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ABSTRACT

This text deals with educational management from the democratic perspective, its influence on the in-service training of the school team and the

prevention of dropout, and its contribution to the permanence of students in the institution. It highlights the relevance of professional post-graduation in encouraging researchers to carry out research linked to their means of work. It aims to present theoretical studies on democratic-participatory management and leadership developed as a result of two professional master's works within the line of research in Educational Management. The first work deals with teacher training in the implementation of a new pedagogical model in early childhood education. The second explores the permanence of students in technical education and the prevention of dropout. Both have democratic management as a point of convergence. A bibliographic exploration of legal and theoretical-conceptual frameworks carried out through narrative review was the methodology used. The main authors consulted: Demo, Lück, Martins, and Paro. It was concluded that, when it is intended to improve the pedagogical and relational spheres of the school, patterns of shared leadership are essential.

Keywords: Democratic management and leadership, formation of the school team, implementation of the pedagogical model, prevention of dropout and permanence of students, professional post-graduation.

1 INTRODUCTION

Although the issue of democratic management in public education, according to legal provisions that are part of the Federal Constitution (BRASIL, 1988) and the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (BRASIL, 1996), is already widely discussed in academic works, we understand that it has not been exhausted given its transversality to multiple aspects of school education. In this sense, this text presents theoretical studies referring to two types of research that were developed in the Graduate Program in Teaching, Management, and Innovation Processes (PPGPEGI / Professional Master's Degree in Education), of the University of Araraquara (UNIARA), specifically in the line of research in educational management. Even acting at different levels and modalities of education, the two researchers find the point of intersection of their research on the theme of the democratization of public schools. We understand that, if debated for a long time – since the

1990s, at least – and not closed, this is a topic that still provokes concerns and demand for investigations.

What we present here are the legal frameworks and the exploration of theoretical studies that served as support to the two researchers.

By exposing this text, our central objective is to present the legal frameworks and theoretical studies on democratic management, exploring the exercise of leadership in this management model that, it seems obvious to us, implies the continuing education in service of the school team, especially that of teachers. Our specific objectives are: (a) to highlight the relevance of professional post-graduation in the area of education and, in particular, in the scope of educational management; (b) to present a synthesis of the two professional master's studies cited; (c) discuss the implications of democratic management in schools; (d) explore the role of the school manager considering the principle of democratic management.

The theme permeates various aspects of school education, among them teacher training, the implementation of new pedagogical models, and the inclusion and permanence of students, which justifies its presentation and discussion.

2 METHODOLOGIES

We used, by way of methodology, a bibliographic exploration, which was carried out through a narrative review, not systematic. It is worth clarifying that scientific review articles are forms of research that use bibliographic or electronic information sources to obtain research results from other authors, to theoretically substantiate a given theme. Such articles can be divided into two categories: systematic reviews and narrative reviews. It is this last category that we are dealing with, which explores broad publications, appropriate to describe and discuss the development of a given subject, from a theoretical and contextual point of view. (ROTHER, 2007).

The exploratory survey took place in the following databases: *Scientific Electronic Library Online* (SciELO), Google Scholar, Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), and portals of theses and dissertations of various higher education institutions. Most of the studies found cover the period from 1999 to 2020, except for the relevant legislation that predates this period.

Within the survey of the theoretical and legal frameworks on democratic school management, priority was given to the search for works focused on the specific themes of the mentioned research: implementation of an innovative pedagogical project in a school of early childhood education and study of the permanence of students in a technical education school.

3 PROFESSIONAL POST-GRADUATION: RELEVANCE

The professional post-graduation allows the researcher to carry out investigations linked to his profession. It is directed to a type of research aimed at the exploration of factors that intervene and shape the professional exercise of the researcher, allowing him to deepen the understanding and interpretation of his work environment, to create innovations of social, scientific and technological relevance and to apply and share them in the places where he exercises his profession. In the personal sphere, the professional post-graduation, which has *stricto sensu status*, allows one to expand the professional qualification, in addition to the acquisition of knowledge and training in research and teaching. The profile of the student in the professional modality is of high training and experience in his field of activity, either in strategic areas of companies or in public agencies. (KELHAS; FARIASON; FRANCE, 2005).

