A Seletividade Sócio-econômica do Vestibular e suas Implicações para a Política Universitária Pública" in *Educação e Seleção* 19 (1989), 100.

students.³⁹ By contributing to the elitization of access, *cursinhos* contribute to the elitization of the university space.

Among the few studies identified in the literature that focus entirely on the presence of the *cursinho* industry and its role in influencing access to university through the *vestibular*, one study will be drawn on more heavily. In this study, Ricardo Fortes argues that *cursinhos* act as a schooling unity that mediates between the high school and university worlds and provides an interesting overview of how *cursinhos* have played this role historically in Brazil.⁴⁰ For the author, the *cursinho* industry has come about due to a disconnection between traditional schooling and the university, as well as the significance of what is referred to as the “*cursinho* effect”: the materialization of *cursinho* time and financial investment into *vestibular* success. In fact, he dates the origin of *cursinhos* back to the legislation that established the *vestibular*, since they operated as a tool for equalizing the exposure to preparatory material by students from both technical and traditional high schools.⁴¹ This study also finds that some high school students value the *cursinho* learning environment more than the high school environment. That occurs mainly because in addition to being viewed as optional in contrast to the mandatory nature of basic education, *cursinhos* tend to be more specific and efficient in the way they convey *vestibular*-related material. In fact, some *cursinho* methodology can be seen as *vestibular* training rather than education.

³⁹ Norma da Luz Ferrarini Zandoná, “O espaço do contrapoder: o acesso á universidade pública e o perfil socioeconômico educacional dos candidatos ao vestibular da UFPR”, Phd Thesis, (Curitiba: Universidade Federal do Paraná, 2005), 201.

⁴⁰ Ricardo Luiz Rocha Fortes, “O cursinho como unidade escolar de mediação entre o ensino médio e a universidade : peculiaridades , sentidos e perspectivas,” Master’s Thesis (Belo Horizonte: Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, 2005.)

⁴¹ Ibid, 43.

Fortes argues that the strong proliferation of *cursinhos* in the 1970's came about because while the demand for *vestibular*-oriented services existed, they did not fit within the traditional school system. This called for an environment outside of the traditional schooling path that could focus on preparing students for the *vestibular*.⁴² The strengthening of *cursinhos* created spaces for *cursinho* institutions to expand into the traditional schooling system through private high schools designed to fulfil their normal curriculum requirements while directing their students towards their own *cursinhos* upon graduation.⁴³ Other types of preparatory courses geared towards professional exams or government job competitions have also grown considerably and may operate as part of or in affiliation with *vestibular cursinhos*. Based on their position in between the high school and the university levels, Fortes concludes that *cursinho* operations deals with class differences in society that affect and are affected by access to education.⁴⁴ He writes that:

For students who managed to survive many selective situations, throughout their schooling trajectories, the *cursinho* emerges as an alternative, a strategic necessity and indispensable instrument to guarantee the cultural and material conditions for *vestibular* success. In this perspective, the students still consider the *cursinho* as a rite of passage, a schooling necessity for training for the *vestibular* of public and private universities of excellence. Even with the expansion of the higher education courses and with selective modes that no longer require the same level of dedication for passing the *vestibular*, the *cursinhos* continue to occupy an already configured place: a fourth [high school] year, a time for complementing the studies to compensate for non-promoted competencies.⁴⁵

⁴² Ibid, 58.

⁴³ Ibid, 60.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 66.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 67. (In Portuguese, my translation)

Fortes' study is of particular importance because, contrary to most studies considering the *cursinho* industry, including those explored earlier in this chapter, he brings to light the normalization of the industry as a mediator. Fortes highlights the fact that although in the beginning *cursinhos* catered only to the elites, who understood it as a rite of passage for those seeking to increase their competitiveness, the strong perception that they were an important contributor to a student's success in the *vestibular* had made them also appealing to members of the lower classes.⁴⁶ This scenario gave rise to *cursinhos* that targeted students from public school and/or a lower class background, and charged lower or no fees as part of community service. To this date, these *cursinhos* are still a minority and do not carry the same prestige as some of the most expensive elite ones, although they help to demonstrate how *cursinhos* have managed to fill the preparatory gap for students from a range of class and schooling backgrounds.

The author argues that the presence of *cursinhos* that cater to both the elites and lower classes demonstrates the dual potential of preparatory course institutions. While they can facilitate access to university by broadening learning and training opportunities, this potential depends on the identity of these institutions (target student, tuition, location, etc), which determines how accessible *cursinhos* are in the first place.⁴⁷ The fact remains that the *cursinhos* with the highest approval rates are those with high tuition costs and that target middle and upper class students. This characteristic reveals *cursinhos* to be a selective facilitator, undermining its potential for increasing democratic access to university. In a way, the presence of "popular" and private *cursinhos* is a reflection of the

⁴⁶ Ibid, 14.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 70-71.

dual system of education in Brazil and reproduces the hierarchy of schooling institutions. For students of prestigious private schools, attending a *cursinho* is less of a necessity, given their more refined schooling background geared towards accessing more prestigious majors and universities in order to reproduce their family's class position. However, for students from public school and lower material conditions, the *cursinho* offers a schooling alternative that can complement their educational background and offer new future job possibilities.⁴⁸ Fortes argues that although schooling does not have an explicit role of reducing inequalities, its social structure within a capitalist society directly influences class reproduction, which is applicable for *cursinhos* since their demand is based on choices mostly based on investment and return.⁴⁹

Fortes' study analyses students who are currently attending *cursinho*, while this thesis focuses on past *cursinho* attendance (in connection to *vestibular* success). Despite this difference, Fortes' analysis of *cursinhos* is of great significance for the literature on university access in Brazil. His conclusion that *cursinhos* behave as a natural mediator relies on the "*cursinho* effect," interpreted theoretically through Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus*, as its explanation. In fact, a significant amount of studies about the reproduction of inequality through education and the few about the *cursinho* rely on the Bourdieuan concepts of *habitus* and *cultural capital* for its explanation. The critique of *cursinhos* as a mediator will be developed more deeply in this thesis, but through a different theoretical lens: one which focuses on the normalization process on account of the neoliberalization of education in Brazil, hegemonic class power, and the noticeable context of inequality of

⁴⁸ Ibid, 127.

⁴⁹ Ibid,131.

access to university. The theory on neoliberalism and hegemony will shed light on the three main conclusions found in the body of research explored in this chapter:

1. Despite the growth of higher education institutions, access to higher education in Brazil is unequal and is determined by a series of factors. *Cursinho* attendance is one of them and illustrates the strong presence of a private educational sector that benefits from the exclusive nature of the *vestibular* exam.

2. A subject area or major's level of social prestige is associated with the type of career it entails (i.e.: manual labour intensive), competitiveness of access, and future wages. Privileged students tend to apply for and are more represented in majors considered to have higher social prestige, while less-privileged students tend to apply for and are more represented in majors considered to have lower social prestige. This suggests a scenario of self-selectivity on behalf of the students and contributing factors that adds to the elitization of certain university departments.

3. *Cursinhos* are perceived to be an extension of traditional schooling and a mediator between high school and university for students who are unsuccessful at their first *vestibular* experience. In spite of popular *cursinho* options for less privileged students, private *cursinho* institutions prevail and are perceived to be more effective as a means to prepare for the *vestibular*. Similarly to the performance contrast between private and public schools, private *cursinhos* have shown higher rates of *vestibular* success than “popular” *cursinhos*.

3 Chapter: Theoretical perspectives on neoliberalism and education

The literature explored in the previous chapter has pointed to the neoliberalization of the Brazilian educational system, which has contributed to barriers of access to higher education and, consequently, the reproduction of social inequality. The nature of this issue calls for a theoretical understanding of the relationship between education, neoliberalism, hegemony, and the social reproduction of inequality. The theories examined in this chapter draw on various scholars to explain the connection between neoliberal education and inequality and provide the backdrop for the case study questioning the normalization of the *cursinho* industry in relation to access to education in Brazil.

Neoliberalism is a complex system of theories, ideologies, and practices that relate to capitalism, imperialism, and globalisation.⁵⁰ Although this level of complexity makes it hard to define, it is not difficult to identify the advancement of neoliberalism in states and societies. One recognizable feature of neoliberalism is its use of state power to impose the rule of the markets in a way that protects capital and weakens the power of labour.⁵¹ Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston explain that: “Under the ideological veil of non-intervention, neoliberalism involves extensive and invasive interventions in every area of social life, it imposes a specific form of social and economic regulation based on the prominence of finance, international elite integration, subordination of the poor in every country and universal compliance with US interests. [...] Domestically, the

⁵⁰ Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston, “Introduction”, in *Neoliberalism: a critical reader*, by Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (eds) (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 1-2.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 3.

expansion of ‘market relations’ tramples upon rights of access to food, water, education, work, land, housing, medical care, transportation and public amenities as well as on gender relations...”⁵² David Harvey sees neoliberalism as a set of capitalist political economic practices that promote the liberation of individual freedoms through private property rights, free trade and free markets and is preserved by an appropriate institutional framework designed by the state.⁵³ Les Levidow adds to the definition by stating that the neoliberal project “undoes past collective gains, privatizes public goods, uses state expenditure to subsidize profits, weakens national regulations, removes trade barriers, and so intensifies global market competition.”⁵⁴

Since the transformation of state and social relations into market transactions requires the privatization of important social services, it affects every single aspect of people’s lives and places those with a lower ability to purchase these services in an even more vulnerable position. The following section shows that, in the case of education, its transformation from a public good into a private good undermines social outcomes reifies student-teacher partnerships, and reconfigures them into consumers and producer engaged in the exchange of commodified education.⁵⁵

3.1 Education as a public and social good

Historically, education has been under the jurisdiction of the Brazilian state since the arrival of the Portuguese royal family during colonial times. Then, it was a privilege

⁵² Ibid, 4.

⁵³ David Harvey, *A brief history of neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 2.

⁵⁴ Les Levidow, “Marketizing higher education: neoliberal strategies and counter-strategies”, in *The Virtual University? Knowledge, Markets and Management*, ed. Robins et al.(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 2.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 158-159.

given to a few members of the elite. With the democratic opening and the establishment of the Constitution of 1988, education was instituted a social right along health, security, food, and others. As a social right, the Ministry of Education is the overarching body that supervises the entire educational sector, although its regulatory power is of a lesser extent when it comes to private education. The growth of private education institutions has highlighted the sector as profitable and increased its potential as a market for capital accumulation. This process has deepened the divide between private education, of higher quality and more excludable, and public education, of lower quality yet less excludable, at the primary and secondary levels. The problem with a dual system that attempts to make public and private education cohabitate is that education is always perceived as a commodity, since even the users of public education view it as a good that could be purchased if necessary or wanted while the state benchmarks curriculum standards against those of the private sector. The result is a poor understanding of education as a public good by neglecting both meanings of the term: “a decommodified resource for the people and as an ethically legitimate institution that does not submit to the business imperative.”⁵⁶

Therefore, in order to explore the impact of neoliberalism on education, including in Brazil, it is necessary to examine the main notion attacked by neoliberal ideology on education: the notion of education as a public good. Public goods are normally provided by the state, since a private company has no monetary incentive to provide goods whose access cannot be limited by charging usage fees. This thesis focuses on education as a

⁵⁶ Stanley Aronowitz, “Higher education as a public good,” in *Not for sale: in defense of public goods*, by Anatole Anton et al (eds) (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 381.

special type of public good: a social good. A social good is a public good that could be provided by the private sector as a private good or in the form of a public-private partnership but that is best distributed and provides the most social benefits when provided by the state to the largest number of people. A social good is defined according to the way it is provided rather than according to non-rival or non-excludable characteristics. In fact, many social goods provided by the state, such as water distribution, often carry usage fees that could make them excludable although not to the same extent as if water distribution was treated as a private good. Hence, the definition of education as a public (social) good depends mainly on form of provision and whether the good becomes less excludable and less rival if provided by the state in regards to social policy.

Nel Noddings argues that in spite of the growth of private education, most people agree that education should be a public good based on the premise that an “educated citizenry benefits everyone.”⁵⁷ He writes that the counter-argument is that individuals should be free to choose which form of schooling aligns with their own beliefs. This counter-argument relies on the needs and wants of the individual, while arguments about public education consider the effects on society as a whole. Education as a public good is good for the public because it not only serves the interests of liberal democracy but also create positive externalities for a society’s individual members.⁵⁸ In regards to the proposal for a state-run school, Antonio Gramsci writes that “the whole task of educating

⁵⁷ Nel Noddings, “Education as a public good”, in *Not for sale: in defense of public goods*, by Anatole Anton et al (eds) (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 290.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

and forming the younger generation becomes public instead of private, since only in this way can it involve the whole generation without distinctions of group or caste.”⁵⁹

Gramsci sees education as a political-pedagogical process of the greatest importance because of its impact on the political formation of the working-class and its ability to resist the hegemonic power of capital. He establishes that every hegemonic relationship is necessarily a pedagogical relationship,⁶⁰ and since social classes have their own intellectuals, the working class requires the formation of organic intellectuals to help develop counter-hegemonic action.⁶¹ Based on the premise that every man or woman is an intellectual of sorts, although not every man or woman fulfils the intellectual function in society,⁶² the expansion of state-run education through the unitary school suggests that public education can become an important outlet for intellectual engagement free from the hegemonic power of capital, instrumental learning, and hypocritical discipline.⁶³

This is also valid for the specific case of higher education, although it is perceived by the state and society as a more complex situation. Stanley Aronowitz writes that there are three main concerns about how higher education can be treated and fostered as a public good.⁶⁴ The first concern is whether the state is capable of maintaining public higher education at an adequate level of funding to enable institutions to offer high-

⁵⁹ Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince & other writings* (New York: International Publishers, 2007), 129.

⁶⁰ Antonio Gramsci, *L'alternativa pedagogica* (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1972), 4. (my translation)

⁶¹ Ibid, 8.

⁶² Ibid, 12.

⁶³ Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince & other writings* (New York: International Publishers, 2007), 129-131.

⁶⁴ Stanley Aronowitz, “Higher education as a public good,” in *Not for sale: in defense of public goods*, by Anatole Anton et al (eds) (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), 369.

quality education. The second concern regards admission requirements and how the access debate deals with exclusion (as it has been argued that education is an excludable good under scarce resources). The third concern is about the curriculum and what should be made available to students through the state's limited resources. These concerns are central to the development of higher education as a public good, and apply to education in general. The legislative and administrative confusion about these issues in regards to the state's management of education has opened up space for the commodification of education, since neoliberal advocates of private education offer an alternative where these concerns do not matter.

3.2 The neoliberalization of education

A review of the educational system in Brazil indicates the presence of neoliberal tendencies that reproduce its unequal structure. The aforementioned definition of neoliberalism by David Harvey is useful in this context because the neoliberalization of education involves attributing private property rights to education. Les Levidow argues that the World Bank's 'reform agenda' on tertiary education is a prime example of the neoliberal project due to its private and efficiency orientation, since part of the neoliberal project is to prioritize private goods over public goods, including education.⁶⁵ The agenda poses efficiency and 'human capital development' as progress, commodifies students as customers and future labour power, and expands neoliberal thought through specific programs⁶⁶ (i.e.: Structural Adjustment Programs). Another neoliberal proponent, the

⁶⁵ Les Levidow, "Marketizing higher education: neoliberal strategies and counter-strategies", in *The Virtual University? Knowledge, Markets and Management*, ed. Robins et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 12-13.

European Round Table (ERT) of Industrialists has argued for a larger role for the industry in the educational system, given that education is a strategic investment and teachers lack the proper understanding of business and profit.⁶⁷ The neoliberal advance on the educational sector is a result of “accumulation by dispossession”, a means by which capital creates new markets in sectors that could have originally rested under the protection and jurisdiction of the state as a provider.⁶⁸ The result is the transformation of education from a social good into a commodity that can be bought and sold, preventing those who cannot pay for user fees from accessing it. This is convenient for neoliberalism because it expands the accumulation potential of a market for education (and supporting markets, such as a banking system that provides student loans), while undermining the state’s role in the educational sector through private substitutes.

Even decades ago, Clarence J. Karier pointed to the presence of business-oriented values in the state’s promotion of education policy, which has the effect of shaping how those from inside the educational system view the role of education in society.⁶⁹ She notes that schools have been structured to play a selecting role for creating manpower for the economic system, instead of promoting education for personal growth and social formation.⁷⁰ This structure is maintained by a state whose dependence on the elites influences the reproduction of education geared towards economic concerns. Paulo Freire

⁶⁷ Les Levidow, “Neoliberal agendas for higher education”, in *Neoliberalism: a critical reader*, by Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (eds) (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 156.

⁶⁸ David Harvey, *The new imperialism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

⁶⁹ Clarence J. Karier, “Business values and the educational state” in *Schooling and capitalism: a sociological reader*, ed. Roger Dale et al. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), 21.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 28.

argues that this is a consequence of translating educational practices into a restrictive schooling system that denies the possibility of education for all.⁷¹ However, Freire is careful to point out that this does mean that every move by the state is necessarily a perverse, neoliberal one. He establishes that the problem with neoliberalism is that it proposes that education be privatized; yet it still continues to be financed by the state. Neoliberal thinking has prevented the democratic alternative that ensures that schools are granted autonomy but also that the state holds on to “its obligation to offer a quality education of sufficient quantity to attend to social demand.”⁷²

Henry A. Giroux uses the term “corporate culture” to characterize how neoliberalism has promoted the corporatization of education and its respective institutions.⁷³ This movement leads to a selectivity of what types of knowledge are recognized and rewarded, while diminishing access to those subordinated by class and race.⁷⁴ In contrast to public institutions, where one could rationalize power under conditions free from (capitalist) domination, the private sphere treats knowledge and culture as commodities to be consumed.⁷⁵ Even worse is that students and faculty begin to accept “corporate culture” as a norm for educational institutions. Lynch suggests that a process of marketization takes place due to the assumption that the market should be the

⁷¹ Paulo Freire, *Politics and Education* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1998), 26.

⁷² Ibid, 71.

⁷³ Henry A. Giroux, “Selling out higher education”, in *Policy Futures in Education 1* (2003).

⁷⁴ Ibid, 191.

⁷⁵ Henry A. Giroux, *Theory and resistance in education: towards a pedagogy for the opposition*, (Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001), 236.

producer of culture and value.⁷⁶ Unlike popular belief that neoliberalism promotes an absolute free market model, what we observe is a system where rules are bent and the state is used to favour corporations, competitions, and the “global corporate market.”⁷⁷ The market then frames individuals as customers or entrepreneurs in order to guarantee its existence. The focus on individual choice structures society in a way that those with sufficient resources can make a variety of choices in the market whereas the poor have none to make. This idea is central to the promotion of human capital as the developed world’s view of education.

Human capital theory entails that education and training are equivalent to a specific type of capital input that can be used to generate wealth, it directly affects the one commodity the entire capitalist system depends on: labour-power.⁷⁸ It is different from the view of education as a social good, which I will argue should be promoted by the state, because it treats education as a capital input rather than a good whose outcomes for democratic society are beneficial both socially and materially. Karl Marx talks about variable capital in relation to labour’s ability to reproduce its own value and value in excess of it (surplus-value)⁷⁹, and Pierre Bourdieu’s social capital refers to the potential resources associated with membership in a group (i.e. middle-class). However, human capital is different because its basic premise is the investment rationale. While the perception of human capital stock as a capital input could have it confused with variable

⁷⁶ Kathleen Lynch, “Neo-liberalism and Marketisation: the implications for higher education” in *European Educational Research Journal* 5 (2006), 3.

⁷⁷ Hill, Dave. “O Neoliberalismo Global, a Resistência e a Deformação da Educação.” *Currículo sem fronteiras* 3 (2003), 26.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 27.

⁷⁹ Karl Marx, *Capital: Volume I* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1977), 317.

capital, and the level of resources necessary to acquire its stock could imply an association with social capital, human capital is neither because its theory severs the link between value creation and labour, and therefore erases antagonistic class relations from the analysis of capitalist growth.⁸⁰ Human capital theory transforms every worker into a capitalist,⁸¹ who is individually responsible for managing their own human capital investment to guarantee their employability.⁸²

In fact, the term “human capital” has been appropriated by neoliberal advocates and institutions to push a specific type of educational agenda that is more concerned with the well-being of capital than the well-being of society, as exemplified by Levidow’s argument on the World Bank, the ERT, and other policy arguments explored in Chapter Two, because it reduces education to another production input, the human capital doctrine devalues education to the point that it is useless for society unless it is useful for capital. Time and money spent on education are considered investments that will lead to future financial returns. An investment in education is only acceptable if it will generate a higher level of return; that is, you must aim at profiting from your educational experience.⁸³ This has impacted educational and career choices, as students feel pressured

⁸⁰ Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, “The Problem with Human Capital Theory: A Marxian Critique,” in *The American Economic Review* 65 (1975), 74.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 74.

⁸² Les Levidow, “Neoliberal agendas for higher education”, in *Neoliberalism: a critical reader*, by Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (eds) (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 159.

⁸³ World Bank, “Economic returns to investments in education” in *The Road not travelled: Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa* (Washington: The World Bank, 2007) http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/EDU_02-Chap02-Education.pdf (downloaded on January 24, 2012)

to choose academic areas that will lead to highly paid jobs in order to compensate for debt and other monetary costs incurred during schooling.⁸⁴

From the point of view of global institutions and certain governments, the state's investment in education is only warranted if it will generate higher returns in terms of workers' qualifications and overall productivity.⁸⁵ This speaks to the fact that neoliberal governments do not always push for a reduction in state interventionism, but opt to change the nature of state interventions in favour of capital and class power,⁸⁶ which is in accord to Vicente Navarro's argument that "neoliberalism is the ideology and practice of the dominant classes of the developed and developing worlds alike."⁸⁷ The focus on creating human capital is of great benefit to capitalism, since a more trained workforce is better prepared to produce a variety of goods and is generally more productive, increasing the rate of profit. Human capital investment influences the job market and helps to reduce the poverty rate, which aids economic growth⁸⁸ and makes it appealing to governments and global institutions whose primary concern is the GDP rate.

According to neoliberal thought, the inequality of access and levels of education between the poor and upper classes is a result of individual failure where, for instance, one did not dedicate enough effort to education or did not invest enough into their own

⁸⁴ Les Levidow, "Neoliberal agendas for higher education", in *Neoliberalism: a critical reader*, by Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (eds) (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 160.

⁸⁵ Edmund Amann and Werner Baer. "Neoliberalism and its Consequences in Brazil." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34, no. 4 (2012), 958.

⁸⁶ Vicente Navarro. "Neoliberalism as a class ideology; or, the political cases of the growth of inequalities." *International Journal of Health Services* 37, no. 1 (2007), 50.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 53.

⁸⁸ Zelina Cardoso, "Políticas e reformas educacionais no contexto neoliberal," *Colloquium Humanarum* 6 (2009), 17.

human capital stock.⁸⁹ In general, this process of individualization and internalization ensures that negative outcomes are perceived as personal failures even when the circumstances that led to said outcomes are systemic and beyond the individual's control.⁹⁰ The weight that is placed on the individual contributes to the transition from state expenditures in education towards a user fee system that is dominant in the profit-oriented private sector.⁹¹ The neoliberal state then diminishes its role as much as possible in social services areas such as public education,⁹² although it is used to create the conditions for a human capital market, even if it entails a degree of state investment in education. However, as a capitalist state it must “destroy any form of pedagogy that tries to educate students about its own predicament – the creation of a self-consciousness as future labour force and the maintenance of this consciousness with a critical vision aimed at undermining the pacific functioning of the social production of the workforce.”⁹³ Boron and Torres speak to the relationship between neoliberalism, the state and education:

The model of choice, that it vouchers, implies that education should be submitted to market laws and mechanisms, this limiting the regulation established by the state. The privatization of education appears simultaneously as an intent to relegitimize state actions in the provision of services. In addition, privatization transfers the costs of these services to users, borrows administrative and managerial techniques from the private sector, uses cost-benefit analyses and “management by

⁸⁹ David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 42.

⁹⁰ Diane Reay, “Shifting class identities? Social class and the transition to higher education” in *Social justice, education, and identity*, by Carol Vincent (ed) (London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003), 51.

⁹¹ David Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 49.

⁹² *Ibid*, 26.

⁹³ Hill, Dave. “O Neoliberalismo Global, a Resistência e a Deformação da Educação.” *Currículo sem fronteiras* 3 (2003), 27. (In Portuguese, my translation)

objectives,” and ignores the bureaucratic disagreements that do not lead to any type of accountability or control of substantive accounts.⁹⁴

The ability to purchase and sell human capital investment in the private sector enhances the reproduction of inequality that takes place within this view. Richer individuals will have more means to invest in their own training and education and should therefore expect higher economic returns, whereas poorer individuals have fewer means and have to rely on the state’s willingness and capacity to provide human capital investment. Since a neoliberal state is less inclined to spend in public social service areas, given the preference for market-based provision of as many goods and services as possible (and profitable), the poor will have fewer opportunities to access education and may have to resort to the private sectors, at times at the expense of personal financial debt.

In addition to the neoliberal state receding from its role as a provider of education and other social goods, the neoliberal view of education as human capital has become entrenched in the educational system, as evidenced by the rationale behind the “*cursinho* effect” presented in Chapter Two, affecting how educational institutions frame their missions and how teachers and students view their activities and goals. Neoliberalism now holds hegemonic power not only over our political and economic systems, but also over societal thought. Instead of pursuing valuable knowledge that contributes to a worldview, political formation, in addition to preparing for a future occupation, students are turning to the educational system in search for specific job skills and an education

⁹⁴ Atilio Alberto Boron and Carlos Alberto Torres, “The impact of neoliberal restructuring on education and poverty in Latin America” in *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research* 42 (1996), 109.

that will give them the highest reward for their investment. This effect will be explored in detail in the analysis of in-depth interviews in the case study chapter of this thesis.

3.3 Hegemony, reproduction and normalization

The effect of neoliberal thought on how society views the state and the services that are considered to be its responsibility, like education, suggests that neoliberal hegemony has been successful at shaping thought and consciousness and guaranteeing its social reproduction through the generation of consent. Unlike the simple term of domination, which Antonio Gramsci associates with the coercive power of the state, hegemony comes to mean a more complex type of power he associates with institutions in civil society,⁹⁵ ‘superstructures’ in Marxist terms. Although a hegemon’s control is exercised through a society’s superstructure, whose powers may correspond to institutions, forms of consciousness, and/or political and cultural practices,⁹⁶ hegemony’s internal controls are highly complex “and have continually to be renewed, recreated and defended; and by the same token, that they can be continually challenged and in certain respects modified.”⁹⁷ Hegemonic power can be established through consent and coercion, though institutions aiming at using the latter tend to use state power for their purposes.

Karl Marx’s concept of ruling ideas is a starting point for understanding ideological control, an element for the creation of consent under hegemony. Marx explains ruling

⁹⁵ Martin Jay, *Marxism and totality: the adventures of a concept from Lukacs to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 165. Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince & other writings* (New York: International Publishers, 2007), 124.

⁹⁶ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 77.

