

The Program of Excellence in Basic Education: the impacts on school performance of the municipal public network in Paraná, Brazil.

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Abstract

Current paper show the Excellence Program in Basic Education (PEEB), developed by the Centro de Ensino Superior de Maringá (UNICESUMAR) in the state of Paraná, Brazil, and analyzes its impacts on school performance and in the quality of education under different aspects inherent to school management, the teacher, family, organized civil society within the municipal school network. Twenty-five municipalities with 75 government-run schools of basic education are investigated, involving the participation of students from fourth and fifth grades, the North and Northwest region of Paraná in Brazil. The Research was of the type exploratory and their interpretation quantitative and qualitative due to its aims and the target public. Results reveal a lack of a pattern in school management, school units, and hierarchies and even of the family which has ceased to exercise its primary role in children's development and teaching.

Keywords: Quality education; School management; Basic education; School performance.

1. Introduction

The main interest of this study is to analyze the impacts on school performance and quality of education under the different aspects inherent to school management and, identified with the teacher, family, organized civil society and the student of the basic education of the municipal public network. [2, p. 21], argues that "[...] it is unavoidable to assess without having a scale of contrast".

This way, it is aimed to understand how and the reasons of fragilities, which successful practices and potentialities for improvement of school performance in the municipal school network belonging to the North and Northwest region of Paraná in Brazil. This approach is associated with the sight of the school as a unit that acts with a cast of officials whose purpose is quality education.

At the beginning of the school life cycle, the student does it in a gradual way, according to an age evolution and appropriation of knowledge. Simultaneously, the physical and cognitive development happens in a scenario composed by variables that act as counterpoint to the success or failure of the results[1].

In this study, the relevant variables are the school management, the teacher, the family and the organized civil society because they understand that they subsidize the promotion of quality education and the full development of the student as a citizen. By analogy, this scenario of variables is compared to the structure of a pyramid, represented by Figure 1.

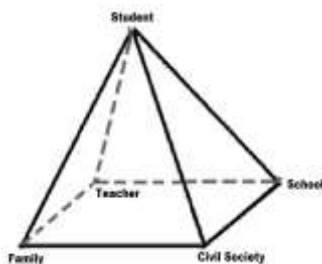


Figure 1: Pyramidal vision of quality education

Source: Author 2013

The base is consolidated under four fundamental points that interconnect and necessarily depend on each other.

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1.1 The school manager

According to [4], the school is seen as an institutionalized field where formal learning activities take place. Its curricular proposals, developed on standards based on social and historical, cultural, affective and cognitive aspects are considered. These are formalized through the interactions and relationships of different sectors of society. The effectiveness of the actions, in the school scope, happens by the manager's leading in addition to the involvement of teachers and other officials.

As an institution, [4] argues that the school needs a command and it does not happen arbitrarily. The professional who occupies the position of school manager needs to know his function and to execute it, being part of it. To be a school manager facing the number of assignments requires the ability to articulate between the needs of daily routine without losing sight of the political and social significance of actions.

1.2 The teacher

The focus on the teacher variable is not to place him/her in the perspective of single responsible, but as part of the process, so that the he/she is positioned as a professional and recognize the implications of his/her actions with those who have them as guiding in the construction of the knowledge.

Involved in this process in which the teacher is the one who leads, using tools and facilitating the construction of knowledge in a reflexive way, that causes paradigm changes in the face of the complexity of the world, it is clear the initial self-commitment to be understood also as Subject under construction.

1.3 The family and the school

The relationship established between the family and the school is something that, according to [5, p.100], deserves attention and needs to be investigated. "The family is considered the first educational agency of the human being [...]". In an attempt to highlight and place the commitment of the family with its members, especially with regard to education, reference is made to the Brazilian Civil Code, which aims to ensure social and individual rights.

Paragraphs I and II of article 1634 of the Brazilian Civil Code establish the obligation of parents to comply with their responsibilities related to education, custody, friendship and the protection of their children. Routinely, there are several complaints from the school regarding the involvement of the family who have transferred their duties to the teachers. There is misunderstanding between rights and duties.

1.4 Organized civil society

According to [3], organized civil society, identified with the Third Sector in the field of Organizational Studies, is composed by the citizens of a population or private groups that come together in different ways counterbalancing the public sphere. Organizations or entities that deal with the lack of services and products that the public sector cannot or does not meet adequately are part of this universe.