However, a professional postgraduate course not only lends itself to the personal improvement of the researcher but also to the improvement of institutional processes, in addition to contributing in the scope of academic studies. The demand for professional post-graduation in the area of education has grown a lot in Brazil. After all, all Brazilians go through school education and the training and improvement of its professionals is of very high importance, not only from the individual perspective of each citizen but also from the cultural, social and economic point of view of the country. Graduate students are expected to produce, apply and manage the scientific knowledge obtained through applied research aimed at solving problems observed in the professional environment, whether public or private. (CAMPOS, GUERIOS, 2017).

From the point of view of public policies for education, the professional graduate program aims to train qualified human resources that will contribute to the development of the country in various areas, namely: cultural, social, economic, scientific and technological. Thus trained, it is expected that these professionals (managers and teachers) have an important role in society because they will be able to recognize the specific demands at any of the levels in which they work – school, local, regional or national –, proposing innovative ways to solve the problems, supply the demands, in short, to face the challenges that arise in the environment in which they operate.

Thus, we highlight the relevance of professional post-graduation in investigations related to the occupational activities of researchers, applied in the case of this work to school management.

4 ABOUT THE TWO ON-SCREEN SURVEYS

The common intention of both studies was to address issues related to public school management policies, how they relate to daily school life and can contribute to social mechanisms that

intensify school inclusion, with the use of educational planning and evaluation instruments at different levels and the use of socio-educational indicators, especially concerning participatory management.

4.1 SEARCH 1

"Management Strategies in Early Childhood Education: challenges in the implementation of the pedagogical model of Reggio Emilia in a municipal school in the Interior of São Paulo". (Naiara Hernandes Carvalho)

The main objective of the research was to analyze perspectives and challenges that the managers of an early childhood education school found to put into practice concepts and principles of the pedagogical approach of Reggio Emilia.

The work focused on: (a) analyzing the performance of the director and the pedagogical coordinator regarding the dialogue he maintains with the teachers to guide and guide them in the Reggillian approach and (b) raising information about the existence or not of democratic management, based on participation, not only with the educators but also with the families and the community, as preached by this model, spread by the Italian pedagogue Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994).

The educational model of Reggio Emilia is based on the democratization of school relations and the understanding that the student is the main protagonist of his learning process. (RINALDI, 2020).

This educational approach has stood out internationally as a reference in the quality it exercises in early childhood education since it strongly has a culture that values the integral participation of the families of the community in the projects and decisions of the schools. Its administrative structure is democratic with the participation of all stakeholders, parents, educators and the community (PATCZYK, 2012).

This is very interesting, because it starts from the daycare centers, extending to the next stages of education, in which students and other participants in the process are involved by a sense of belonging to that particular school unit, where they can dialogue and be heard, which provides democratic participation from the first age.

4.2 RESEARCH 2

"School management and inclusion of students: study in a State Technical School (ETEC) in the interior of the State of São Paulo" (Divino Lozetti Risso)

The research aimed to investigate how school management was carried out in a State Technical School (Etec) located in the interior of São Paulo, to encourage the permanence of students and not, on the contrary, to intensify social inequalities. The theme arose from the interest of the researcher,

being a teacher and manager of the technical school where the research was conducted, in investigating why students of a technical course, despite the difficulties they face, remain frequent and interested, and what is the influence of school management on the inclusion of these students.

In addition to this interest, the research was justified because, in the bibliographic survey carried out, it was noted that there are many studies on the abandonment and dropout of students from technical courses, but few studies were found on the factors that influence the permanence, with room for further studies on this theme.

4.3 LEGAL MILESTONES

In 1988, the Federal Constitution (BRASIL, CF, 1988) was approved and legally consolidated the principle of democratic management in public education systems, being established, in its articles 205 and 206, that Brazilian education, the right of all and the duty of the State and the family, should be promoted and encouraged with the collaboration of society, aiming at the full development of the person, their preparation for the exercise of citizenship and their qualification for work. Law No. 9394, of December 20, 1996, established the Guidelines and Bases of National Education (BRASIL, LDB, 1996) and, as provided for by the CF, expanded the path of democratization. Its implementation in practice, however, is still the subject of many doubts as observed in this review.

The FC and LDB constitute the basis for the implementation of democratic management in public education. In Article 206 of the CF and Article 3 of the LDB, it is stated that public education must be provided by the precepts of democratic management. The following are transcribed articles 14 and 15 of the LDB where the principle of democratic management appears in more detail.