⁹⁷ Raymond Williams, “Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory” in *Media and cultural studies: keyworks*, by Meenakshi Gigi Durham, Douglas Kellner (eds), (Cornwall: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 135.

ideas as the ideas of a ruling class “which is the ruling material force of society... [and] at the same time its ruling intellectual force”.⁹⁸ Marx also states that the ruling class not only produces these ideas but also regulates the production and distribution of ideas of their time.⁹⁹ These ideas form the basis for a strong ideology that may be established through all three types of superstructure identified above, although forms of consciousness is specifically important given the educational target to shape one’s consciousness. It is very powerful in the education scenario because it controls not only the curriculum to be taught but also how the entire system is perceived by society. By developing a ruling ideology on the educational system, neoliberal institutions and governments help to ensure the maintenance of a market for education and the commodification of knowledge and the priority of only knowledge that can be a valuable capital input. A ruling ideology can be skilfully used to create consent by hegemony in order to strengthen class power, as is the case with human capital theory, which leads students to pursue certain careers and a curriculum that relate to highly rated skills in the job market, among the teachers, who transform themselves into trainers for capital rather than educators, and among society in general, which accepts this system as tool for progress and economic growth. By promoting private education in lieu of public education, the market ideology transfers to the education system and its users, who apply the same investment-based rationale they use for skills attainment to their choice of schooling structure.

⁹⁸ Karl Marx (with Friedrich Engels), *The German Ideology*, (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1998), 67.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Complemented by consent to its operations, the presence of private education helps to reproduce hegemonic class power by ensuring the economic and social positions of class members through the investment rationale: the purchase of the educational commodity translates into a higher level of knowledge acquisition (which might not necessarily be the same as learning), which, in turn, increases the chances of accessing prestigious higher education institutions to study prestigious subject areas that will lead to high income levels in the job market. The notion of prestige itself is a result of neoliberal hegemony, which conflates class status with educational status by associating prestige with human capital returns and exclusiveness – a main characteristic of private goods. While there is a process of continuous contestation of hegemonic class power by the working class, exceptionally through the working class' own organic intellectuals who overcome educational barriers, the massive scale at which the reproduction of class positions through private education takes place constantly renews hegemony's internal controls and reconsolidates class power. The way educational arrangements speak directly to families and how they choose or expect children to be educated can lead to situations where the consolidation of class power is also the consolidation of family power. With both powers fused in many occasions, family elites guarantee their own social reproduction through various means such as personal estate and expensive educational investments that allow for high returns and powerful networking. The fact that family class power is a determining factor in one's access to schooling and plays a major role in reproducing social status makes it a significant part of hegemonic power, because, as Engels suggests, families are the source of human beings themselves, thus,

they directly affect the social organization of a historical stage¹⁰⁰ by producing workers and capitalists, and therefore, guaranteeing the reproduction of labour essential to capitalism.

The continuous renewal of hegemonic class power is directly related to the status quo of a society. The hegemonic class wishes to maintain the status quo because its maintenance must overpower counter-hegemonic contestations. While hegemony will reinvent itself to ensure its reproduction, any change must be embedded into the status quo through a process of normalization. In the case of the educational system, the normalization of private education, which is followed by the human capital doctrine and the internalization of responsibility for one's own education, derives from a hegemonic process involving the creation of consent. As previously mentioned, while the coercive aspect of hegemony is often aided by the state, consent is a more powerful arm because it directly affects forms of consciousness and prevents the creation of counter-hegemonic contestation. Consent aids the normalization of a system by generating acceptance of its reproduction. Gramsci writes that "'spontaneous' consent [is] given by the great masses of the population to the direction imprinted on social life by the fundamental ruling class, a consent which comes into existence 'historically' from the 'prestige' (and hence from the trust) accruing to the ruling class from its position and its function in the world of production."¹⁰¹ He argues that coercion is used to discipline the groups that do not consent either passively or actively. Jacob Gross explains that active consent implies a

¹⁰⁰ Friedrich Engels, "Preface to the First Edition, 1884," *Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 2009), 32.

¹⁰¹ Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince & other writings* (New York: International Publishers, 2007), 124.

conscious realization by the subordinate class of the compromise they have entered into with the dominant class, while passive consent consists of the unquestioned views and assumptions that directly or indirectly support the rule of the dominant class.¹⁰²

Consent building is not an easy task, it directly affects forms of consciousness, and, like other aspects of hegemony, it must constantly renew and reinvent itself in light of contestation. It works through the enforcement and reproduction of a specific worldview or ideology up to the point where consent is given to that power through the lack of contestation and, sometimes, through active acceptance. Harvey writes that the embeddedness of neoliberal thought into common sense creates consent. Contrary to good sense, which can be constructed out of critical engagement, common sense is uncritical and rooted in long standing practices and traditions and can be “profoundly misleading, obfuscating, or disguising real problems under cultural prejudices.” The neoliberal state can use its power to maintain the climate of consent necessary to perpetuate the ideological and political embodiment of neoliberalism by affecting common sense.¹⁰³ It is the common sense of a subordinate group that leads it to believe that its interests are best served by allying with the interests of the dominating group.¹⁰⁴ The use of short-term tactics that benefit constituents without challenging class power, a populist strategy, is an example of consent building under circumstances that are

¹⁰² Jacob P. K. Gross, “Education and hegemony: the influence of Antonio Gramsci” in *Beyond critique: exploring critical social theories and education*, by Bradley Levinson et al (eds) (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2011), 60.

¹⁰³ David Harvey, *A brief history of neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 40.

¹⁰⁴ Jacob P. K. Gross, “Education and hegemony: the influence of Antonio Gramsci” in *Beyond critique: exploring critical social theories and education*, by Bradley Levinson et al (eds) (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2011), 60.

primarily designed to help capital. Strategies such as the expansion of credit for the poor, or need-based scholarships to private universities contribute to the illusion of an increase in the standards of living of the subordinate classes. It becomes common sense to pursue financial help to access education. Such an image masks the active collaboration between state and capital and enables the embedding of even more neoliberal values into common sense, affecting the cultural and ideological reality. Market-power and the private sector are strengthened and neoliberalism renews its hegemonic power under the blind eye of the population.

3.4 Breaking the cycle: education as counter-hegemony

The argument of education as a public good is a strong one because of its many social roles and positive externalities, as well as its powerful counter-hegemonic potential. In addition to providing people with the necessary knowledge and skills to achieve employment and improve or maintain their material conditions, education also shapes the political consciousness of a community. According to Gramsci, superstructures have the power to shape consciousness, and education is a superstructure that is directly engaged with this task. Since educational institutions are a vehicle for generating consent, producing knowledge, and legitimizing theories and practices, it is only natural for hegemony to try to limit access to them while controlling their content and autonomy. As a result, educational institutions can have both a controlling or liberating, hegemonic or counter-hegemonic potential that depends on how consciousness is affected. Paulo Freire talks about three types of consciousness: critical consciousness,

naïve consciousness, and magical consciousness¹⁰⁵. He argues that critical consciousness (*conscientização*) is a requirement for achieving the critical awareness necessary to become political beings. It is integrated with reality, represents things as they are, and submits any casual links to analysis. Naïve consciousness, on the other hand, sees causality as an established fact and misrepresents the truth. Magical consciousness sees cause and effect as superior truth to which it must submit, leading to fatalism and negating agency and resistance in an educational scenario, while extremely important in a cultural context.¹⁰⁶ These three types of consciousness are directly related to Antonio Gramsci's common sense and good sense, where we could characterize naïve consciousness as production of common sense and magic consciousness as common sense reified. Consciousness can also be contradictory, because through active consent it is somewhat aware of the deals made between classes that guarantee hegemony.¹⁰⁷ Then, critical consciousness marks a rupture within common sense that leads to the formation of good sense. Gramsci connects good sense to philosophy, for it is "criticism and the overcoming of [...] common sense."¹⁰⁸ Like Gramsci, Freire points to education as an avenue for nurturing critical consciousness and challenging hegemony. He argues that

¹⁰⁵ The term "magical consciousness" is also used in different contexts to denote the consciousness of indigenous peoples, among others. It is important to consider that, in the context of this thesis study, magical consciousness is not being dismissed as inferior. Rather, the focus on critical consciousness is given because of its role in the educational process, while magical consciousness is very relevant to the anthropological study of the intersections between resistance and culture.

¹⁰⁶ Paulo Freire, *Education: the practice of freedom* (London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1974), 44.

¹⁰⁷ Jacob P. K. Gross, "Education and hegemony: the influence of Antonio Gramsci" in *Beyond critique: exploring critical social theories and education*, by Bradley Levinson et al (eds) (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2011), 60.

¹⁰⁸ Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince & other writings* (New York: International Publishers, 2007), 60.

education and literacy are directly related to individual and class identity and it must take the shape of a political act.¹⁰⁹ The creation of political consciousness through education is a major tool to fight hegemonic power by nurturing the capacity for contestation. Gramsci writes: “Critical understand of oneself, therefore, comes through the struggle of political ‘hegemonies’, of opposing directions, first in the field of ethics, then of politics, culminating in a higher elaboration of one’s own conception of reality. The awareness of being part of a determined hegemonic force (i.e. political consciousness) is the first step towards a further and progressive self-consciousness in which theory and practice finally unite.”¹¹⁰ And effective counter-hegemony “would undermine the power of bourgeois ideology over the masses through a process of political education”.¹¹¹

Carlos Alberto Torres agrees that education is essential in a counter-hegemonic process, since that “insofar as hegemony is founded on coercion and consensus, it is an educative relationship.”¹¹² He argues that hegemonic domination rests on ideological and material relations, which contribute to a process of social reproduction. Without education that challenges common sense (and the state of consent that follows from it), hegemonic power is maintained and so are unequal social structures. Access to education is, therefore, an important factor that conditions one’s chance to improve their material conditions and foster critical consciousness. One of the major criticisms highlighted in

¹⁰⁹ Paulo Freire, *Politics and Education* (Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1998), 55.

¹¹⁰ Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince & other writings* (New York: International Publishers, 2007), 67.

¹¹¹ Martin Jay, *Marxism and totality: the adventures of a concept from Lukacs to Habermas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 165.

¹¹² Carlos Alberto Torres, *Globalizations and education: collected essays on class, race, gender and the state* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2009), 54.

the literature review is that the Brazilian education system is configured towards workforce formation and, especially, instrumental knowledge, which Adorno and Horkheimer argue reinforces the status quo and bourgeois domination.¹¹³ A more democratic access to higher education represents an outlet for challenging the social reproduction of the elite while offering students the opportunity to better their condition and, at times, even engage with education as a political act, like Freire suggests.

Higher education offers significant opportunities for counter-hegemony while contributing to one's material conditions through specialization. Moacir Gadotti argues that the potential for counter-hegemony in higher education is based on the premise that universities are inherently political, because they defend interests that reflect the social and political organization of society. They are a space of struggle and conflict against the elite-based tendencies and the counter-tendencies that can be found within their environment.¹¹⁴ However, since access to universities also reflects the unequal structure of society, it is, by nature, discriminatory because it is structured to refuse access to those who have already been structurally denied access to resources and knowledge in the past.¹¹⁵ This selectivity undermines the counter-hegemonic potential of these spaces, because it favours students whose class interests are already aligned with those of society or who are more inclined to consent to hegemony even if against their own class interests. By expanding access to universities, including through equal access to quality public schooling, and eliminating selectivity based on income, gender, race, ethnicity, school

¹¹³ Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: philosophical fragments* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 30.

¹¹⁴ Moacir Gadotti, *Educação e Poder: Introdução à Pedagogia do Conflito* (São Paulo: Cortez Editora, 2008), 112.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 113.

background, and others, more opportunities arise for students to engage with critical thinking without the chokehold of debt and user fees that are part of market-based private education. The weakening of market and neoliberal influence also opens the door for more academic freedom, which is likely to foster a counter-hegemonic process and public debate on the development of alternatives.¹¹⁶ This situation opens the door for an in-depth analysis of access to universities under neoliberal hegemony. The following chapter explores how inequality of access is a complex phenomenon and it also provides the methodological basis for this thesis's case study and how the theory explored will be applied.

¹¹⁶ Les Levidow, "Marketizing higher education : neoliberal strategies." In *The Virtual University? Knowledge, Markets and Management*, edited by Kevin Robins and Frank Webster, 227-248. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, 13.

4 Chapter: Methodology

4.1 Methodological lens

As explored in Chapter Three, neoliberalism and hegemony are underlying themes that set the scenario for inequality of access to education. The neoliberal agenda includes a focus on a human capital model of education and the privatization of access. This creates barriers that contribute to inequality of access, though they do not marginalize every individual the same way. Systems of inequality foster the presence of ‘multiple oppressions’, a concept shaped by an intersectional methodological approach and aimed at making visible the different ways people are marginalized and oppressed based on class, race and gender. The definitions of class, race, and gender used in this study are derived from Joan Acker’s work, in which class can be defined as a concept that locates individuals and groups within the logic of capitalist processes of privilege and inequality¹¹⁷; gender is informed by both male/female categories as well as expressions of femininity and masculinity and pertains to “socially constructed differences between men and women and the beliefs and identities that support difference and inequality”; and race refers to “socially defined differences based on physical characteristics, culture, and historical domination and oppression, justified by entrenched beliefs” and is, at times, accompanied by ethnicity in structures of inequality.¹¹⁸ Intersectionality is important for the development of a methodology that is sensitive to multiple oppressions and the type of selectivity it promotes. Berger and Guidroz write that the intersectionality of

¹¹⁷ Joan Acker, *Class questions: feminist answers* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 2.

¹¹⁸ Joan Acker, “Inequality regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations” in *Gender & Society* 20 (2006), 444.

experience in society is the driving force behind a theory of multiple oppressions, first advocated by Kimberlé Crenshaw's scholarly effort to make visible the discrimination experienced by black women.¹¹⁹ Considering how "diverse subjects whose social location within cross-cutting relations of difference" shape their experiences helps us see how multiple oppressions are embedded in processes of marginalization under capital.¹²⁰ The survey of the literature by Nagar et al. shows how a context of neoliberalization impacts class processes, identities and gender relations simultaneously. For instance, as neoliberalism pulls states away from the provision of social services, most of the work falls back on poor women's shoulders, who not only carry a disproportionate role in social reproduction but are also denied emancipatory opportunities due to this increased workload.¹²¹

Acker argues that studies that focus on class, gender and racial inequality separately tend fail to see how these factors contribute to mutually reinforcing or even contradictory processes: by focusing on one category, the scholar risks oversimplifying interlocking experiences.¹²² The literature on education inequality in Brazil and the *vestibular* system has only lightly considered this argument from a theoretical standpoint and neglected it as a methodological approach. The studies on the exclusive character of the *vestibular* focus primarily on class as a socioeconomic factor that determines access to education. Most of

¹¹⁹ Michele Tracy Berger and Kathleen Guidroz, "Introduction" in *The intersectional approach: transforming the academy through race, class, and gender*, by Michele T. Berger and Kathleen Guidroz (eds.) (Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 2009), 4.

¹²⁰ Richa Nagar, Victoria Lawson, Linda McDowell, Susan Hanson, "Locating Globalization: Feminist (Re)readings of the Subjects and Spaces of Globalization" in *Economic Geography* 78 (2002), 263.

¹²¹ Ibid, 261.

¹²² Joan Acker, "Inequality regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations" in *Gender & Society* 20 (2006), 442.

the literature on the *vestibular* is not structured to be attentive to intersections of class, gender and race.

Antonio Guimarães argues that race has only been included in the dialogue through affirmative action measures, such as university entrance quotas. Black people suffer from various disadvantages when attempting to enter university such as poverty, access to poor quality public school, low social support and incentives, as well as the exclusive character of the *vestibular* exam that values a private school curriculum.¹²³ He criticizes the scholarship that rejects any sort of race-based policy for inclusion because of the belief that class concerns should prevail; this argument highlights the need for interconnecting class, race and gender oppressions when analysing access to quality basic education and higher education. Gender has also been disregarded as a major issue due to arguments that women are just as well represented in higher education as men. Most studies concentrate on the increase in enrolment and degree completion by women, such as Beltrão and Alves', who find that in the youngest cohort studied the number of women that finish a university course is almost twice that of men.¹²⁴ This is used to conclude that Brazil is an "example of a country that has managed to reverse the gender gap in education and eliminate the educational shortfall of women relative to men."¹²⁵ This conclusion is problematic, because the study does not consider intersections of class and race that affect women's access (that is, which women have easier access to university) or the impact of the private/public divide and the *vestibular* system on determining which

¹²³ Antonio Sérgio Alfredo Guimarães, "Acesso de negros às universidades públicas" in *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 118 (2003), 259.

¹²⁴ Kaizo Iwakami Beltrão and José Esutáquio Diniz Alves, "Reversal of the gender gap in Brazilian education in the 20th century" in *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 39 (2009), 26.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 29.

women achieve access (i.e. women with a public school background versus private school background).

Rosemberg suggests that similar thinking has produced uniform education policies that treat gender in an essentialist manner.¹²⁶ If it is possible to claim that the Brazilian system offers equal gender opportunities, it is only because race and class positions have been ignored. A similar argument is seen in a study of wage inequality in the United States by Leslie McCall, who states that factors such as the gender wage gap are inadequate as a measure of women's material conditions, for absolute gains by highly educated women often come at the cost of a worsening situation for lower skilled women.¹²⁷ This reinforces the need for intersecting hierarchies of gender, class and race in order to unveil the full scope of the marginalizing effects of access to higher education. Wivian Weller's analysis of inequality and affirmative action measures at the University of Brasília (UnB) demonstrates the value of an intersectional approach.¹²⁸ By highlighting the experiences of black women at university, the research shows that racial and gender discrimination co-exist and vary according to the students' family, class and schooling backgrounds. Some of the findings also report that attendance at *cursinhos* played a decisive role in preparing the young women to pass the entrance exam.¹²⁹ Overall, Weller makes a convincing case for the importance of considering how class and race affects a

¹²⁶ Flúvia Rosemberg, "Educação formal, mulher e gênero no Brasil contemporâneo" in *Estudos Feministas* 9 (2001), 517.

¹²⁷ Leslie McCall, "Gender and the New Inequality: Explaining the College/Non-College Wage Gap" in *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000), 251.

¹²⁸ Wivian Weller, "Diferenças e desigualdades na Universidade de Brasília: experiências de jovens negras e suas visões sobre o sistema de cotas" in *Política & Sociedade* 11 (2007).

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, 144.

woman's access to university and her chances of success and discrimination once she begins her post-secondary studies.

4.2 Research design

When designing the research methods employed in this study, I aimed at being attentive to any scenarios that could display marginalization of access at the intersections of race, gender, and class. By keeping these connections and hierarchies in mind, I designed survey and in-depth interview questions that were sensitive to these three categories and how they could affect access to tertiary education in the city of Goiânia, whether concomitantly or separately. Hence, the research methods were designed to make visible the ways certain factors determine students' access to university through the normalization of the *cursinho* industry and whether these factors operate intersectionally in the form of multiple oppressions. The two arguments, mentioned in Chapter One, being explored through the case study are:

First argument – The normalization of *cursinho* attendance advances a neoliberal agenda for education. Students who wish to gain access to tertiary education are more and more inclined to attend *cursinho* and/or a related service in addition to high school in order to enhance their preparedness for the *vestibular* exam. This has promoted an individualized, private sector oriented, view of education.

Second argument – The neoliberal agenda for education contributes to the inequality of access to universities. This inequality faced by students is intersectional, which entails that marginalization of access to university in Brazil is determined by many

factors that may vary across the country, six of which are central to this study: sex, race, ethnicity, class, school background, and *cursinho* attendance.¹³⁰

The case study about access to tertiary education in the city of Goiânia presented in this thesis was conducted through mixed methods, which involve the collection, analysis and integration of qualitative and quantitative data.¹³¹ This approach allows for triangulation, which enriches the study's findings, complementarity and a process where the results from one method inform or develop the other method.¹³² Hesse-Biber argues that statistical data collected often shapes interview questions for the qualitative part of the study.¹³³ Mixed methods also help to clarify contradictions or questions found in the first phase of investigations, while expanding the scope of the inquiry, which contributes to future research.¹³⁴ While the quantitative methods used in this study could address both propositions, the addition of a qualitative approach ensures that the theoretical themes of neoliberalism and hegemony as well as related subjective issues such as power, influence, and a subject's perspective are taken in to account. These themes are paramount to the understanding of the first proposition, on the normalization of the

¹³⁰ Subject area is also an important variable that determines access, because the choice of major at the vestibular exam is directly related to competitiveness. Competitiveness affects a student's odds of gaining entry to that major not only because of the number of students competing for a number of spots, but also because of cut-out grades at the exam (ponto de corte) and the availability of waitlisting. Since competitiveness is already determined by a yearly survey of vestibular data published by the Federal University of Goiás (UFG), it will not be determined through survey numbers. Rather, UFG's data will be used in a complementary manner and a table with such data will be added to the appendix.

¹³¹ Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, *Mixed methods research: merging theory with practice* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2010), 3.

¹³² Ibid, 3-5.

¹³³ Ibid, 5.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

cursinho industry, as suggested in the previous chapter, which explores the links between neoliberalism, hegemonic thought, and the normalization of institutions, structures, and society's expectations.

Case studies are important because the deep investigation of a specific example can contribute to more general explanations of a phenomenon. The choice of case is significant for determining the relevance of the case study and subsequent conclusions for the research field. This case study in the capital city of Goiânia was chosen given its context of inequality, making it significant for an analysis of inequality of access to tertiary education in Brazil. Goiânia's Gini coefficient¹³⁵ is 0.65, the highest of any major urban city in Latin America according to the *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011* report.¹³⁶ The city is also very diverse, since it has attracted migrants from various parts of the country since its inception. Goiânia also represents a relevant case study because it hosts 28 higher education institutions, both universities and colleges, including the Federal University of Goiás (UFG).¹³⁷ The city is also an interesting case from the perspective of basic education, since the latest numbers divulged in the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) show the uneven performance of public schools, since while some achieved high scores, many others fared poorly and even regressed.¹³⁸ Figure 1

¹³⁵ The Gini coefficient measures inequality of income/wealth (varies by country) with values between 0 and 1. 0 stands for perfect equality and 1 stands for perfect inequality.

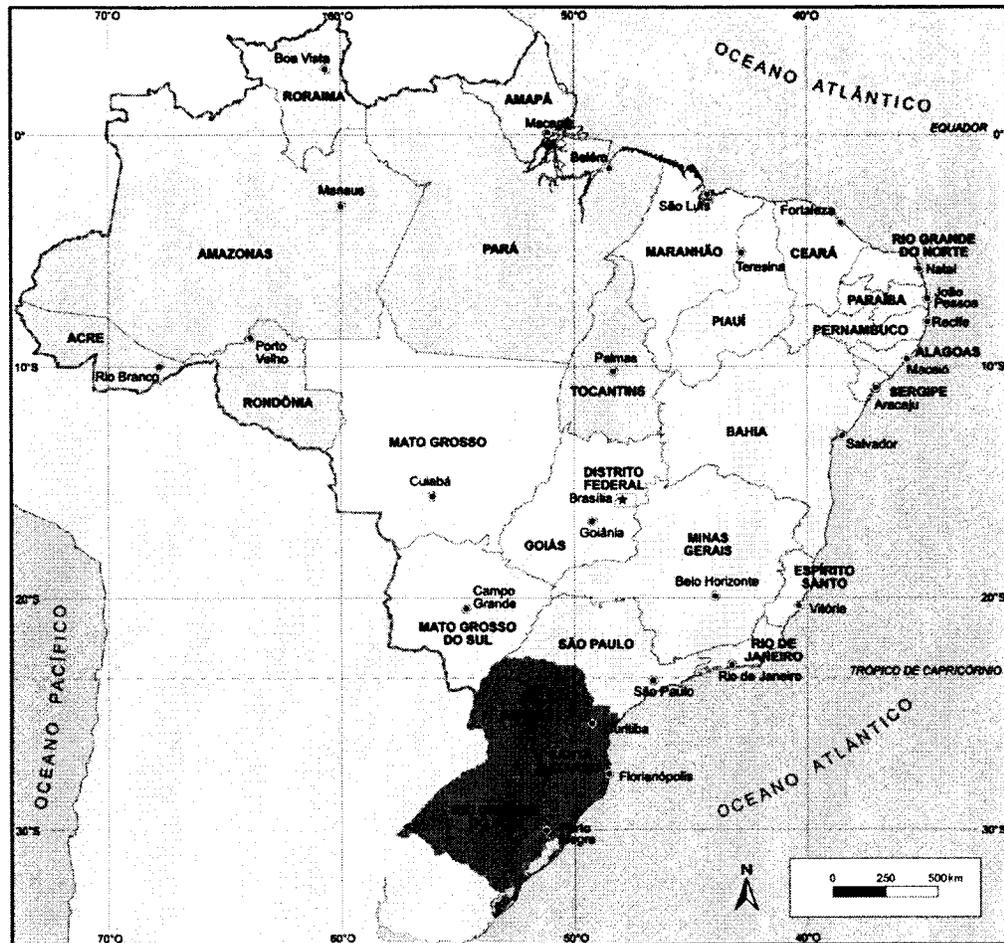
¹³⁶ UN-HABITAT, *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011: bridging the urban divide* (London: Earthscan, 2010), 193.

¹³⁷ Ministério da Educação, "Instituições de Educação Superior e Cursos Cadastrados" <http://emec.mec.gov.br/> (accessed on December 17, 2011)

¹³⁸ Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais, "Basic Education Development Index" "<http://sistemasideb.inep.gov.br/resultado/> (accessed on December 17, 2011)

shows the location of the city of Goiânia in Brazil and in the state of Goiás. More context about the city of Goiânia and its educational scenario will be provided in Chapter Five.

Figure 1 - Map of Brazil¹³⁹



The case study was designed to be representative and explanatory of the relationship between unequal access to tertiary education in Brazil and the factors that affects such access. The factor variables explored are of both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The quantitative factors of access to university are: sex, race (complemented by ethnicity), class, high school background, and previous attendance of *cursinho*, a focus of

¹³⁹ IBGE, “Mapa Político,” http://www.ibge.gov.br/7a12/mapas/frame.php?mapa=brasil/brasil_grandes_regioes (accessed on May 15, 2012)

this study. These factors operate in an intersectional manner and are the focus of the quantitative phases of this study. The qualitative factors are neoliberalism and hegemony, which are the main theoretical themes that pertain to how inequality of education occurs. Since these themes are hard to quantify, they are the focus of the qualitative phase of this study and convey the theoretical position behind both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses undertaken. The objective of analysing the variables is not to predict access to tertiary education, which would be a statistically unrepresentative attempt given the limited sample size, but rather to explain how these factors interact with each other to determine such access. Since the choice of mixed methods is based on the triangulation of results, the two quantitative sources and one qualitative source of data will be interrogated simultaneously to investigate the normalization of *cursinho* attendance prior to university access and what other factors operate intersectionally to determine access.

Among the indicators of normalization of *cursinhos* are: students' understanding of the *cursinho* as a facilitator and/or means of access in face of the high levels of competitiveness of the *vestibular*, human capital view of education that reinforces private investment in training and schooling (resulting in the previously mentioned “*cursinho* effect”), the elitization of subject areas (majors) and learning spaces and reinforcement of class power, and the internalization of responsibility for educational provision onto families and the individual. Indicators of intersectional inequality include: pre-selectivity (when low-income students choose less competitive majors and high-income students choose more competitive ones), dependence on *cursinho* attendance on income and other factors, privilege and prestige in the educational setting, financial sacrifices, personal and

structural discrimination, and the correlation between sex, race, class, and *cursinho* attendance as factors that affect one's background and chances of entry into university.

