


TEACHERS WORKING HOURS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

DOCENTES HORA-ATIVIDADE NA EDUCAÇÃO INFANTIL

HORARIO LABORAL DE LOS PROFESORES DE EDUCACIÓN INFANTIL

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2025.030-031>

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ABSTRACT

Regular teachers have the right to one third of their working hours as working time, which is enshrined in Law No. 9.394/96, and later in Law No. 11.738/2008. In order to guarantee the legislation, the federal, state and municipal governments had to organize themselves. In Early Childhood Education, it was necessary to hire hourly teachers to work with the children during the period when the teachers are doing their planning, studies and training. Given this scenario, the central question of this research arises: What are the characteristics of hourly teachers in Early Childhood Education and who are they? In order to answer this question, the general objective is to characterize who these workers are and what their role is when teachers are taking advantage of their working hours. Based on the theoretical framework of Historical-Dialectical Materialism and Historical-Cultural Theory, bibliographical and field research was used to uncover this object of study. The results show that the participants in the research are professionals belonging to the teaching staff, with the function of carrying out the pedagogical work in the classroom during the teachers' working hours. Thus, the pedagogical mediation of hourly teachers is developed through thematic projects, taking into account the specific nature of each class with dynamic activities. There is a need to separate the work of the hourly teachers from that of the regular teachers. In addition, the institutional organization for guaranteeing working hours for teachers needs to be rethought in order to ensure that children develop fully.

Keywords: Education. Work. Working Hours. Science Teaching.

RESUMO

As(Os)⁴ docentes regentes têm o direito a um terço da carga horária de trabalho a hora-atividade, o qual está consubstanciado na Lei nº 9.394/96, e, posteriormente, na Lei nº 11.738/2008. Para garantir a legislação, algumas organizações foram necessárias pela União, Estados e Municípios. Na Educação Infantil, foi necessário contratar professores hora-atividade para trabalhar com as crianças no período em que as(os) professoras(es)-regentes estão realizando seus planejamentos, estudos e formações em hora-atividade. Diante deste cenário, levanta-se a questão central desta pesquisa: Qual a característica e quem são as(os) docentes hora-atividade na Educação Infantil? Para responder a tal

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⁴ We use the expression (A)O, due to the greater concentration of women in early childhood education.

questão, o objetivo geral compreende: caracterizar quem são e a função dessas(es) trabalhadoras(es) que atuam no momento em que os professores regentes estão usufruindo da sua hora-atividade. Pautada no referencial teórico do Materialismo Histórico-Dialético e da Teoria Histórico-Cultural, recorre-se à pesquisa bibliográfica e de campo para desvendar esse objeto de estudo. Os resultados demonstram que as participantes da pesquisa são profissionais pertencentes ao quadro do magistério, com a função de exercer os encaminhamentos pedagógicos da sala de aula durante a hora-atividade dos(as) professoras(es) regentes. Assim, verificar que a mediação pedagógica das (os) professoras(es) hora-atividade é desenvolvida por meio de projetos temáticos, considerando a especificidade de cada turma com atividades dinâmicas. Verifica-se a necessidade da cisão entre o trabalho das professoras hora-atividade e o das regentes. Além disso, a organização institucional para a garantia da hora-atividade às(aos) docentes precisa ser repensada para assegurar às crianças seu pleno desenvolvimento.

Palavras-chave: Educação. Trabalho. Hora-atividade. Ensino de Ciências.

