

TEACHER APPRECIATION IN DISPUTE: TRAINING, CAREER, AND NEOLIBERAL RATIONALITY

VALORIZAÇÃO DOCENTE EM DISPUTA: FORMAÇÃO, CARREIRA E RACIONALIDADE NEOLIBERAL

LA VALORACIÓN DEL PROFESORADO EN ENTREDICHO: FORMACIÓN, CARRERA PROFESIONAL Y RACIONALIDAD NEOLIBERAL



<https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2026.011-062>

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the valorization of teacher education as a field of dispute between different educational projects, taking as its empirical reference the career plan of the Municipal Education Network of Niterói (RJ), based on the dissertation by Yamaguchi (2024). It is grounded on the assumption that teacher valorization is a historical, political, and contradictory construction, shaped by tensions between the conception of education as a social right and its increasing subordination to neoliberal rationality (Laval, 2004; Freitas, 2018). Methodologically, this is a qualitative study of a documentary and analytical nature, based on the interpretation of legal and normative documents, as well as data produced in the aforementioned dissertation (Minayo, 2007; Yamaguchi, 2024). The theoretical framework draws on critical scholars who understand teacher education as a socially situated and historically constructed process (Saviani, 2013; Freitas, 2007). The results indicate that, although there are institutional advances in the valorization of teacher education, these are reconfigured by mechanisms of regulation and control that challenge their emancipatory potential, particularly in contexts influenced by managerial and neoliberal logics (Laval, 2004). It is concluded that teacher valorization constitutes a field of dispute in which antagonistic educational projects coexist.

Keywords: Teacher Valorization. Teacher Education. Teaching Career. Educational Policies. Neoliberalism.

RESUMO

O presente artigo analisa a valorização da formação docente como um campo de disputa entre distintos projetos educacionais, tomando como referência empírica o plano de carreira da Rede Municipal de Educação de Niterói (RJ), à luz da dissertação de Yamaguchi (2024). Parte-se do pressuposto de que a valorização docente constitui uma construção histórica, política e contraditória, atravessada por tensões entre a concepção da educação como direito social e sua crescente subordinação à racionalidade neoliberal (LAVAL, 2004;

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FREITAS, 2018). Metodologicamente, trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa de natureza documental e analítica, fundamentada na interpretação de dispositivos legais e normativos, bem como nos dados produzidos na referida dissertação (MINAYO, 2007; YAMAGUCHI, 2024). O referencial teórico apoia-se em autores do campo crítico que compreendem a formação docente como processo social e historicamente situado (SAVIANI, 2013; FREITAS, 2007). Os resultados indicam que, embora existam avanços institucionais na valorização da formação docente, estes são reconfigurados por mecanismos de regulação e controle que tensionam seu potencial emancipatório, especialmente em contextos marcados por lógicas gerenciais e neoliberais (LAVAL, 2004). Conclui-se que a valorização docente se configura como um campo de disputa no qual coexistem projetos educacionais antagônicos.

Palavras-chave: Valorização Docente. Formação de Professores. Carreira Docente. Políticas Educacionais. Neoliberalismo.

RESUMEN

This article analyzes the valuation of teacher training as a field of dispute between different educational projects, taking as an empirical reference the career plan of the Municipal Education Network of Niterói (RJ), in light of Yamaguchi's dissertation (2024). It starts from the premise that the valuation of teachers constitutes a historical, political, and contradictory construction, traversed by tensions between the conception of education as a social right and its increasing subordination to neoliberal rationality (LAVAL, 2004; FREITAS, 2018). Methodologically, this is a qualitative research of a documentary and analytical nature, based on the interpretation of legal and normative provisions, as well as on the data produced in the aforementioned dissertation (MINAYO, 2007; YAMAGUCHI, 2024). The theoretical framework is based on authors from the critical field who understand teacher training as a social and historically situated process (SAVIANI, 2013; FREITAS, 2007). The results indicate that, although there are institutional advances in valuing teacher training, these are reconfigured by regulatory and control mechanisms that strain their emancipatory potential, especially in contexts marked by managerial and neoliberal logics (LAVAL, 2004). It is concluded that teacher valuation is configured as a field of dispute in which antagonistic educational projects coexist.

Keywords: Teacher Valuation. Teacher Training. Teaching Career. Educational Policies. Neoliberalism.

1 INTRODUCTION

Teacher valorization occupies a central place in Brazilian educational policies, being repeatedly affirmed in legal frameworks and national guidelines as a condition for guaranteeing the right to education (BRASIL, 1996). However, far from constituting a consensual concept, this notion is configured as a field crossed by theoretical, political, and economic disputes, in which different projects of society and education confront each other (FREITAS, 2018).

In this context, teacher training assumes a strategic role, and is often presented as a structuring axis of professional valorization. However, its centrality does not imply uniformity of meanings. On the contrary, education is appropriated by different rationalities, sometimes understood as a critical and collective process, sometimes reduced to an instrument of adaptation to market demands (LAVAL, 2004).

Despite the relevance of the theme, there is a gap in the literature regarding the analysis of the concrete mediations through which these disputes materialize in local educational policies. It is in this sense that this article proposes to examine the valorization of teacher training as a field of dispute, taking as a reference the career plan of the Municipal Education Network of Niterói, in the light of the data produced in Yamaguchi's dissertation (2024).

Thus, it seeks to understand how this process of teacher valorization, particularly with regard to training, is tensioned by different educational projects, evidencing the contradictions that cross its materialization in public policies.