The qualitative phase will build directly upon the findings from the quantitative part. Thus, the methods proceeded from quantitative to qualitative, so that important issues that emerge in the first phase could be explored more deeply in the second part. This was done through double sampling (a sample of participants for the qualitative phase is selected from the sample of participants of the quantitative phase) and by exploring the relationship between the quantitative variables and the qualitative ones. The data collection and analytical methods used in the case study can be divided in three parts, two quantitative and one qualitative:

First part (quantitative): In order to assert whether or not *cursinho* attendance has been normalized, it is important to determine the size and reach of the *cursinho* industry. To do so, I turned to the grey literature: registries, search engines, official documents and advertisement material collection. To complement these findings, I contacted the *cursinho* institutions in question for enrolment data and tuition costs. This was done through a survey of eleven questions, which was applied either by phone or by e-mail, as per the institution's request. This part of the study proved to be somewhat challenging, since some institutions were unwilling to share some of the information they would not normally share with prospective students and the wider public. In actuality, the fact that I disclosed my identity as a researcher only added to their suspicion, leading to a number of refusals, which I had anticipated. Out of 33 *cursinhos* identified as active within Goiânia's city limits, 18 responded to the survey, 8 refused to answer, and 7 were deemed unreachable due to invalid phone numbers and dubious local addresses. The

sample of 18 institutions was diverse as it consisted of both large and expensive *cursinho* establishments, medium-sized *cursinhos*, as well as those identified as “popular” *cursinhos* (with lower tuition fees and that cater to poorer students). Since this part of the study involved several scheduling conflicts while trying to reach the most qualified persons in each institution to answer the survey, it was conducted on random dates from September 2011 to November 2011. The statistical mode will be applied to determine the dominant picture of the *cursinho* industry in Goiânia, especially in terms of size of institution, tuition fees, and whether the institution targets students pursuing more competitive majors, which is an indicator of prestige and the reproduction of class position (Full questionnaire can be found in Appendix B). The distribution frequency of these variables is particularly important to support conclusions about the socioeconomic profile of students that may attend each *cursinho*, since this information was not sought out directly in anticipation of the institutions’ probable refusal to provide it. This part of the study provides the reach of the *cursinho* industry in Goiânia and contributes to the analysis of its normalization as a factor of access to higher education.

Second part (quantitative): The quantitative phase consisted of anonymous surveys of 27 multiple-choice questions designed to find out about the background and choices of students of the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) who began their studies in 2010 or 2011. The purpose of the survey was to trace a profile of university students from both private and public school backgrounds and identify those who attended *cursinho* for the third part of the study. The survey indicated not only the socioeconomic profile of new incoming university students but also the relationship between successful access to the UFG and *cursinho* attendance. The population was limited to students registered at

the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) only. Although originally I intended to also survey students from the Pontifical Catholic University of Goiás (PUC-GO), the largest private university in Goiânia as per enrolment numbers, I was unable to do so due to the refusal by this university's administration to grant me access to their campus that complied with the ethics guidelines approved for this research.

The surveys were conducted in late September and early October of 2011. The sample was made through nonprobability, nonproportional quota sampling, which consists of setting a minimum number of sampling units, since the size of the sample will depend on the amount of students willing to take the survey. Since students could be approached only while the researcher was present on campus, this sample is also the result of accidental or convenience sampling. During this time, I randomly approached students at the two campuses of UFG. I estimate that between 500-800 students were approached, however, due to the eligibility criteria of having begun studies in 2010 or 2011 and some refusals, the final number of successful surveys was 207. To encourage participation, the potential participants were offered the option to enter into a draw to win one of three gift cards to a popular bookstore in Goiânia as compensation for their time. Survey results were paramount for exploring the proposition that access to higher education is affected by intersectional inequality. The statistical methods applied to evaluate the survey sample and chosen variables of access (sex, race, class, and previous attendance of *cursinho*) were the chi-square test, for determining dependence and correlation (specifically relevant when investigating intersectionality), and frequency distribution, for determining standard deviation.

Third part (qualitative): Based on the information collected from the survey, I identified that 122 out of 207 participants had utilized some form of *vestibular* preparatory service. Among these services were: standard *cursinho* attendance, enrolment in *cursinhos* classes for specific subjects (called *especificas*) such as Physics or History, and travel packages for out-of-state *vestibular* exams. Since the third part of the study involved taking a sample out of the sample used in the second part of the study, I randomly selected 50 students out of the 122 that had used a *cursinho* service and invited them to participate in a 20-minute semi-structured interview as a follow-up to their survey participation. I also offered a bookstore gift card to each participant as direct compensation for his or her interviewing time. As a result of nonprobability, nonproportional quota sampling, 15 successful interviews took place either in person or over the phone, as per the participant's choice. The questions were designed with the survey answers in mind, as a means to clarify or highlight any aspects that were predominant in the survey responses. All 15 interviews were conducted in the last two weeks of October 2011.

The interview analysis was done to highlight the two theoretical themes that inform this research: neoliberalism and hegemony in an inequality of education context, as explored in the previous chapter. The themes were identified in several contexts brought forward by the participants and are fundamental for the understanding of the normalization of the *cursinho* industry as a mediator of access to university. Neoliberal influence was identified in contexts such as the internalization of responsibility, individual success, and view of education as human capital investment and returns. Hegemony arose in contexts of oppression, feelings of inability, privilege, psychological

pressure, as well as in contexts of explicit barriers of access (physical and financial). The objective was to examine how these factors affected participants' view of access and their personal experiences at school, the *vestibular* exam, and finally at university. The participants were asked questions about their past experiences as well as how they currently view their place at university and their expectations for the future (base interview questions can be found in Appendix B). Finally, coding was analysed in order to bring forward (intersectional) correlations among the qualitative themes and the quantitative variables identified in the second part of the study, many of which arose directly and indirectly in the interviews.

5 Chapter: Case study - Neoliberalism and *cursinhos* in the city of Goiânia

Although the literature has explored many factors that affect access to education in Brazil, the *cursinho* industry remains under researched and its influence analysed only as an extension of the private educational sector. This case study utilizes fieldwork data collected in the city of Goiânia and at the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) to expose the various ways the *cursinho* industry has impacted access and students' perception of the Brazilian educational system. It explores the links between factor-based inequality, such as race, gender, class, and schooling background, and the selectivity that occurs through the *vestibular* method of entry to university. It employs a theoretical understanding of neoliberalism and hegemony to analyse these factors in relation to student experiences of success and failure as they try to access tertiary education in Goiânia.

5.1 The city of Goiânia as a case study of inequality

The city of Goiânia was chosen as the scenario for this case study because of its extreme urban inequality and diverse educational system. Goiânia is the capital city of the centrally located state of Goiás, in Brazil. The city was founded in 1933 in the former village of Campinas in order to transfer the former state's capital (Cidade de Goiás) to a new location. Originally planned for a population of 50,000, Goiânia is now the home of 1,301,892 people and the place of work of many more who live in its greater urban area. Although located in Goiás, a state whose economy is based on agriculture and animal husbandry (both small-scale and large-scale), Goiânia's economy also relies heavily on the textile, food, and services industries.

Table 1 - Goiânia, capital of Goiás, Brazil (2009/2010 numbers)	
Population	1,318,149
Average GDP per capita:	R\$ 15.376,50 ¹⁴⁰
Area:	722km ²
Basic school students	237,707
Number of high schools	Public: 74 (72.8% of students); Private: 78 (27.2% of students)
Number of elementary schools	Public: 264 (70.4% of students); Private: 209 (29.6% of students)
Number of pre-schools	Public: 146 (31.1% of students); Private: 231 (68.9% of students)

Source: IBGE, 2010 <http://www.ibge.gov.br/cidadesat/>

The UN-Habitat report *State of the World Cities 2010/2011: Bridging the urban divide* provides data and analysis of urban areas throughout the world and on the standard of living of their dwellers. The study compiles the Gini Coefficient¹⁴¹ of selected major urban areas in various countries in order to identify levels of equality and inequality within the urban divide. The city of Goiânia is present in their list as the city with the highest Gini coefficient in Brazil, boasting a 0.65 index.¹⁴² Brazil's overall urban Gini was 0.58,¹⁴³ while the largest cities in the country, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, also known for their slums and criminality, reported coefficients of 0.50 and 0.53, respectively. Based on the study's compilation of cities and their Gini coefficients, Goiânia is not only the most unequal major city of Brazil, but also of Latin America. In fact, among the cities used in the study, Goiânia is only less unequal than South African

¹⁴⁰ The Brazilian currency, Real (reais, in its plural form), denoted by the symbol R\$ will be used throughout the study to refer to income and costs. As a frame of reference R\$1.00 is worth U\$0.52 according to the May 07, 2012 exchange rate. Another important reference for understanding the value of the Real is the national minimum wage, which is established at R\$622.00 per month as of January 1st, 2012.

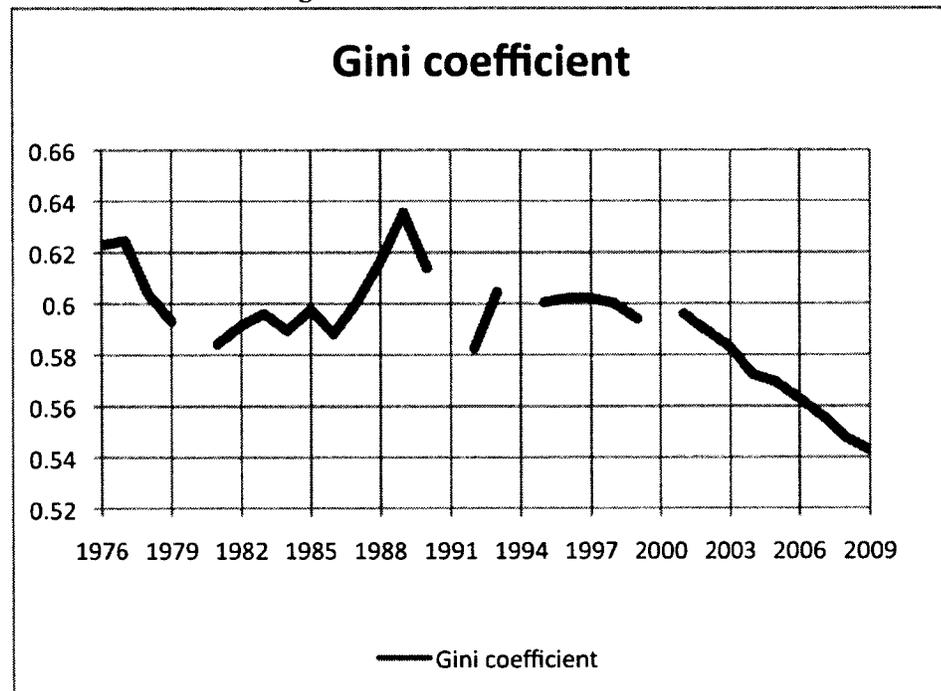
¹⁴¹ The Gini Coefficient measures inequality on a scale from 0 to 1, where 0 stands for perfect equality and 1 for perfect inequality. Depending on the country, the Gini may be calculated for income inequality or consumption inequality. In Brazil, it measures the distribution of income.

¹⁴² UN-HABITAT, *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011: bridging the urban divide* (London: Earthscan, 2010), 193.

¹⁴³ Though the Gini is 0.54 if considering both urban and rural areas.

cities, which, it can be argued, still suffer in the aftermath of racial apartheid. Although the Gini Coefficient used is a measure of only income inequality, it helps to paint a picture of overall inequality and what it means for access to important resources in an urban area, one of them being access to quality education.

Figure 2 - Brazil's Gini 1976-2009¹⁴⁴



The educational scenario of the city of Goiânia is diverse, with public schools run by the municipal, state, and federal governments, a wide range of private schools. The divide between the public and private school sectors is almost even in terms of

¹⁴⁴ Government of Brazil, "Economic Indicators," *Portal Brasil* http://www.brasil.gov.br/sobre/economia/indicadores/disoc_rdcg/indicadorview (accessed on 25/03/2012). The gaps in the graph refer to years when the Gini coefficient was not calculated or reported by the appropriate research bodies of the Brazilian government. It is relevant to note the declining trend in the national Gini coefficient after the peak that took place in 1989, an important year for Brazil's democratic transition from decades of military dictatorship. It can be argued that the decline is owed to the newly established democratic governments and high growth rates, especially after the election of President Cardoso in 1994 and President Lula in 2002. The increase between 1992 and 1993 may be owed to the deepening of the inflationary crisis that happened in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

institutional numbers (See Table 2). However, in regards to the number of students enrolled in each sector, the public sector carries the larger weight of students with 68.4% of all students attending public municipal, state, or federal schools (See Table 3). This difference in enrolment suggests that while the number of public and private schools is comparable, public schools have a bigger student body while private schools absorb the excess demand for schooling coming from members of the population who can pay private tuition. This distribution reflects how the private sector is dominant in terms of number of institutions while still maintaining its exclusive character through smaller enrolment.

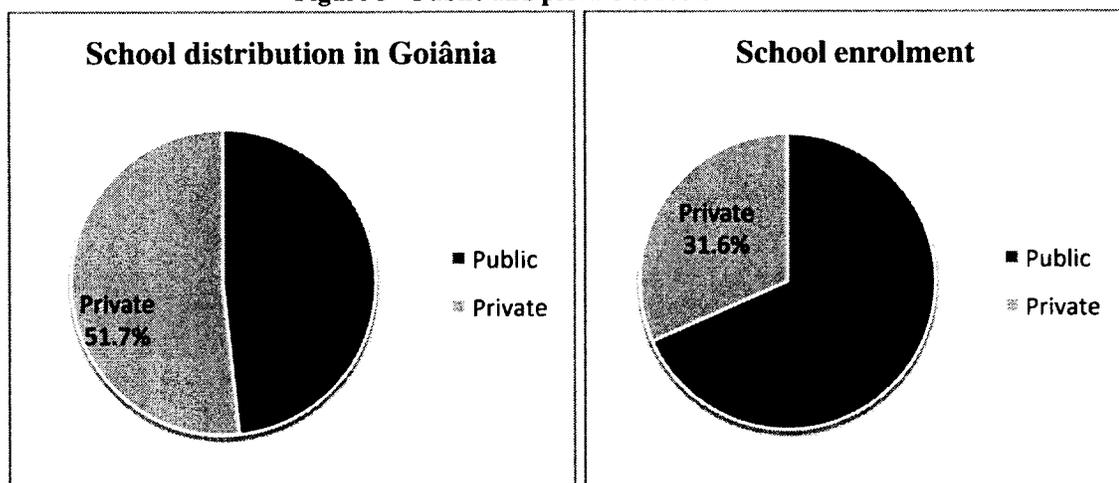
Table 2 - Number and types of schools in Goiânia

	Pre-school	Primary and middle school	High school	Total
Public (municipal/state/federal)	146	264	74	484
Private	231	209	78	518
Total	377	473	152	1002

Table 3 - Schools in Goiânia according to enrolment numbers

	Pre-school	Primary and middle school	High school	Total
Public (municipal/state/federal)	6186	123782	45690	175658
Private	13089	51283	16952	81324
Total	19275	175065	62642	256982

Figure 3 - Public and private schools in Goiânia



The private sector also benefits from the precarious state of many public schools and how public system teachers are often overworked and underpaid. The schools run by the state government, for example, are considered to be very underfunded and struggling with underpaid teachers, who often work multiple jobs at both public and private sectors. In early 2012, the state school system teachers went on strike because of disagreements over job security and payment. In a rare event, public school students joined the teachers in protests, demanding that the government makes public education a priority.

It is clear then that the city of Goiânia presents a very competitive educational scenario to foster a prosperous market of private education, especially in light of underinvestment in state-funded schools and an underpaid teaching force. While private high schools rely heavily on their approval track record on the *vestibular* exam¹⁴⁵ to attract more students and even create competition for coveted spots at some of the top schools, the high tuition costs, some of which surpass private university tuition, are prohibitive and lead students to search for alternatives to increase their own competitiveness in the *vestibular* exam. They may choose to study on their own during their free time, to make use of *vestibular*-oriented resources made available online or for purchase at bookstores, or to enrol at *cursinho* classes and/or their *específicas*, which are classes on a specific subject that can be hard for the student to understand or a fundamental part of the *vestibular* exam for their desired major.

5.2 *Cursinhos* in Goiânia

In this case study we identify *cursinhos* as any institution, or section of an institution, providing classes and material geared specifically towards the *vestibular*

¹⁴⁵ A detailed description of the *vestibular* exam can be found in Chapter Two.

exam with a curriculum that may be equal to or different from the traditional school curriculum approved and regulated by the state through, Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional (LDB), Brazil's federal education law. *Cursinhos* are preparatory courses for the *vestibular* exam. Lessons are normally offered daily in the mornings, afternoons, or evenings, and include classes on all the subjects required for the *vestibular*. *Cursinhos* can also be customized to focus on the *vestibular* material required by a specific university, normally a local one or a very prestigious one. In addition to regular preparatory *vestibular* courses, a *cursinho* may offer *específicas*, as defined above and which normally take place once or twice a week for a couple of hours, and other support services such as pre-packaged books of exercises and mock tests (*apostilas*) and even arrange *vestibular* registration and travel packages for students wishing to write the exam for out-of-state universities, though this service is also offered by travel agencies and other businesses. It is important to note that the *cursinho* phenomenon is not peculiar to Brazil, since the institutional concept is also present in other countries, although under different names, but still designed to offer additional preparation for students writing higher education entrance exams such as *academias* in Peru and *cursos de acceso a la universidad* in Colombia.

Although the *cursinhos* are not officially integrated into the Brazilian educational system, it can be argued that they have become, nonetheless, a level between traditional schooling and universities.¹⁴⁶ While the Ministry of Education (MEC) keeps a registry of

¹⁴⁶ Freitas (1984) in Ricardo Luiz Rocha Fortes., "O cursinho como unidade escolar de mediação entre o ensino médio e a universidade: peculiaridades, sentidos e perspectivas," Master's Thesis (Belo Horizonte: Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, 2005), 23.

all schools and universities in Brazil, which ensures its ability to oversee these institutions, it has not sought to compile a list of *cursinho* institutions in Brazil nor has it provided a reason for not doing so. The fact that many *cursinhos* are affiliated or directly operate out of a traditional school (mainly private ones) may be why MEC has not dedicated due attention to these establishments. The volatility of the industry is also high, as observed in Goiânia through the material collected during the year of 2011 with smaller *cursinho* institutions operating for a small number of years and either closing down or being absorbed by a larger institution. This volatility makes it particularly difficult to keep an updated database of these establishments. However, no matter the reason, the absence of an official registry of *cursinhos* demonstrates a low level of accountability by this industry to the MEC and a high level of autonomy that is enjoyed because of MEC's inability to regulate the industry.

Hence, the need to collect information about *cursinhos* from other methods and why there is not aggregate data on the size of the *cursinho* industry in Brazil. Thirty-three *cursinho* institutions were identified in the city of Goiânia through various methods, including: telephone books, online listing, billboards, and advertisement material such as pamphlets and television commercials. These methods were employed given the absence of an official database or directory for *cursinho* institutions. The 33 *cursinhos* were contacted in the fall of 2011 to participate in this study by telephone or e-mail. These methods were chosen because of the long distances between some of these institutions and the way they were scattered around the city. It is notable, though, that a high proportion of these institutions were in areas of the city inhabited by the middle-class and the upper-middle-class, a convenient location for the *cursinhos* given that some of the

monthly fees charged were as high as monthly tuition for private university and that top private schools of Goiânia are also mostly located in the same regions. Seven establishments contacted were deemed unreachable due to ambiguous locations and invalid phone numbers, and even possibly name changes. This included the only free/popular *cursinho* identified in the city. Eight others refused to participate in the study.

As a result, 18 *cursinho* establishments (54.5% of institutions contacted) participated through a short survey answered by individuals deemed qualified by their own institutions to answer the questions.¹⁴⁷ Some of the institutions that refused to participate expressed concerns about the purposes of the study (i.e. worried about espionage by the competition) and others hung up on the researcher even though information about the study and ethics clearance was presented. Since this reaction was expected, I had established that a minimum of 15 *cursinho* institutions would be sufficient to provide an overview into *cursinho* activities. Therefore, I consider a response level of 54.5% to be satisfactory. The answers from the 18 *cursinho* institutions are not intended to be a representative sample of the *cursinho* industry of Goiânia (or Brazil) as a whole or to have statistical significance. However, they are useful to point to specific trends to *cursinho* operations, size, and potential influence on access to university. The information gathered helps to provide context to the environment of access to universities in Goiânia and the options (or lack thereof) students face when preparing for the *vestibular* exam.

¹⁴⁷ Since the institutions determined their own selection criteria for answering the survey, the individuals who answered the questions ranged from directors to receptionists.

The 18 *cursinho* institutions that participated in this study ranged in size, time in business and services offered. They were given the option to refuse to answer any question they deemed sensitive to their business. Taking into account the answers given to the multiple-choice questions, I was able to estimate what the dominant characteristics of a *cursinho* institution in Goiânia. In order to make the estimate, I identified the “mode,” the value or values that occur most frequently in the data and is useful to determine the dominant view of what a *cursinho* institution looks like. The use of “mode” is also important to understand student comments about the *cursinho* industry in the second part of this chapter by highlighting the most common picture of a *cursinho* establishment.

Table 4 - Dominant characteristics of preparatory course institutions in Goiânia (Mode)

Question	Mode category	Number of institutions in the mode
Years of operation	More than 10 years	8
Number of students	Less than 100 and between 501-1000 students (bi-modal) ¹⁴⁸	5 and 5
Number of teachers employed	31-40 teachers	7
Preparatory courses offered	Offers both <i>cursinho</i> and <i>específica</i>	6
Relationship to a high school	Affiliated/part of a high school	11
Estimated success rates at the 2010 <i>vestibular</i> (UFG or general)	Approval rates between 51%-75%	8
Monthly tuition for <i>cursinhos</i>	Between R\$501-900	6
Monthly tuition for <i>específicas</i>	Less than R\$150	10
Types of students targeted	Students pursuing any major	12

While the phase that entailed identifying all the *cursinho* institutions in Goiânia revealed that a share of them no longer existed or was bought out by larger institutions

¹⁴⁸ The bi-modal result indicates that the *cursinho* industry has both very large institutions and very small institutions. Size depends on student capacity and facilities available, as well how well known the institution is, which affects its ability to attract more students and tuition costs.

and that new institutions has arisen recently, 44.4% of institutions participating in the survey reported being in operation for longer than 10 years. The fact is that 75% of these long-running institutions belong to or are affiliated to a high school, which suggests that successful *cursinho* operations in the long-run are associated with successful high school operations. The affiliation with a high school may provide the *cursinho* institution with higher name exposure (if they have the same name, as is the case when the *cursinho* operates directly out of the high school precincts) as well as a steady supply of students who, unsuccessful at the *vestibular* at the end of their senior year, may choose to take up *cursinho* or *especifica* classes at the *cursinho* run by their former high school. Meanwhile, the 3 institutions that reported being in business for less than 1 year are not affiliated with any high school.

