

# International Journal of Human Sciences Research

## EVALUATION OF EARLY EARLY EDUCATION FROM QUALITY INDICATORS: THE PATHS OF AN EXPERIENCE

---

*Maria Sandra de Oliveira*

Master in Education and PhD in Education from the Faculty of Education at UNICAMP. Researcher at LEPED/FE/UNICAMP. Public Manager, currently a trainer at: ``Centro de Formação dos Educadores Municipais de Sumaré`` – CEFEMS/SP

*Ana Benvinda C.S. Cosmo*

Master in Education from UNISAL, psychopedagogue, currently coordinator of a training team in the initial years at: Centro de Formação dos Educadores Municipais de Sumaré - CEFEMS/SP

*Mirian Silva Gonçalves Freitas*

Graduated in Physical Education and Pedagogy. Specialist in Early Childhood Education and Visual Arts, currently a trainer at: ``Centro de Formação dos Educadores Municipais de Sumaré`` – CEFEMS/SP

*Márcia Cristina Tognete Rocha*

Master in School Education – Universidade Estadual de Campinas/Unicamp. Currently director of: ``Centro de Formação dos Educadores Municipais de Sumaré`` – CEFEMS/SP

All content in this magazine is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution License. Attribution-Non-Commercial-Non-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).



**Abstract:** This work narrates training practices developed by the authors, at ``*Centro Municipal de Formação de Educadores de Sumaré*`` / CEFEMS, state of São Paulo, especially with regard to the implementation of the evaluation of early childhood education in the education network, anchored in the National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education and in the Quality Indicators in Early Childhood Education, both from the Ministry of Education (MEC). The reported path covers the year 2022 and the actions linked to this proposition are in progress until the present moment. It is understood from this perspective that the quality of education is not measured by the results obtained by students in learning tests, but especially by the educational process experienced at school, which involves broader aspects of training for citizenship, integral development of the child, management and democratic participation, among others. Therefore, quality is a relative concept, based on values and, therefore, defining quality is a dynamic, continuous process, requires revisions and never reaches a definitive statement, as stated by Moss et.al (1999). This perspective, in turn, lacks more participatory processes for defining and measuring the quality of education based on a flexible instrument - which here is called 'quality indicators' - to help the school community evaluate and improve quality. from school. These, among other questions, arise when thinking in depth about the concept of "quality of early childhood education". The data collected in the assessments developed shed light on the aspects experienced in the education network, clarifying strong points and those that still need improvement. It must be noted that the exercise of democratic participation in this process of evaluating early childhood education was very relevant, leaving strong lessons and marks that will

certainly yield new fruits, as we move forward in this network journey, in the search for improving the quality of education childish.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Early Childhood Education, Quality Indicators, Democratic Participation

## INTRODUCTION

In this article we will briefly present the experience of implementing an Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment that we carried out in our municipal education network in the city of Sumaré/SP, through training actions developed with educators and managers of early childhood education schools. belonging to our Municipal Department of Education.

The implementation of the Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment in the municipality was anchored in the legal documents of the Ministry of Education, such as the National Quality Parameters for Early Childhood Education (MEC, 2006), the Early Childhood Education Quality Indicators (2009) and also in the Quality Indicators of Early Childhood Education in São Paulo (SME/SP, 2016).

From the study of the theme Quality of Early Childhood Education, the demands observed in our education network, especially with regard to the questions of "What, Why, How and For What" evaluate the quality of early childhood education in our network of teaching, we trainers in the early childhood education segment, working at (CEFEMS), developed meetings with the purpose of discussing and studying with our managers and teachers in the segment, what notions we had about the issue of evaluation of early childhood education and how we could implement, in a network, an action that could mark the beginning of a systematized movement in relation to this problem.

Our objective as the CEFEMS training

team was to build ways to support managers, teachers and professional teams at school units, so that, together with families and people from their respective communities, they could develop a participatory institutional self-evaluation process that would lead to a collective diagnosis on the quality of education promoted in each Unit, also giving an overview of the quality of early childhood education in our education network, so that we could reflect and propose improvements in the educational work carried out with children in our school units.