RESUMEN

Los profesores regulares tienen derecho a un tercio de su jornada laboral como tiempo de trabajo, lo que está consagrado en la Ley nº 9.394/96, y posteriormente en la Ley nº 11.738/2008. Para garantizar la legislación, se requirieron una serie de organizaciones por parte de los gobiernos federal, estatal y municipal. En la Educación Infantil, fue necesario contratar profesores por horas para trabajar con los niños durante el período en que los profesores realizan su planificación, estudios y capacitación durante su horario de trabajo. Ante este escenario, surge la pregunta central de esta investigación: ¿Cuáles son las características de los maestros por hora en Educación Preescolar y quiénes son? Para responder a esta pregunta, el objetivo general es caracterizar quiénes son estos trabajadores y cuál es su rol cuando los docentes aprovechan su horario laboral. A partir del marco teórico del Materialismo Histórico-Dialético y de la Teoría Histórico-Cultural, se utilizó la investigación bibliográfica y de campo para descubrir este objeto de estudio. Los resultados muestran que los participantes en la investigación son profesionales pertenecientes al cuerpo docente, cuyo trabajo consiste en proporcionar orientación pedagógica en el aula durante el horario laboral de los profesores. Así, la mediación pedagógica de los profesores por horas se desarrolla a través de proyectos temáticos, teniendo en cuenta la especificidad de cada clase con actividades dinámicas. Es necesario separar el trabajo de los profesores por horas del de los profesores ordinarios. Además, es necesario repensar la organización institucional para garantizar las horas de trabajo de los profesores, con el fin de garantizar el pleno desarrollo de los niños.

Palabras clave: Educación. Trabajo. Horas de Trabajo. Enseñanza de las Ciencias.

1 INTRODUCTION

In Early Childhood Education, with the specificity of the work, in many municipalities the function of the hour-activity teacher was instituted, aiming to develop the pedagogical work with the students when the teachers are performing their duties at the time of the hour-activity. This fact, added to the academic and professional experience, mobilized the development of the present research. This is how the master's dissertation asks: *From the right to Hour-activity to the need of the teacher(r) hour-activity in Early Childhood Education* of the Graduate Program in Education of the State University of Maringá (PPE/UEM): "who are and what is the function of the workers who work in the period in which the regent teachers are in hour-activity?"

Considering the object of research – teacher(r) hour-activity, the reference of Historical-Dialectical Materialism and Historical-Cultural Theory was adopted. In this sense, the category of work, as defended by Leontiev (2004) and in more recent research as pointed out by Silva, Oliveira and Aleixo (2024), comprises the relationships that involve the function of this worker in her process of constitution and development of her actions as an hour-activity teacher. Thus, this manifestation is revealed in the particularity of the teaching work. Here, for example, the teaching work is inserted. Work occupies a central and universal aspect, since it constitutes a human activity that mediates in the relationship between being and nature.

The concrete reality of the object of study was understood in its dialectical unity between the universal, the particular and the singular. According to Marx (2011), the universal expresses the general determinations of social life, for example: work, conceived as a vital activity of the human being and an essential mediation between the human being and nature. While the particular manifests itself in the historical way in which work is organized, such as teaching work, that is, an expression of a human practice that mediates actions of knowledge, culture and development.

Finally, the singular corresponds to the concrete and historical materiality of the phenomenon, that is, that it is effective under certain conditions; which in this study, refers to the role of the hour-activity teacher who works with projects in early childhood education.

According to Leontiev (2004), work is constituted from human activity through the mediation of social relations. In this sense, the function of the hour-activity teacher expresses the singularity of the teaching work, related to municipal public policies, linked to school time and space and to the struggles of the category for the realization of their rights. Therefore,

understanding the singular means capturing how the universal of human work is concretized in the particularity of teaching work and materializes, historically, in the function of the hour-activity teacher.

In this way, the study mobilized reflections on: the work in Early Childhood Education through a bibliographic survey, which went through the process of human development, the history of teaching and the legislation that regulates pedagogical practice in the twenty-first century.

The documentary research made it possible to examine municipal, state, and federal laws and documents of the Ministry of Education related to the achievement of the activity-hour, considering its constitution and maintenance as a right. Also, the legal aspects of the function of the teacher(r) activity-hour, the disputes between the State and Unions in the maintenance of the activity hour as a right were discussed. For this, the different functions performed in Early Childhood Education were analyzed, which concluded that there is a need for the teacher(r) hour-activity and her pedagogical mediation between caring and educating.

