

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

THE MOTIVATION OF TEACHERS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN A SCHOOL OF PORTO ALEGRE/RS

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Abstract: The present study was carried out in the context of the internship discipline in early childhood education. As a result of the experience of the author of the study in this environment, it was possible to observe a harmonious interaction between the teachers who work in this school during the activities. One of the possible reasons for this relationship between teachers is motivation. This way, we sought to verify the level of motivation of the teachers of this school and to evaluate the correlation between self-determined motivation and their daily practice. For this, the Teacher Motivation Scale (EMD) was applied to 4 teachers who work with early childhood education in this school, this way it was possible to verify a motivated faculty in all dimensions of the EMD. Considering that the instrument is answered with a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 lower applicability and 5 greater applicability) with averages of 4.21 for Performance, 4.79 for Institutional Insertion, 4.25 for Continuing Education, 4.67 Development and 4.50 Teaching Practice. Despite the satisfactory results for motivation, it was possible to identify some individual deficiencies. In this sense, the results of the study confirm the importance of motivation for a qualification of work in the classroom.

Keywords: Self-determined motivation. Teacher Motivation Scale. Teacher motivation. Faculty.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the scenario of Brazilian education encounters several problems that interfere with the effectiveness of actions carried out at school, resulting in an educational process that, due to the difficulties encountered, hardly reaches its full educational potential in the individuals who are the main piece in this scenario, the students.

However, although students are the target

audience of this process, they cannot be entirely responsible for school success or failure, as has been done in some moments in the history of Brazilian education. In this sense, the importance of the role of teachers and the school community in the qualification of students has been increasingly recognized.

Thus, some of the factors that directly influence the teaching-learning process are the motivation of teachers and their qualifications.

The National Education Plan (PNE), in its diagnosis, defines that the quality of education can only exist if there is the appreciation of teaching professionals, which will only be achieved through a global policy capable of articulating initial training, working conditions, salary, career and continuing education. The PDE concludes that initial and continuing teacher education requires public universities to pay special attention to basic education. Thus, improving the quality of basic education depends on the training of its teachers, which is a direct result of the opportunities offered to them. The improvement in the quality of training of teachers with higher education, in turn, is conditioned to the quality of schooling offered to them at the basic level, closing a cycle of mutual, evident and positive dependence between educational levels. (INEP, 2014).

In this sense, this study is part of the 1st semester of 2018 in the context of the subject “internship in early childhood education” of the Physical Education course, in a private school located in the city of Porto Alegre/RS, which provides a high-quality infrastructure, when compared to the evaluation criteria of Inep. Given this, it is important to characterize the school, in order to explore the reality of these teachers and some factors that influence their professional performance.

This information is in line with the preliminary observation made by the author of the work and the reports of the teacher

supervising the internship, in which it was possible to verify the existence of an apparently well-articulated teaching staff, in addition to being able to observe behavior on the part of the students that reflects a consistent educational process. It is possible to observe an adequate articulation of teachers seeking the development of students under their responsibility.

Based on this information, it is possible to identify the school as an educational institution that has a qualified faculty for teaching (not necessarily schooling). This information corroborates the identification of the teaching staff as subjects integrated into the school environment and indicates that their performance has acquired satisfactory results in relation to the teaching/learning process, so that the experiences lived in this environment must serve as a good example of how to educate for the author of this study.

The intern's experience with Kindergarten 2 (two classes), Pre-school 1 (three classes) and Pre-school 2 (one class) classes, during classes there was always the presence of the supervisor teacher of the internship, the main teacher of the class and/or the teacher's assistant, with at least two responsible for the class in addition to the intern. In this sense, the completion of the internship indicated the hypothesis that teachers who work at the school have a high motivation in relation to their teaching activities, reflecting positively on the behavior of the classes in which the intern performed his intervention. Based on this hypothesis, the present study seeks to verify the level of self-determined motivation of teachers who work in early childhood education at this school and to evaluate the correlation between motivation and their daily practice.

