## PSYCHOLOGIST'S PERFORMANCE IN ELEMENTATRY SCHOOL: WORK MODELS

## A ATUAÇÃO DO PSICÓLOGO NA ESCOLA DE ENSINO FUNDAMENTAL: MODALIDADES DE TRABALHO

# EL DESEMPEÑO DEL PSICÓLOGO EN LA ESCUELA DE EDUCACIÓN FUNDAMENTAL: MODALIDADES DE TRABAJO

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ABSTRACT: A psychologist in the school context facilitates possibilities, especially in elementary school. Given this, the objective of this study was to investigate the performance of the psychologist in elementary school, punctuating the modalities of work that are being performed. A systematic review was made to search the databases Virtual Health Library, PubMed Central, Scielo, Directory of Open Access Journals and Directory of Open Access Repositories. Keywords: psychology, school, experience report. Thus, eight articles were analyzed, considering the characteristics of the participants and the modalities of interventions, as well as the results from these works. The amount of work found marks a weakening of experience reports of psychology professionals, and this modality of work ends up being little valued by the scientific community. It is suggested that the construction of experience reports be made for the knowledge on interventions of psychology professionals contribute further development of psychological practices in the school context.

**KEYWORDS**: Educational psychology. School. Interventions. Systematic review.

RESUMO: Um psicólogo no contexto escolar é facilitador de possibilidades, especialmente no Ensino Fundamental. Diante isso, o objetivo desse estudo foi de investigar a atuação do psicólogo na escola de ensino fundamental, pontuando as modalidades de trabalho que estão sendo executadas atualmente. Realizou-se uma revisão sistemática contemplando uma busca nas bases de dados Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde, PubMed Central, Scielo, Directory of Open Access Journals e Directory of Open Access Repositories. Foram analisados oito artigos, considerando as características dos participantes e as modalidades de intervenções, bem como os resultados desses trabalhos. A quantidade de trabalhos encontrados demarca uma fragilização de relatos de experiência dos profissionais da psicologia, sendo que essa modalidade de trabalho é pouco valorizada pela comunidade científica. Sugere-se que sejam desenvolvidos trabalhos na modalidade de relatos de experiência para a divulgação do conhecimento sobre intervenções de profissionais da psicologia e desenvolvimento das práticas psicológicas em contexto escolar.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Psicologia educacional. Escola. Intervenções. Revisão sistemática.

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RESUMEN: Un psicólogo escolar es un facilitador de posibilidades, especialmente en la escuela primaria. Ante esto, el objetivo de este estudio fue investigar el papel del psicólogo en la escuela primaria, puntuando los tipos de trabajo que se realizan actualmente. Se realizó una revisión sistemática contemplando una búsqueda en la Biblioteca Virtual en Salud, PubMed Central, Scielo, el Directorio de Revistas de Acceso Abierto y el Directorio de bases de datos de Repositorios de Acceso Abierto. Se analizaron ocho artículos, considerando las características de los participantes y las modalidades de las intervenciones, así como los resultados de estos trabajos. La cantidad de trabajo encontrado marca un debilitamiento de los informes de experiencia de profesionales en psicología, y este tipo de trabajo es poco valorado por la comunidad científica. Se sugiere que el trabajo se desarrolle en forma de informes de experiencia para la difusión del conocimiento de las intervenciones por parte de profesionales en psicología y el desarrollo de prácticas psicológicas en el contexto escolar.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Psicología Educacional. Colegio. Intervenciones. Revisión sistemática.

### Introduction

The role of the psychologist in the field of education can be presented as recent in Brazil. Psychology bears the mark of clinical practice, while, on the other hand, there are movements by the Federal Council of Psychology (CFP) so that the position of psychologist is mandatory in public schools in the country. The justification is that the psychologist working in a school environment will promote mental health, consequently mitigating potential risks that may emerge in adulthood.

The psychologist in the education scenario was characterized for a long time in adjusting students to the model of school and society, as well as helping students who had learning and behavior problems (EVANGELISTA; AMARAL, 2017; BARBOSA; MARINHO-ARAÚJO, 2010; OLIVEIRA; MARINHO-ARAÚJO, 2009, VALLE, 2003). Currently, the participation of the psychologist in the school, presents a posture more around preventive and relational performance, valuing all school agents and their mental health (OLIVEIRA; MARINHO-ARAÚJO, 2009). In this way, the school psychologist contributes to the valorization of human beings who work in the same place, something considered as an independent performance of the consolidated clinical practice (BARBOSA; MARINHO-ARAÚJO, 2010).