Figure 4 – *Cursinho* years of operation

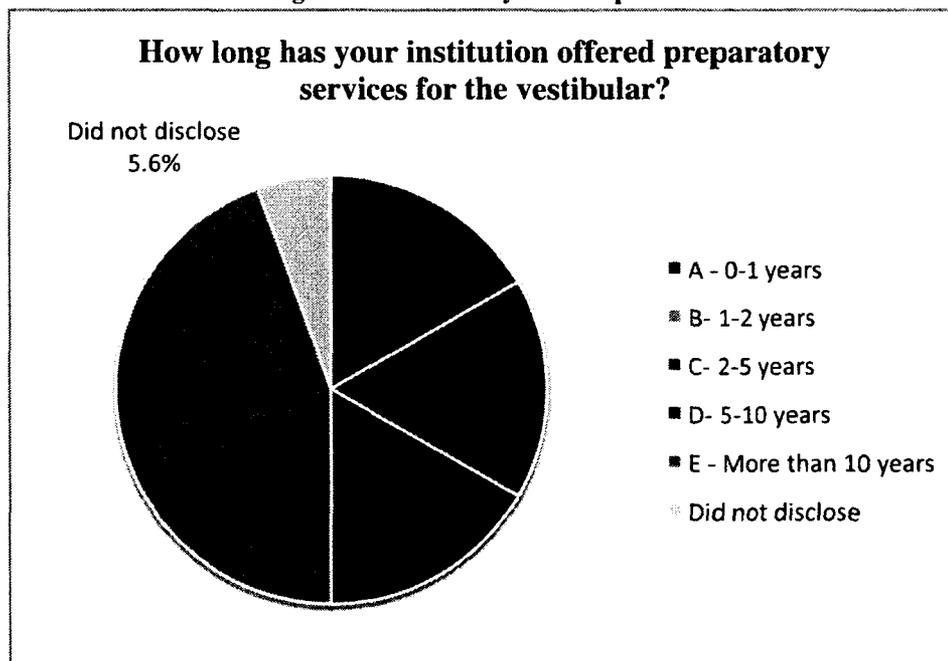


Figure 5 - Monthly *cursinho* fee

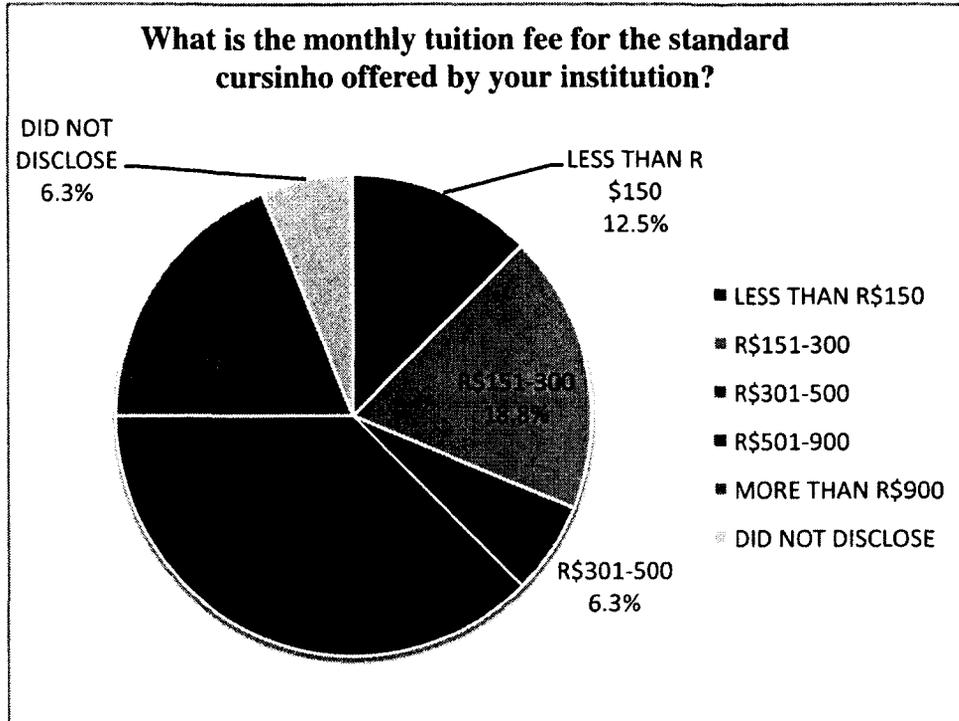
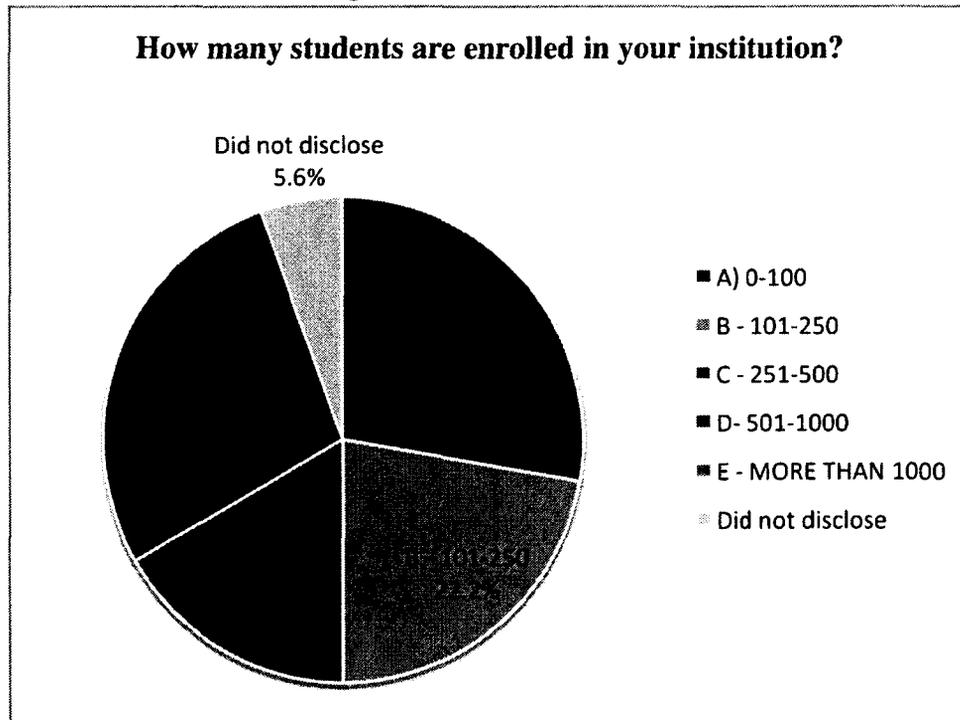


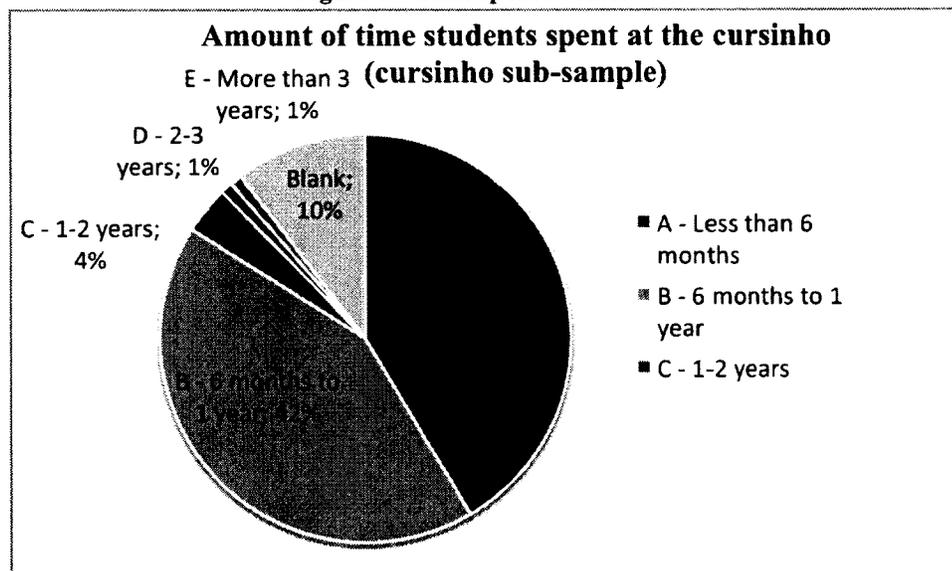
Figure 6 - Students enrolled



Most of the institutions surveyed offer both standard *cursinho* classes and *específica* classes, although some offer either one or the other, or other options such as

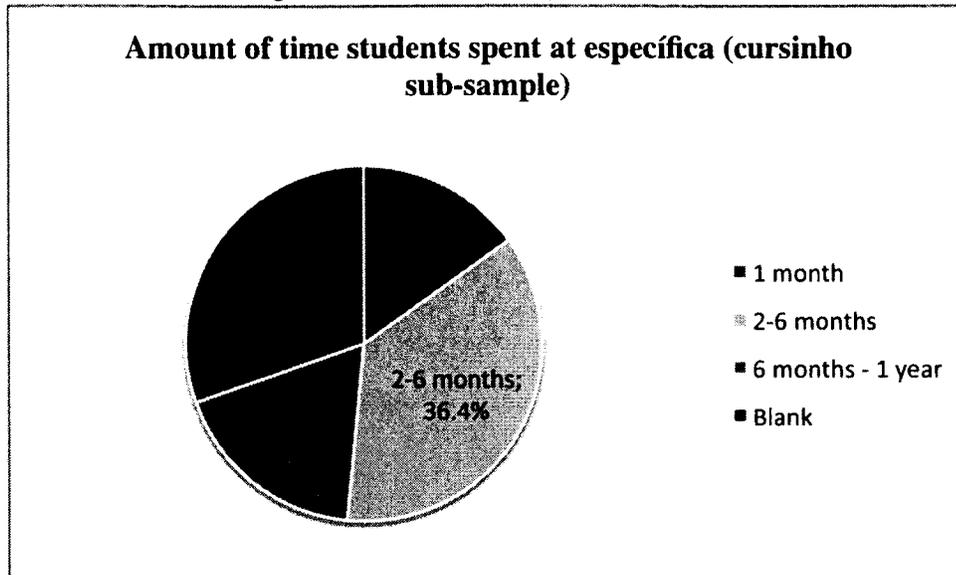
preparatory courses for state job competition exams or the Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio (ENEM), a standardized high school exam whose grades may be used by some universities to replace the *vestibular* as a selection process.¹⁴⁹ While *cursinho* classes are normally taken for a minimum of six months, *especificas* may be taken for a month or more. Four institutions reported offering *cursinho* classes designed specifically for the *vestibular* exams of certain universities, like for the Federal University of Goiás (UFG) or for the Technological Institute of Aeronautics (ITA). Five institutions also reported targeting students pursuing specific majors or subject areas at university, such as medicine, law, or engineering, although the majority of institutions reported targeting any students regardless of their choice of major.

Figure 7 - Time spent at *cursinho*



¹⁴⁹ The ENEM is a national exam written by high school students in Brazil and overseen by the federal government. It is not mandatory, but encouraged as a way to measure high school education standards. Since 2009, some Brazilian university students have begun to use ENEM as part of the entrance examination process. While some universities have replaced the *vestibular* exam with the ENEM exam scores, other university only partially use the scores (or not at all) and have continue to design and apply their own *vestibular* exams. Private high schools achieve the highest scores in the ENEM, with minor exceptions according to the examination year.

Figure 8 - Time spent at *específica* classes



The study indicated a strong correlation between institutions that had been in operation for more than 10 years and higher tuition, with 6 out of 8 charging above R\$500.00 a month for the standard *cursinho* option. While the dominant monthly tuition for *cursinhos* ranges from slightly less than the monthly minimum wage (R\$622.00) to almost double, monthly tuition for *específica* courses falls in a much cheaper range at less than R\$150.00. This is explained by the fact that while standard *cursinho* classes are daily and cover a wide range of subjects, *específica* classes take place once or twice a week for only a few hours and concentrate on only one subject area.

Despite more affordable *específica* classes, the tuition fee for the standard *cursinho* classes at most of the *cursinhos* is unaffordable for students whose family income is close to or just above the minimum wage. In fact, some of the institutions charge as much as what some private universities in Goiânia charge monthly for full-time studies. The comparatively high tuition fees for an educational industry considered to be optional, that is, separate from the traditional school system, called the attention of Superintendência De Proteção Aos Direitos Do Consumidor (Procon), the office

responsible for overseeing certain consumer rights in the state of Goiás. A report by Procon Goiás released in July 2011 estimated a variation of up to 607.14% in the tuition fee charged by different *cursinho* institutions when analysing 13 randomly selected *cursinhos*.¹⁵⁰ While one institution charged R\$840.00 for a semester worth of *cursinho* classes, another charged R\$5,940 – over ten times the minimum wage of R\$545.00 in force at the time of the Procon survey. With the occurrence of some discounts such as for early registration or payment, the difference between the lowest and highest tuition charged can reach 993.9%. The study also points out that *cursinho* fees tend to rise faster and above the average inflation with some fees increasing by 68,13% between 2010 and 2011. After outlining all of the fees and their variations, the report offers advice and tips for students to be successful at the *vestibular* exam including recommendations on how to evaluate *cursinho* institutions beyond their cost such as quality of the facilities and learning resources.

Together with the Procon survey, the field work questionnaire shows that the *cursinho* industry in Goiânia is quite diverse, with institutions of many sizes that charge from affordable to more expensive tuition fees. There is a tendency for *cursinho* institutions to offer *específica* classes in addition to the standard *cursinho*, since that *específicas* are a viable option for students still in high school who cannot take the time to attend *cursinho* full-time but would still like to strengthen themselves in certain areas of study. While most institutions contacted do not target any specific students, some do

¹⁵⁰ Procon-Goiás, “Cursinho pré-vestibular para o segundo semestre de 2011 pode variar até 607,14%” (Goiânia, July 2011)
<http://www.jornalopcao.com.br/arquivos/files/Procon.pdf> (downloaded September 20, 2011)

focus on students pursuing more competitive majors. The institutions may offer *cursinho* classes in the morning, afternoon, or evenings, which benefits students that may have scheduling conflicts such as for part-time or even full-time work. The tuition fee may also vary according to the period of study and the Procon survey indicates that morning classes are usually more expensive. Overall, the tuition fees are in line with the fees charged for regular high school classes in many private schools, with the highest fees being charged by the most well-known schools – some of which are also well-known for their own *cursinho* division.¹⁵¹

5.3 Exploring access to the Federal University of Goiás (UFG)

This section will interrogate the presence of inequality of access to higher education in Goiânia through a study of the Federal University of Goiás (UFG). It will make use of the surveys collected on the UFG-Goiânia campus in the fall of 2011 together with the 15 interviews made shortly after the surveys. More information about the methodology of the study and the research methods used to both collect and analyse the data can be found in the previous chapter (Chapter Four). While section 5.2 of this chapter provides the context for understanding the extent of the *cursinho* industry of Goiânia, this section will connect the industry to its impact on students' access to university and how the students perceive it.

The 207 students who participated in this study through the survey answered questions, including about sex, race, ethnicity, income, high school background, and

¹⁵¹ Procon-Goiás, “Cursinho pré-vestibular para o segundo semestre de 2011 pode variar até 607,14%” (Goiânia, July 2011)
<http://www.jornalopcao.com.br/arquivos/files/Procon.pdf> (downloaded September 20, 2011)

cursinho attendance. In accordance with the intersectionality lens behind the methods utilized to inform the questionnaire, these six categories must be analysed for correlation. Upon analysis of chi-square tests between the six variables, which indicates the presence of absence of correlation between these categories, I found the relationship between sex and ethnicity in relation to each of the other categories not to be statistically relevant in the case of the 207 participants. While this result does not invalidate the possibility of an intersectional inequality involving race and ethnicity at the Federal University of Goiás, given the small size of the sample, it was simply not significant for the case involving these particular students. However, two types of correlations were encountered. The first was in the case of race and ethnicity, which indicated an almost perfect correlation, suggesting that a participant's perception of race/colour is aligned with their perception of ethnic origin. The second type of relationship is the most interesting for the case study and it involves the correlations between high school background and race, high school background in relation to income, and high school background in relation to *cursinho* attendance. The table below indicates the result of the chi-square tests for these particular relationships, followed by a detailed analysis of what the correlation coefficients entail.

Table 5 - Chi-Square values and Likelihood ratios for selected variables

		<i>Cursinho</i>	Race	Income
High School	Pearson Chi-square	.004	.033	.114
	Likelihood ratio	.001	.078	.059
Ethnicity	Pearson Chi-square	/	.000	/
	Likelihood ratio	/	.000	/

The chi-squared test is used to determine dependence or independence between variables and how their sub-variables are distributed. A Pearson Chi-square value above 0.05 indicates a degree of independence between the variables, while a value below 0.05

indicates a degree of dependence. As observed in the table above, *cursinho* attendance is highly dependent on high school attendance. Race is also somewhat dependent on high school attendance with a Pearson Chi-square coefficient of .033. The significance of these values lies in the fact that there is a direct relationship between high school choices and the distribution of *cursinho* choices (including non-attendance) and a direct relationship between high school choices and the distribution of race amongst participants (See Appendix B for detailed distribution data).

When breaking down the distribution of race and separating the frequencies according to participants who attended private school from participants who attended public school, we find that 77.2% of the participants from private school identified as white or *pardo*¹⁵² while that percentage is smaller at 59.4% for public high school participants. This demonstrates more racial variety at public schools, while private high school participants were predominantly white or *pardo*, the racial majorities in Brazil according to IBGE.¹⁵³

In terms of income, we find that 55.6% of participants from private high schools reported a residential monthly income above R\$2,501 (4 times the monthly minimum wage or more) while that percentage was 39% for public high school participants. When

¹⁵² Pardo is a race/skin colour category used in the national census questionnaire by IBGE, a Brazilian statistics authority. Although there isn't a direct translation or correspondent classification in English, pardo includes shades of brown, especially a mix of gray and brown. For the surveys, the choice to split pardo from mixed was made to accommodate for cases where participants would identify with one in terms of race but not in terms of colour, though the IBGE makes no distinction between the two categories.

¹⁵³ IBGE, *Síntese de Indicadores Sociais: uma análise das condições de vida*, (Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2010)
http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/condicaodevida/indicadoresminimos/sinteseindicsoais2010/SIS_2010.pdf (retrieved May 1st, 2012)

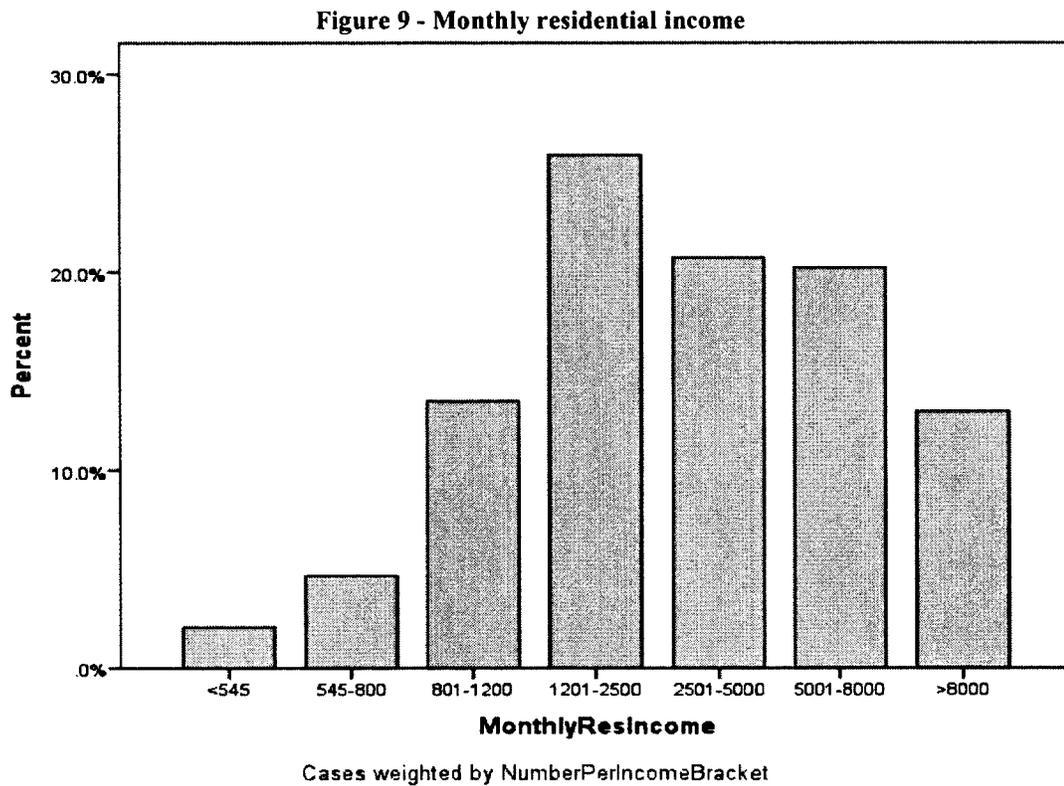
considering a the bracket of reported monthly residential income of R\$8,000 (13 times the monthly minimum wage or more) the discrepancy between the income of public and private school students becomes even more evident: while 17.4% of students who attended private high school reported income higher than R\$8,000, only 3.1% of public high school students reported similar earnings.

Although the Pearson chi-square coefficient between income and the other categories this study focuses on demonstrated a degree of non-dependence, it is important to consider how the distribution of income affects class representation within the university. The 2010 national census data suggests that residential income is a strong source of inequality of access to education in Brazil.¹⁵⁴ In a distribution of five income levels, the top fifth level of income was 26 percentage points ahead of the remaining levels in terms of access to education for people between 18 and 24 years old.

Figures 9 and 10 below illustrate the distribution of income for all survey participants and for *cursinho* users only (blank answers excluded). In both cases we find a negative distribution, showing that income level is skewed towards the top income levels. The majority of survey participants are clearly represented in income levels above R\$1201 per month. In the *cursinho* situation, although you find a slightly more equal distribution, with more students represented in the lowest brackets and fewer students in the highest brackets, the distribution remains negatively skewed towards the top income levels. The difference in distribution between overall participant income and *cursinho*

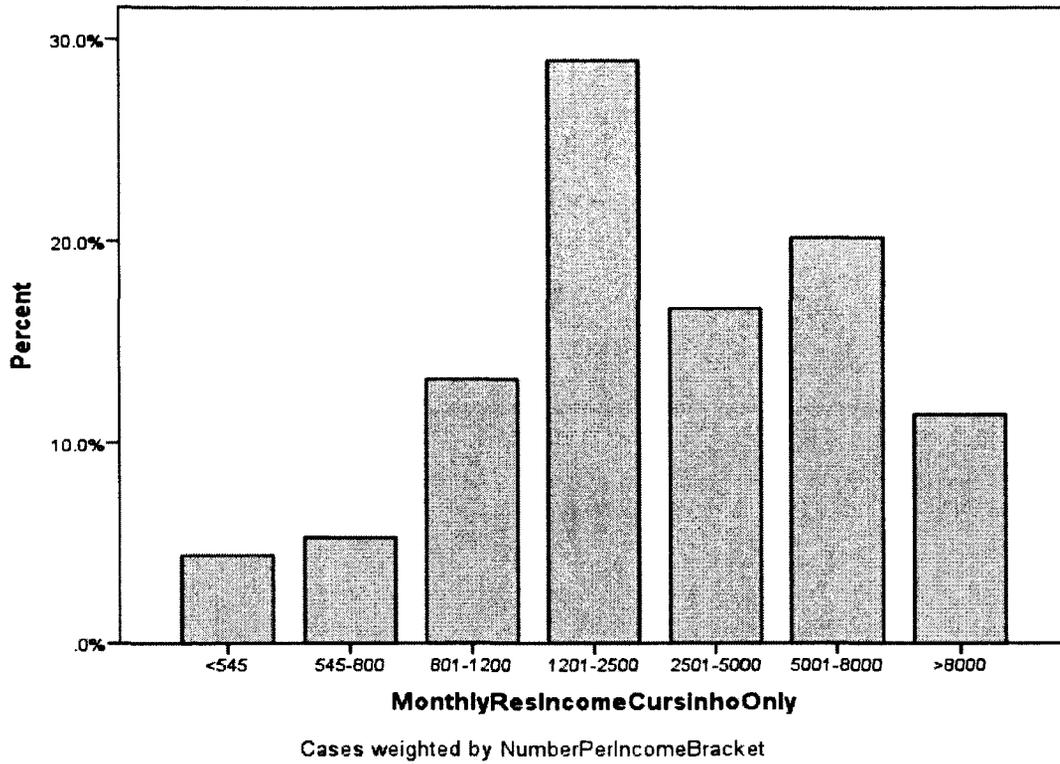
¹⁵⁴ IBGE, “SIS 2010: Mulheres mais escolarizadas são mães mais tarde e têm menos filhos,” *Sala de Imprensa - Síntese de Indicadores Sociais 2010* http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/presidencia/noticias/noticia_visualiza.php?id_noticia=1717&id_pagina=1 (retrieved on May 01, 2012)

only is explained by the fact that there is a significant presence of public school students in the *cursinho*, since they perceive the *cursinho* as an opportunity to make up for any educational deficits left by the public school system. This will be further explored in Section 5.3.3. When compared to the overall distribution of income in Brazil, where the so-called “Class C” (whose average income is R\$1,450) represents 54% of the population,¹⁵⁵ one can see that participants from higher income brackets (which are smaller than the Class C at the national level) are overrepresented at UFG and in *cursinho* institutions.



¹⁵⁵ Cetelem BGN, “O Observador: Brasil 2012” http://www.cetelem.com.br/portal/Sobre_Cetelem/Observador.shtml (accessed on May 05, 2012)

Figure 10 - Monthly residential income (*cursinho* only)



Although the results of the chi-square tests did not indicate a strong correlation between sex, ethnicity, and income, the representation of students within each of the subcategories of these variables is still very relevant to this study from a non-intersectional point of view. For instance, 56.5% of the survey participants were female, whereas 43% were male (with one student who declined to answer this question). The higher proportion of female participants can be explained by a bigger willingness to participate in the study by these students, since although the pool of *cursinho* students only indicates that 47% of *cursinho* users were male, an isolated sex-based distribution shows that 64% of male participants used *cursinho* services in comparison to 54.7% of

female participants. Another point to be made is that, similarly to Nadir Zago's¹⁵⁶ study analysed in Chapter Two, the absence of a strong correlation in data compiled using students who are currently attending university does not preclude a strong correlation that may occur when also considering students who have not succeeded in accessing university, since the high rates of rejection at the *vestibular* lead to a bias towards factors that affect inclusion and not exclusion.

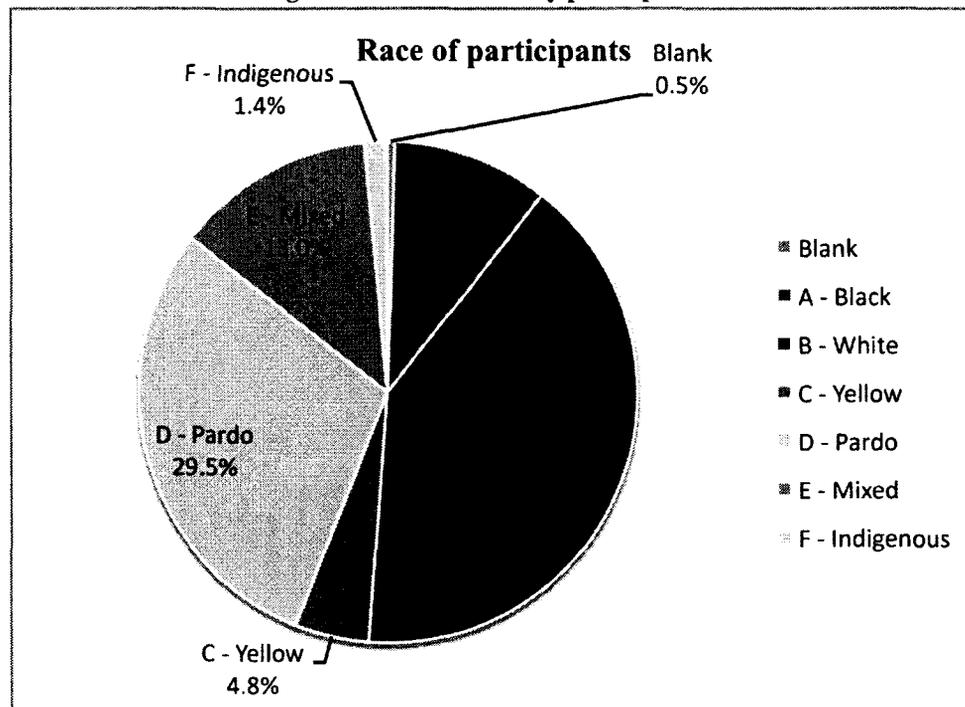
All in all, UFG numbers indicate an almost equal distribution between female and male incoming undergraduate students between 1995 and 2009, with 2,744 new male students in comparison to 2,896 new female students in 2009. This information is in line with the study by Beltrão and Alves¹⁵⁷ that suggested that there was a reversal in the gender gap at Brazilian universities. However, in line with the criticism from intersectional inequality, we must note that the weak correlation may be due to the fact that the majority of both male and female participants identified as being from mixed ethnical origin. In terms of race, the majority of male and female participants identified as being white or pardo/mixed, while only a few identified as black, yellow, or indigenous (See table below). This information suggests the presence of inequality at the intersection of gender and race, where, although more female participants were found, only a few

¹⁵⁶ Nadir Zago, "Do acesso à permanência no ensino superior: percursos de estudantes universitários de camadas populares" in *Revista Brasileira de Educação* 11 (2006).