With this initiative, we, as educators, wanted to contribute to the construction of increasingly meaningful quality educational experiences for all children who are part of our education system. This implied working directly with the construction of the notion of quality in early childhood education, with the concepts of childhood, organization of environments, the provision of materials and physical structure that we offer to children in our schools, it was also necessary to deal with concepts and practices relating to the management styles we adopt, pedagogical practices, issues related to welcoming, listening, participation, inclusion, among other topics.

## **THE CONCEPT OF QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

It is understood from this perspective adopted by us that the quality of education is not measured by the results obtained by students in learning tests, but especially by the educational process experienced at school, which involves broader aspects of training for citizenship, integral development of children, management and democratic participation, among others.

Thus, Quality is a relative concept, based on values and, therefore, defining quality is a dynamic, continuous process, requires

revisions and never reaches a definitive statement, as stated by Moss et.al (1999).

This way, we created some reflections with educators during our training meetings throughout 2022 that covered the following questions:

- What philosophical conceptions do we have about early childhood education and assessment practices in this segment?
- Evaluate: What? Who? For what? Why? How?
- How do we deal with the notion of Assessment and the guarantee of the rights to learn advocated in legal documents, above all, a concept of children's rights to be in an early childhood education school that provides opportunities for their full development according to their own abilities and potential? (BNCC, 2009).
- Reflection on the quality of education: "but what quality are we talking about?"
- How do we deal with internal assessment (records of the children's own journeys) and external assessment that involves broader community participation?
- How can we experience an assessment of early childhood education from the perspective of quality indicators in our own contexts, based on other experiences and references (such as MEC 2006, MEC 2009, SME/SP, 2016)?
- What paths would we need to take in order to build and implement an assessment based on quality indicators for early childhood education schools in our education network?

And after implementing this assessment based on quality indicators, what paths must you take? What would we do after these desired quality assessments based on the indicators we would list?

Vianna (2005, p. 16) points out that

evaluation is not a value in itself and must not be restricted to a simple rite of educational bureaucracy; it needs to be integrated into the process of transforming teaching and learning, and thus actively contribute to the process of transforming students.

And it was in this direction that we followed the conversation with our educators: so that this moment of studies with the purpose of implementing a quality assessment in our network, was not just something bureaucratic, but in fact, we could live this experience as a lever for to think and rethink our pedagogical practices, our physical school structure, our management styles and several other dimensions that involve the daily life of our early childhood education schools here in our education network.

Now, thought of this way, the quality of education is not something fixed, much less something measured with tests of cognitive knowledge or demonstrated in supposed pre-fixed skills that our children must achieve. It must be clear that in this concept of quality that we talk about here, there is a huge importance attributed to school conditions, both materials, pedagogical and relational.

Thus, material conditions certainly depend on the socioeconomic conditions of where the school units are located, that is, they primarily depend on extracurricular factors. Pedagogical conditions, which are also related to the social context, refer, in turn, to a complex apparatus of teacher training – initial and continued – monitoring and criticism of pedagogical practice, but, above all, to the valorization of teaching activity embodied in consistent remuneration and adequate working conditions – number of students per class, working hours, teaching material and adequate physical structure available, encouragement of exchanges. Likewise, relational issues are affected (and are implicated) in the management style and

subjectivities that coexist in the same school educational space, as well as the training and support that these same people receive at the school unit and also from the municipal educational system in its entirety.

In view of this, it is imperative to seek a broader process of evaluating the quality of education, and therefore, of schools and education networks themselves, which, far beyond the use of standardized tests, acquisition tests, such and such skills by children, bear in mind the political nature of school education.

Recognizing this character implies recognizing school professionals and users as subjects who need to be considered as such in evaluation processes, because, without omitting their responsibilities, they are the ones who, in school environments, materialize the educational task.