2 EDUCATION, TRAINING AND NEOLIBERAL RATIONALITY

The understanding of teacher valorization in the contemporary scenario requires its insertion in the broader context of reconfiguration of educational policies under the influence of neoliberal rationality. As Laval (2004) argues, education has been progressively redefined based on the logic of human capital, in which the school is conceived as a space for the production of skills aimed at employability and competitiveness.

In this process, this teacher training undergoes significant displacements in its direction. On the one hand, a perspective is consolidated that reduces it to a set of technical and instrumental skills, guided by performance indicators and results (FREITAS, 2007). On the other hand, its critical, historical and social dimension, essential to understanding the role of education in human formation, is weakened (SAVIANI, 2013).

The educational reforms implemented in recent decades in Brazil deepen this movement, especially with the centrality attributed to the National Common Curricular Base

(BRASIL, 2017), which reinforces the pedagogy of competencies and curriculum standardization (FREITAS, 2018).

In addition, there is an expansion of continuing education models based on training and certifications, often disconnected from collective processes of teacher reflection (FREITAS, 2007). Such dynamics contribute to the individual accountability of teachers, shifting the focus from structural working conditions to their own performance (LAVAL, 2004).

3 THE VALORIZATION OF TEACHERS IN NITERÓI

The analysis of the career plan of the Municipal Education Network of Niterói reveals important advances with regard to the valorization of teacher training, especially by establishing the title as a criterion for functional progression, in line with the Brazilian educational legislation (BRASIL, 1996).

The Positions, Career and Wages Plan instituted by Law No. 2,866/2013 represents a relevant milestone in expanding incentives for initial and continuing education, associating the title with salary progression (NITERÓI, 2013).

However, the analysis shows that these advances are crossed by mediations that reconfigure the meaning of teacher valorization. As Yamaguchi (2024) points out, subsequent changes introduced conditions to the recognition of the title, such as the requirement to comply with the probationary stage.

This change transforms valorization into a regulated process, dependent on institutional criteria, which evidences the presence of control mechanisms over the teaching career (FREITAS, 2018).

In addition, the valorization of teacher training is directly related to budgetary issues, since the incentive to obtain degrees implies an increase in personnel expenses (YAMAGUCHI, 2024), inserting educational policy in a logic of fiscal management that tensions the expansion of rights (LAVAL, 2004).

4 TEACHER VALUATION AS A FIELD OF DISPUTE

This process is configured, in the context of contemporary educational policies, as a field of dispute in which different rationalities and education projects are confronted (FREITAS, 2018). Far from constituting a homogeneous or linear politics, its materialization occurs through tensions that express broader structural contradictions in society.

On the one hand, the conception of education as a social right is inscribed, which understands the valorization of teachers as an inseparable dimension of an educational project committed to critical training, the democratization of knowledge and the guarantee of

decent working conditions (ANFOPE, 2018). From this perspective, ~~teacher training~~ is not reduced to a technical requirement, but is constituted as a continuous, collective and historically situated process, articulated with the pedagogical practice and the social function of the school.

On the other hand, there is a growing incorporation of principles associated with neoliberal rationality, which reconfigure the meaning of teacher valorization by introducing mechanisms of regulation, evaluation and control (LAVAL, 2004). In this context, this training process is progressively instrumentalized, assuming a functional character, guided by competencies, performance and productivity, which contributes to the individualization of professional trajectories and to the accountability of teachers for educational results (FREITAS, 2007).

The analysis of the career plan in Niterói concretely evidences this tension. As pointed out by Yamaguchi (2024), although there is institutional recognition of the importance of teacher training, materialized in progression by degree, such recognition is crossed by constraints that regulate its access and effectiveness. The requirement to comply with the probationary period, for example, shifts professional recognition from an immediate right to a conditioned achievement, mediated by institutional criteria.

This dynamic reveals that the process of valorization, at the same time that it is affirmed as a principle in educational policies, is also the object of disputes that redefine its meanings and scope. Thus, what is at stake is not only the expansion of rights, but the very definition of what is meant by professional recognition, evidencing the coexistence of antagonistic educational projects within public policies.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The analysis developed in this article allows us to affirm that this process, in the context of the Municipal Education Network of Niterói, cannot be understood in a homogeneous or linear way, but as an expression of a field of disputes crossed by different rationalities (FREITAS, 2018).

The results show that, although there is significant institutional progress, especially with regard to the recognition of training as a criterion for career progression, such advances are stressed by regulatory mechanisms that condition its effectiveness. This process reveals the presence of a rationality that, at the same time that it incorporates the language of valorization, reconfigures its meanings, bringing it closer to a logic of individual control and accountability (LAVAL, 2004).

In this scenario, training assumes an ambiguous role. If, on the one hand, it remains a central element in the construction of professional valorization, on the other hand, it is progressively captured by devices that subordinate it to performance and productivity criteria, which weakens its critical and collective dimension (FREITAS, 2007). Such a movement tensions the understanding of education as a right and brings it closer to a logic of individual investment.

In view of this, the need for public policies that include the valorization of teachers in their structural dimension is reaffirmed, articulating training, career, working conditions and social recognition of the profession (SAVIANI, 2013 and ANFOPE, 2018). More than expanding certification or progression mechanisms, it is about building policies that strengthen the collective character of teaching and that resist the trends of individualization and instrumentalization present in the contemporary scenario.

Finally, this study contributes to the debate by showing that professional recognition is not limited to its normative formulation, and it is essential to analyze the concrete mediations that cross its implementation. In this sense, understanding these policies as a field of dispute allows us to broaden our view of it, highlighting its contradictions and limits, but also its possibilities of resistance and transformation.

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