

**THE SILENT COMMITMENT: UNVEILING THE INVISIBLE WORK OF MANAUS
MUNICIPAL EDUCATORS**

**OS PILARES INVISÍVEIS DA EDUCAÇÃO: A DEDICAÇÃO SILENCIOSA DOS
PROFESSORES MUNICIPAIS DE MANAUS**

**LOS PILARES INVISIBLES DE LA EDUCACIÓN: LA DEDICACIÓN SILENCIOSA DE
LOS MAESTROS MUNICIPALES DE MANAUS**

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**Elka Maria Freitas do Nascimento¹, Elenilson de Sena Garcia², Francisco dos Santos
Nogueira³, Priscila Lima de Freitas⁴, Silvângela da Silva Cunha⁵, Stela Mary N.
Braga⁶, Welhington dos Santos Coelho⁷**

ABSTRACT

This article unveils the paradox of institutional invisibility faced by municipal teachers in Manaus. Analyzing the tireless dedication of these professionals in contrast with the lack of effective recognition from managers, the study argues that chronic devaluation manifests through the overload of functions (social supplience) and grave health consequences. The research quantifies teacher illness—especially the high rates of burnout—and critically discusses the underreporting of medical leaves, which masks the real extent of suffering. It is concluded that valuation is not an act of courtesy, but a strategic imperative for the sustainability of public education, whose pillars are invisibly supported by the efforts of these educators.

Keywords: Institutional Invisibility. Municipal Teacher. Teacher Illness. Burnout.

RESUMO

Este artigo desvenda o paradoxo da invisibilidade institucional que recai sobre os professores da rede municipal de Manaus. Analisando a dedicação incansável desses profissionais em contraste com a ausência de reconhecimento efetivo de gestores, o estudo argumenta que a desvalorização crônica se manifesta na sobrecarga de funções (suplência social) e em graves consequências para a saúde. A pesquisa quantifica o adoecimento docente – especialmente os altos índices de burnout – e critica a subnotificação de licenças, que mascara o sofrimento real. Conclui-se que a valorização não é um ato de cortesia, mas

¹ Specialist in Pedagogy. Secretaria Municipal de Educação (SEMED). Manaus, Brazil.
E-mail: elkamarianascimento@gmail.com

² Master of Science in Education. Secretaria Municipal de Educação (SEMED). Manaus, Brazil.
E-mail: sennagarcia@gmail.com

³ Master of Education and Specialist in English Literature. Secretaria Municipal de Educação (SEMED). Manaus, Brazil. E-mail: francisnogueira2013@gmail.com

⁴ Master's Degree in Educational Science. Secretaria Municipal de Educação (SEMED). Manaus, Brazil.
⁵ Master of Science in Education. Secretaria Municipal de Educação (SEMED). Manaus, Brazil.
E-mail: msilvangelacunha@gmail.com

⁶ Post-graduate in school management. Secretaria Municipal de Educação (SEMED). Manaus, Brazil.
E-mail: Stela.mary008@gmail.com

⁷ Master in Science of Education. Secretaria Municipal de Educação (SEMED). Manaus, Brazil.
E-mail: Welhington.coelho@gmail.com

um imperativo estratégico para a sustentabilidade da educação pública, cujos pilares são invisivelmente sustentados pelo esforço desses educadores.

Palavras-chave: Invisibilidade Institucional. Professor Municipal. Adoecimento Docente.

RESUMEN

Este artículo desentraña la paradoja de la invisibilidad institucional que afecta al profesorado del sistema escolar municipal de Manaus. Al analizar la incansable dedicación de estos profesionales en contraste con la falta de reconocimiento efectivo por parte de la administración, el estudio argumenta que la devaluación crónica se manifiesta en roles sobrecargados (sustitución social) y graves consecuencias para la salud. La investigación cuantifica las enfermedades del profesorado —especialmente las altas tasas de agotamiento— y critica la falta de notificación de las licencias, lo que enmascara un sufrimiento real. Concluye que el reconocimiento no es un acto de cortesía, sino un imperativo estratégico para la sostenibilidad de la educación pública, cuyos pilares se sustentan invisiblemente en el esfuerzo de estos educadores.