Know and use the results of institutional assessments (as is the case with quality assessment based on quality indicators that we are explaining here), compare them with records of children's learning journeys (portfolios, descriptive records, documentation pedagogical approach through mini stories, books of life and other instruments typical of assessment in this age group), means understanding them not as an end in themselves, but rather as the possibility of associating them with the necessary transformations in order to strengthen the quality of democratic public school, which is one that is organized to guarantee the learning of all boys and girls throughout their childhood.

## **THE PERSPECTIVE OF EVALUATION BASED ON DIMENSIONS AND RESPECTIVE QUALITY INDICATORS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

The initial questions that guide the evaluation perspective based on quality indicators are: What must a quality early childhood education institution be like? What are the criteria for evaluating the quality of a daycare center or preschool? How can teams of educators, parents, people in the community and responsible authorities help improve the quality of early childhood education institutions?

Following the experiences studied and the recommendations of the MEC itself, we listed nine dimensions to guide our reflective analysis and data collection in the local contexts of each early childhood education unit in our education network. The dimensions reflect aspects of the reality of early childhood education schools. In our network, we followed the dimensions also listed in the São Paulo experience (SME/SP, 2016), as we believed that this well reflected our municipal context, as São Paulo residents from the interior, but from the same state. They were: dimension 1 - educational planning and management; dimension 2 - participation, listening and authorship of babies and children; dimension 3 - multiplicity of experiences and languages in playful contexts for children; dimension 4 - interactions; dimension 5 - ethnic-racial and gender relations; dimension 6 - educational environments: times, spaces and materials; dimension 7 - promoting health and well-being: experiences of being cared for, taking care of oneself, others and the world; dimension 8 - training and working conditions of educators; dimension 9 - sociocultural protection network: educational unit, family, community and city.

The dimensions can be verified through

indicators. The indicators consist of a series of questions that seek to assess the quality of that school unit based on the themes organized in each dimension. Each indicator, in turn, is evaluated after the group of educators, managers, families, in short, the entire local school community, answers a series of questions. The answers to these questions allow the community to evaluate the quality of the early childhood education institution in terms of that indicator (MEC, 2009, p.15).

There is NO single way to use Quality Indicators in Early Childhood Education. It is a flexible instrument that can be used according to the creativity and experience of each early childhood education institution. Locally, we chose to organize our indicators with their respective questions, based on the documents already mentioned, we added, deleted and even modified the questions present in several documents, in order to arrive at our own list of elementary questions.

The mobilization of the school community to participate in the evaluation is the first important point in the use of indicators and this was widely discussed with managers who, in their respective schools, took measures and carried out actions to engage everyone (employees, teachers, managers, families, children), so that they could participate in the quality assessment that would be developed through forums organized and held by the schools themselves on a school day designated for such action.

The more people from different segments of the community get involved in actions to improve the quality of early childhood education institutions, the greater the gains for children, society and education would be, hence this call for effective participation and not for representation (when a number of people from each segment are previously chosen), it was extensively worked on in each school.



The protocols for holding forums – participatory assemblies, in each school unit, followed the CEFEMS guidelines, which in turn was largely based on the MEC (2009) guidelines. We use colors assigned to the indicators. The colors symbolized the assessment that was made: if the situation analyzed was considered ‘good’, the color was green; if it was considered ‘average’, the color yellow was used; if it was analyzed as ‘bad’, the color red was assigned. This color methodology greatly facilitates the participants’ understanding and provides a very noticeable visual response to the group as they focus on the arguments and analyzes that are being shared under the guidance of an assembly mediator.

After small assemblies were held by Dimension, the participating public gathered in a large forum to deliberate on the collective analyses, producing a preliminary report that was organized in the form of a public document by the unit’s managers and served to forward the action plan.