To answer this research problem about who these professionals are, a field research was carried out with 10 teachers from two CMEIs, in the northwest of the State of Paraná, who have the specificity of the teachers' work hours through interviews and a semi-structured questionnaire, to apprehend their characteristics and attributions.

In the final considerations, the relevance of the institutional organization that ensures the rights of teachers and children to an education that seeks to promote the quality of teaching and the guarantee of rights through teaching work was highlighted.

In view of these results, part of the results presented demonstrates the work of the teacher(s) hour-activity in early childhood education as a category for the understanding of the object and as subjects of the research.

2 WORK AS A CATEGORY FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE OBJECT

Human formation is considered to be the product of the development of the species, driven by creative and productive activity. Work, in this sense, is materialized in the production of the intellectual and material culture of humanity. In this relationship, education allows humanizing conditions to be given to the subject, that is, conditions for him to appropriate the culture of the previous generation and, thus, reproduce it in his mind, subjectivize it. This statement has significant implications for the pedagogical practices developed in school institutions, whose function is to enhance human formation.

Borges Neto and Lucena (2015), supported by Saviani (2008), argue that school is the most advanced configuration that humanity carries out to ensure the education of children, young people and adults. This concerns access to the most elaborate knowledge, produced in the social environment and historically by humanity.

In this way, the relationship between work and education occurs during the systematic reproduction of the social division of labor. In the particular case of society governed by the capitalist system of production, there is fragmentation of the two classes: worker/proletarian and the bourgeoisie/capitalist. This division permeates the duality of the subject's education: training for manual labor and not for intellectuality, that is, it teaches adaptation, aiming to form the majority of the population able to the labor market; and proposes, only for a restricted group, the high society, an education aimed at intellectual formation, aiming at the occupation of high positions and the most valued professions (Borges Neto; Lucena, 2015).

To sustain the relationship between work and education, the singular-particular-universal triad is approached. The particularity of teaching developed in Brazilian society is governed by the capitalist system of production. Singularity refers to the work of teachers in early childhood education. And the universal constitutes work in its ontological dimension for human formation.

In other words, it can be considered that the relationship between singular and universal is conditioned to the relationship between whole and parts, in which the singular is part of a whole and this whole is the universal, it is created and realized in the interaction of the singular parts. These parts do not exist by themselves: they relate to each other and to the whole.

With this, a range of different forms of work is opened, each with its own uniqueness, as occurs, for example, in Early Childhood Education institutions. Singularity is expressed as part of a whole characterized by universality, so both are related. However, while the singular is a constituent part of the universal, the former is opposed to it. In this way, the universal exists only in and through the singular.

In this sense, singularity and universality are instituted as a contradictory unity that takes place in the process of formation and transformation from one to the other. By considering that the singular and the universal coexist in the phenomenon, it is affirmed that the human being has a generality, which makes him biologically and socially belonging to the species - in the terms of Lukács (2012), the means of work, the instruments of work. Human transformations, according to Engels, were only possible due to the development of forms of

labor. When referring to the toil that human beings face, the author portrays that all capital comes from work.

To this end, nature makes the materials for the modification and constitution of the production of wealth viable. It is the conditions of a biological and social nature, in the mediation between signs and instruments, that provide the genesis of work and proceed, in so many human transitions, in the anatomical and social treatment. The subject exists only as a social being, that is, as a member of a group in society that follows historical development. The organization of the human personality and the behavioral structure depend on the development of work and human relations.

3 TEACHERS ACTIVITY TIME: THE RESEARCH SUBJECTS

The results of the aforementioned research refer to the results of the Master's study in Dourado (2020). Thus, it is understood that the guarantee of human relations in the school context, in a formal way, the right to activity-hour is necessary for class teachers. Thus, it is necessary to hire other teachers to meet this demand. For its maintenance, democratic professional mobilization and historical struggles are constantly necessary (Dourado, 2021).