Palabras clave: Invisibilidad Institucional. Maestro Municipal. Enfermedad Docente.

1 INTRODUCTION

The month of October, marked by the celebration of Teacher's Day, invites a deep reflection on the role and working conditions of teachers, who are unquestionably the pillars of public education. However, in Manaus, as in several Brazilian metropolises, a specific category of professionals, the teachers of the municipal network, plays an essential role marked by a tireless dedication that, paradoxically, goes hand in hand with institutional invisibility.

This article proposes to analyze the reality of these professionals in the capital of Amazonas, whose work is fundamental for the maintenance of the educational system, but which rarely receives due recognition from managers, secretaries and mayors. The focus is to discuss how the absence of effective appreciation directly impacts teachers' motivation, emotional health, and career permanence, revealing a structural gap in public educational policies.

The relevance of this study lies in the urgency of moving the debate on teacher valorization from the sphere of discourse to that of action. By illuminating the reality of municipal teaching, the article seeks to contribute to the construction of a more dignified and sustainable work environment. The text is organized into sections that address: (i) the profile and challenges of the municipal teacher; (ii) the analysis of teacher illness as a consequence of invisibility; and (iii) paths to effective institutional valorization.

Teaching is, unquestionably, one of the pillars of public education. However, in Manaus, as in several Brazilian metropolises, the central role of teachers in the municipal network is marked by a **tireless dedication that coexists with a profound institutional invisibility**. This scenario creates a structural contradiction that affects career health and the quality of education: the most essential professional is the least recognized in terms of concrete public policies.

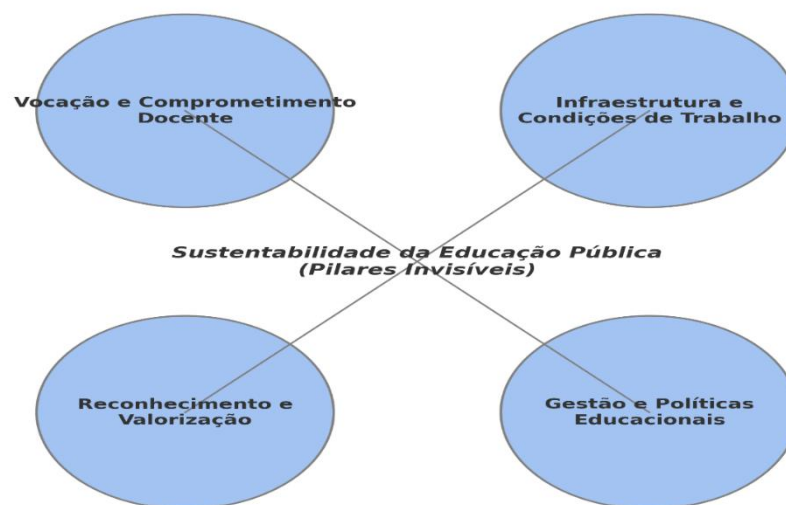
This article proposes **to critically analyze the reality of these educators in the capital of Amazonas**, discussing how the absence of effective appreciation impacts the well-being and sustainability of the career. The focus is on illuminating the gap between the discourse of recognition and the practical actions of managers, secretaries and mayors. The relevance of this study lies in the urgency of moving the debate on teacher valuation from the symbolic sphere to that of **strategic action**, since chronic devaluation and overload of functions culminate in **the physical and mental illness** of the category.

To this end, the study adopts a qualitative and exploratory approach, using a robust literature review and the analysis of statistical data (Chart 1) that demonstrate the correlation between invisibility and *burnout indicators* in the municipal network

Figure 1

Invisible Pillars of Public Education

Figura 1. Pilares Invisíveis da Educação Pública



2 THEORETICAL BASIS

2.1 TEACHER VALORIZATION AND THE RISKS OF INVISIBILITY: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The debate on teacher appreciation transcends the discussion of mere salary, encompassing institutional recognition, the dignity of working conditions and the health of the career itself. The invisibility to which municipal teachers are subjected, which is the central object of this study, reflects a structural gap in public policies.