When we consider motivation as a relevant variable for the success of a process, it is important to take into consideration, the

existence of two types of motivation, extrinsic motivation and intrinsic or self-determined motivation. The first refers to questions that involve the individual in an activity for a reason that does not directly involve the activity carried out with the objective of this individual, such as being a teacher to earn money or carrying out a task only by order of the administration of the place, that is, without intense individual involvement in order to achieve the objective of the task. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, refers to situations where the subject does not need reasons external to the task for his motivation to increase, as he is highly involved with the task and feels important for achieving this goal, enabling a more efficient learning environment (MINELLI et al, 2010; MACHADO ET AL., 2012). Intrinsic or self-determined motivation is understood as a condition in which the individual recognizes himself as the author of his actions and develops a certain action based on his personal interest and recognition of the importance of what is being developed, representing a situation of true engagement with the activity (MINELLI et al, 2010).

In the same direction Davoglio and Dos Santos (2017) point out that:

Intrinsically motivated teachers tend to actively explore their own capabilities, spontaneously engaging and remaining involved in activities perceived as interesting and rewarding in themselves, facing challenges and developing skills and competencies necessary for their performance. In addition, the literature empirically supports that teachers' self-determined motivation for teaching also promotes students' autonomy for learning[...]

METHODOLOGY

Thus, this study was based on the application of the “Teacher Motivation Scale” (EMD) to assess the self-determined motivation of teachers and teacher assistants who work in kindergarten at this school. With the objective of understanding the aspects related to the motivational profile of the teacher that contribute to a quality education.

The EMD was applied to teachers who work with early childhood education classes during the internship period. Since the application of the questionnaire was carried out only after filling out a consent form. The sample consisted of a group of 4 teachers and teacher’s assistants who work in kindergarten at the school in question, with 3 teachers in charge and 1 teacher’s assistant. It is worth mentioning the time these professionals work at this institution, ranging from 3 months of work to 1 year and 3 months, that is, only one of the teachers completed a school year at this school.

This instrument consists of 23 questions, where 6 questions correspond to performance, 7 to development, 4 to teaching practice, 3 to continuing education and 3 to institutional insertion. The data will be analyzed through the percentiles found in each dimension and later the correlations between each dimension will be evaluated with the information obtained in the individual identification, with the intention of verifying factors that contribute to a greater or lesser motivation of these professors through the verification of the recurrence of factors. EMD is an instrument that uses a theoretical model that explains self-determined motivation based on the following dimensions:

- **Performance:** It focuses on situations of pressure and expectation that affect the quality of performance and the perception of capabilities, which have a negative potential on self-determined motivation

as they are antagonistic to tendencies towards integration and psychological cohesion. Therefore, the scores of these items were coded inversely, as they act to undermine self-determination. (6, 8, 12, 16, 17, 18). To correct inverse scores, the following formula was used for these items: Response value - 6 = score converted to positive.

- **Development:** It refers to the professor’s attitudes and choices that are focused on growth and development, which are shown to be cohesive and integrated with the self. It is aligned with a continuous process of learning more about oneself and in the interaction with others, placing the person at the origin of their own actions, evidencing reflection and awareness about choices and purposes. (1, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 23).

- **Teaching practice:** It focuses on the alignment between personal interests and teaching, highlighting the harmony between personal will and professional demands. (13, 20, 21, 22).

- **Continuing education:** It refers to the search for qualification and challenges as a teacher’s personal commitment. Self-determined motivation tends to be characteristic of people who have initiative and believe in their own ability to achieve. (4, 5, 7).

- **Institutional insertion (D5):** It explores the integration experience of the professor in the institutional environment. The experiences of choosing, interacting and sharing, promoted by the environment, act as stimuli for the engagement and accountability that accompany self-determined actions. (2, 3, 19). (DAVOGLIO; SANTOS, 2017).

RESULTS

The present study presented results that confirm the initial hypothesis that the teaching staff was motivated with their teaching tasks, since the average evaluations are close to the maximum score (5), according to Figure 1.