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Considering that the school space consists of students, teachers, families, employees, the management team and the community in which it is inserted, some difficulties for the psychologist's insertion in the school environment are due to the lack of knowledge of the effective work of this professional. There is still the clinical mark of the psychologist, and the professional is not recognized as a facilitator of interpersonal relationships between these school agents, as well as in the teaching-learning relationship. The psychologist who will work in this environment, then, should create space to listen to the demands that emerge in school and education as a whole and to think of ways to deal with these demands. This favors reflection within the school, with all agents so that one can work with these relationships and paradigms (VALLE, 2003).

In a bibliographic review on school health in Latin America, Casemiro, Fonseca and Secco (2014) discussed the focus on disease, screening and prevention, also elucidating that the direction to health promotion has driven changes. Still, important findings in reference to the quantity of publications, showing Brazil as the country that produced more articles on the topic, compared to the countries of Latin America. To solve the deficits in relation to health, the authors articulate about the importance of interdisciplinary work, development of public policies and focus on health promotion in school environments, involving the school community and several professionals working in the health area. Likewise, Valle (2003) agrees that health at school must be applied involving different knowledge, articulating with other competences to the detriment of the ethics of social transformation and development of mental health.

Among examples of the work possibilities of a psychologist working at the elementary school, Brazilian studies refer: the fight against bullying and the management of interpersonal conflicts (SANTOS, 2015), the promotion of health and the development of social skills (GUIMARÃES; AERTS; CÂMARA, 2013), academic performance and relationship with social development (CIA; COSTA, 2012), institutional psychology at school and power relationships (QUEVEDO; MAGGI, 2018), school inclusion of children with autism and intellectual disabilities (BENITEZ; DOMENICONI, 2018), sex education in a school context (MOURA; PACHECO; DIETRICH; ZANELLA, 2011), the practices of school psychologists with public school teachers (AQUINO; LINS; CAVALCANTE; GOMES, 2015), among many others topics that can be addressed by a psychologist who works at school.

Within this context of the psychologist's possibility of acting at school, it is necessary to reflect on professional practices and work modalities feasible in the school environment. The choice for Elementary Education was because it comprises early school years, that is, children in cognitive, social and biological development, and the school favors this development, especially in the cognitive (learning) and social (relationship between peers and with teachers), management and other school agents). Thus, the objective of this study was to investigate the role of the psychologist in the elementary school, punctuating the types of work that are currently being performed.

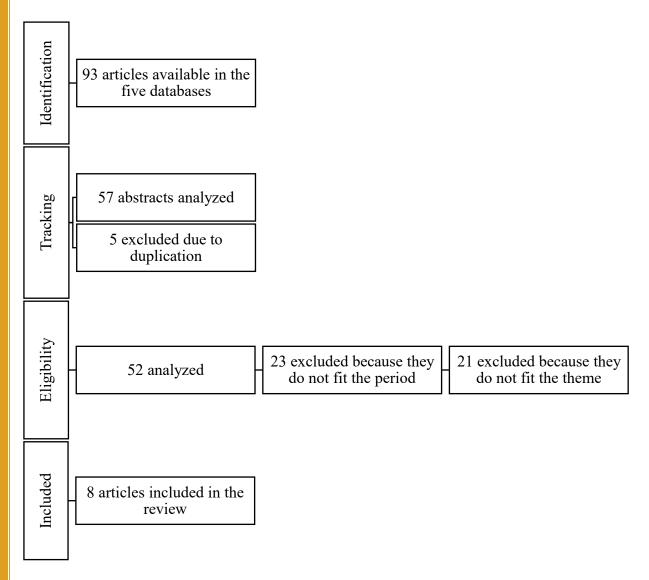
## Method

This is a systematic review of the literature. A search was carried out in the databases *Biblioteca Virtual em Saúde (BVS)*, *PubMed Central (PMC)*, *Scielo*, *Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)* and *Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR)*, being considered the following descriptors: *psicologia* (psychology), *escola* (school), *relato de experiência* (experience report), using advanced Boolean research resources with the AND resource in the cross between descriptors. The inclusion criteria were papers published in Portuguese and English, covering the period between 2014 and 2019, which included reports of experience of psychologists working in elementary schools. After the search, the abstracts of the articles were read, and for the reporting and analysis of the items, the recommendations of PRISMA (Main Items for Reporting Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyzes), by Moher *et al.* (2009).