Art. 14. The education systems will define the norms of the democratic management of public education in basic education, according to their peculiarities and according to the following principles: I - participation of education professionals in the elaboration of the pedagogical project of the school; II - participation of school and local communities in school boards or equivalent.

Art. 15. The education systems shall ensure to the public-school units of basic education integrate progressive degrees of pedagogical and administrative autonomy and financial management, observing the general rules of public finance law. (BRAZIL, LDB, 1996)

However, it is worth remembering, as Machado and Falsarella (2020) warn, that...

... The democratization of education is not limited to access to school or participatory management, since the quality of teaching goes through the capacity of the school to instrument the population, enabling prospects of raising living standards, personal and professional fulfillment, and social participation. In other words, it is necessary to ensure that students can stay in school and learn,

that the educational process is an opportunity for democratic exercise and that the school trajectory continues without interruptions (p. 381).

4.4 THEORETICAL MILESTONES

When we talk about school democratization there is a need to know what is meant by the term, given its multiple understanding. In this direction, the main theoretical contributions that supported this analysis were: Demo (1999), Lück (2006), Martins (1999), and Paro (2006 and 2016), among others. We seek to understand the relevance of collective work resulting from the exercise of democratic management, shared in a common compass to reach the permanent improvement of teaching.

Management implies organizing people for collective work and one of the attributions of the school manager is to provide the participation of the collective in the decision about the pedagogical process that develops; We mention not only the teachers but also the parents, students, and staff. Active participation is what makes it possible to know and analyze one's reality. In this view, the director becomes more of a member who participates and decides and is not only the only one making decisions. However, as each one has its role, the director is responsible for the organization and coordination of the school group and the monitoring of the "combined".

With the proposal of democratic management, we highlight here the change of paradigms when moving from the concept of administration to that of management. It is intriguing for an educator-researcher to understand that democratic management encompasses the administrative aspects, but goes beyond them by valuing interpersonal relationships and the social and cultural aspects that coexist within the school. Hence the relevance of management is that being participatory enables reflections and democratic experiences.

According to Lück (2006), democratic management is understood as the act of administering, organizing, and managing an institution, to promote the participation of all actors involved in the educational process, from teachers to students, employees, and the community in general, and this process is fundamental for the search for the improvement of teaching. Democratic management is opposed to the authoritarianism present for decades in school education; By involving all the segments that make up the school, it reflects the role of each component in the search for a quality public school.

Within the democratic perspective, it is also up to the manager to act together with the school colleagues, but based on what we have studied, the reality in our country does not seem to portray democratic management as predominant in everyday school life. Even if it is legally supported by legislation, as we have already pointed out, most states and municipalities, even if they know its principles, do not implement them in their education systems or implement them in a distorted way. In

addition, as Falsarella (2022) highlights, despite the guarantee of democratic participation in the Council, the decisions that are in charge of the school are localized, punctual, and little interfere with the directions of the educational policy of the systems.

According to Paro (2016), when there is the participation of all sectors of the school – educators, students, staff, and parents – in decisions about its objectives and its functioning, there will be better conditions to pressure the upper echelons to endow the school with autonomy and resources. At the moment when the community participates in decisions in a school unit, its members are exercising their rights and their duty as citizens in the construction of democracy, and the achievement of the objectives outlined will be a permanent process that will bring a true sense of involvement to this community.

Scholars on the subject talk about the multiplicity of institutional issues that involve management. One of them is Paro (2006), which affirms the importance of management for the coordination of actions in the educational institution "due to the complexity of the tasks, the scarcity of available resources, the multiplicity of objectives to be pursued and the large number of workers involved". (p. 17)

Many concepts related to educational management are linked to business management, which is not surprising since the school is immersed in a capitalist society. In this sense, Martins (1999) brings the assertion that management runs within a context influenced by political, economic, and social orders that characterize the mode of production of capitalism.

The management, in a broad sense, goes beyond the notion of administration which is, according to Lück (2006), a process of linear and fragmented organization that establishes influence "from the top down and from the outside to the inside of the units of action" and that employs people and resources "in a mechanistic and utilitarian way" (p. 57-58). We emphasize here that it is necessary to think of a definition of education administration that goes beyond bureaucratic and technical issues; In this way, we focus on the concept of management. Thus, educational management, while approaching business administration because it is in the same capitalist world, differs from it, because, in addition to profit-making, it aims at the formation of human beings and the transformation of society.