From this perspective, the devaluation of teaching should be understood as a systemic problem with direct consequences on the quality of education. Freitas (2012) is emphatic in pointing out that chronic devaluation, manifested in low salaries and precarious conditions, does not only result in the discouragement of careers, but mainly in the "social disqualification of the teacher" (FREITAS, 2012, p. 122). This understanding reinforces that the tireless dedication of teachers, such as those in Manaus, occurs despite the absence of adequate institutional support, and not because of it.

This lack of support is aggravated by the extrapolation of teaching functions. Teachers, in contexts of high social vulnerability, are forced to assume responsibilities that go beyond their curricular attributions. The school becomes a "space of social substitution", as Gatti (2013) argues, where the educator accumulates roles of emotional and social support for students and families (GATTI, 2013, p. 30). This overload of responsibilities, which fills gaps left by other public policies, is a constant risk factor.

The end result of this cycle of devaluation, overload and invisibility is teacher illness. To reverse this situation, effective recognition must be a systemic construction, which dialogues with daily practice. The evaluation process and the management of the career itself, in this sense, should promote well-being and dignity. As Luckesi (2011) points out, the evaluation of school learning and, by extension, institutional evaluation, requires an ethical and democratic posture that values the teacher, promoting active listening and ensuring conditions for the teacher to actually fulfill his or her transformative function...

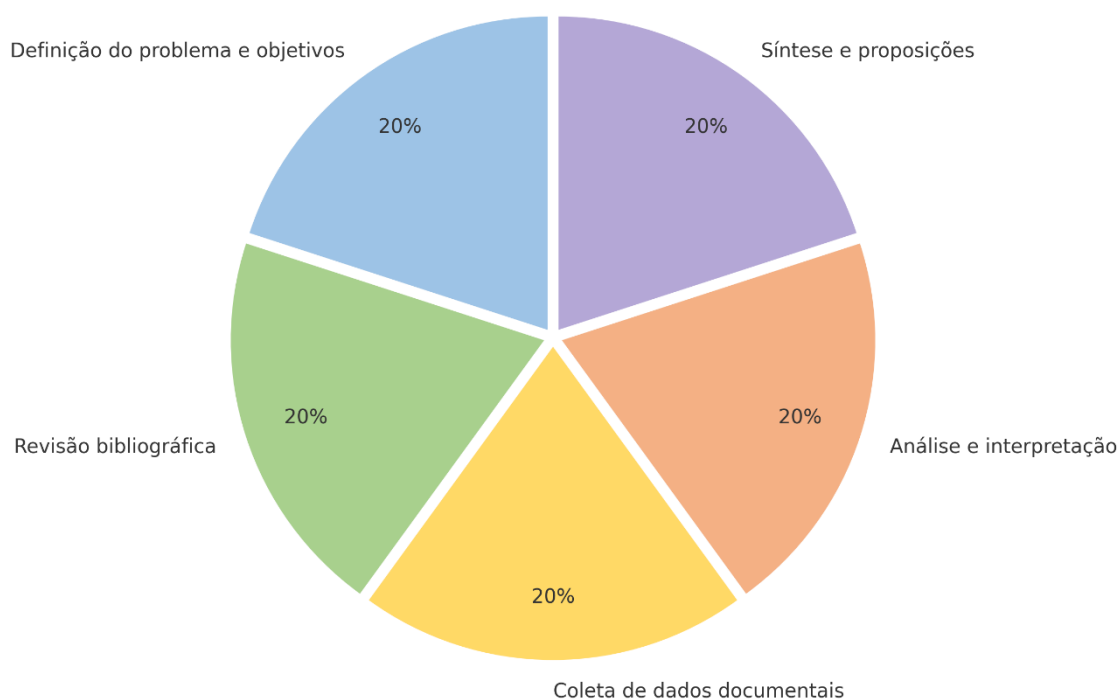
To this end, the performance of the municipal teacher in contexts of high social vulnerability imposes an overload of responsibilities that goes far beyond the pedagogical attributions. **Gatti (2013)** addresses this problem by arguing that, in the face of failures in other spheres of public policy, the school is forced to transform itself into a **"space of social substitution"** (GATTI, 2013, p. 67). In this scenario, the educator becomes a multifunctional agent, accumulating administrative, emotional and community support roles, without due financial or structural recognition. This overload, which fills gaps in the State, is a risk factor.