¹⁵⁷ Kaizo Iwakami Beltrão and José Esutáquio Diniz Alves, "Reversal of the gender gap in Brazilian education in the 20th century" in *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 39 (2009), 26.

identified with a racial minority.¹⁵⁸ This is reflective of how white students are, in general, overwhelmingly represented at universities in Brazil, with 62.6% of white students between 18 and 24 years old in postsecondary education, while that percentage is only 31.8% for pardos, and 28.2% for black students.¹⁵⁹

Figure 11 - Race of survey participants



¹⁵⁸ According to data from 2009, 48.2% of the Brazilian population was identified as white, 44.2% as pardo, 6.9% as black, and 0.7% as yellow or indigenous. IBGE, *Síntese de Indicadores Sociais: uma análise das condições de vida*, (Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2010) http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/condicaodevida/indicadoresminimos/sinteseindicsoais2010/SIS_2010.pdf (retrieved May 1st, 2012)

¹⁵⁹ IBGE, *Síntese de Indicadores Sociais: uma análise das condições de vida*, (Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2010) http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/condicaodevida/indicadoresminimos/sinteseindicsoais2010/SIS_2010.pdf (retrieved May 1st, 2012)

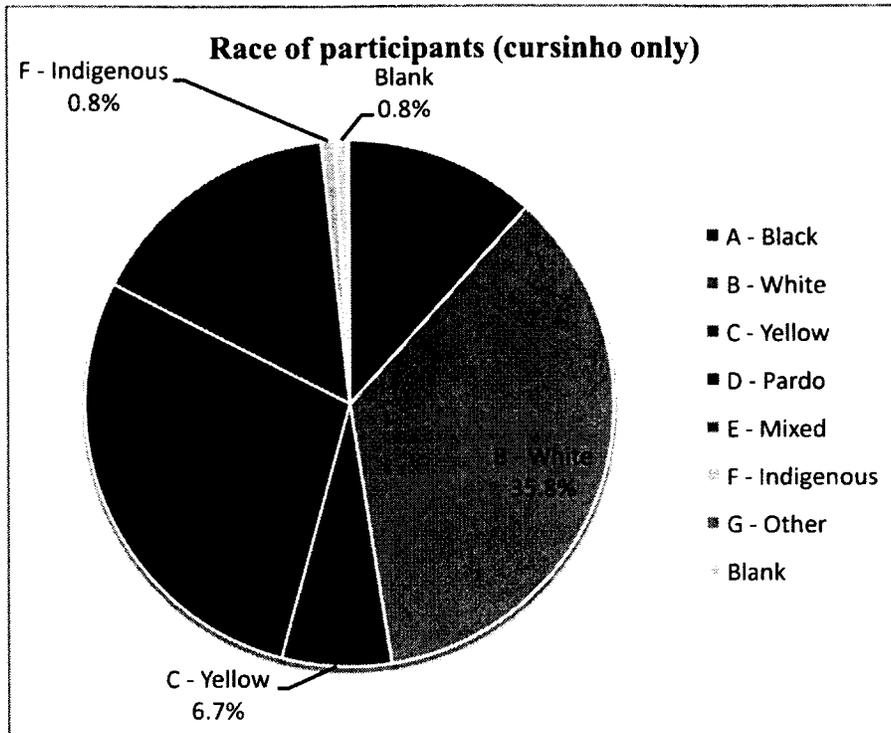
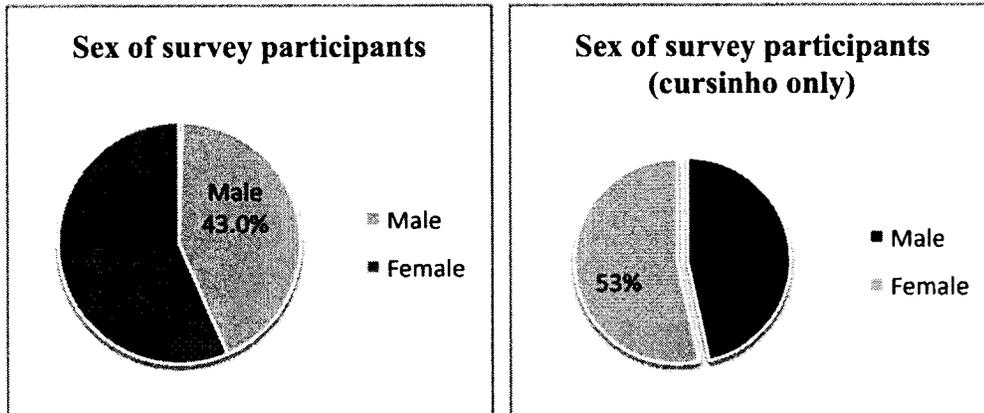


Figure 12 - Sex of survey participants



5.3.1 The relationship between major, competitiveness, status, and pressure

The table below provides a summary of the main characteristics of the Federal University of Goiás vestibular exams for the Goiânia campus. These years are relevant because only students who began their studies in 2010 or 2011¹⁶⁰ participated in the

¹⁶⁰ UFG offers two vestibular exams a year (mid-year and the end of the year) Availability of spots in the mid-year vestibular depends on the major chosen. The

surveys and the interviews performed during the fieldwork component of this study, with 33% of participants having begun in 2010 and 67% of participants having begun in 2011. The surveys applied on the UFG campus presented questions that ranged from sex and income to access to a computer and Internet before the *vestibular* exam. The interview questions, on the other hand, were designed to probe further into certain aspects of the relationship between access to education, neoliberalism, and inequality that had arisen in the literature and the theoretical body. A sample of the survey questionnaire and the interview questions can be found in the Appendix section.

Table 6 – UFG *vestibular* data¹⁶¹

	<i>Vestibular</i> 2010-1	<i>Vestibular</i> 2010-2	<i>Vestibular</i> 2011-1	<i>Vestibular</i> 2011-2 ¹⁶²
Availability of spots	3,349	637	3,388	N/A
Students enrolled in the exam	23,896	8,491	27,368	N/A
Average competition for spots	7.13/ 1	13.3/1	8.07/1	N/A
Total number of enrolled students	N/A	12,874	13,825	N/A

While, as Table 6 shows, there are, on average, between 7 and 13 students competing for an available spot at UFG in the Goiânia campus, the picture is quite different depending on the major at hand. While for Medicine competition can be as high as 41.66/1 in 2010-1 and 50.23/1 in 2011-1, the competition for Geo-environmental Science was 1.14/1 in 2010-1 and 1.10/1 in 2011-1. For majors with the lowest demand, it is possible to have more spots available than students pursuing them at the *vestibular*.

students who participated in the study were approved in one of the following vestibular exams: 2010-1 (written at the end of 2009), 2010-2 and 2011-1 (written in mid-2010 and at the end of 2010), and 2011-2 (written in mid-2011). The study dealt with first and second year students (or first to fourth period students as customarily called in Brazil).

¹⁶¹ Universidade Federal de Goiás, “UFG em números 2011: Ano Base 2010” (Goiânia: UFG, 2011) http://www.ufg.br/uploads/files/Folder_UFG_em_n_meros.pdf (downloaded on March 10, 2012)

¹⁶² This information will not be released by UFG in time for the completion of this thesis.

This is the case for Museology, whose competition varied between 0.62 and 0.78 for the 2010-1 and 2011-1, and Music (Regency), which had a competition between 0.50 and 0.75 for the same exams.

The interviews reveal that the demand for a major and competition for the spots available is connected to how prestigious the major (and even the profession that can spin from that major) are considered by the students and the society in which they live. In some cases, being successful at the *vestibular* for a highly competitive major is followed by higher recognition of effort and merit, as well as higher expectations for career and income prospects. This perception affects how students choose their majors while they weigh prestige, financial prospects, and the competitiveness at the exam as variables into how they make their decisions. Two students who were majoring in Linguistics (Letras) expressed their concerns about the relationship between these variables. A total of 12% of survey participants were Linguistics students and 58.3% of these students attended *cursinho* or *especifica* when preparing for the *vestibular* exam.¹⁶³

Student 2 - "Oh, I like literature. I was going to try for Veterinary medicine, looking for a more profitable future. Only that my mother always told me: 'do something you think you like, not because of the money.' So I decided to do Linguistics (*Letras*), because I really like literature."

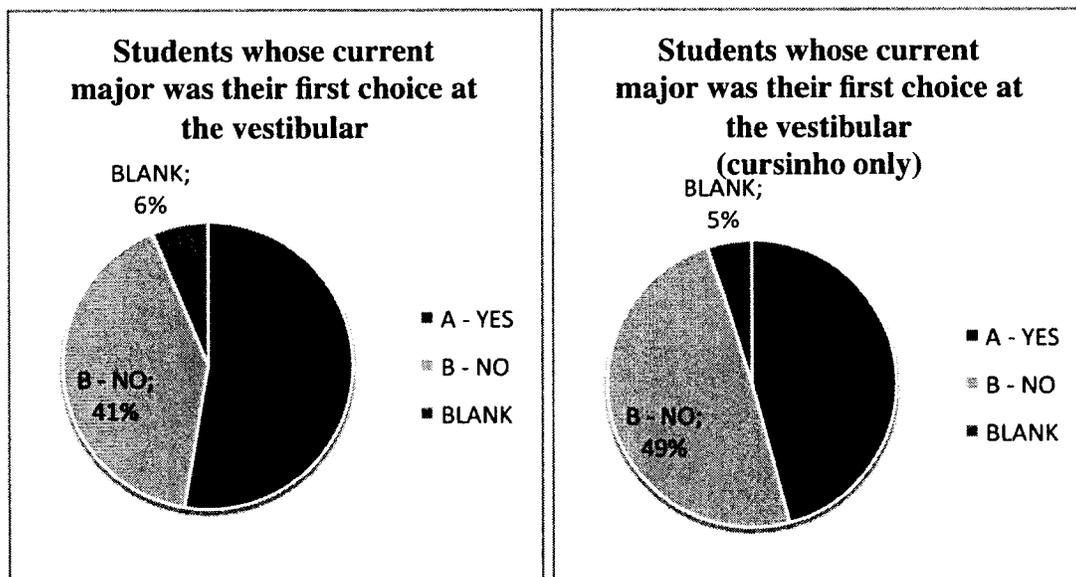
Student 4 - "It was kind of funny how I chose Linguistics, because I saw that besides Medicine, it was the [major] with the most spots [available]. So I thought: 'I'm tired of taking *cursinho*, what I'm going to do is [try for] Linguistics.' Then I passed [the *vestibular*] and took [Linguistics], but I always wanted to do Law."¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ For a complete breakdown of survey participants according to major, see Appendix.

¹⁶⁴ All anonymous interviews reproduced in this chapter were conducted by the research in person or by phone (as per the participant's choice) and took place between October 18 and October 31, 2011.

The prestige associated with competitiveness and higher future income also affects how the students are influenced by family, teachers, and society at large. Many students reported feeling pressured to choose one major over the other, even in cases where the student showed no aptitude or interest in a certain area of study. This pressure can lead to situations where students write multiple *vestibular* exams, in which they apply for a different major every time. Instead of being comfortable with their major and, subsequently, career choice, some students roll the dice and decide to pursue a major based on the simple fact that they were able to access it through a successful *vestibular* exam.

Figure 13 - Major preference of participants



Student 1: “I changed [my mind]. There’s always some doubt, that period of doubt, ‘what am I going to want?’ I’ve thought about Medicine, thought about Law. But then I realized they had nothing to do with me, with the area I like”

Student 5: “[I thought about] Information System, a family pressure. I think it was more a matter of career, because of my dad. You grow up in the liberal logic, since you are little you study at a well-known school. [...] You suffer this pressure, this family coercion for having a better job position, the matter of status quo in society. A bigger financial [prospect].” (Social Science student)

Student 12: “I had thought about other [majors], but all within the arts. In the beginning it’s a little hard with mom and dad when you tell them you want [to do] Plastic Arts. It’s not a very acceptable major. They always want us to do Law or Medicine or whatever, but it changes with time.”

Students 4 and 13 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

Pressure to pursue a major is related to the social status and future income associated with that specific major. In a way, the participants’ experience with pressure to choose one major over another indicates not only the pursuit of status through specific career paths, but also the human capital rationale behind treating education as an investment from which one must reap the higher financial rewards expected from these majors. According to UFG data from the 2011-1 *vestibular* exam, Medicine, Law, and Civil Engineering had the most amount of students competing for spots, also representing the most competitive majors in each area of study (Biological Sciences, Social Science and Humanities, and Exact Sciences).¹⁶⁵ What is interesting is that part of the prestige that comes with being a student in one of these majors is associated not only with the career prospects and financial rewards they offer, but also with the perception of success that derives from being able to defeat the competition for some of the most competitive, and coveted, spots.

Student 15: “[I felt more pressured] because it’s a more competitive major, it’s a lot more [people] competing for spots for the major. We feel more pressured to succeed in getting in. More for status too, to get in a major with more [competition]. It makes us feel better.”

¹⁶⁵ Universidade Federal de Goiás, “UFG em números 2011: Ano Base 2010” (Goiânia: UFG, 2011) http://www.ufg.br/uploads/files/Folder_UFG_em_n_meros.pdf (downloaded on March 10, 2012)

Pressure also prevents students from making choices based on their own likes and vocations. One example is the fact that some students write many *vestibular* exams for different majors each time (or at each university). The students below reported writing the exam multiple times, and often making last-minute major choices when registering for the *vestibular*. This is even more common for students who already failed the exam once or more than once, and they tend to migrate to less competitive majors or choose majors according to what content they were most exposed to during that year (i.e.: during *cursinho* classes).

Student 2: “I did the *vestibular* when I finished my third year (senior year), then I tried for Veterinary Medicine. Then I didn’t pass. [...] Then I did a whole year of *cursinho* [...] and said ‘I’ll try for Veterinary Medicine again, I will’. Then I had a heavy conscience. I already didn’t pass once, so [it’s better] to try for a major whose competition is less. So I opted for Linguistics.”

Student 4: “In the beginning I did [the *vestibular*] for Medicine, then I did for Law, then I did for Environmental Engineering, and later for Environmental Analysis. Then last I did for Linguistics. [...] In the middle of *cursinho*, before the *vestibular*, I said ‘I don’t know if I’ll be able to get into Law. I’ll have to stay even more time at the *cursinho*. I will do something with less competition, a weaker major.’ [...] So I wouldn’t depend on my mother’s friend. Because she said she would pay [the *cursinho*] for me. She wanted me to get into Medicine, so she should pay even 5 years [of *cursinho*] so that I could do Medicine.”

Students 12 and 15 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

These students ended up writing *vestibular* exams for very different majors (even completely unrelated ones). Another student used the expression “to put the useful with the pleasant” to describe her struggle to find a compromise between the major she wanted and the one her mother wanted, in which case she chose something in the same field but

with higher prospects for future financial return.¹⁶⁶ This is very telling of the experience of students who prefer a major that is not considered financially attractive to the parents or society in general. There is also the case where students write the *vestibular* exams of different universities and put down a different major choice at each. In this situation, they are torn between trying to pass for a very competitive major and having a back-up plan that consists of a less competitive major in order to enter university without having to repeat the process of studying for the *vestibular* and writing the exam six months or a year later.

The decision to have a first choice major and university as well as a back-up plan shows the need to pass the exam immediately after the conclusion of their senior year of high school or with the least amount of trials if the first exam is unsuccessful. They reported that such pressure to succeed can come from family and teachers, whose concern is based on many factors including financial expenses and the idea that time is being wasted when a student does not get into university right away after their senior year. In spite of external pressure, almost every student also talked about “self-pressure,” in which they were the ones who demanded success at the exams the most. This internal demand varied from mild to extreme, in which cases it even led to stress and physical sickness. In fact, many students defined their *vestibular* experience as “traumatic.”

Student 3: “I got nervous, very nervous. Ah, I don’t know, pressure that I put on myself. And I saw the *cursinho* as a terrible thing, I thought that if I had to go to a *cursinho* I wouldn’t be able to overcome not having passed [the *vestibular*].”

Student 11: “It’s traumatizing, the *vestibular*. I studied a lot to pass, but I don’t know, I think didn’t study enough. At the first time I wrote it, I thought I had a lot of chances. I didn’t think there was the possibility of not passing, because I studied a lot.

¹⁶⁶ Student 12, Personal Interview, October 2011.

But at the second time, I was calmer. [I thought] ‘if I don’t pass, I’ll survive. I’ve already survived once.’”

Student 13: “*Vestibular* experience? Traumatic. It even makes you scared (*dá medo*). But later we find out the *vestibular* is the easiest part of your degree. Until I decided what I wanted, the fear of not being able to do the exam, of not being prepared enough, I think it made me do worse than I’d do if I was calm. I would have done better if I’d been calmer.”

Students 6, 10 and 14 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

This type of experience suggests students feel both external and internal pressures to succeed at the *vestibular* exam and, therefore, gain entrance to university. Passing the *vestibular* is perceived as the most important goal for a senior in high school or a *cursinho* student, so much that the terminology “*pré-vestibulando*” (*pre-writing the vestibular*) is often used to refer to these students. The fact that the process of accessing university is considered traumatic speaks to a kind of oppression where these young people believe they will only be seen as successful or decent students if they pass the exam. There is a widespread expectation to pass the exam from family and society, which translates into self-expectation in order to avoid the perception of failure. However, such oppression leads to the opposite effect, in which students are under so much stress that it harms their own performance during the exam, trapping many of them in a long cycle of *vestibular* exams and *cursinho* attendance.

5.3.2 *Vestibular* experience: access barriers, investment and the internalization of responsibility

Although these students related the *vestibular* to an experience they would rather not relive, some participants expressed that they found the experience to be positive in spite of the pressure, stress, and nervousness. The conflict between having an experience

deemed as traumatic and, yet, considering it to have been a positive experience is mainly explained by two factors: the association of an eventual successful outcome with a constructive life event, and the weight that is placed on specific barriers to access to university (i.e.: the *vestibular* exam is traumatic, although being prepared through a *cursinho* is an advantage).

Student 1: “It was a very good experience. I tried three times, since when the Architecture major was opened at UFG. It’s an arduous process, it’s hard, but it’s worth it. Very cool (*bacana*), it’s a very good experience.”

Student 3: “It was [what motivated me to take *específica*], I thought it would really help me. And it really helped me a lot.”

Student 8: “It was a positive experience. We get nervous, [wondering] if we’re going to pass or not, all that drama. It was a good experience, positive. We start to get used to it and it’s even good because we learn [a lesson] for life, so that we get calm during times we need to.”

Student 15: “It was even easy, the *vestibular* wasn’t that complicated. Maybe because I prepared myself well at the *cursinho*.”

Although the students sound contradictory in their accounts, it shows the weight that is placed on their individual responsibility for passing the *vestibular*. By attributing any *vestibular* failure to themselves through little preparation or effort, students often fail to see how their access is affected by systemic barriers that are independent of their knowledge and performance on the exam.

The accounts below demonstrate a level of acceptance of the *vestibular* system, accompanied by little to no contestation of how fair and equal this system of access to university is. When asked what they would change to provide them with an easier and/or more accessible entry to university if they could change anything, the majority of participants relied on personal changes related to individual effort, showing how the

internalization of responsibility, a characteristic of neoliberal influence in society where the individual is to take up the responsibility for certain services and access to them instead of the state. When the burden of education falls upon the individual, he or she will have to pursue any choices made available through the market or not so that they can acquire the knowledge necessary to access university. This is clear in the way the opportunity to study at a private school or even begin *cursinho* study during high school was considered to be very important by students as a way of facilitating access to university, as they heavily associate *vestibular* success with preparedness, which, based on their view, depends on a mixture of individual effort and a *vestibular*-oriented environment.

Student 1: “We end up feeling pressured, in my case a personal demand. I’m always thinking I could have tried harder, put more effort into it and all. No other people’s demand per se, but that one we feel, that weight (*peso* – also: burden). Thinking I could have studied more, put more effort and all.”

Student 2: “I think I should have started to take other courses, parallel to high school. I thought that the school was enough for learning. I could have sought the *cursinho* either earlier, like since the first year [of high school], or taken a foreign language course. It would have helped.”

Student 4: “Partly, [I would have changed] my own effort too. If I had been more engaged, I think that if I had made more of an effort, given the best that I could, I would have gotten in [at the first try] too. I think I also failed myself in this aspect (*fui muito falha nessa parte.*)”

Student 10: “If I could, I would have studied at a private school. I believe that then [I wouldn’t need the *cursinho*]. If I could choose, I would have gone to a private school and wouldn’t have taken *cursinho*.”

Students 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

By giving a lot of attention to personal effort as a way to increase their chances of passing the *vestibular*, students overlook the structure of the *vestibular* system, which is

based on competitiveness, and since, on average, there are more competitors than spots available it is also based on exclusion. Instead of perceiving the system as a method of exclusion of students and preventing a large number from accessing university for multiple years, or even permanently, the students judge themselves responsible for whether or not they are “worthy” of access. Although they recognize a private school background and *cursinho* attendance as external factors that help to determine one’s competitiveness, they still treat it as a matter of individual choice, whether it implies capacity to pay for private education or simply the choice to forego the public school system and rely on market-based education to pass the exam. Despite the fact that students recognize a public school background as leading to a deficit in preparation for the *vestibular*, there is little contestation as to why the state has forsaken public schools aside from average complaints about the many issues the public basic education system encounters. This will be even more evident later in the chapter when the accounts of students’ comparisons between private and public schools are examined.

What is important about this is that the participants have transferred the responsibility for preparation for the *vestibular* exam entirely to themselves, while also conforming to the use of a “traumatic” system of entrance. The consequence is the view by some participants that a plausible way of facilitating their access to university would have been to take *cursinho* earlier and/or during high school. Most of them argued that they felt *cursinho* or *específica* attendance directly influenced or determined their outcome at the *vestibular* exam. That happened either through the revision or learning of *vestibular*-focused content, or through the perception of preparedness that helped to make student feel calmer during the exam. This line of thought demonstrates how not only

students perceive the formal market of basic education to contribute to *vestibular* preparedness (through private schools), they also view the informal market (through *cursinhos* and *específicas*) to be a necessary extension to schooling if one wishes to increase their competitiveness and access their major of choice at their university of choice.

As a result, the internalization of responsibility is accompanied by an investment and return mentality in regards to education, which is a characteristic of how predominant human capital theory has become as a model for viewing one's educational path. The students below report seeing not only the money spent on *cursinho*/private school as an investment, but also the time allocated for classes and studying for the *vestibular*, to the point where leisure was considered to a privilege one could not afford if they were to apply the most effort to preparing for the exam. Time spent on activities that were not directly related to the *vestibular* exam was seen as a waste from the investment point of view, especially because lesser effort on behalf of the student could risk the possibility of receiving a positive return from the educational investment, including financial, made by the students and their families.

Student 9: "I began to feel pressure from myself and from my family too. Because [the *cursinho*] is an investment that the parents make, and since it's an investment it has to yield a return. [...] There was certain a sacrifice of time, I did only that; there was nothing else to do, only study. And there was also financial [sacrifice], because my parents took away from other things to pay the *cursinho*. But like I said it was an investment so that in the future you don't have to pay for [private] university, which is certainly more expensive."

Student 13: "I also [felt pressured] to pass because you are demanding time, and an entire financial recourse, and you need to pass. The family saw in you an opportunity to improve too. It's an investment. [...] There were both [types of sacrifice.] Because if we want to pass, it's an investment, it demands time, it demands money, it demands choosing between being home studying or going out."

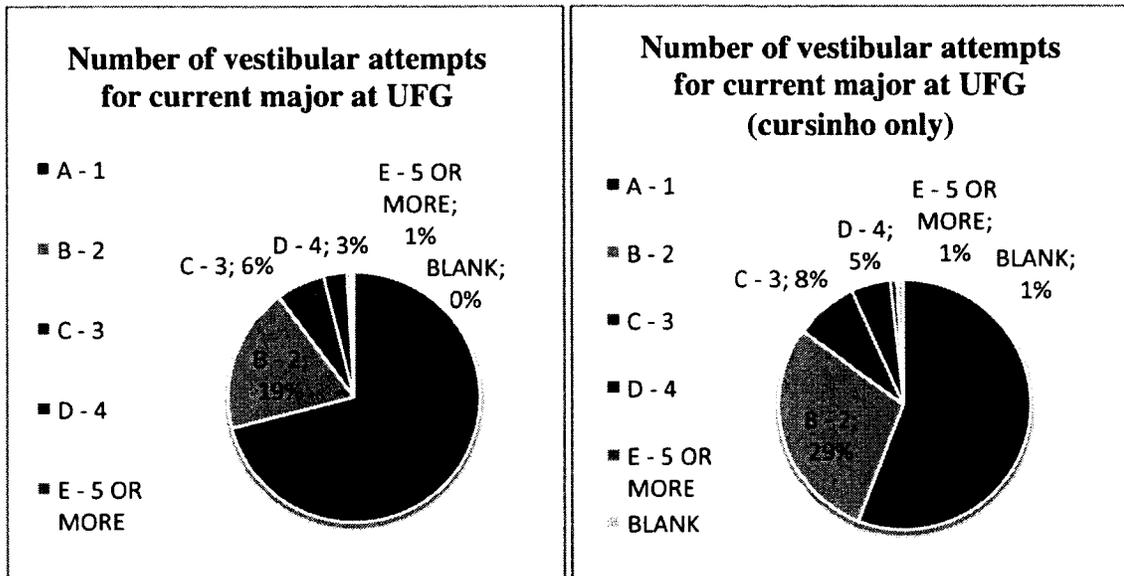
Students 2 and 6 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

This perception of how time should be applied towards studying for the *vestibular* leads to a lack of confidence in the first *vestibular* a student ever writes. Not only do students write the *vestibular* two or more times if they fail at the first try, and often attend *cursinho* to prepare for the subsequent exams, some students consider the first time they write the *vestibular* to be for practice. They believe the first attempt to be useful to gain experience only, since they find it unlikely they will succeed without previous *vestibular* experience or *cursinho* background. This account is compatible with what Nadir Zago found in her study of low-income university students, reporting that it is common from students, especially those from less privileged backgrounds, to view the first *vestibular* solely as a training opportunity.¹⁶⁷ As seen in the charts below, while 71% of the overall participants were successful at their first attempt at the *vestibular* exam when competing for their current major, the percentage is smaller at 56% for students who attended *cursinho*, which indicates that *cursinho* students have more experience failing their first attempt at the exam and a higher overall level of repetition. It is also important to consider that these numbers refer to the number of attempts for their current major and university only, excluding multiple attempts for different majors or for different universities. Based on the interview responses, it is possible to deduce that the number of overall attempts could be larger, because, as analysed previously, students can and tend to change their minds in terms of major of choice and may end up writing the *vestibular* for

¹⁶⁷ Nadir Zago, “Do acesso à permanência no ensino superior: percursos de estudantes universitários de camadas populares” in *Revista Brasileira de Educação* 11 (2006).

a different major at each attempt (i.e: two failed attempts at Law, one successful attempt at current major, such as Linguistics)

Figure 14 – Number of attempts at the *vestibular* exam for current major



Student 4: “[My expectations] were minimal. I only really went there to write [the *vestibular*] because you feel you have to. My mother said ‘now you won’t succeed, I believe you’ll pass only after you get into a *cursinho*.’ [...] Especially when you go to write the exam and see everybody arriving with t-shirts from [school A] and [school B]¹⁶⁸. Then you think ‘that’s it, what am I doing here?’ [...] The t-shirts are very intimidating.”

Student 9: “I had none. I only did the *vestibular* to try it out, see how I was doing. [...] I passed the first phase of the exam and didn’t even do the second phase. I went straight to the *cursinho*.”

Student 12: “The first time I wrote it I didn’t expect to pass, it was more for getting experience, really.”

Students 2 and 10 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

¹⁶⁸ The participant named two schools that are considered to be among the best and most expensive private schools of Goiânia. These names were omitted to maintain the anonymity of these schools, which were participants in the *cursinho* surveys through their *cursinho* division.

The lack of confidence in the first *vestibular* leads to another phenomenon, in which students pursue *cursinho* classes while during high school.¹⁶⁹ Since *especifica* classes are less demanding in nature and perceived as complementary to basic schooling, they are mostly taken during one or more years of high school. While this is not the case for *cursinho* classes, which are daily and can take up many hours of the student's day and carry a heavy homework burden, some students choose to take *cursinho* during high school as a way to get extra preparation for the exam. They believe that by taking both at the same time, although extremely demanding, they could be successful at their first attempt at the *vestibular* at the end of the senior year, which would result in saving time that would have been otherwise spent at the *cursinho* for a year had they not passed the exam. Another perceived benefit of taking *cursinho* and high school together is that if the student enters university immediately after high school, they will also graduate earlier than their counterparts who had to take *cursinho* after high school in order to pass. Earlier graduation implies earlier entrance in the job market.