#### Results

The initial search for the articles evoked 93 results in the five databases searched, being: 47 files in the BVS, two in the PMC, 14 in the Scielo, 30 in the DOAJ and zero in the OpenDOAR. In view of these results, 57 abstracts were analyzed and five were excluded due to duplication. Thus, of the 52 abstracts, 23 articles were excluded because they did not fit the time period used as an inclusion criterion for this study (2014-2019), as well as another 21 were excluded because they did not fit the proposed theme for this review. Thus, eight articles remained, which comprise the sample of this systematic review. The process of searching, selecting and distributing articles can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Flowchart of search, selection and distribution of articles



Source: Devised by the author

The articles included for this review were organized in Table 1, with names of the authors and the title of each work.

**Table 1** – Articles included in the systematic review

Authors	Title
	A construção de práticas críticas em espaços de formação
BULHÕES (2018)	do/a psicólogo/a escolar (The construction of critical
	practices in formative spaces for the school psychologist)
MIURA et al. (2018)	O ambiente escolar como espaço potencial para adolescente:
	relato de experiência (The school environment as a potential
	space for adolescents: an experience report)

OLIVEIRA; TAVEIRA; NEVES (2014)	Sensibilizar professores para o desenvolvimento de carreira dos alunos: Relato de uma experiência (Sensitize teachers to students' career development An experience report)
PERINI et al. (2016)	Relato de experiência sobre a reflexão da conduta passiva em ambiente escolar (Experience report on the reflection of passive conduct in the school environment)
QUEVEDO; CONTE (2017)	Projeto defesa à vida: a psicologia na escola de ensino fundamental (Defense of life project: psychology in elementary school)
ROSE; BONDIOLI; AFONSO; GONÇALVES; PREZENSZKY (2016)	Práticas educativas inovadoras na formação do psicólogo escolar: uma experiência com aprendizagem cooperative (Innovative educational practices in the formation of the school psychologist: an experience with cooperative learning)
SAVEGNAGO; FARAJ; ARPINI; SIQUEIRA (2015)	Oficinas com meninas em uma escola aberta: espaço de diálogo, reflexão e reconhecimento da singularidade (Workshops with girls in an open school: space for dialogue, reflection and recognition of uniqueness)
SILVA; GANDA (2019)	Intervenção em psicologia escolar: relato de experiência com crianças de um projeto de educação integral (Intervention in school psychology: an experience report with children from an integral education project)

Source: Devised by the author

All articles in this sample were written in Portuguese, and only the study by Oliveira *et al.* (2014) was carried out in Portugal, the rest was composed of studies with the Brazilian population (BULHÕES, 2018; MIURA *et al.*, 2018; PERINI *et al.*, 2016; QUEVEDO; CONTE, 2017; ROSE, *et al.*, 2016; SAVEGNAGO, *et al.*, 2015; SILVA; GANDA, 2019). All studies were described using the experience reporting methodology, most of which were carried out by interns from the Psychology course (BULHÕES, 2018; MIURA *et al.*, 2018; QUEVEDO; CONTE, 2017; PERINI *et al.*, 2016; ROSE, *et al.*, 2016; SILVA; GANDA, 2019). Only one work was carried out entirely by Psychologists (OLIVEIRA, *et al.*, 2014) and another was carried out by academics and professionals with formation in Psychology, working together (SAVEGNAGO, *et al.*, 2015).

Regarding the participants of the selected studies and interventions carried out, Bulhões (2018) performed an intervention in the period of 10 months with three children from the 1<sup>st</sup> year of Elementary Education, referred by the school with a school complaint (learning difficulties), which were also accessed by families, from fortnightly home visits, meetings with the children's teacher and observation in the classroom. Quevedo and Conte (2017) carry out the intervention over a period of one year with elementary school students, in group mode, being a reflective group of 14 girls aged between 13 and 16 years old, a reflective group of 10

boys aged between 13 and 15 years and another group with six adolescents of both sexes aged between 13 and 15 years. The themes addressed in the groups were sexuality, bullying, aggression, social skills, friendships, interpersonal and family relationships, school, among others. In addition to these groups, a parents' meeting was held, in which a psychoeducative posture on the children's behaviors and on how the parents themselves experienced their own adolescence phase was approached. Regarding the individual counseling carried out with the students, a listening space was highlighted to meet specific demands, the main emerging demand being related to drug use.