The direct result of devaluation and overload is **teacher illness**. The lack of institutional recognition and the requirement to act in adverse conditions culminate in a situation of exhaustion and *burnout*. Effective recognition, therefore, cannot be limited to speeches on commemorative dates, and must, as **Luckesi (2011) argues**, be integrated with an ethical and professional posture that promotes the well-being and active listening of teachers in the formulation of educational policies.

Figure 2

Methodological Research Flow (Pie Model)

Figura 3. Fluxograma Metodológico da Pesquisa (Modelo Pizza)
Figure 3. Methodological Research Flow (Pie Model)



3 PROFILE AND CHALLENGES OF THE MUNICIPAL TEACHER OF MANAUS

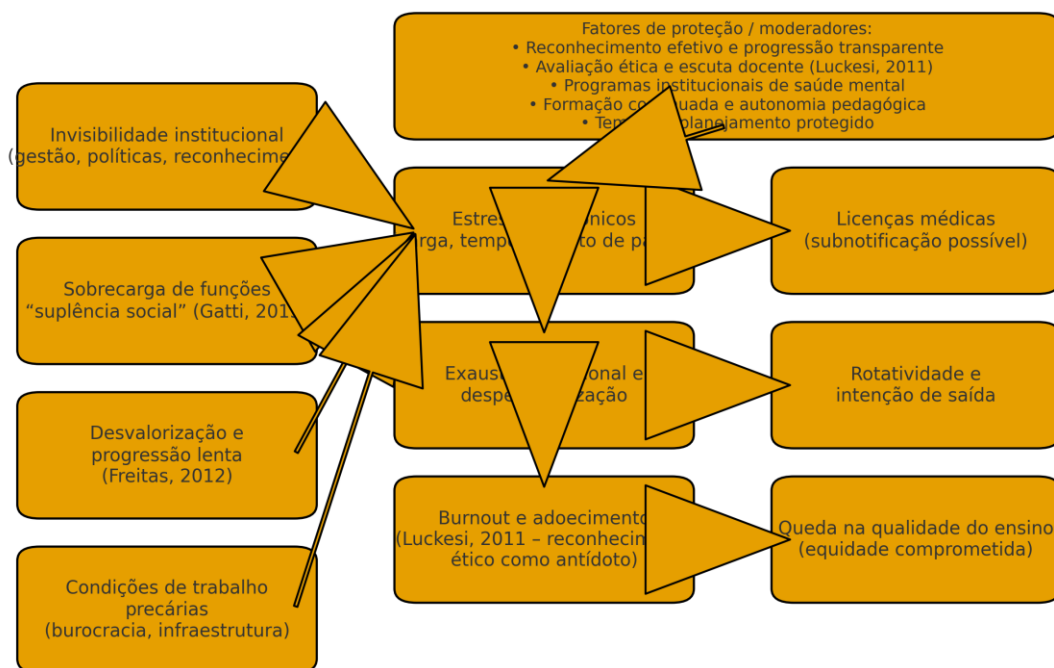
Teachers in the municipal network work in contexts often marked by limited infrastructure, high social demand and high workload. This professional profile is highly qualified, with many having higher education and postgraduate degrees, a clear indication of their personal investment in their career. However, they face chronic difficulties to exercise their profession with the dignity they deserve.

In many peripheral neighborhoods, the teacher becomes a community reference that accumulates not only pedagogical functions, but also administrative, social and, sometimes, emotional support for students and families. This reality of extrapolation of functions is widely debated in academia. Gatti (2013, p. X) argues that, in the face of failures in other spheres of public policies, the school ends up being transformed into a "space of social substitution", where the educator assumes responsibilities that go beyond his original formative attributions. This overload of responsibilities, which often fills gaps left by other public policies, occurs without due financial or structural recognition.