5.3.3 The choice to pursue *cursinho* or *especifica*

Out of the 207 survey participants, 58% of students utilized one or more forms of services provided by the *vestibular* support industry. These services were *cursinho* attendance, *especifica* attendance, and *vestibular* travel packages,¹⁷⁰ while 41.5% of all

¹⁶⁹ It is also a common practice for students to register for the *vestibular* as “*treineiros*” (practice students) while in the first or second year of high school. These students go through the same process as the regular students, although their mark is not counted in the final list of approved students and they cannot enter university yet, as theirs was only a practice attempt.

¹⁷⁰ The travel packages are options made for students who will write one or more *vestibular* exams out of state – this service can be provided by *cursinho*-related institutions or by travel agencies.

survey participants attended regular *cursinho*.¹⁷¹ As evident in the chart below (Figure number 16), 71.7% of students who used a *cursinho* service attended the standard *cursinho* classes (in parallel or after high school), while 10% of these students attended only *especifica* classes (which are normally taken parallel to high school). Unfortunately, a large amount of students did not specify which *cursinho* service they used by leaving it blank (15.8%), although it could be suggested that many of these students could have attended *cursinho*, or *especifica*, since these are the dominant answers.

When asked whether or not they thought the use of a *cursinho* service influenced their chances of passing the *vestibular*, the majority of interview participants agreed that the *cursinho* contributed to their chances of success. They attributed the *cursinho* contribution not only to the extended *vestibular*-oriented review provided in classes, but also to the perception that by taking *cursinho*, they would be more prepared. This perception is important for the student's confidence when writing the exam and it helps many of them to feel less nervous and more competent on the day of the *vestibular*.

Student 3: "I think [the *especifica*] did, it influenced. Because there was a lot that we'd only see superficially during classes. The *especifica* goes a little deeper. [...] It gets better, and this is one extra point for you, in relation to your competitor."

Student 4: "Wow, [the chances] were much bigger. After I took the *cursinho*, I already went even more encouraged to do the *vestibular*, already more confident, because I saw what I'd learned that year [...] It was what gave me the most strength."

Student 8: "Big chances, because when I studied through the *cursinho*, through the simulated exam, I was getting good grades. [...] The experience was good, I learned and I'd be able to pass. [I felt] a lot more [prepared]."

¹⁷¹ For simplification, these services will be referred to hereafter as *cursinho* services, and the students who utilized one or more of these services will be referred to hereafter as *cursinho* students.

Student 10: “[The chances were better] after the *cursinho*. I was much more confident after the *cursinho*. It opened new horizons.”

Students 1, 9 and 12 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

Figure 15 - Use of *cursinho* services by participants

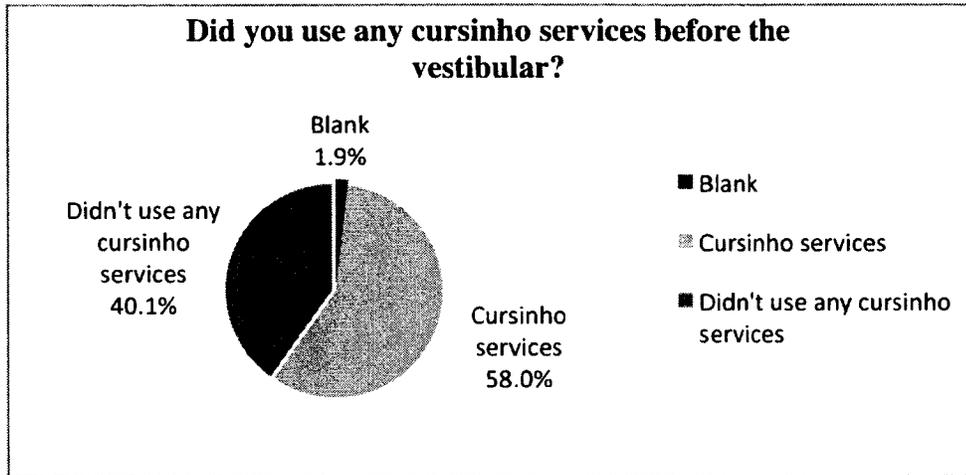
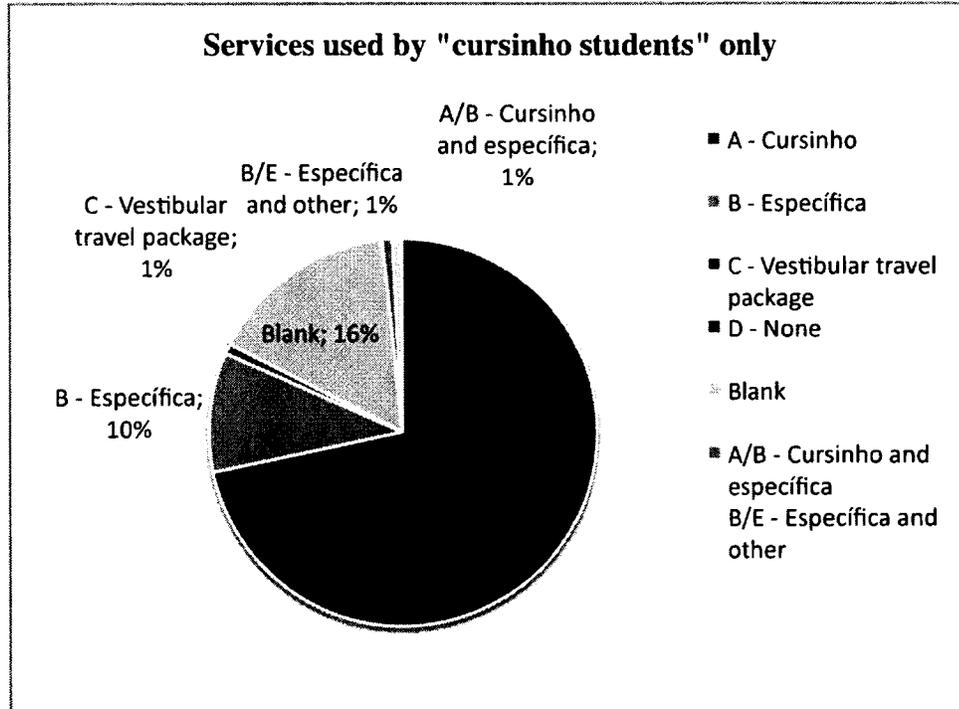


Figure 16 - Types of *cursinho* services used by participants



In fact, it is the expectations surrounding the relationship between *cursinho* attendance and *vestibular* success that led many participants to decide to take *cursinho* classes, either during high school or after high school as a means to deal with one or more failed *vestibular* exams and review the required content for their next attempt. When asked what motivated them to seek *cursinho* or *específica* classes, students expressed hope that, by pursuing extra preparatory help, they would become more competitive and be able to pass the *vestibular* exam:

Student 2: “I had a friend who finished his senior year together with the *cursinho*. He had taken this path [...] and he told me: ‘Take the *cursinho*, it helps so much. It even helps inside the classroom.’ Then I said: ‘Cool, you took *cursinho* together with the senior year and passed [the *vestibular*] right away. I’m going to do the same.’”

Student 8: “[...] I didn’t remember the content from my first year [of high school] anymore. I felt I needed at least a review for the *vestibular*, to remember. [...] So the *cursinho* was very important so that I could do this review of everything I learned in high school.”

Student 12: “I wanted to prepare myself, train myself for the *vestibular*.”

Student 15: “[It was because I spent] a year without studying. I wasn’t very confident that if I did the *vestibular* without the *cursinho* I would succeed.”

Students 1, 5, 9, and 13 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

Most students described the *cursinho* environment as demanding and very *vestibular*-oriented. They reported that the content covered in the *cursinho* classes had the purpose of being an overall, yet intensive, review of material that was relevant for the *vestibular* exams of that year. Although the environment was at times associated with even more pressure to succeed than at school, some participants considered their *cursinho* experience to be more productive than their time at high school when taking the *vestibular* exam as their main concern. In fact, complaints were made about how some

schools, especially public schools, did not give enough focus to the *vestibular* exam, whereas the *cursinho* had no other purpose and specific content and knowledge were prioritized as instrumental to passing the *vestibular* exam. Despite the pressure, some students referred to the *cursinho* experience as a positive one, either because of the perception that the *cursinho* was fundamental to *vestibular* success or because of the way classes and content were structured.

Student 1: “We go to the *cursinho* to review the content. And there were things that surprised me, because I had never seen them, so instead of reviewing I had to learn them in order to do [the *vestibular*].”

Student 5: “I think that in terms of content, it was something very mechanical. There wasn’t much beyond that. It’s totally a formation for the *vestibular*. They’re not educating (*formando*) anyone to discuss subjects, or anything like that. [...] It’s instrumental.”

Student 8: “It was positive, it was very good. [...] It helped me pass.”

Student 9: “I got into the *cursinho* more so to redo high school. Have them teach so I learn everything again. [...] Then I went to a better [*cursinho*], after I spent a year [at a cheaper one]. It definitely met my expectations.”

Students 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, and 13 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

The students accounts confirm the perception of the *cursinho* as a facilitator of access and even as a mediator between high school and the university for those who do not pass the *vestibular* exam in their first attempt (or even for the students who choose to take *cursinho* and high school at the same time for additional help). What is interesting here, and will be explored further in this Chapter in a comparison of public and private schools, is that the *cursinho* is not only seen as an opportunity at a review year, so that students can recall what they learned in the past, but also as a way to learn content they never saw or did not learn well the first time. The latter is the case of public school

students, who expressed discontent with public school teachers and the lack of *vestibular*-oriented content. Hence, they see the *cursinho* as a gateway to university because it offers them the chance to learn specific content to which they were not exposed. The objective of learning for these students is to absorb material that will help them pass the *vestibular*, even if it is content they are not interested in, are not useful for their specific majors, or does not help to develop critical thinking.

Student 8: “The *cursinho* works like a review, in six months. Sometimes whoever isn’t able to pass the *vestibular* right away after the *cursinho*, ends up coming back and seeing always a review of the content.”

Student 9: “In high school you have to get grades to pass the year, at least at the public schools they’re not that worried about the *vestibular*. At the *cursinho* the teaching is totally differentiated [...] and you’re indoctrinated (*adestrado* – also: trained) to pass the *vestibular*.”

Student 13: “I think the *cursinho* prepares you more for the *vestibular*, the school prepares you more to obtain knowledge. I think the school still manages to form people more critical than the *cursinho*.”

Students 2, 4, 7, 10, 11, and 14 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

5.3.4 Private education as an advantage and implications for learning and content

At some point of their interviews, all students referred to either private school background as an advantage or public school background as a disadvantage. *Cursinho* and *especifica* attendance was often grouped together with private schools as a way to gain an edge against your competitors at the *vestibular* exam, even though students felt the *cursinhos* did not offer as much of an opportunity to learn content as to memorize information that will be specifically useful for the *vestibular*. This type of thinking is a prime example of the promotion of knowledge only as instrumental and as a tool to achieve a certain goal, in this case passing the *vestibular* exam. This mentality is opposes

the theoretical proposal by Paulo Freire and other scholars examined in Chapter Three, which deals with expanding the view of knowledge and education as a process that encourages critical consciousness and the construction of a counter-hegemonic process.

Student 1: “I think I had an advantage because I noted a lot of decline in the structure of teaching in the schools in the public system. So the *cursinho* helped me a lot. [...] It gave me direction to what would be at the *vestibular* and for catching up, studying, researching. I think I had an advantage in these terms.”

Student 3: “I thought the *específica* was a super advantage. It helped me a lot and it was in the area that I wanted, humanities. Because there’s a lot that we don’t manage to see in the classroom, so the *específica* helped a lot. It complements.”

Student 4: “Ah I had [an advantage]. I see that, especially with those from public schools, with whom I was competing. Because the *cursinho* helps a lot, because we’re prepared to write that exam. And not in high school, there you have to study the content, they’re not so focused on the *vestibular*. That is, at the public schools. Not at the private schools, there they’re also focused on the *vestibular*.”

Students 2 and 15 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

Whereas the students referred to their own *cursinho* experience as a way they acquired an advantage over their competitors, one student made an important remark about how the *cursinho* can be used to one’s advantage as well as to fool the UFG quota system for students with a public high school background.

Student 12: “Who studied at a public school in order to get into university through the public school quotas, already knowing of this possibility, this person gets prepared at a *cursinho* almost full-time. [...] There are always those who fool the system and they are taking away available spots from who really needed it.”

This account shows how the informal status of the *cursinho* institutions as unregulated, and mostly private, education providers has led to gaps in the UFG quota system, which establishes, among other criteria, a quota of available spots for students who attended public high school, guaranteeing a certain amount of approvals at a lower

average and performance. As a result, as the student reports, some students take advantage of the fact that UFG does not exclude public school students who also take *cursinho* from the eligibility requirements. By trying to correct for the perceived disadvantage of public high school students at the *vestibular* (due to lower quality preparation, as per previous student accounts), the quota system offers students with the right resources the opportunity to increase their chances of *vestibular* success by having a lower grade required of them while seeking additional preparation through the *cursinho*.

This account shows that public school students are perceived to be at a disadvantage not only by the university, which tries to correct the problem through quotas, but also by the students themselves, who seek the *cursinho* in addition to public school as a way to equalize their level of preparation with private school students. According to the IBGE, in general, private schools fare better than public schools at the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) at each of the three levels of basic schooling. This information suggests that the perception by students that private schools constitute an advantage for those looking to access university through the *vestibular* is validated by concrete data on national curriculum standards. The figures below show that although the majority of survey participants come from a private high school background, the percentage of students with a public high school background increases when considering *cursinho* students only. This indicates that a significant share of public school students are willing to seek out *cursinho* services, even at the cost of financial distress as reported earlier, in order to increase their chances of gaining entrance to a public university.

Figure 17 - High school background of participants

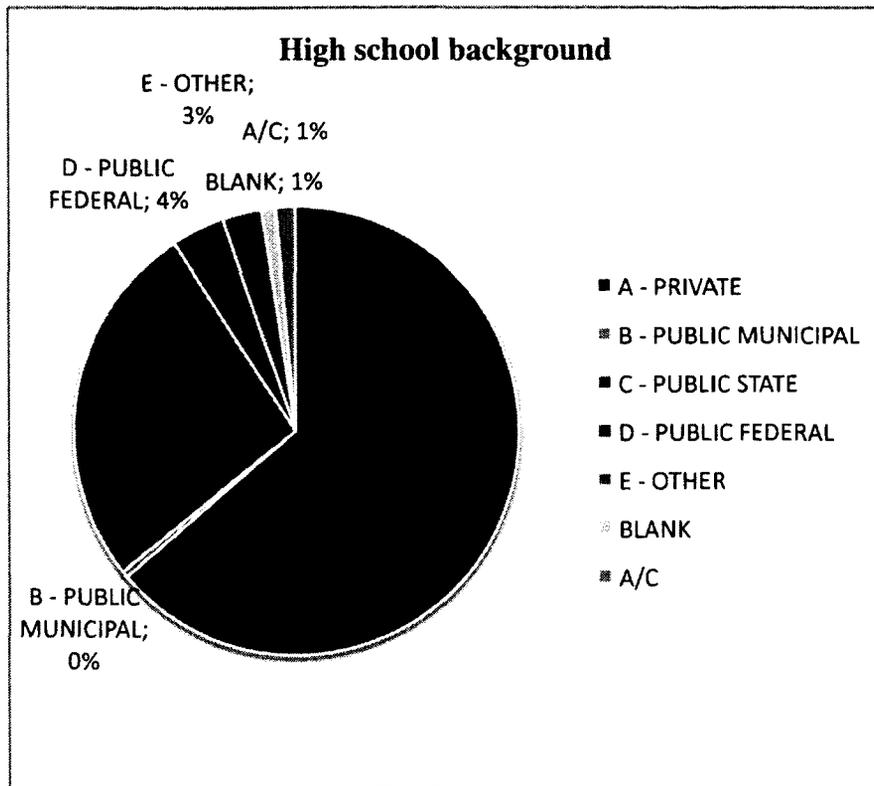
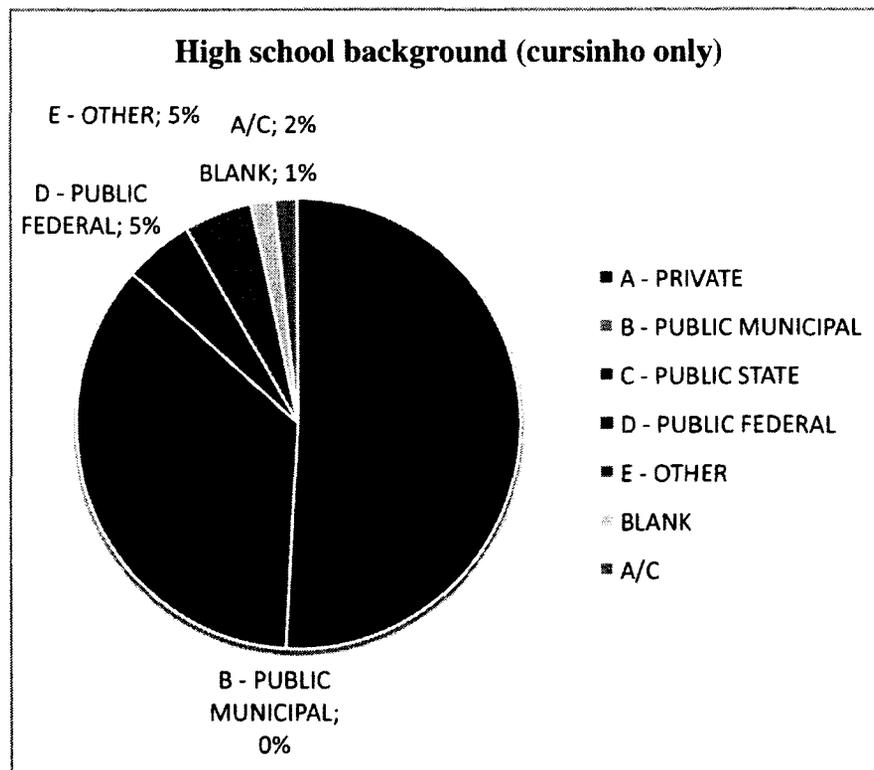


Figure 18 - High school background of *cursinho* participants



Student 5: “I see that I had certain advantages because of the school where I studied, a formation directed for this, for the *vestibular*, for approval. [...] But I also totally disagree with this educational logic. [...] Being only focused on the *vestibular*, you leave as a student with very little critical sense, very accommodated. Only that memorization (*decoreba*), you learn rules and rules.”

Student 6: “I consider [having studied at a private school] an advantage because of the quality of the teachers, in relation to public school and even to inferior private schools. I think it really is an advantage.”

Student 9: “I always studied at public schools, so I wasn’t very well-prepared during high school. [...] I think I was harmed that way because until then they didn’t talk about the *vestibular* at school. I ended up learning about it from my father.”

Student 10: “The biggest pressure was the matter of the public school, because it’s different. Whether I like it or not, it’s different from a private school. I think it was a disadvantage, certainly, coming from a public school. I think that at private schools the preparation is different, they push the student more, demand more from the student.”

Students 7, 12, and 15 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

The comment by Student 5 expands on the critique of knowledge as instrumental and how it has become the focus of the educational system because of the structure of the university entrance model. The model prevents students from seeking out content and knowledge that are important for building critical consciousness and allowing individuals to gather comprehending and analytical skills. This demonstrates one aspect of the neoliberal agenda for education, since it not only promotes a user-fee system for basic educational that prevents many from accessing universities, but it also ensures that the students are preoccupied with specific content that is useful for the *vestibular* exam, while it neglects other aspects of education. This neglect occurs not only on behalf of the students, but also the schools, since subjects such as Physics and Chemistry are taught with more frequency than Philosophy or Arts, because the latter do not carry the same weight and focus at the *vestibular* as the former do. This selectivity of knowledge ends up

translated into the hierarchy of majors mentioned earlier, where more instrumental subject areas are assigned higher financial returns, are seen as more prestigious, and are the most competitive majors at the *vestibular*. The opposite occurs for majors in areas such as the Liberal Arts, since competition is lower and its related content is less taught and less focused on at high schools and *cursinhos*.

A side effect of this difference in focus is one of the reasons why students consider public schools to be a disadvantage and why the public system fares worse than the private system at the IDEB. While public schools follow a more balanced curriculum put forward by the Ministry of Education (MEC), albeit with many deficits due to overworked and insufficient faculty and declining resources, the private schools and *cursinhos* have access to a larger pool of resources through user fees and the market and are able to set additional curriculum standards to the ones provided by the state. One example is the fact that while students from public school often attend school five days a week for a set number of hours in the morning, afternoon, or evening, some private school students find themselves at the school premises up to seven days a week at all times of the day. This is especially the case for students in their senior year, whose Saturdays and, at times, Sundays are dedicated to weekly tests and simulated mock *vestibular* exams. For students who decided to attend both *cursinho* and private high school during their last year of basic schooling, this amounts to an incredibly heavy burden of time that often leads to stress and other health problems, as well as the financial burden implied in paying for two separate educational resources as well as incidental costs (i.e. lunch at a restaurant) that occur when a student has to spend all day at school and/or the *cursinho*.

In fact, stress is considered to be a common element in the life of a student preparing for the *vestibular*, especially in the case where students undertake both *cursinho* and high school simultaneously. When asked if they thought they had to go through any difficulty or a type of sacrifice to guarantee their access to university through the *vestibular*, students mentioned time and finances as sources of worry and stress. As observed in Section 1 on this chapter, the amount of stress created by these circumstances, combined with nervousness and a feeling of constant pressure, even led students to develop health conditions and added to the understanding of the process to access university as an arduous one. The accounts below associate the lack of time and busy routine the students go through as they prepare for the *vestibular* with the health problems, as well as the conflict that arises when some students have to study and work at the same time in order to afford *cursinho* tuition.

Student 8: “I had [financial difficulties] during my first year of high school. My father was unemployed for a whole year and during my second year I began to work [part-time at my school]. It was good. But it was tiring, at night I was tired and I had to study, during weekends I had to apply myself. It was tiring.”

Student 11: “During the exam I got sick. Before, when I was studying, I ended up at the hospital because I never ate. I was doing high school and the *cursinho*. So I was at school in the morning and in the afternoon and in the evening I went to the *cursinho*. So it made it hard.”

Student 15: “I can say a bit of both [difficulties, financial and of time]. Because I was working and taking *cursinho*. So a good chunk of my salary was going to pay for the *cursinho*. An in terms of time also because I had to work and study. [...] It was very hard, I didn’t have time for practically anything.”

Students 4, 6, and 10 also provided similar answers and experience accounts.

5.3.5 Connecting student responses for an account of neoliberal education and inequality

The objective of the fieldwork was to collect information that could provide a picture of factors that influence access to universities in Brazil through the *vestibular* and analyse student experiences in terms of their place within the advancement of neoliberal education in Brazil. In Chapter Three, we examined theoretical explanations of certain trends in both the educational curriculum and access to education in Brazil that are leading to a focus on the exclusive aspect of education as a private good, the prioritization of specific types of knowledge and skills that are useful for the market, and the internalization of responsibility for education that further excuses the state from providing quality education to all members of society. These tendencies translate into the treatment of access to university as a privilege, instead of a right. This understanding was clearly portrayed in arguments by students about how the *vestibular* exam requires that they invest time and financial resources into their individual preparation in order to compete with other students for limited spots.

While public universities are not, at present, able to expand the amount of spots available for the most competitive majors, the opportunity to make access to tertiary education more inclusive is further hindered by deterministic factors that condemn students to a privileged or underprivileged position when writing the exam. These factors include sex, race, ethnicity, class (income), and primary access to private education (private school and *cursinho* services). Most importantly, as the survey data collected shows, the scenario presented by the participants is not one when one of these factors act alone to obstruct a student's access, but rather how the intersections of these factors influence one's chances to improve their learning and helps to reproduce the status quo. Also, it is important to notice that the fact that certain majors are valued more than others

in a capitalist society is, in itself, a barrier to access, since it results in the problem of higher competition for these majors while less valued majors do not always have all spots filled.

The fact that the students' accounts failed to include the state's responsibility for providing them with quality public education is especially problematic. While students were clear that public education was faulty and put their public system students at a disadvantage in comparison to students who have the means to access private education, they often attributed this inequality to their misfortune in not being able to access private school (or even *cursinho* right away) instead of pointing to the unfairness of a system that prevents the majority of the population from acquiring a quality education basis and, yet, requires that all majors compete as equals during an entrance exam. Even a solution such as quotas for students from public school was shown to be incapable to allocate for the differences in schooling background, when it was reported that individuals are able to fool the quota structure by attending public school and *cursinho* at the same time. In all of these circumstances, the burden falls onto the individual to try to correct for any educational deficits through the *cursinho* institutions, which benefit not only from the competitiveness of the *vestibular* that drives more and more students into stressful learning environments, but also the state's retreat from providing the knowledge it requires from its students at the *vestibular* exam.

When previous access to a resource helps to determine access to another resource, a cycle of inequality is created due to the gap between those with access and those without access. This is the case with access to private schools in Goiânia among the survey participants, and how the students with such access have, on average, higher

income and are more representative of racial majorities. When these students are able to access university faster and easier than others, they gain a privileged position for their future in terms of future earnings and social status, which will, most likely, also carry forward for their children if the structure of the educational system remains the same in the future. This process leads to the reaffirmation of class positions, which rely not only on income for its power but also on the ability to maintain a convenient status quo. In some analysis, class positions within the educational scenario can also be perceived as family positions, as is this case through intergenerational aspect of educational attainment. The social reproduction of the middle class and upper classes, whose access to private education is guaranteed, occurs cyclically because as long as the students from these classes are able to access resources that position them in an advantageous position in comparison to other classes, the privileged students will have primary access to more learning and job opportunities and inequality will persist.

The issue is that, as it arose in a few interview comments, this cycle strengthens the current logic of the educational system because it prioritizes education as human capital investment. Therefore, those with the power for making such investment contribute to the private view of education and will not object to going to the market to purchase “education” goods. Furthermore, the acceptance by students that this arrangement is beyond their power and all they can do is also try to access the education market to improve their level of competitiveness, which has been increasingly done through *cursinho* attendance, creates consent, a valuable tool for the reinforcement of hegemonic power. Not only are attempts to build critical consciousness, and, as a consequence, counter-hegemonic models and movements, curtailed, but the acceptance of

this system makes it stronger and more profitable, increasing market power and the appeal for new firms to take advantage of the capital opportunity. This is exactly the case with the *cursinho* industry, which is seen as a mediator between basic school and university for those who want to minimize their attempts at the *vestibular* by increasing their preparedness. Moreover, the role of the *cursinho* as a mediator becomes normalized and uncontested, even though these institutions do not carry a formal role or status within the educational system. Their presence increases the view of private education as a requirement for *vestibular* success, because even though there are popular or free *cursinhos* offered, they are not perceived to be as significant for one's chances of passing the exam as are the private and more expensive *cursinhos*.