In the search to understand the function of the hour-activity teachers, it is important to know the organization of the different professionals of Early Childhood Education in the investigated municipality. The workers are divided into three functions, namely: General support, Pedagogical support (management team) and Pedagogical function. This last function is where the teacher's activity-hour is located.

In focus, the hour-activity teachers seek subsidies in bibliographic, documentary and field research. Therefore, it can be stated that the work with the axes that apprehend the data of the teachers participating in the research aims to characterize the function of the teacher's hour-activity. For this, a sample composed of 10 professionals was used: 5 from a Municipal Center for Early Childhood Education (CMEI) located in the north zone and 5 from another Center in the south zone of a city in the north of Paraná, where they also work as hour-activity teachers. The choice of these centers was made by lottery.

The institutional place where the hour-activity teachers work, in the northern region, has 40 workers who attend 7 classes, totaling 173 children, and is a small CMEI. The institutional environment in the southern region has 84 professionals to serve 296 students distributed in 14 classes, being large.

After choosing the institutions and participants, a questionnaire was carried out to identify the profile of the researched group. It was found that all the participants of the research are female and the age varies between 25 and 50 years. Since they were all female, the term teachers was used during the analysis. During the study, results were presented on remuneration and functional status, initial and continuing education, pedagogical practice and political participation, and job and career plan, as shown below.

In view of social demands, when questioned about remuneration, the teachers unanimously considered the salary low, in view of the needs of subsistence and a dignified life. There is a discrepancy in salaries between educators who have a weekly workload of 30 hours and teachers hired for 20 hours or 40 hours, since the remuneration of the professionals who took part in the research varies between R\$ 1,787.40 and R\$ 4,060.23, depending on the position, length of profession and workload.

In the role of teacher, the workload can be 20 hours or 40 hours, while educators work 30 hours a week, whose salary represents less than half the salary of a regent teacher. However, both perform the same function: hour-activity teacher.

The difference between the workload of the position of teacher and educator interferes with remuneration. However, when analyzing the latest Public Notice, No. 009/2018 (Maringá, 2018), which deals with the attributions to be developed by new educators and teachers, it is observed that, even with the difference in workload, the initial remuneration is the same for both professionals.

Still, the document diverges from the attributions between the positions. It is up to the teacher: to plan, teach and produce didactic material; the early childhood educator, on the other hand, is the professional who "[...] develops all children's hygiene activities, in the relationship of educating/caring [...]" (Maringá, 2018, p. 66).

When asked about the ideal salary for the fulfillment of their function, the participants agreed to a salary equal to or greater than R\$ 6,000.00. According to the DIEESE survey (2021), the current minimum wage of R\$ 1,100.00 should be R\$ 5,351.11. As previously demonstrated, in a society ruled by the capitalist system, teaching work (among other professions) is affected by low pay. In the testimonies raised, the professionals expressed discontent with the salary: *"We should earn 10 thousand reais or more, equal to the judge perhaps, because we form people's thinking, this is very serious, but no one cares much, right?"* (Interviewee 3, 2021).

Regarding the training of the hour-activity teachers, the data collected show that 6 hour-activity teachers graduated from public universities. In addition, it was found that 8 educators are trained in Pedagogy, although the public exams require only teaching, only two professionals do not have higher education.

Of the 10 hour-activity teachers, 4 of them have specialization, however, none of them took the master's/doctoral course. It is perceived that going beyond specialization is something far from the reality of the researched group. This is not just a characteristic of this group.

In one of the testimonies collected, it is identified that teacher training, for one of the hour-activity teachers, was understood as a mechanism of incentive and teacher appreciation. Regarding continuing education, the Municipal Department of Education (SEDUC) offers different training moments. The survey participants bring some notes:

I think that the training of the activity-hour should be focused on practice, such as, for example, the construction of recyclable toys, storytelling, theater, with less theory, because we use more recyclable materials and it is what is within our reach (Interviewee 9, 2021).