When evaluating the averages by dimension, it is also not possible to identify any negative dimension, as shown in Figure 2.

Even with individually high averages in relation to teacher motivation (Figure 1) and there are no major differences between the averages of each dimension, it is possible to verify some motivational deficiencies in specific dimensions of some individuals. As the case of P4 who, despite having a satisfactory average, is the subject who has the greatest deficiency in the criteria of Performance and Teaching Practice, in addition to the highest values for Continuing Education and Development (Figure 3).

In addition to the individual evaluation, the recurrence of not so positive evaluations was verified. Since the mode of continuing education scores 4 (Figure 4), which does not mean a negative note, but rather a general assessment lower than the other variables, indicating a lack of this dimension in relation to the others.

By checking the answers per question, it is possible to identify situations where the professional does not feel comfortable or motivated. In this sense, questions 18 and 20 have lower values than the others (Figures 5 and 6). These questions are: "Sometimes I stop doing something of my interest for fear of feeling embarrassed" (question 18) and "I value having flexible activities and work schedules" (question 20). They belong to the dimensions Performance and teaching practice, respectively.

Questions previously mentioned in Figure

6, it is possible to identify the particularity of P4 in question 12, "The remuneration for teaching work interferes with the perception of the abilities I have" (Performance), where all other subjects responded with the maximum score while P4 evaluated with the minimum value.

DISCUSSION

The evaluation of the averages of individual scores (Figure 1) and the averages per dimension (Figure 2) corroborates the initial hypothesis of the study, in addition to reaffirming the relationship established by the literature on teacher motivation and quality of teaching in schools (MACHADO et al., 2012; MAIESKI; OLIVEIRA; BZUNECK, 2013 DAVOGLIO; DOS SANTOS, 2017; INEP, 2017;).

Monteiro (2012) elucidates the relationship between teacher motivation and student performance based on Vygotsky's theory, where the teacher must identify the difference between what is being proposed in class and the learning level of each student (Zone of Proximal Development) so that it is possible to carry out an intervention that will enhance the individual learning process. However, a teacher who does not have a high self-determined motivation would not be able to understand these individual needs and would probably end up skipping some learning stages of some students, compromising their later development. In this sense, the results illustrated in figures 1 and 2 indicate that this process is carried out with adequate levels of motivation in the entire sample of this study.

Despite positive results in relation to teachers' motivation, when specifically analyzing the dimensions in each individual (figures 3 and 6), the dimensions of Performance and Teaching Practice of P4 have unsatisfactory evaluations, indicating difficulties in dealing with external pressures

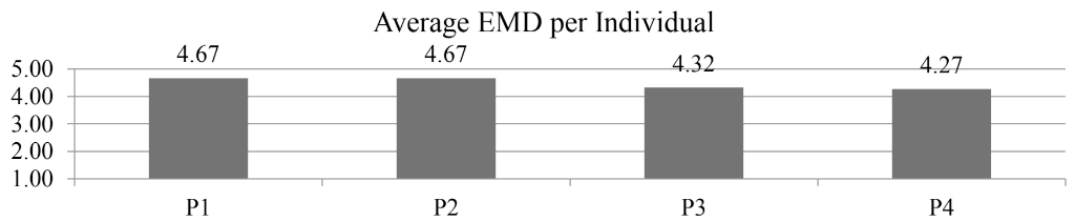


Figure 1: General average of the Teacher Motivation Scale per individual.