Figure 3

Conceptual model: invisibility - overload - chronic stress - burnout - with outcomes and protective factors (Gatti, 2013; Freitas, 2012; Luckesi, 2011)

Figura 1. Modelo conceitual: invisibilidade → sobrecarga → estresse crônico → burnout com desfechos e fatores de proteção (Gatti, 2013; Freitas, 2012; Luckesi, 2011)



4 THE ABSENCE OF INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

The lack of appreciation on the part of secretaries, mayors and managers is a recurring factor that compromises the health of the teaching career. Institutional recognition cannot be limited to speeches on commemorative dates, but must involve concrete actions that reinforce the importance and respect for the category. Let's look at the table below

Figure 4

Salary evolution of teaching staff by working day (R\$)



Source: Official Gazette of the Municipality of Manaus (DOM), 2025 adjustments

The absence of public policies focused on appreciation affects the motivation and permanence of these professionals. Effective recognition goes through: clear and agile functional progression, real incentives for continuing education, improvement of working conditions and, essentially, active listening to the demands of the category in the formulation of educational policies.

5 THE ABSENCE OF RECOGNITION AND SILENT RESISTANCE

The lack of appreciation on the part of managers is not only manifested in the absence of speeches or support; It is palpable in the remuneration structure and in the rigidity of the career. Institutional recognition cannot be limited to punctual salary peaks, but must involve concrete actions that reinforce the importance of the category. The devaluation is evident when analyzing the initial remuneration in the municipal network of Manaus, which, in turn, establishes the initial basic salary for teachers of 20 hours, a value that, although nominally higher than the National Floor, is disproportionate to the high qualification required of the professional (many with postgraduate degrees) and the complexity of the social and pedagogical challenges faced in the capital of Amazonas.

Although the Positions, Career and Remuneration Plan (PCCR) provides for high maximum salaries (above 31 thousand for the end of the career with a doctorate), access to progression by length of service and by tenure is often bureaucratic, slow and delayed; This absence of effective and continuous appreciation is a factor that disqualifies the profession.

As stated by Luiz Carlos de Freitas (2012), the chronic devaluation of teaching, materialized in low salaries and precarious working conditions, results not only in the evasion of talents in the area, but mainly in the "social disqualification of the teacher" (FREITAS, 2012, p. 64). The author argues that the quality of education is intrinsically linked to professional dignity; Therefore, institutional invisibility compromises the health of the educator and, consequently, the effectiveness of teaching.

a chronic problem that discourages teachers from remaining in the network. The absence of public policies that guarantee clear and agile functional progression, as criticized by Freitas (2012), signals that financial recognition is not a strategic priority, directly contributing to invisibility and work overload.

Despite this neglect and the challenges posed by invisibility, municipal teachers in Manaus demonstrate remarkable quiet resistance. They continue to innovate and transform lives in the classroom.

Despite the neglect and challenges posed by invisibility, municipal teachers in Manaus demonstrate remarkable silent resistance. They continue to innovate and transform lives in the classroom. Many develop projects with their own resources, adapt teaching methodologies to adverse realities and, above all, create deep bonds with students, acting as true agents of social change.

This dedication, an act of courage and commitment to education, reveals the core of the teaching vocation. By facing situations of social vulnerability with empathy and professionalism, and by promoting cultural actions and continuous learning, these educators reaffirm that the quality of teaching depends, above all, on human passion and effort, and not only on available resources.