When we approach school management committed to a society in transformation, we are urged to seek means that reach the interests of all social strata, especially the less favored. That is, the public school needs to seek, with the leadership of the managers, the nature of its objectives, that is, its specificity in the process of formation of the human being. The conception of democratic management is opposed to the static and segmented model of administration regarding the participation of the school community. A school guided by authoritarianism in its daily life and by the lack of participation of

those interested is not consistent with the democracy achieved through struggles for the transformation of society. (PARO, 2006).

Through such arguments, a challenge is presented for educational institutions: to create democratic minds and habits of participation. However, there are still many education professionals who have a restricted view of administration and not an expanded perspective of management. Thus, for managers trained in a traditional view of the school, the process of accepting opinions and making joint decisions emerges as a painful situation, because they understand that discussions become endless and uncontrollable, that fatigue and disappointment appear, and that the long-awaited recognition leads nowhere (DEMO, 1999).

The updated manager is the one who seeks to promote and propose democratic management in the school because he understands that it is not true that it brings more burdens; on the contrary, it facilitates their performance. In this universe, the legitimate leadership of competence exercised by the manager is an essential part of school democratization. Within this understanding, effective school managers reveal themselves as leaders, encourage teachers and other employees of the institution, as well as parents, students, and the community in which the school is inserted to expand its potential, aiming at promoting a positive and welcoming school environment and a more egalitarian society.

With this, we understand that democratization in schools is a point of relevance and requires, on the part of managers, not only academic training but also acumen and sensitivity to the human aspect of relationships. Therefore, it is important to promote democratization, keeping in mind not only the results to be obtained by an action, or a set of actions, because, in addition to them, it is essential to consider the social processes that permeate school activities and relations to form democratic minds.

The leadership of a school principal, a pedagogical coordinator, or an educational advisor, when it is effective and has as its foundation the competence in the exercise of the functions, is continuously focused on minimizing edges that may eventually arise as a result of misinterpreted interpersonal relationships, and on the construction of a productive synergy that the joint work demands. All this concerns the social commitment of the public school to citizen education and encompasses numerous aspects, including the reflective training of teachers to develop innovative pedagogical proposals that provide better learning to students and the inclusion and permanence of students who, without the support of the school, would abandon their studies.

5 RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Regarding the objectives initially proposed in this study, we believe we have achieved them since legal frameworks and theoretical studies on democratic management were presented, the

implications of democratic management in the school were discussed, as well as the role of the school manager as effective leadership within the principle of democratic management. The relevance of professional post-graduation in the area of education, especially in the scope of educational management, was also highlighted, and a synthesis of the two professional master's studies in question was presented, considering their points of convergence despite the different objectives and levels of education.

When we started the discussion around the democratization of the school, we sought what some authors think and understand about this concept. To say that the school is democratic means to affirm that it has participatory management? The countless papers we observe in academia tell us no.

We observed in the bibliographic research that we did that there is a gap within the schools: the distance between the managers and the teachers, staff, families, and students. Decision-making often occurs only among school leaders; the voice of other segments is not heard.

We understand that, for democratic management to become effective, it is necessary to dialogue between the community and the school professionals, therefore, it must be participatory and based on mutual respect, in thinking about working together with the main objective of the best possible learning on the part of the students. Summed up in one word: partnership. To do so, it is necessary to have a firm leadership that organizes and coordinates all group work.

We can summarize the conclusions in the following terms:

- there is a gap within schools regarding participatory management;
- old standards of school organization and management must be overcome;
- the legitimate leadership of competence exercised by managers is an essential part of school democratization;
- Joint and participatory action led by managers is a means to overcome the difficulties faced to make schools more democratic and inclusive;
- This joint action promotes in-service training and professional improvement of the school team;
- It is necessary to conceive the school as a social environment open to dialogue and collectivity in the work and decisions that generate actions that contribute to the cultural and ethical formation of citizens.

It is essential to break with old patterns of organization, to identify new forms of communication in which not only school professionals are represented, but also parents and students in different ways. Ideally, we think of a "spectrum of opportunities" for people to meet, relate and dialogue in an open, pleasurable and enriching way.

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