Some of the professionals request training focused on teaching practice, that is, directed to the construction of pedagogical resources, for example: workshops aimed at making recyclable toys, considering that these are the most accessible materials for teachers working hours. From this observation, it is reflected on what training and practice mean. Because, as Fonseca's (2007) research points out, extension and specialization courses, with a greater focus on playfulness, are not only requested by the interviewees. This is a request from the teaching class in general.

The reports of the research participants also show that there is no specific training for the function of hour-activity teacher, as the professionals undergo the same training as the regent teachers. However, according to the participants, as they work with a differentiated methodology, that is, through projects with generating themes, it requires a differentiated training, in which "the hour-activity teacher, in his function in which I fit in, is the one who has the possibility of working on content through thematic projects organized by the education department that I adapt to the reality of the classes.

Thus, in the words of one of the teachers interviewed, the following statement was identified: *"I usually apply the same project in the same classes, but different in the way it is*

carried out to meet the specific age of the class" (Interviewee 5, 2021). Through data analysis, it is verified the urgency of a dialogue between those responsible for continuing teacher training (including higher education institutions) and professionals who work in basic education. The objective is to think of teacher training that meets the needs of teachers in the hour-activity period. This thus enables them to meet the specificities of the children, through a critical education.

It is understood that the teacher training model influences the pedagogical practice, therefore, it is understood that, through the testimonies collected, these aspects are materialized in the work of the hour-activity teachers participating in the research.

The teachers reported that they have the function of ensuring the activity-hour of the regent teachers and, with this, guarantee teaching for the children. The way to develop actions with children is through the development of projects. One of the teachers stated that: "I see that the teacher of the activity-hour should plan more playful classes and, in return, collaborates with the regent teacher so that he can plan his classes" (Interviewee, 10, 2021).

When considered in its most complex form, play allows the combination of values, cultural development, sociability, creativity and assimilation of theoretical knowledge. In particular, the historical-cultural theory defends the importance of playing for the development of children's imagination. Thus, one survey participant expresses her opinion:

The function of Early Childhood Education, in my view, is to teach scientific knowledge to young children, so that they can develop and have skills and competencies to carry out the activities proposed in elementary school (Interviewee 1, 2021).

Unlike an education proposal that aims only at the development of skills and competencies, the need to think about education from the perspective of human formation is defended. This training should be based on the development of the child's psychic processes and psychological personality traits, considering their developmental period. It is based on the principle that the organization of teaching should be based on the triad form-content-recipient, focused on the development of teachers' theoretical thinking so that school education develops the maximum capacities of children.

When characterizing who the teacher(r) activity-hour is, we questioned how the teachers conceive their function. The professionals reported the importance of the function in the education of children who work according to the theme proposed in the quarter, through the development of projects that promote children's learning.

One of the teachers argued that, in her work, she has more autonomy in relation to the teaching and learning process than the regent teachers, precisely because of the work with the projects. In addition, they emphasized that, at the moment they are working with the children, the teachers are carrying out studies and planning: *"I believe that the hour-activity teacher has greater freedom in the sense of planning and their teaching practice"* (Interviewee 6, 2021).

These reports reveal the difference between the work of the regent teacher and that of the hour-activity teacher, who work in the pedagogical function. Such a situation needs to be reflected on and seek alternatives to overcome different methodological approaches with the same class. Change involves collective work at school.

When asked about which documents guide the pedagogical practice, the research participants cited: Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (1996); National Curriculum Reference for Early Childhood Education (RCNEI) (1996); National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education (2006); National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEI) (2010); and the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) (2017). What caught our attention is that the municipality's Curriculum and the CMEI's Pedagogical Political Project were not mentioned. These documents are considered essential instruments for the organization of pedagogical work.