The action plan was prepared on another school day, intended exclusively for a new assembly with the community who, after discussions and analyzes in small groups, decided what steps needed to be taken, in order to meet the needs identified in the self-assessment carried out previously. This action plan contained short, medium and long-term goals, depending on the needs that arose. It also contained actions to be carried out, forecasting of resources needed for the actions, sharing of responsibilities between educators, managers, families and, it even provided for, the request, (when necessary), of the support network external to the school (such as, for example, actions that can or must be derived exclusively from systemic actions implemented by the Department of Education or sectors intersecting with it), in pursuit of the improvements desired by the community.

The journey map was this one:

**a) Organization of self-assessment**

- choice of dimensions and indicators;
- elaboration of questions for each indicator;
- organization of protocols/procedures for application - (timetable forecast for each stage);

**b) Application of self-assessment**

- use of participatory methodologies;
- promotion and engagement - public notice, invitations, awareness within the community;
- reception with a general plenary session to explain the day’s work (all Unit professionals, family members/guardians, community, School Supervisors);
- selection of a coordinator and a rapporteur per dimension to lead the assemblies;
- organization of rooms and materials for discussion by dimension;
- final plenary with notes and collective assessment of the first notes from the studies and debates of the day (obtain an overview of the strengths and challenges of the Educational Unit through participatory evaluation);
- scheduling a new meeting to organize the action plan collectively

**c) Action plan –**

- organization and first analyzes of data (planning the next actions – school unit working group);
- holding a plenary session to develop an action plan for the unit based on the diagnosis (all unit professionals, family members, guardians, community,

School Supervisors). Follow the same organization steps as in the first stage.

- planned actions, schedule: What? As? When? Who?

- local and external referrals

- advertising.

## **METODOLOGIA**

It was action research. According to Thiollent (1987), the main characteristic of action research consists of establishing a communication network at the level of information capture and dissemination; It's part of a partner action project! or solving collective problems.

The focal problem was to promote reflective analyzes about the quality of early childhood education in the municipal network of Sumaré, based on data collection, supported by quality indicators and through dialogical forums with the participation of the school community, specifically, in each educational unit. and later, in collective meetings with all managers of the education network.

The instruments and strategies used were:

- Carrying out studies and training with the school community conducted by CEFEMS trainers – action supported by the Municipal Department of Education;
- Preparation of quality indicators for early childhood education to be used in the action;
- Holding dialogical forums in each educational unit, led by the unit's managers and teachers;
- • Analysis of data and plans implemented by each school unit – conducted by the CEFEMS training team.

Some data about the context in which the action research was carried out:

- 28 early childhood education schools in the municipal network of Sumaré/SP;

- Through training actions carried out via `` *Centro Municipal de Formação de Educadores de Sumaré* -Professor *Leovigildo Duarte Júnior*” – CEFEMS, for managers and educators of school units in the municipal network;

- Academic year 2022

- 28 school units that provide early childhood education participated in the action;

- Totaling 6724 children enrolled in the school. children's;

- 56 school unit managers;

- 299 teachers and 22 recreationists = 321 educators

- 8 editing supervisors. children's;

- Average participation in the evaluation and action plan forums: 1100 people

## **SOME RESULTS FOUND**

This entire training process and implementation of the Early Childhood Education Quality Assessment based on Quality Indicators in our education network brought gains. The managers and teachers involved in the training meetings and in carrying out the actions in their respective communities, reported in their journey evaluations - recorded after interventions, gains especially in the elaboration of the concepts worked on and their practical implications such as: choices of pedagogical approaches, in the development of teaching strategies, in the organization of environments, reception and management styles that they are experiencing in their units, as well as changes that the physical structure of the school itself requires or even security in identifying, based on the data collected, acts which depend on actions by the Municipal Department of Education as a local system.

Thus, some results found were:

- Strengthening professionals who work in the Educational Unit;
- Dialogue between educators and families of the children served;
- Development and deepening of democratic management practices in the Unit;
- Collaboration between teams from Educational Units and the Municipal Department of Education;
- Improvement of the Political Pedagogical Project of the Educational Units and the actions of SME/Sumaré in order to support and strengthen these projects;
- Improvement of the municipality's public educational policies to improve the quality of Municipal Early Childhood Education;
- Collection of subsidies for the re-

elaboration of the Sumareense Early Childhood Education Quality Indicators for future editions.