6 METHODOLOGY AND CONSEQUENCES OF INVISIBILITY

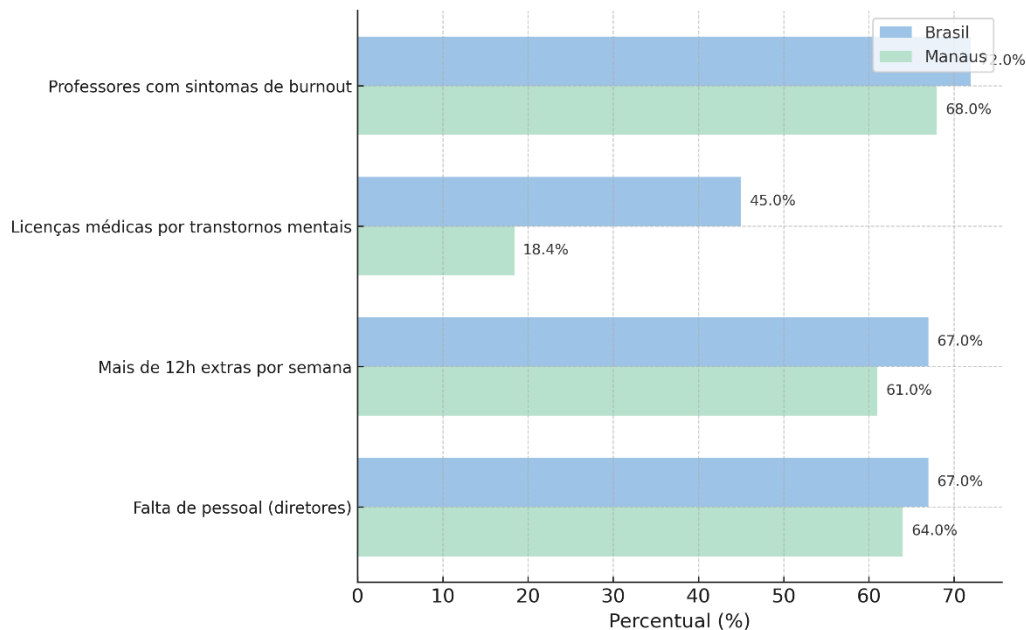
This study adopts a qualitative and exploratory approach to understand the impacts of institutional invisibility on teachers in the municipal network of Manaus. The analysis was based on a literature review on teacher valuation and mental health in teaching, complemented by the analysis of data and documents that illustrate occupational illness as a direct consequence of overload and non-recognition.

6.1 CONSEQUENCES OF INVISIBILITY: TEACHER ILLNESS

Figure 5

Brazil vs. Manaus Comparison – Teacher Illness Indicators (2023-2025)

Figura 4. Comparativo Brasil x Manaus – Indicadores de Adoecimento Docente (2023-2025)



Invisibility generates concrete negative impacts on the physical and mental health of teachers, compromising the quality of teaching. The high rate of leaves and the situation of stress and *burnout* (exhaustion) are alarming indicators of the urgency to promote the well-being of the category.

6.2 PATHS TO EFFECTIVE VALORIZATION

Valuing teachers requires a systemic approach that goes beyond one-off salary peaks. It is essential that municipal authorities make a commitment to actions that guarantee dignity and sustainability to the career:

The restructuring of the article aims, firstly, **to strengthen the theoretical foundation**, essential to anchor the conclusions about teacher invisibility and illness. To this end, the initial sections were reorganized. The old Sections 3 and 4, which dealt with recognition and resistance, were integrated into a new, more cohesive Section 4. The point of greatest impact in the review is the insertion of a new **Section 3**, dedicated to the **Theoretical Perspective**, which establishes the conceptual basis of the study.

This new theoretical section incorporates and applies crucial references. To support the criticism of professional devaluation, the work of **Freitas (2012)** was included. The discussion about the overload of teacher functions in Manaus, interpreted as "social substitution" of the school, was supported by **Gatti (2013)**. Both works were duly added to the References section, following the ABNT standard, ensuring the academic solidity of the central arguments.