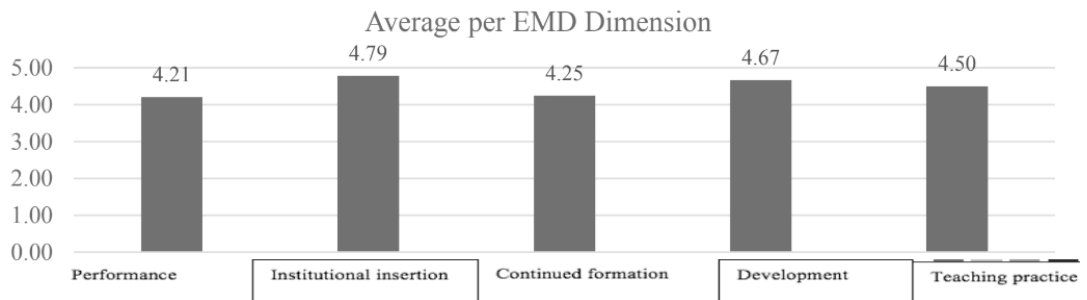


Figure 2: General average of the Teacher Motivation Scale by Dimension.

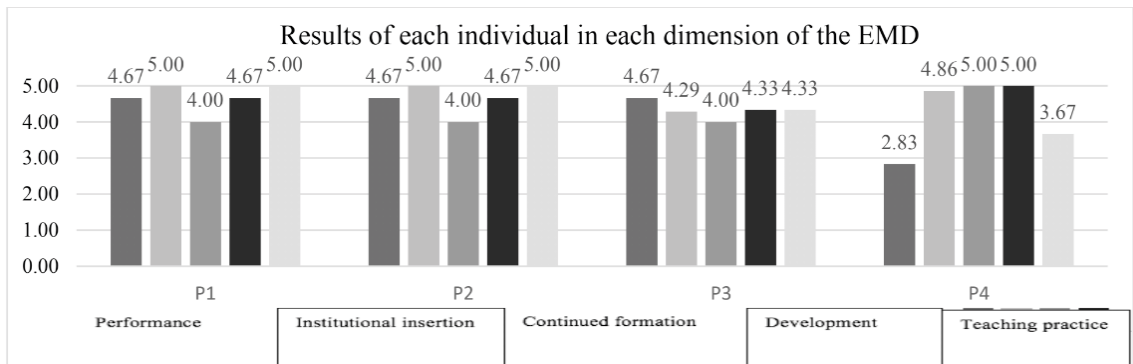


Figure 3: Results of each individual in each dimension of the EMD.

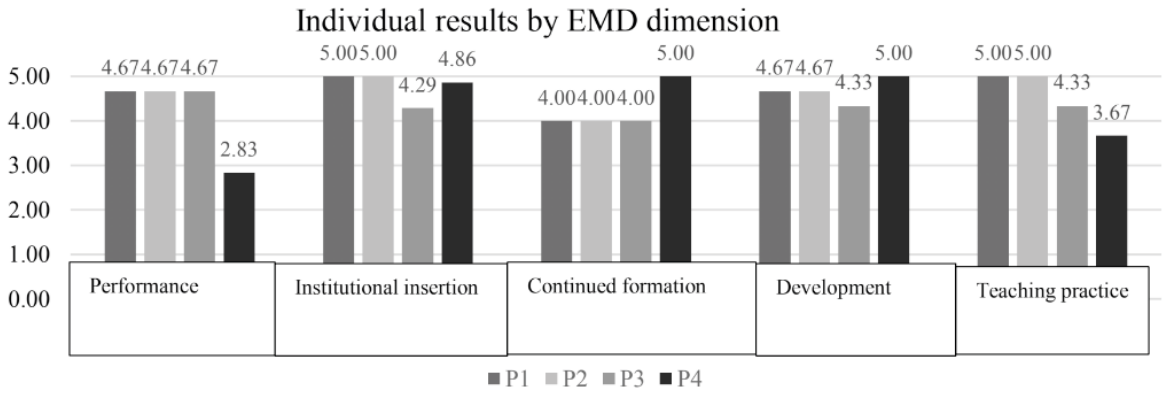


Figure 4: Individual scores by EMD dimension.