Finally, the fieldwork information spoke to the oppressive aspect of the *vestibular* system, something often undermined in the literature in favour of more strict analysis of access and inequality. However, it is important to highlight how the perception of the *vestibular* as a traumatic experience is directly related to the growth and power of the private education market, since students and families are willing to purchase private education as a way to minimize the amount of times students may be exposed to the stress and pressure of the *vestibular* in a case of multiple failed attempts. Although students reported feeling more at ease and calm because of the *cursinho*, often due to a feeling of being more prepared, this strategy does little to minimize overall stress and anxiety, since the *cursinho* environment is comparable to the private school environment in terms of extreme pressure, tension, and strain (and at times, according to some accounts, even more than the private schools). The result is a system that puts students at their edge, under harmful psychological conditions that emphasize individual failure and

success, so that students can compete with each other for a place in university. In the meantime, the private sector of education benefits from the retreat from the state as a provider of quality education and finds an opportunity to expand the reach of education as a private good through the normalization of the *cursinho* industry. Combined, these conditions facilitate the neoliberal agenda for education as it reinforces a human capital model of education, the overpowering of the private educational sector over the state, and societal consent due to the focus on knowledge useful for capital in detriment to education that could give rise to a counter-hegemonic process.

6 Chapter: Concluding remarks

This thesis dealt with the relationship between neoliberalism, access to education, and the role of the *cursinho* industry. Chapter Two provided an overview of the literature that deals with access to education in Brazil and how it has reproduced a system of inequality based on class, race, gender, schooling background, and more recently, use of special preparatory services for the *vestibular* provided by the *cursinho* industry. Research shows that *cursinhos* are becoming more common, up to the point where they are seen as mediators between formal basic school and university, even though *cursinhos* are not part of the formal system of education in Brazil. Despite the presence of some popular or free *cursinhos*, the majority of these institutions charge tuition for profit and expand the reach of the private sector of education. In Chapter Three, the theoretical underpinnings of the neoliberal agenda for education were examined as a framework for analysis of the marketization of education in Brazil and what is its impact for capitalism, society, and the students who are the main players in a system based on exclusion rather than inclusion. The *cursinhos* enhance the exclusive character of education as a special arm of the private sector, since, although *cursinho* attendance is optional and informal, it is becoming more normalized and accepted by students as a strong facilitator of access to university.

As one resource-based factor that can facilitate access for those who have it and, as a consequence, hamper access for those who do not have it, *cursinho* attendance can be seen as a determining factor of inequality of access to education. Other factors, such as race, gender, class, and private school attendance, also help to determine one's chance of succeeding at the *vestibular* exam, although, as explained in Chapter Four, these factors

play a stronger role in affecting access at their intersections. One example is the suggestion of a reversal of the gender gap at Brazilian universities, with more female students attending tertiary education. However, gender should not be analysed in isolation, since barriers of access and forms of exclusion often occur when two or more factors intersect, as is the case with gender and race, which reveals that in regards to the student surveys collected during fieldwork, there were more female participants than male, though it was important to highlight how white and *pardo* races were the most represented within the sample, whereas minority races continue to be more excluded. The surveys were also indicative of more white and *pardos* at private schools than at public schools, again pointing to the intersection of two factors of access.

Chapter Five shows that 58% of the students surveyed utilized one or more forms of *cursinho* industry services as they prepared for the *vestibular* exam. Although the percentage alone is indicative of how prominent the industry has become as a mediator, it is the personal accounts by the students interviewed that reveal the high esteem held in regards to *cursinhos* as a potential advantage in relation to one's competitors at the *vestibular*. The choice to pursue *cursinhos* as a preparation option also shows how much students have come to rely on the private education system to prepare for the *vestibular*, as not only do they view public schools as inept for providing them with the necessary content but also these schools fare worse than private schools at national performance measurements. The result is the unloading of the burden of educational provision from the state onto the individual. The focus on the individual also enhances the competitive aspect of the system, positioning students against their peers when writing the exam for the same major at the same university. Also, the fact that only certain content and certain

majors are valued in the current context operates as a way to generate consent in society through the argument that human capital attainment and specific skills valuable to capital are the key to improving one's material condition. As a consequence, education based on knowledge that can foster a counter-hegemonic environment is neglected and rejected by students and families whose aim is to receive a return on their educational investment. This results in a double-advantage for the maintenance of the neoliberal system and its agenda for education. While an individualist education centred around skills and knowledge useful for capitalism promotes capital accumulation and reinforces the idea that the market is an appropriate provider of education, the system is reproduced through the absence of contestation that results from preventing students from accessing knowledge that gives them a historical understanding of oppression, exploitation, and power.

Although the recent introduction of the ENEM as a standardized option for entry into many universities that reduces the need for students to write individual exams when applying for multiple universities is an option that might reduce some of the pressure and stress the students have to deal with, the ENEM maintains the need by students to seek private schools and *cursinhos* in order to get a higher ENEM grade and increase their chances of entry into the most competitive majors. Even though some universities have already replaced their customized *vestibular* exam with the nationwide ENEM, the slow transition and the autonomy universities retain into how they choose to utilize the ENEM grade leads to a level of uncertainty on behalf of the students, in addition to problems encountered in the last ENEM editions that point to fraud by private education institutions that were looking to obtain questions in advance in order to give their

students an advantage. Furthermore, some *cursinhos* have already adapted and now offer classes tailored specifically towards the ENEM content.

While the ENEM represents a step towards the disappearance of the *vestibular* in the future, it does not solve the systemic problem of inequality based on determining factors of access. Once more, the Brazilian state's attempt to make access to university more fair, and perhaps more equal, neglects that inequality must be tackled at its roots. A major step would be to bring more state attention and resources into the basic public education system, as a means to close the gap between public school and private school students. This policy option would not only diminish the need for *cursinhos* and the private education sector as a whole, but it also holds the opportunity for a reform of educational content. If a student's educational background becomes valued as part of an application process for university, including a transcript of grades throughout their schooling history instead of performance based on one or two days of stressful *vestibular* examinations, there will be more room for teaching a broad range of subjects without prioritizing one over the other. It is likely that such a transition could open the doors for an education system that follows some of the principles outlined by Antonio Gramsci and Paulo Freire in Chapter Three.

This possible transition and its policy implications are valuable topics for future research, as well as a thorough examination of the size of the *cursinho* industry as a whole. The limited resources available for this thesis project were not compatible with the potential size of a study that could measure the Brazilian *cursinho* industry in size and influence, although such research would be extremely valuable to complement the current understanding of this important informal arm of the private educational sector.

Les Levidow suggests that one way to counter away the neoliberal agenda is to demonstrate the links amongst various types of marketization. He writes: “To counter the neoliberal agenda, imaginative efforts will be needed. First, links among various types of marketisation must be demonstrated. Marketisation measures can take subtle forms – e.g. ideological language, funding priorities, public-private partnerships, tuition fees, cost-benefit analysis, performance indicators, curriculum changes, new technology, students as consumers of pre-packaged goods, etc. Critics need to demonstrates how all these aspects are linked, how they change the content of academic work and learning, and how they arise from efforts to discipline labour for capital, as part of a global agenda.”¹⁷²

The case study presented in this thesis contributed to this effort by exposing how the process of marketization of education represented by the *cursinho* industry is advancing the neoliberal agenda, changing the content of learning and the relationships in the educational sector, and contributing to the inequality of access to universities by enhancing class divisions through systematic selectivity and self-selectivity.

Moreover, the influence of the *cursinho* industry and the promotion of individualistic, instrumental learning hinder the advancement of counter-hegemonic efforts in the Brazilian social and political arena. This results in a disconnection between those engaged in social struggle and the professional (and even partly, the intellectual) class. Students are being formed to rely on the market for their needs and believe that the state cannot be used to provide aid and social services. The focus on careers that produce a certain level of financial gain blinds students from understanding that, in an

¹⁷² Les Levidow, “Neoliberal agendas for higher education”, in *Neoliberalism: a critical reader*, by Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (eds) (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 161.

unequal society, one person's gain often results in another's losses, especially in an economic system whose growth is based on class antagonism and the exploitation of labour. Instrumental knowledge leads one to think only of their own return and undermines class awareness and, most importantly in the case of strong rejection of social movements by the middle and upper classes, class solidarity. The lack of class solidarity is evident in the way occupations are perceived to be superior to others according to the financial return and, at times, educational level to which they are associated. This mode of thinking is in contrast to what Paulo Freire has found in his methodology of alphabetizing for power and freedom, the most striking example being one in which a mature student concludes: "I make shoes, and I discover that I am of the same value as the doctor who makes books."¹⁷³ However, the reproduction of the current system of production, education, and thinking continues to position workers against others, the same way students are positioned against other students as they compete for limited access to university with the help of the market.

Overall, this thesis contributed to the literature on the role and impact of the *cursinho* industry in Brazil. It proposed analysing inequality of access and its determining factors through an intersectional analysis while paying special attention to the marketization of education in Brazil from a critical perspective of neoliberalism. This thesis argued that the *cursinho* industry is becoming normalized as a mediator of access to university and is perceived as an advantage by students who choose to attend *cursinho* or *específica* in order to prepare for the *vestibular* exam. Finally, it maintained that

¹⁷³ Paulo Freire, *Educação como prática da liberdade* (São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2010), 118. (my translation)

prioritization of content and majors that are perceived to be of more value to capital hinders the development of a counter-hegemonic process. The internalization of responsibility for educational attainment by students contributes to an acceptance of the unequal structure of the system of access to higher education in Brazil and generates consent, thereby strengthening hegemonic class power within a neoliberal system.

Appendices

Appendix A List of Acronyms

ERT: European Round Table

ENEM: Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio (High School National Exam)

IBGE: Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics)

IDEB: Basic Education Development Index

ITA: Instituto Tecnológico de Aeronáutica (Technological Institute of Aeronautics)

LBD: Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional (Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education)

MEC: Ministério da Educação (Ministry of Education)

UFG: Universidade Federal de Goiás (Federal University of Goiás)

UFSC: Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (Federal University of Santa Catarina)

UnB: Universidade Nacional de Brasília (National University of Brasília)

Appendix B Fieldwork questions

B.1 Interviews - Oral consent script

Title of research project: Access to higher education in Brazil: Exploring the *cursinho* industry

Ethics clearance for data collection expires: May 31, 2012

Meu nome é Sabrina Fernandes e você foi convidada a participar na fase qualitativa do estudo do meu mestrado na Carleton University, sob a supervisão da Professora Cristina Rojas. Você foi convidado a participar, porque você já participou da primeira fase do estudo e sabe o que o projeto envolve.

Participação neste estudo é voluntária. Que irá envolver uma entrevista de 19 perguntas que levará aproximadamente 30-45 minutos ocorrendo em um local de mutuo acordo. Você pode se recusar a responder a qualquer das perguntas da entrevista, se assim o desejar. Além disso, você pode decidir retirar-se do estudo a qualquer momento antes de novembro de 2011, sem quaisquer consequências negativas, ao me avisar. Se você decidir retirar-se, as informações que você forneceu serão destruídas. Você é livre para elaborar tanto quanto você quiser em cada resposta e pedir esclarecimentos antes de responder.

Todas as informações que você fornecer são consideradas totalmente confidenciais. Seu nome não aparecerá em nenhuma tese ou relatório resultante deste estudo. Somente o pesquisador associado a este projeto terá acesso aos dados recolhidos, que serão arquivados de forma segura após a conclusão do projeto. Como compensação por sua participação, você receberá um cartão de presente para Livraria Saraiva no valor de 20 reais que pode ser dado a você em pessoa ou por e-mail de acordo com sua escolha.

Se você tem alguma dúvida sobre este estudo, ou gostaria de informações adicionais para ajudá-lo a chegar a uma decisão sobre a participação, entre em contato comigo em 062-8164-0673 ou pelo e-mail sfernan1@connect.carleton.ca

Gostaria de assegurar-lhe que este estudo foi analisado e recebeu autorização da ética através do Escritório de Ética em Pesquisa da Universidade de Carleton. No entanto, a decisão final sobre a participação é sua. Você pode contactar o Presidente do Conselho de Ética em Pesquisa, Prof Antonio Gualtieri, no ethics@carleton.ca ou (613) 520-2517 e / ou Professor Cristina Rojas em cristina_rojas@carleton.ca se você tiver dúvidas ou preocupações.

Agradecemos antecipadamente por sua ajuda neste projeto.

Posso começar?

- 1) Quando você decidiu que gostaria de fazer um curso superior?
- 2) Como você chegou à decisão de prestar *vestibular* para ingressar na universidade? E como você chegou a essa decisão? Você considera que você chegou a essa decisão sozinho?
- 3) Por que você escolheu fazer este curso?
- 4) Você cogitou fazer outros cursos ou se sentiu pressionado para fazer certos cursos?

- 5) Você está satisfeito com sua escolha de universidade?
- 6) Como você avalia o processo seletivo pelo qual passou?
- 7) Você se sentiu pressionado como um pre-vestibulando? Como você descreveria essa pressão?
- 8) Que vantagens e desvantagens você acha que você teve na sua preparação para o processo seletivo?
- 9) Já no terceiro ano, como você avaliava suas chances de passar no *vestibular* de seu curso e universidade de preferência?
- 10) O que o motivou para fazer *cursinho*/específica e o que influenciou a sua escolha de instituição de *cursinho*?
- 11) Como você caracterizaria sua experiência no *cursinho*?
- 12) Como você diferenciaria sua experiência no ensino médio do *cursinho*?
- 13) Como você avaliaria a relação entre suas chances de passar no *vestibular* e o fato de ter feito *cursinho*/específica?
- 14) Você considera que houve algum tipo de sacrifício ou dificuldade financeira ou de tempo incorrida por você ou sua família para garantir melhor preparo para o *vestibular*? Quais?
- 15) Você precisou ou optou por trabalhar durante o ensino médio ou *cursinho*? Se sim, o que motivou sua escolha de trabalhar? Como foi a sua experiência ao tentar conciliar o dia de trabalho com os estudos? Como você descreve o relacionamento entre o fato de ter trabalhado e o seu desempenho escolar e posteriormente desempenho no *vestibular*?
- 16) Você vivenciou dificuldades que interferiram no seu desenvolvimento educacional no ensino médio e fundamental? Quais?
- 17) O que você acha que teria contribuído para você ter tido melhor acesso à seu curso na universidade?
- 18) Como você caracteriza a relação entre ter conseguido acesso à educação superior e sua posição material e lugar na sociedade? futuros... contraste se não tivesse tido acesso
- 19) Você gostaria de fazer mais algum comentário ou elaborar alguma resposta?

B.2 Campus survey

Termo de Consentimento

Projeto de pesquisa: Acesso ao ensino superior no Brasil: Explorando o mercado de *cursinhos*

Data de depuração ética: 15 de julho de 2011

Caro participante,

- Este é um convite para participar de minha pesquisa de Mestrado em Economia Política na Carleton University (Canadá).
- Este projeto investiga o mercado de *cursinhos* e o acesso ao ensino superior em Goiânia. Você foi convidado(a) para participar deste estudo porque é um estudante atual da UFG e/ou PUC-GO que começou seus estudos após aprovação

no vestibular de fim de ano de 2009 ou 2010.

- Participação neste estudo é **voluntária e confidencial**. Envolverá um questionário de **28 questões de múltipla escolha**. Você pode se recusar a responder qualquer pergunta e/ou se retirar do estudo a qualquer momento antes de **outubro de 2011**, ao avisar a pesquisadora, e suas informações serão destruídas.
- Você é livre para analisar o questionário (em anexo) antes de decidir aceitar ou recusar o convite para participar deste estudo.
- **Após preencher o questionário, você pode ser selecionado para continuar a participar deste projeto de pesquisa por meio de uma entrevista (pela qual será recompensado(a)). Você é livre para se recusar a dar uma entrevista. Participando ou não da entrevista, você pode optar por participar de um sorteio para ganhar um de três vales-presente no valor de R\$30 para a Livraria Saraiva que será realizado em Outubro de 2011.**

Obrigada antecipadamente por sua ajuda neste projeto,

Sabrina Fernandes

Pesquisadora - Instituto de Economia Política
Carleton University (Ottawa, Canadá)
Sfernand1@connect.carleton.ca / 062-8164-0673

Dr. Cristina Rojas

Supervisora - Ciência Política
Carleton University (Ottawa, Canadá)
Cristina_rojas@carleton.ca / 613 520 2600 ext 8097

Eu, _____, li a carta acima e voluntariamente dou consentimento para participar do estudo descrito acima.

Eu quero participar do sorteio para ganhar um de três vales-presente no valor de R\$30 para a Livraria Saraiva SIM NÃO

Este projeto recebeu autorização da ética de Carleton University. Se eu tiver quaisquer comentários ou dúvidas resultantes da minha participação neste estudo, posso contatar o Presidente do Conselho de Ética em Pesquisa, Professor Antonio Gualtieri, em ethics@carleton.ca ou +1 (613) 520-2517 e / ou Professor Cristina Rojas em cristina_rojas@carleton.ca

Telefone(s) do Participante: _____

E-mail do participante: _____

Assinatura do participante

_____/09/11
Data

Acesso a educação superior no Brasil: Explorando o mercado de *cursinhos*
Questionário

1. Em que universidade você estuda?

- A. Universidade Federal de Goiás
- B. Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Goiás

C. Ambas

2. O que você cursa na universidade acima? (Se marcou ambas, determine o que cursa em cada universidade)

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| A. Administração | I. Engenharia Elétrica |
| B. Arquitetura e Urbanismo | J. Letras |
| C. Ciências Contábeis | K. Odontologia |
| D. Comunicação Social | L. Psicologia |
| E. Direito | M. Medicina |
| F. Educação Física | N. Medicina Veterinária |
| G. Enfermagem | O. Nutrição |
| H. Engenharia Civil | P. Outro: _____ |

3. Qual seu turno de estudo?

- A. Matutino
- B. Vespertino
- C. Noturno
- D. Integral

4. Qual seu sexo?

- A. Masculino
- B. Feminino

5. Com que raça ou cor você se identifica?

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| A. Negro | E. Mista |
| B. Branco | F. Indígena |
| C. Amarelo | G. Outro: _____ |
| D. Pardo | |

6. Com que etnia você se identifica?

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| A. Origem africana | D. Origem mista |
| B. Origem européia | E. Origem indígena |
| C. Origem asiática | F. Outro: _____ |

7. Com quem você mora?

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| A. Família imediata (pais e/ou irmãos) | D. Parceiro(a) ou esposo(a) |
| B. Parentes (tios, avós, primos, etc) | E. Sozinho |
| C. Amigo(s) ou colega de quarto | |

8. Quantas pessoas moram em sua residência incluindo você?

- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 ou mais

9. Quantas pessoas assalariadas e que contribuem para a renda residencial (ex.: pagam aluguel, contas, alimentação) moram em sua residência incluindo você?

- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 ou mais

10. Você possui dependentes?

A. Sim

a. Quantos?

- i. 1
- ii. 2
- iii. 3
- iv. 4
- v. 5 ou mais

B. Não

11. Qual a renda mensal de sua residência?

- A. De zero a menos de um salário mínimo
- B. Um salário mínimo
- C. Entre R\$545 e R\$ 800
- D. Entre R\$801 e R\$1200
- E. Entre R\$1.201 e R\$2.500
- F. Entre R\$2.501 e R\$5.000
- G. Entre R\$5.001 e R\$8.000
- H. Mais de R\$8.001

12. Qual sua renda mensal pessoal?

- A. De zero a menos de um salário mínimo
- B. Um salário mínimo
- C. Entre R\$545 e R\$ 800
- D. Entre R\$801 e R\$1200
- E. Entre R\$1.201 e R\$2.500
- F. Entre R\$2.501 e R\$5.000
- G. Entre R\$5.001 e R\$8.000

H. Mais de R\$8.001

13. Na residência em que você cresceu, excluindo você, quantas pessoas possuíam diploma de curso superior?

- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 ou mais
- F. Ninguém

14. Em que tipo de escola fundamental de segunda fase (sexto ao nono ano) você estudou?

- A. Escola fundamental particular
- B. Escola fundamental municipal pública
- C. Escola fundamental estadual pública
- D. Escola fundamental federal pública
- E. Outro: _____

15. Em que tipo de escola de ensino médio você estudou?

- A. Escola de ensino médio particular
 - a. **Quem foi responsável pelo pagamento de sua mensalidade escolar durante o ensino médio?**
 - i. Pai e/ou mãe ou guardião legal
 - ii. Parente (tios, avô/avó, etc)
 - iii. A própria escola através de bolsa escolar
 - iv. Você
 - v. Outro: _____
- B. Escola de ensino médio municipal pública
- C. Escola de ensino médio estadual pública
- D. Escola de ensino médio federal pública
- E. Outro: _____

16. Quais tipos de serviços pré-vestibular você usou antes de passar no vestibular?

- A. Curso pré-vestibular (*cursinho*) comum
 - a. **Em que tipo de *cursinho* você estudou?**
 - i. Particular
 - ii. Popular (mensalidade baixa e/ou subsidiada)
 - iii. Público

B. Específica(s)

- a. **Que tipo de *específica* você atendeu?**
 - i. Particular

- ii. Popular (mensalidade baixa e/ou subsidiada)
- iii. Público
- C. Pacotes de excursão para prestar *vestibular* em outras cidades
- D. Nenhum (**pule para a questão 22 - se você é aluno da UFG pule para a questão 23**)
- E. Outro: _____

Caso tenha respondido A (curso pré-vestibular) na questão 16:

17. Por quanto tempo você estudou em um *cursinho*?

- A. Menos de 6 meses
- B. 6 meses a 1 ano
- C. 1-2 anos
- D. 2-3 anos
- E. Mais de 3 anos

18. Quem foi responsável por pagar sua mensalidade do *cursinho*?

- A. Pai e/ou mãe ou guardião legal
- B. Parente (família estendida)
- C. O próprio *cursinho* através de bolsa escolar
- D. Você
- E. Gratuito
- F. Outro: _____

Caso tenha respondido B (*específica*) na questão 16:

19. Por quanto tempo você estudou atendeu alguma *específica*?

- A. 1 mês
- B. 2 – 6 meses
- C. 6 meses – 1 ano
- D. 1-2 anos
- E. Mais de 2 anos

20. Quem foi responsável por pagar sua mensalidade da *específica*?

- A. Pai e/ou mãe ou guardião legal
- B. Parente (família estendida)
- C. O próprio *cursinho* através de bolsa escolar
- D. Você
- E. Gratuito
- F. Outro: _____

21. Em relação à renda total de sua residência, você considera que seus custos relacionados a *cursinho* e/ou *específica* foram:

- A. Baratos
- B. Razoáveis
- C. Caros
- D. Excessivamente caros

22. Se você estuda na PUC-GO, quem é responsável por pagar sua mensalidade da universidade?

- A. Pai e/ou mãe ou guardião legal
- B. Parente (tios, avós, etc)
- C. Universidade ou governo através de bolsa escolar (ProUni, outros...)

- D. Você
- E. Outro: _____

23. Você domina pelo menos uma língua estrangeira?

A. Sim

a. Qual(is)?

- i. Inglês
- ii. Espanhol
- iii. Francês

- iv. Alemão
- v. Outro: _____

b. Onde você aprendeu esta(s) línguas(s)?

- i. Em casa
- ii. Na escola
- iii. Curso particular de línguas estrangeiras
- iv. Outro: _____

B. Não

24. Você usufruiu de acesso fácil e contínuo a computador e à internet antes do vestibular?

A. Sim

a. Como você acessou a um computador e à internet?

- i. Computador pessoal
- ii. Computador da escola
- iii. Computador de amigos
- iv. Computador do trabalho
- v. Computador público
- vi. Lan house
- vii. Outro: _____

B. Não

25. Dentre todas as universidades onde você prestou vestibular, sua universidade atual foi sua primeira escolha?

- A. Sim
- B. Não

26. Caso tenha prestado vestibular para cursos diferentes, seu curso atual foi sua primeira escolha?

- A. Sim
- B. Não

27. Quantas vezes você prestou o *vestibular* para estudar na sua universidade atual em seu curso atual? (Ex: José marcou opção “C” pois prestou o *vestibular* para Engenharia Civil três vezes na UFG e passou na terceira vez)

- A. 1
- B. 2
- C. 3
- D. 4
- E. 5 ou mais

28. Quando você iniciou seus estudos na sua universidade atual em seu curso atual?

- A. Início de estudos em 2010)
- B. Início de estudos em 2011)

B.3 Industry telephone questionnaire

Script for Telephone questionnaire

Olá, meu nome é Sabrina Fernandes, mestranda em Economia Política na Universidade de Carleton, no Canadá, sob a supervisão da Dra. Cristina Rojas. Estou fazendo em uma pesquisa sobre os a relação entre *cursinhos* e o acesso à educação superior em Goiânia e gostaria de fazer algumas perguntas ao responsável pela sua instituição. A participação será anônima e confidencial e envolve 11 questões que devem tomar menos de 5 minutos do seu tempo.

A participação é voluntária e há o direito de se recusar a responder a certas perguntas. Você também pode solicitar que a sua participação seja retirada do estudo a qualquer momento antes de 15 de Outubro de 2011.

Este projeto recebeu autorização da ética através da Universidade de Carleton. Se você tiver quaisquer dúvidas resultantes da sua participação neste estudo, pode contatar o Presidente do Conselho de Ética, Prof Antonio Gualtieri, em ethics@carleton.ca ou (613) 520-2517.

Você tem alguma dúvida?

Posso começar o questionário?

1. Há quanto tempo sua instituição oferece *cursinho*?
A) 0-1 anos B) 1-2 anos C) 2-5 anos D) 5-10 anos E) Mais de 10 anos
2. Quantos alunos você estima que estão matriculados no seu *cursinho* (todos os turnos)?
A) 0-100 B) 101-250 C) 251-500 D) 501-1000 E) Mais de 1000
3. Quantos professores são empregados no seu *cursinho*?
A) 0-10 B) 11-20 C) 21-30 D) 31-40 E) Mais de 40
4. Que tipos de cursos vocês oferecem? (Por favor identifique todos na seguinte lista)
 - i. Curso pré-vestibular
 - ii. Curso para o ENEM
 - iii. Específicas
 - iv. Cursos para concursos
 - v. Cursos para OAB
 - vi. Outros
5. Você oferece cursos pré-vestibular específicos para os vestibulares de certas universidades?
 - i. Sim/NãoSE SIM, PARA QUAL UNIVERSIDADE?
6. Seu *cursinho* é afiliado ou faz parte de uma escola de ensino médio?
 - i. Sim/Não
7. Qual a sua taxa de aprovação no vestibular de 2010? Em geral 90% concursos e vestibulares
A) Não sei B) Menos de 25% C) 26%-50% D) 51%-75% E) Mais de 75%
8. Qual é o valor da mensalidade de seu curso pré-vestibular mais comum/procurado?
A) Gratuito B) Menos de R\$150 C) R\$151-300 D) 301-500 E) R\$501-900 D) Mais de R\$900

9. Qual é o valor da mensalidade de seu curso de específica, caso ofereça algum?
A) Grátis B) Menos de R\$150 C) R\$151-300 D) 301-500 E) Mais de R\$ 500
10. Você opinaria que sua instituição de *cursinho* procura atrair estudantes concorrendo a cursos de maior competitividade por vaga? (Exemplo: Medicina, Direito, Engenharia, etc).
i. Sim/Não
11. Última pergunta: Sua instituição de *cursinho* também oferece algum dos serviços para vestibulandos a seguir?
A) Pacotes de excursão para vestibulares
B) Apostilas e/ou livros preparatórios por um preço adicional ao valor da mensalidade e/ou disponíveis para pessoas que não estudam no seu *cursinho*
C) Curso de línguas estrangeiras
D) Curso de informática
E) Outro: _____

Essas foram todas as questões. Minha informação de contato é 062-8164-0673 se você tiver alguma pergunta ou preocupação. Obrigada pela sua participação.