The articulation of civil society organizations (CSOs) promoted a solid contribution between the State and civil society, favoring the consolidation of its space in the scope of public policies, predicted in the Federal Constitution of 1988, that contemplate the areas of social assistance, health, family, education, child and adolescent and the elderly.

2. Methodology

This is an exploratory research and for procedures, it is characterized as a field research because it uses different resources such as action-research for data collection. Regarding the approach, this research is classified as quantitative and qualitative considering the proposed objective and the public attended.

As for the means, for this study the following actions were carried out: field surveys with visits in all 75 participating school units to delineate the profile of each one; Application of structured questionnaire to the school manager, teachers, students, family and members of organized civil society to collect information and also delineate the profile; Elaboration and application of the math and Portuguese assessment to evaluate the potentialities and fragility of knowledge; Training workshops for the manager, pedagogues, teachers and other officials the school unit whose subject; workshops for teachers of mathematics and portuguese; training meetings with families and organized civil society; preparation of technical and devolutive reports on the results.



3. Results achieved

With the survey of the profile of the 75 school units in the regions north with 16 municipalities and northwest with 9, it was possible to identify the difference between one school and another in the same municipality. Although the public education policy is the same, the lack of management and planning was evident. In this study 74 directors and 77 pedagogues reported as the most difficult point in conducting their work, the absence of planning and possible strategies to be implemented throughout the year.

In 2015 specific workshops were held in the area of management that assisted 23 directors and 46 pedagogues. In 2016, in addition to the directors and pedagogues, 1,073 officials such as the cook, janitor, gatekeeper, secretary, administrative assistant, school bus driver and maintenance team participated. The approached topics were interpersonal relationship, organizational climate and ethics. As for the 6,765, that is, 100% students in the fourth and fifth grade of basic public school education, from all 75 municipal schools, when they answered the evaluation paper containing 22 questions related to mathematics and 22 questions of portuguese, it was identified the gaps in learning from each class. The evaluation happened in consecutive years of 2014 and 2015 between the months of October and November.

The results, following the statistical criteria, pertinent to a quantitative study distributed between Descriptive Analysis and Inferential Analysis, allowed to issue reports by class and turn in descending order by average and, a comparative between the areas, mathematics and portuguese, by school and, region.

With the report, principals and pedagogues began to have strategic arguments to discuss with teachers the evaluation results achieved by students since they participated in training workshops in mathematics and portuguese in which they dealt with specific subjects pointed by them as difficulty when they answered the Socioeconomic questionnaire.

Since the second semester of 2016 up to date, studies on family and organized civil society are taking place. The contact with the family happens through formative lectures held in the municipality. The meetings usually take place at the school itself, in the evening. Besides being open to the parents of students of fourth and fifth grade, the lecture is open to all family members, from kindergarten up to fifth grade. The subject is about the family's crucial role in the student's performance, highlighting the family and school commitments. In 2016, were attended with 12 lectures reaching an audience of 803 families. All parents, who attended the lectures, also answered a questionnaire with similar questions as the ones answered by the students. The intention is to cross the information by the students with the information their parents in order to understand to what extent the participation of the family and the involvement with the school can reflect on the performance of the student.

When questioned about how many hours, on average, their children study at home, of the 803 families already attended, 604, or 75.2%, do not know how much time their children use at home for studies. This may be related to the professional activity of the parents, since 62.3% have a full time job, characterizing the absence of supervision at home. When questioned what year the child was born, 477 that correspond to 59.4% did not know it and, 326 did not remember it, what equals 40.6%. This is relevant information considering that 75.2% of the questionnaires were answered by the mother.

For the work with organized civil society, 14 municipalities in the two region have already been attended, and the issue addressed was the quality of education and what their contribution is. When analyzing the questionnaires that this group also answered, there was a concern and desire to be more involved with education, but there is a lack of concrete knowledge about public policy and the processes that involve local education.

The central variable student of the pyramid, when asked if they like the school, the 80.4% students that corresponds to 5.438 said they like it very much and the favorite place was the patio. It is still worth investigating what attracts the students to the patio although it happens in a dosed way during break time, and these, for the most, are without maintenance and attractions. The answer may seem obvious, but given the context presented here and the studied variables based on the main objective of the (PEEB), the results achieved have urged the search for local solutions and the best use of the potential of the school professionals. The community came to realize that the school in the neighborhood or city where they live is also their commitment.

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