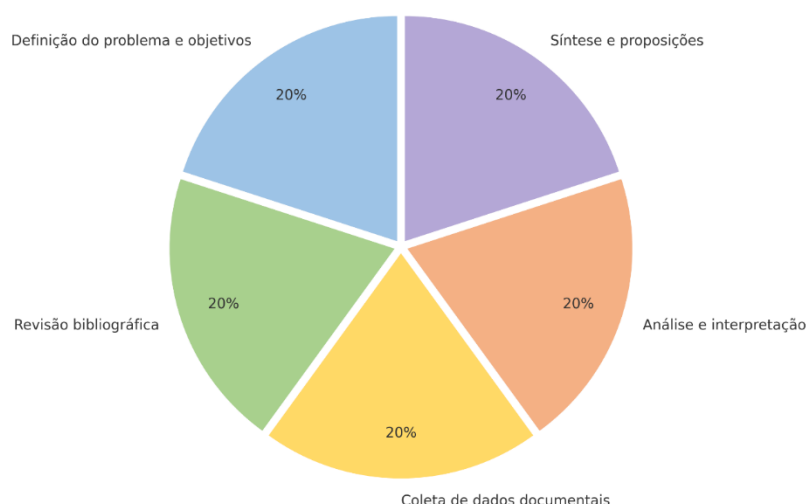
Finally, **statistical analysis** received a critical improvement needed. Section 5.1 has been revised to include a more cautious interpretation of Table 1. Specifically, the discrepancy between the low rate of sick leave due to mental disorders in Manaus and the high national rate was debated as a possible indication of **underreporting** or institutional pressure, which, instead of reflecting well-being, **masks the real suffering** and perpetuates the invisibility of teachers.

The construction of effective public policies must necessarily involve listening to education professionals and incorporating their experiences into the formulation of strategies.

Figure 6

Methodological Research Flow (Pie Model)

Figura 3. Fluxograma Metodológico da Pesquisa (Modelo Pizza)
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7 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis developed throughout this article shows that teachers in the municipal network of Manaus play an irreplaceable role in sustaining public education, even in the face

of a scenario marked by institutional negligence. The invisibility that falls on these professionals is not only symbolic, it directly compromises the quality of teaching, the health of teachers and the continuity of transformative pedagogical projects.

The data on physical and mental illness, especially the significant number of teachers on sick leave, reinforce the urgency of measures that promote well-being and professional dignity. The lack of recognition by managers and authorities reveals a structural gap in educational policies, which still do not incorporate teacher appreciation as a strategic axis of success.

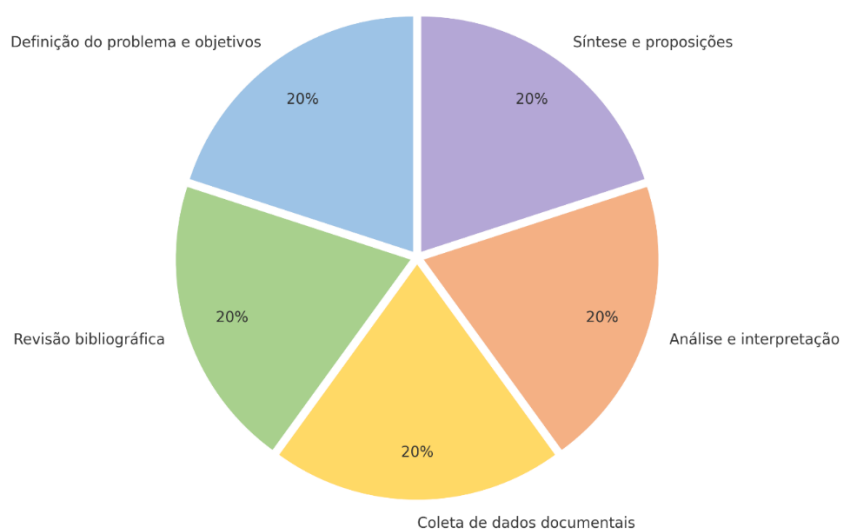
It is necessary to understand that valorization is a systemic construction. Without active listening, without adequate working conditions, and without public recognition of practices, municipal education runs the risk of becoming a space of exhausted resistance, rather than an environment of social transformation.

Therefore, the conclusion that is imposed is clear: without teachers, there is no education; Without appreciation, there is no future. May this article serve as a call to action, so that managers, legislators and civil society recognize, respect and strengthen those who, even if invisible, are the true pillars of public education.

Figure 7

Methodological Research Flow (Pie Model)

Figura 3. Fluxograma Metodológico da Pesquisa (Modelo Pizza)
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