Appendix C Survey data worksheets

C.1 Income distribution analysis

MonthlyResIncome			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
<545	4	27.6	-23.6
545-800	9	27.6	-18.6
801-1200	26	27.6	-1.6
1201-2500	50	27.6	22.4
2501-5000	40	27.6	12.4
5001-8000	39	27.6	11.4
>8000	25	27.6	-2.6
Total	193		

Test Statistics	
	MonthlyRes Income
Chi-Square	61.575 ^a
df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 27.6.

MonthlyResIncomeCursinhoOnly			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
<545	5	16.3	-11.3
545-800	6	16.3	-10.3
801-1200	15	16.3	-1.3
1201-2500	33	16.3	16.7
2501-5000	19	16.3	2.7
5001-8000	23	16.3	6.7
>8000	13	16.3	-3.3
Total	114		

Test Statistics	
	MonthlyRes IncomeCurs inhoOnly
Chi-Square	35.456 ^a
df	6
Asymp. Sig.	.000

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.3.

C.2 Public school data analysis

```
FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Race Ethnicity Income Cursinho Sex
/STATISTICS=STDDEV VARIANCE RANGE MEAN MEDIAN MODE SUM
/ORDER=ANALYSIS.
```

Statistics						
		Race	Ethnicity	Income	Cursinho	Sex
N	Valid	64	64	64	64	64
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean						1.42
Median						1.00
Mode						1

Std. Deviation				.498
Variance				.248
Range				1
Sum				91

Frequency Table

Race

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Black	13	20.3	20.3	20.3
White	16	25.0	25.0	45.3
Valid Yellow	3	4.7	4.7	50.0
Pardo	22	34.4	34.4	84.4
Mixed	10	15.6	15.6	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

Ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
African	4	6.3	6.3	6.3
European	5	7.8	7.8	14.1
Asian	1	1.6	1.6	15.6
Valid Mixed	45	70.3	70.3	85.9
Indigenous	6	9.4	9.4	95.3
Other	1	1.6	1.6	96.9
Blank	2	3.1	3.1	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

Income

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	2	3.1	3.1	3.1
B	1	1.6	1.6	4.7
C	6	9.4	9.4	14.1
D	13	20.3	20.3	34.4
Valid E	16	25.0	25.0	59.4
F	16	25.0	25.0	84.4
G	7	10.9	10.9	95.3
H	2	3.1	3.1	98.4
Blank	1	1.6	1.6	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

Cursinho

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
--	-----------	---------	---------------	--------------------

Valid Yes	49	76.6	76.6	76.6
Valid No	15	23.4	23.4	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	37	57.8	57.8	57.8
Valid Female	27	42.2	42.2	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

C.3 Private school data analysis

```
FREQUENCIES VARIABLES=Race Ethnicity Income Cursinho Sex
/STATISTICS=STDDEV VARIANCE RANGE MEAN MEDIAN MODE SUM
/ORDER=ANALYSIS.
```

Statistics

	Race	Ethnicity	Income	Cursinho	Sex
N Valid	132	132	132	132	132
N Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean					1.64
Median					2.00
Mode					2
Std. Deviation					.498
Variance					.248
Range					2
Sum					216

Frequency Table

Race

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Black	7	5.3	5.3	5.3
Valid White	65	49.2	49.2	54.5
Valid Yellow	5	3.8	3.8	58.3
Valid Pardo	37	28.0	28.0	86.4
Valid Mixed	14	10.6	10.6	97.0
Valid Indigenous	3	2.3	2.3	99.2
Valid Blank	1	.8	.8	100.0
Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid African	6	4.5	4.5	4.5
European	33	25.0	25.0	29.5
Asian	1	.8	.8	30.3
Mixed	84	63.6	63.6	93.9
Indigenous	2	1.5	1.5	95.5
Other	3	2.3	2.3	97.7
Blank	3	2.3	2.3	100.0
Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Income

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid A	1	.8	.8	.8
C	5	3.8	3.8	4.5
D	9	6.8	6.8	11.4
E	30	22.7	22.7	34.1
F	22	16.7	16.7	50.8
G	29	22.0	22.0	72.7
H	23	17.4	17.4	90.2
Blank	13	9.8	9.8	100.0
Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Cursinho

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	62	47.0	47.0	47.0
No	66	50.0	50.0	97.0
Blank	4	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	132	100.0	100.0	

Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	49	37.1	37.1	37.1
Female	82	62.1	62.1	99.2
3	1	.8	.8	100.0
Total	132	100.0	100.0	

C.4 Chi-square test of intersectionality analysis: High school as main variable

CROSSTABS

/TABLES=Highschool BY Sex Income Cursinho Race

/FORMAT=AVALUE TABLES

/STATISTICS=CHISQ
 /CELLS=COUNT
 /COUNT ROUND CELL.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
High school * Sex	207	100.0%	0	0.0%	207	100.0%
High school * Income	207	100.0%	0	0.0%	207	100.0%
High school * <i>Cursinho</i>	207	100.0%	0	0.0%	207	100.0%
High school * Race	207	100.0%	0	0.0%	207	100.0%
High school * Ethnicity	207	100.0%	0	0.0%	207	100.0%

High school * Sex

Crosstab

Count

		Sex			Total
		Male	Female	3	
High school	Private	49	82	1	132
	Public	37	27	0	64
	Other	1	5	0	6
	Blank	1	1	0	2
	Mixed	1	2	0	3
Total		89	117	1	207

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	9.842 ^a	8	.276
Likelihood Ratio	10.308	8	.244
N of Valid Cases	207		

a. 11 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

High school * Income

Crosstab

Count

		Income						
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G
High school	Private	1	0	5	9	30	22	29
	Public	2	1	6	13	16	16	7
	Other	0	0	0	2	2	1	1
	Blank	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
	Mixed	0	0	0	0	1	0	2

Total	3	1	11	24	50	40	39
-------	---	---	----	----	----	----	----

Crosstab

Count

		Income		Total
		H	Blank	
High school	Private	23	13	132
	Public	2	1	64
	Other	0	0	6
	Blank	0	0	2
	Mixed	0	0	3
Total		25	14	207

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	41.862 ^a	32	.114
Likelihood Ratio	45.372	32	.059
N of Valid Cases	207		

a. 33 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

High school * Cursinho

Crosstab

Count

		Cursinho			Total
		Yes	No	Blank	
High school	Private	62	66	4	132
	Public	49	15	0	64
	Other	6	0	0	6
	Blank	2	0	0	2
	Mixed	2	1	0	3
Total		121	82	4	207

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	22.259 ^a	8	.004
Likelihood Ratio	26.685	8	.001
N of Valid Cases	207		

a. 11 cells (73.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .04.

High school * Race

Crosstab

Count

		Race						
		Black	White	Yellow w	Pardo	Mixed	Indig enous	Blank
High school	Private	7	65	5	37	14	3	1
	Public	13	16	3	22	10	0	0
	Other	0	2	1	2	1	0	0
	Blank	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
	Mixed	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Total		21	84	10	61	27	3	1

Crosstab

Count

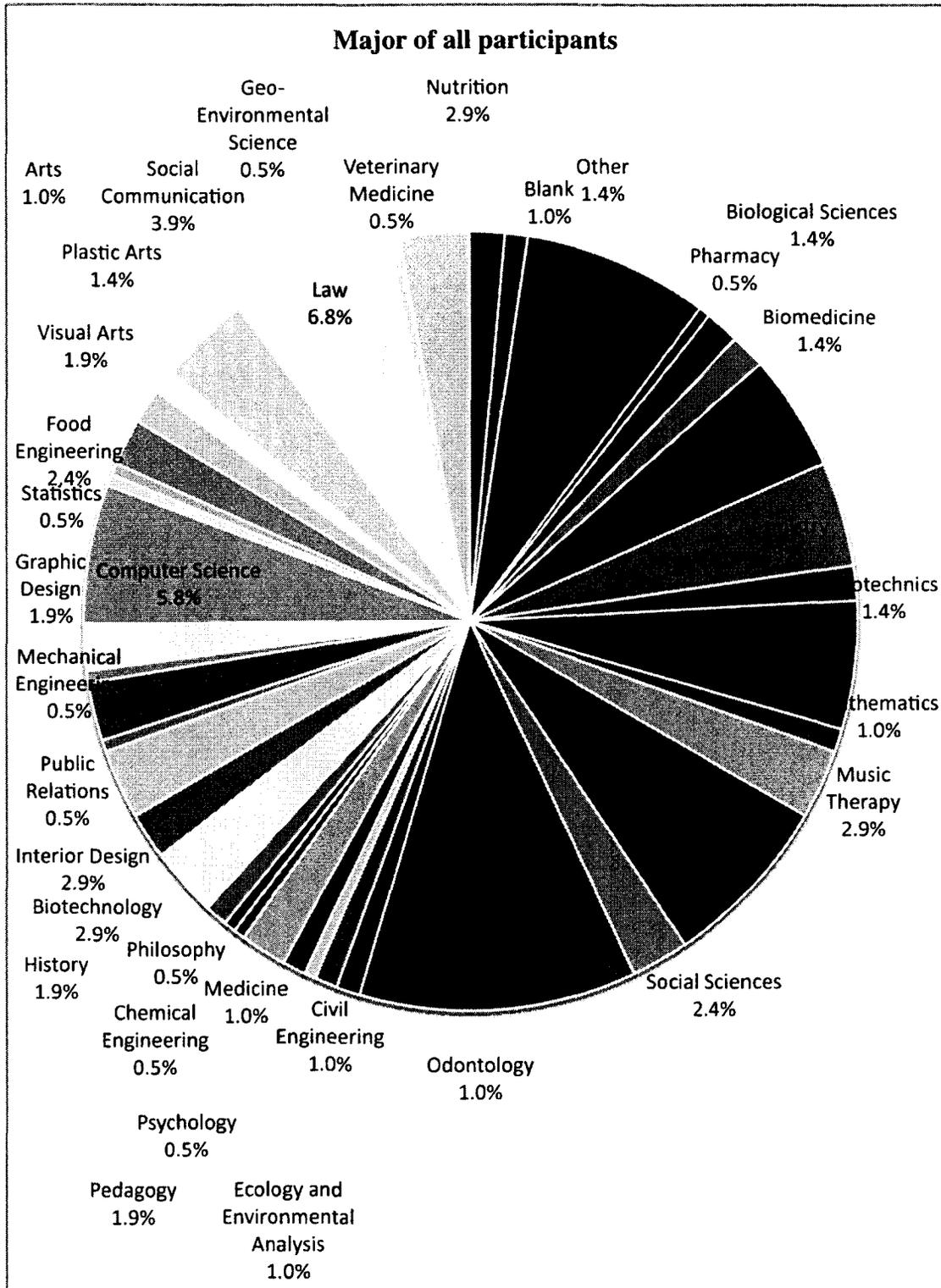
		Total
High school	Private	132
	Public	64
	Other	6
	Blank	2
	Mixed	3
Total		207

Chi-Square Tests

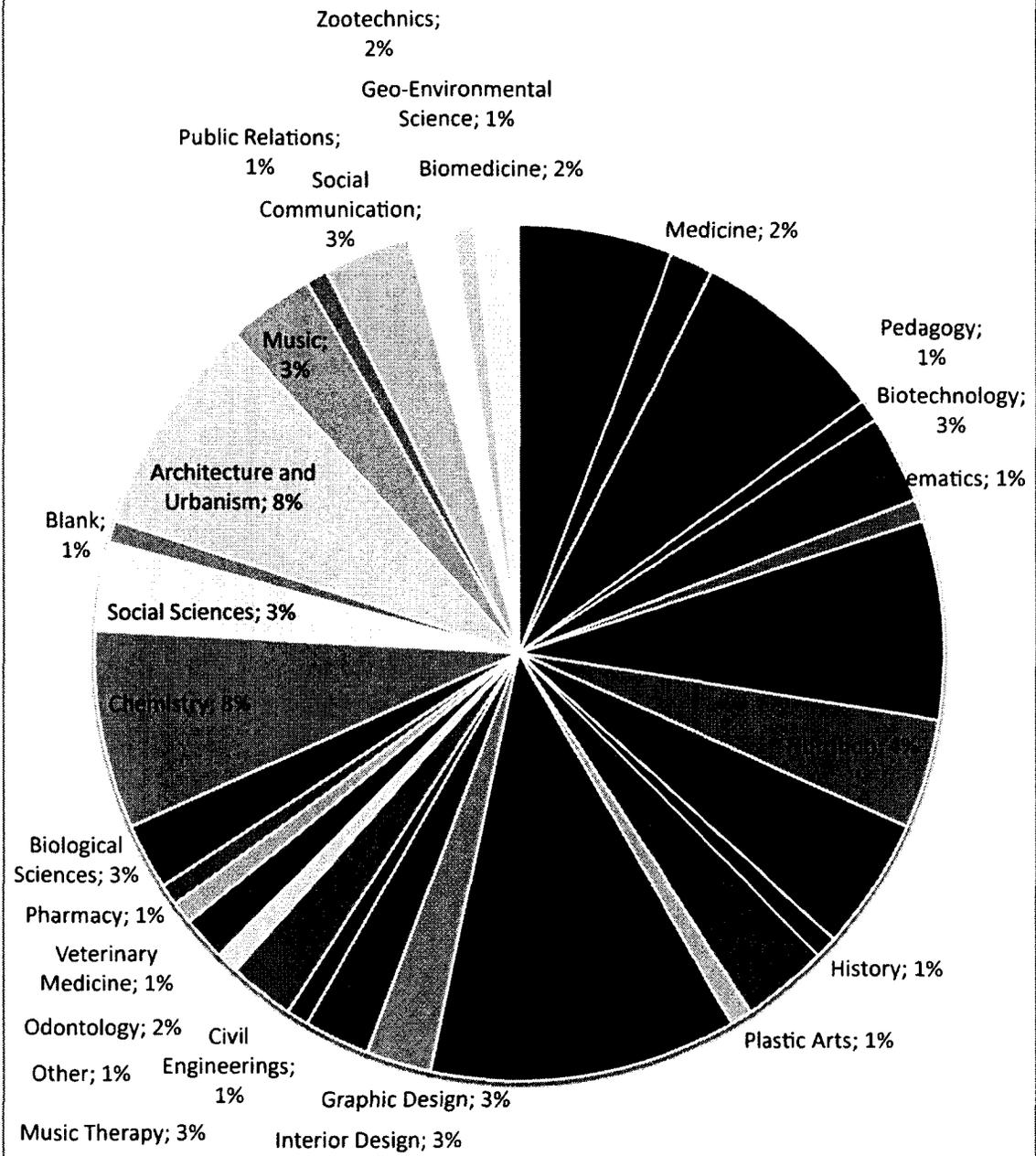
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	38.224 ^a	24	.033
Likelihood Ratio	34.398	24	.078
N of Valid Cases	207		

a. 26 cells (74.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

Appendix D Major of survey participants



Major of cursinho participants



Bibliography

- Acker, Joan. "Inequality regimes: Gender, Class, and Race in Organizations." *Gender & Society* 20 (2006): 441-464.
- Acker, Joan. *Class questions: feminist answers*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006.
- Albernaz, Ângela, Francisco H.G. Ferreira, Creso Franco. "Qualidade e Equidade na Educação Fundamental Brasileira" Departamento de Economia." PUC-Rio, Texto para Discussão no. 455, May 2002.
- Amann, Edmund, and Werner Baer. "Neoliberalism and its Consequences in Brazil." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 34 (2012): 945-959.
- Aronowitz, Stanley. "Higher education as a public good," *Not for sale: in defense of public goods*. Anatole Anton et al (eds). Boulder: Westview Press, 2000.
- Beltrão, Kaizo Iwakami and José Esutáquio Diniz Alves, "Reversal of the gender gap in Brazilian education in the 20th century." *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 39 (2009): 1-32.
- Berger, Michele Tracy and Kathleen Guidroz. "Introduction." *The intersectional approach: transforming the academy through race, class, and gender*. Michele T. Berger and Kathleen Guidroz (eds.). Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 2009.
- Birdsall, Nancy, Barbara Burns and Richard H. Sabot. "Education in Brazil: playing a bad hand badly." *Opportunity foregone: education in Brazil*. Nancy Birdsall et al. (eds.) Washington: Inter-American Development Bank, 1996.
- Borges, José Leopoldino das Graças and Beatrice Laura Carnielli. "Educação e estratificação social no acesso à universidade pública." *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 35 (2005): 113-139.

- Boron, Atilio Alberto and Carlos Alberto Torres. "The impact of neoliberal restructuring on education and poverty in Latin America." *The Alberta Journal of Educational Research* 42 (1996): 102-114.
- Bowles, Samuel, and Herbert Gintis. "The Problem with Human Capital Theory: A Marxian Critique." *The American Economic Review* 65 (1975): 74-82.
- Cardoso, Zelina. "Políticas e reformas educacionais no contexto neoliberal." *Colloquium Humanarum* 6 (2009): 11-24.
- Cetelem BGN. "O Observador: Brasil 2012"
http://www.cetelem.com.br/portal/Sobre_Cetelem/Observador.shtml
- De Oliveira, Cícero Santiago. "Os pré-vestibulares populares como espaço de educação política de jovens adultos: o caso do práxis." Santa Maria: Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, 2009.
- Dickert-Conlin , Stacy and Ross Rubinstein. "Introduction." *Economics inequality and higher education: access, persistence and success*. Stacy Dickert-Conlin et al (eds.) New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2007.
- Engels, Friedrich. "Preface to the First Edition, 1884." *Origins of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. New York: Pathfinder Press, 2009.
- Fortes, Ricardo Luiz Rocha. "O *cursinho* como unidade escolar de mediação entre o ensino médio e a universidade : peculiaridades , sentidos e perspectivas." Master's Thesis, Belo Horizonte: Pontifícia Universidade Católica de Minas Gerais, 2005.
- Franco, Maria Aparecida Ciavatta. "Acesso à universidade: uma questão política e um problema metodológico." *Educação e Seleção* 12 (1985): 9-26.
- Freire, Paulo. *Educação como prática da liberdade*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 2010.

- Freire, Paulo. *Education: the practice of freedom*. London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1974.
- Freire, Paulo. *Politics and Education*. Los Angeles: UCLA Latin American Center Publications, 1998.
- Gadotti, Moacir. *Educação e Poder: Introdução à Pedagogia do Conflito*. São Paulo: Cortez Editora, 2008.
- Giroux, Henry A. "Selling out higher education." *Policy Futures in Education* 1 (2003):
- Giroux, Henry A. *Theory and resistance in education: towards a pedagogy for the opposition*. Westport: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2001.
- Government of Brazil. "Economic Indicators" *Portal Brasil*
http://www.brasil.gov.br/sobre/economia/indicadores/disoc_rdcg/indicadorview
- Gracindo, Regina Vinhaes, Sonirza Correa Marques, and Olgamir Amância Ferreira de Paiva. "A contradição exclusão/inclusão na sociedade e na escola." *Linhas Críticas* 11, no. 20 (2005): 5-25.
- Gramsci, Antonio. *L'alternativa pedagogica*. Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1972.
- Gramsci, Antonio. *The Modern Prince & other writings*. New York: International Publishers, 2007.
- Gross, Jacob P. K. "Education and hegemony: the influence of Antonio Gramsci." *Beyond critique: exploring critical social theories and education*, by Bradley Levinson et al (eds.) Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2011.
- Guimarães, Antonio Sérgio Alfredo. "Acesso de negros às universidades públicas." *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 118 (2003): 247-268.
- Harvey, David. *A brief history of neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

- Harvey, David. *Spaces of Global Capitalism*. London: Verso, 2006.
- Harvey, David. *The new imperialism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy. *Mixed methods research: merging theory with practice*.
New York: The Guilford Press, 2010.
- Hill, Dave. "O Neoliberalismo Global, a Resistência e a Deformação da Educação."
Currículo sem fronteiras 3 (2003): 24-59.
- Horkheimer, Max and Theodor Adorno. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: philosophical fragments*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002.
- IBGE. "Mapa Político." http://www.ibge.gov.br/7a12/mapas/frame.php?mapa=brasil/brasil_grandes_regioes
- IBGE. *Síntese de Indicadores Sociais: uma análise das condições de vida*. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2010.
http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/condicaodevida/indicadoresminimos/sinteseindicsoais2010/SIS_2010.pdf
- IBGE. "SIS 2010: Mulheres mais escolarizadas são mães mais tarde e têm menos filhos,"
Sala de Imprensa - Síntese de Indicadores Sociais 2010.
http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/presidencia/noticias/noticia_visualiza.php?id_noticia=1717&id_pagina=1
- Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais. "Basic Education Development Index" <http://sistemasideb.inep.gov.br/resultado/>
- Jay, Martin. *Marxism and totality: the adventures of a concept from Lukacs to Habermas*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

- Karier, Clarence J. "Business values and the educational state." *Schooling and capitalism: a sociological reader*. Roger Dale et al (eds.) London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976.
- Kempner, Ken, and Ana Loureiro Jurema. "The global politics of education: Brazil and the World Bank." *Higher Education* 43 (2002): 331-354.
- Levidow, Les. "Marketizing higher education: neoliberal strategies and counter-strategies." *The Virtual University? Knowledge, Markets and Management*. Robins et al (eds.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Levidow, Les. "Neoliberal agendas for higher education." *Neoliberalism: a critical reader*. Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (eds.) London: Pluto Press, 2005.
- Lynch, Kathleen. "Neo-liberalism and Marketisation: the implications for higher education." *European Educational Research Journal* 5 (2006): 1-17.
- Marx, Karl (with Friedrich Engels). *The German Ideology*. Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1998.
- Marx, Karl. *Capital: Volume I*. New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 1977.
- McCall, Leslie. "Gender and the New Inequality: Explaining the College/Non-College Wage Gap." *American Sociological Review* 65 (2000): 234-255.
- McCowan, Tristan. "The growth of private higher education in Brazil: implications for equity and quality." *Journal of Education Policy* 19 (2004): 453-472.
- Ministério da Educação. "Instituições de Educação Superior e Cursos Cadastrados"
<http://emec.mec.gov.br/>

- Mitrlis, Eleny and Sônia Teresinha de Sousa Penin. "Pré-vestibulares alternativos: da igualdade à equidade." *Cadernos de Pesquisa* 36 (2006): 269-298.
- Nagar, Richa, Victoria Lawson, Linda McDowell, Susan Hanson. "Locating Globalization: Feminist (Re)readings of the Subjects and Spaces of Globalization." *Economic Geography* 78 (2002): 257-284.
- Navarro, Vicente. "Neoliberalism as a class ideology; or, the political cases of the growth of inequalities." *International Journal of Health Services* 37 (2007): 47-62.
- Noddings, Nel. "Education as a public good." *Not for sale: in defense of public goods*. Anatole Anton et al (eds). Boulder: Westview Press, 2000.
- Oliveira, Romualdo Portela de. "A transformação da educação em mercadoria no Brasil." *Educação Social* 30 (2009): 739-760.
- Pinto, José Marcelino de Rezende. "O acesso à educação superior no Brasil." *Educação Social* 25 (2004): 727-756.
- Plank, David N., José Amaral Sobrinho and Antonio Carlos da Ressureição Xavier, "Why Brazil lags behind in educational development." *Opportunity foregone: education in Brazil*. Nancy Birdsall et al. (eds.) Washington: Inter-American Development Bank, 1996.
- Procon-Goiás. "Cursinho pré-vestibular para o segundo semestre de 2011 pode variar até 607,14%." Goiânia, July 2011.
<http://www.jornalopcao.com.br/arquivos/files/Procon.pdf>
- Reay, Diane. "Shifting class identities? Social class and the transition to higher education." *Social justice, education, and identity*, by Carol Vincent (ed.) London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003.

- Ribeiro, Gustavo Lins. "Neoliberalism and higher education in Brazil." *Working Paper* 384. Brasília: Universidade Nacional de Brasília, 2005.
- Rosemberg, Flúvia. "Educação formal, mulher e gênero no Brasil contemporâneo." *Estudos Feministas* 9 (2001): 515-540.
- Saad-Filho, Alfredo and Deborah Johnston, "Introduction." *Neoliberalism: a critical reader*. Alfredo Saad-Filho and Deborah Johnston (eds.) London: Pluto Press, 2005.
- Schwartzman, Jacques. "A Seletividade Sócio-econômica do *Vestibular* e suas Implicações para a Política Universitária Pública." *Educação e Seleção* 19 (1989): 99-109.
- Silva Júnior, João dos Reis. "Mudanças estruturais no capitalismo e a política educacional do governo FHC: o caso do ensino médio." *Educação Social* 23 (2002): 201-233.
- Tomelin, Heloisa Suzana Santos. "Access to higher education in Brazil." Master's Thesis. Athens: Ohio University, 2002.
- Torres, Carlos Alberto. *Globalizations and education: collected essays on class, race, gender and the state*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2009.
- UN-HABITAT. *State of the World's Cities 2010/2011: bridging the urban divide*. London: Earthscan, 2010.
- Universidade Federal de Goiás. "UFG em números 2011: Ano Base 2010." Goiânia: UFG, 2011. http://www.ufg.br/uploads/files/Folder_UFG_em_n_meros.pdf

- Weller, Wivian. "Diferenças e desigualdades na Universidade de Brasília: experiências de jovens negras e suas visões sobre o sistema de cotas." *Política & Sociedade* 11 (2007): 133-158.
- Williams, Raymond. "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory." *Media and cultural studies: keywords*, by Meenakshi Gigi Durham, Douglas Kellner (eds.) Cornwall: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.
- Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Wing, N. G. Haig, and Luiz Honorato. "Determinantes socioeconômicos na probabilidade de aprovação no exame *vestibular*: uma análise entre os campi da Universidade Federal de Pernambuco." *Planejamento e Políticas Públicas* 37 (2011): 97-131.
- World Bank. "Economic returns to investments in education." *The Road not travelled: Education Reform in the Middle East and North Africa*. Washington: The World Bank, 2007. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/EDU_02-Chap02-Education.pdf
- Zago, Nadir. "Cursos pré-vestibulares populares: limites e perspectivas." *Perspectiva* 26 (2008): 149-174.
- Zago, Nadir. "Do acesso à permanência no ensino superior: percursos de estudantes universitários de camadas populares." *Revista Brasileira de Educação* 11 (2006): 226-238.
- Zandoná, Norma da Luz Ferrarini. "O espaço do contrapoder: o acesso á universidade pública e o perfil socioeconômico educacional dos candidatos ao *vestibular* da UFPR." Phd Thesis. Curitiba: Universidade Federal do Paraná, 2005.