It is considered that the guiding documents of training and pedagogical practice should be produced in an effective, democratic and collective way, in order to be present in pedagogical practice. In addition, these documents should be constantly analyzed, critically, in the daily life of the CMEI.

The professionals also explained that the projects are adapted from a previous organization, since they are prepared and sent by the education department, as well as the plans of the other teachers. In this way, the teachers organize weekly lesson plans, with teaching tasks within the theme pertinent to the bimester. In another report, one of the professionals mentioned that:

I work with projects, helping the class while the class teachers are in activity-time. Then we plan our lesson plans, with the projects that we adapted from the Department of Education. The theme is already ready and we will only apply it in the classes (Interviewee 5, 2021).

While the projects are organized more broadly, for example, monthly, and the lesson plans consist of the organization of daily teaching, that is, of each day of class in which the teachers work with the different classes. Thus, an important difference was found between the work of the teachers and the work of the teachers who are working hours of activity.

The teachers' reports on projects demonstrate the need for studies that investigate the teaching and learning actions, based on the methodological approach defended in the curriculum and in the PPP of the school institution, because, in the testimonies collected, there was a need for a split between the work of the hour-activity teacher and the work of the regent teacher.

The union activity has the participation of 4 teachers. It is important to point out that one of the professionals had no knowledge about the union's actions. As previously discussed, the uniqueness of the teaching work is perceived, thus, participation in collective movements needs to be intensified.

Regarding the knowledge about the Municipal Teaching Positions and Careers Plan (PCCR), with regard to the points considered necessary to value the professional category, 4 professionals did not know the PCCR, and 6 know the document. This report is evident in: "[...] The study leave needs to be updated to increase or adapt the annual workload allowed without prejudice, the unpaid leave needs regulations because it is not possible to obtain it without internal indication [...]" (Interviewee 3, 2021).

In addition, they pointed out the need to know more about the document, as they consider the divergence of nomenclature between teachers and educators to be flawed, since, in practice, they perform the same functions, but receive different remuneration. The PCCR of the municipality is one of the means of ensuring teacher appreciation, whether in remuneration, training or exercise of the function.

In this sense, the teachers expressed the need for: improvements in working conditions and remuneration; more differentiated didactic resources; social prestige; political awareness; training, relating theory and practice; and the reduction in the number of students per class. Therefore, it is verified that the requests of the teachers, aiming at the development of the work in Early Childhood Education, are necessary for the valorization of professionalization, which can occur through the movement of struggle in the construction of the Plans of Positions, Careers and Remuneration of the Teaching Profession (PCCRs). For this, political and social mobilizations are one of the possibilities to maintain and guarantee working conditions.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The results of the research evidenced the need for a split between the work of the hour-activity teachers and that of the regents for a quality education, avoiding the fragmented work of capitalist society.

In view of this, the doctoral research thinks about the social representations between the teacher(r) activity-hour and regent about the teaching work in the face of science teaching. These are organized based on projects and lesson plans prepared in the researched municipality. In addition, it presents proposals for better working conditions and teaching-learning for early childhood education students.

To support the analysis, the Theoretical Framework of Social Representations (SR) is used. The objective is to investigate how these representations affect pedagogical practice. From this, proposals are presented that favor better working conditions for teachers, the effectiveness of teaching-learning processes that are meaningful to children and mobilize the need for teacher training integrated with theory and practice.

According to Moscovici (2003), SR allow subjects to build a common and shared reality based on their ideas, values and practices. Therefore, in this process, SR are central mediations to apprehend how professionals signify their teaching practice, their functions especially focused on Science Teaching.

Methodologically, the focus group and the questionnaire are used as data collection instruments. The objective is to capture, collectively and individually, the social representations of these professionals about work in Early Childhood Education and its relationship with the right to hour-activity. This may promote greater interpretative density and the proposition of systematized organizations for the development of pedagogical work, which makes up the Graduate Program in Education for Science and Mathematics - State University of Maringá.

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