## FINAL COMMENTS

We hope that this narrative inspires and contributes to the reflection of educators engaged in the fight to improve the quality of early childhood education. Above all, it serves as an encouraging testimony to our educators and local managers that our actions need to deepen every day in the search for this quality that we desire.

We are hopeful and will continue working tirelessly for quality early childhood education in our city, in our country.

We sincerely thank everyone who participated in these actions. Without you nothing would have been. We reiterate our invitation to these strong and committed people who create democratic and quality public schools for everyone, to join us in this educational and transformative experience.

## REFERENCES

BONDIOLI, Anna (Ed.). O projeto pedagógico da creche e a sua avaliação: a qualidade negociada. Campinas: Autores Associados, 2004.

BRASIL. MEC. Parâmetros Nacionais de Qualidade para a Educação Infantil. Brasília, 2006. Disponível em: <http://portal.mec.gov.br/seb/arquivos/pdf/Educinf/eduinfparqualvol1.pdf>

BRASIL. Presidência da República. Casa Civil. Subchefia para Assuntos Jurídicos. Decreto Nº 6.094, de 24 de abril de 2007. Dispõe sobre a implementação do Plano de Metas Compromisso Todos pela Educação, pela União Federal, em regime de colaboração com Municípios, Distrito Federal e Estados, e a participação das famílias e da comunidade.

BRASIL. MEC. Indicadores da Qualidade na Educação Infantil. Brasília, 2009. Disponível em: [http://portal.mec.gov.br/dmdocuments/indic\\_qualit\\_educ\\_infantil.pdf](http://portal.mec.gov.br/dmdocuments/indic_qualit_educ_infantil.pdf)

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. Base Nacional Comum Curricular. Brasília: MEC, 2018.

CAMPOS, Maria M. et al. A qualidade da educação infantil: um estudo em seis capitais

brasileiras. Cadernos de Pesquisa, São Paulo, v. 41, n. 142, p. 20-54, abr. 2011.

DAHLBERG, Gunilla; MOSS, Peter; PENCE, Alan. Beyond quality in early childhood education and care: postmodern perspectives. Londres: Falmer, 1999.

ESTEBAN, Maria Tereza. A avaliação no cotidiano escolar. In: Avaliação, Uma prática em busca de novos sentidos, 1999.



GIMENO SACRISTÁN, J. A avaliação no ensino. In: \_\_\_\_\_; PÉREZ GÓMEZ, A. I. Compreender e transformar o ensino. 4. ed. Tradução de Ernani F. da Fonseca Rosa. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 1998. p. 295-351.

MACHADO, C.; MUNHOZ, Alavarser. Avaliação interna no contexto das avaliações externas: desafios para a gestão escolar. (Univás/Gepave) – cristiane13machado@yahoo.com.br Ocimar Munhoz Alavarse (Feusp/Gepave) – ocimar@usp.br São Paulo (SP). Secretaria Municipal de Educação. Diretoria de Orientação Técnica. Indicadores de Qualidade da Educação Infantil Paulistana. – São Paulo : SME / DOT, 2016. 72p. : il. Disponível em: <https://educacao.sme.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/wp-content/uploads/Portals/1/Files/25101.pdf>

SME/SP. Secretaria Municipal de São Paulo. Diretoria de Orientação Técnica. Indicadores de Qualidade da Educação Infantil Paulistana. 2016.

VIANNA, H. M. Fundamentos de um programa de avaliação educacional. Brasília: Liber Livro, 2005.

WEBER, S. Relações entre esferas governamentais na educação e PDE: o que muda? Cadernos de Pesquisa, São Paulo, v. 38, n. 134, p. 305-318, maio/ago. 2008.