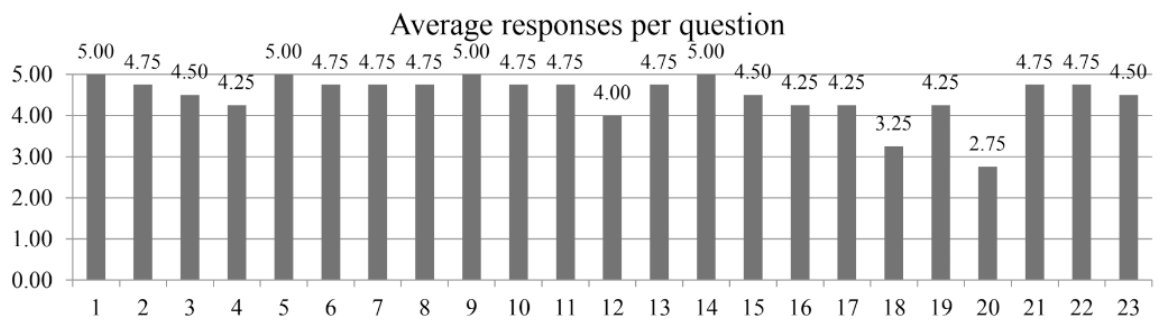


Figure 5: Average of responses per EMD question, with conversion of inverse question scores.

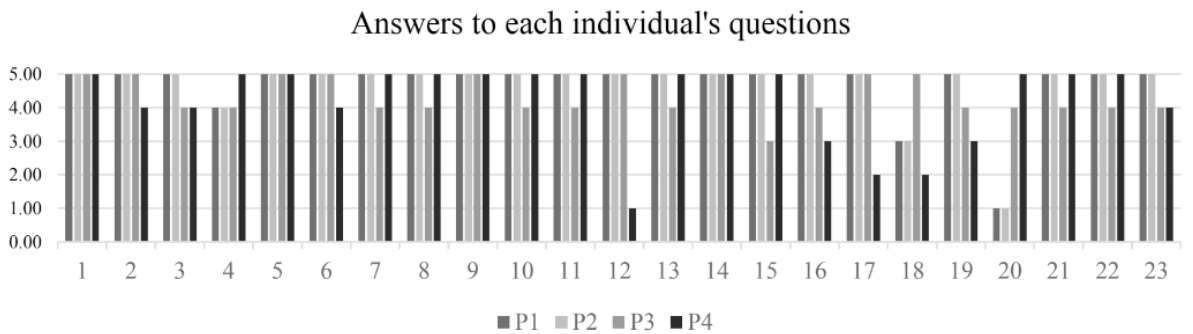


Figure 6: Answers to EMD questions by Individual, with the conversion of inverse question scores.

and reducing the ability to assess their skills, in addition to there being a certain distance between personal goals and professional goals. Such factors may be related to the time working at school, since she has worked at the institution for only 3 months, something that is possibly reversed with more time spent at school.

In general, despite the fact that question 8 (figures 5 and 6), “The lack of support from peers limits my willingness to face teaching difficulties or opportunities”, obtained one of the highest scores, it is possible to identify a certain insecurity in the teaching staff in relation to exposing their ideas when we observe the answers to question 18, “Sometimes I fail to do something of my interest for fear of feeling embarrassed”. Indicating a weakness in the teacher training process that does not favor the teacher to expose his ideas to his peers (JOAQUIM; BOAS; CARRIERI, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The internship took place in a favorable

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environment for the learning of both students and the intern, with the professionals who carried out the work with the groups assisted always working together, without any power conflicts in relation to who guides the classes. This articulated work between teachers is highly related to teaching motivation, because, just as too much intervention in the other's work can mean insecurity among peers, the absence of cooperative work demonstrates a lack of commitment to the role of teaching. In this sense, it is possible to state that the faculty performs an effective job, where the quality of the work is only achieved as the professors had a high self-determined motivation.

Even with a high motivation, the present study manages to show that even with satisfactory results it is possible to obtain better results through an alignment of individual objectives with the objectives of the school, in addition to the reaffirmation of the abilities of these professionals so that they feel safe to expose ideas to their peers and manage to enhance their initiatives in this institution.