The intervention of Rose *et al.* (2016) was carried out with students from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle of Elementary Education (6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> years), with a total participation of 140 students. The interventions were in the form of groups for classes with low academic performance, difficulty adapting to the school context and low motivation for academic activities. In this study, the topics of interest were sexuality in adolescence, preservation of the environment, and risk factors for drug use. Silva and Ganda (2019) intervened with 14 children between 8 and 10 years of age, who are studying between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year of Elementary School. In the ninemonth period, observations were made, followed by the practice of activities and dynamics with groups of children, addressing topics such as cooperation and inappropriate behaviors and social vulnerability at school. Miura *et al.* (2018) intervened with 26 students enrolled in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of elementary school with an average of 11 years old, using the format of seven workshops of 60 minutes each. Drawings, storytelling, videos, collages and dynamics were used, prioritizing playful instruments to work on the following themes: adolescence, teenage pregnancy, sexual abuse and bullying.

Still, the work by Savegnago *et al.* (2015), addressed an intervention carried out with girls from 12 to 17 years old in an institution that works as an open school. During a period of one year, workshops were held every two weeks, lasting 1 hour and 30 minutes each meeting. The workshops resulted from the use of playful and audiovisual materials, as well as group dynamics, addressing topics such as family relationships, violence, sexuality, especially teenage pregnancy, since there were girls with this profile, and focusing on life projects for these teenagers.

On the other hand, authors like Oliveira *et al.* (2014), carried out a 90-minute intervention with 18 teachers of Portuguese basic education (2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycles). This intervention aimed to promote, with teachers, positive attitudes about the future, to stimulate cooperative work in the school community and to bring the school closer to work contexts. The session aimed to: clarify the concept of career development for teachers; make these

professionals aware of students' career development; and to encourage the conduct of activities with teachers to promote students' career development. Perini *et al.* (2016), carried out their intervention with 15 teachers and 20 students from the 9<sup>th</sup> year of a public elementary school. 45-minute weekly meetings were held with the students. Group meetings were held with the teachers, in which various subjects requested by the participants were discussed, promoting a space for problematizing their questions.

Regarding the results of these interventions, Bulhões (2018) pointed out that the three children attended during the internship overcame the learning difficulties related to the appropriation of writing. Family members became more participative in the school life of children and the educational institution started to offer spaces for community participation in the school. Miura *et al.* (2018) demonstrated that the participants were committed to the activities and expressed their opinions regarding the topics covered. The realization of the proposal enabled access to a potentializing way of experiencing the school environment, as well as the themes that permeate their daily experiences. The authors describe positive results in each of the workshops held with different themes, providing different ways of experiencing their participation in the school. Quevedo and Conte (2017) mention that their work reverberated in aspects of mitigating difficulties, as well as promoting the psychological health of students and parents who were the target of the interventions. The article refers to positive results regarding interventions, especially regarding preserving the quality of life at school.

On the results of the works that intervened with teachers and directors, Perini *et al.* (2016) pointed out changes in the passive perspective of management to contemplate active attitudes in the face of school daily problems, giving new meaning to the institution's established models. The authors also mention that there was a good change in relation to direction and coordination, presenting a positive position for the solution of emerging problems. Oliveira *et al.* (2014) pointed out as results the valuation of the teachers 'professional experiences, pointing out the need to deepen practices that promote career development for the school's students, providing reflections about the teachers' own careers.

The authors Savegnago *et al.* (2015) pointed out positive results, in which the workshops were reflective moments of the teenagers' present living conditions, as well as thinking about plans for the future, with the implementation of thinking about life projects. The authors state that actions like this enable enlightening adolescents to think about building healthy plans that involve emotional growth. The interventions carried out also allow a good connection with the coordinators of the groups and the adolescents, which favored the exchange of experiences and

the necessary space to work on important themes marked by an unstable period of adolescence and conflicting family and social life.

The study by Rose *et al.* (2016) pointed out significant positive results, such as a good interaction between affective bonds with students and group coordinators. Working with social skills, which are necessary for the development of groups, as well as in learning cooperation for the success of the group. It is noteworthy that there was encouragement for everyone to participate in the group, listen to colleagues, resolve conflicts, wait for the turn to speak, for example. The group was motivated by the feedbacks, which contributed to the commitment and learning of all. The authors also discuss the importance of the school as a space for social and academic development, and that these experiences favor healthy and strategic experiences for life as a whole. Even so, an important point highlighted in this study, some adolescents were more favored by the interventions while others will need more opportunities to improve skills for a better result.

On the other hand, Silva and Ganda (2019) only mentioned results in relation to the intern's development, not developing in what the interventions performed contributed to the school and to the different school actors. It is important to highlight the contributions of this intervention, aiming to contribute with other interns and professionals who work at the school. However, it is understood that the objective of the article was to highlight the development of the intern at that time.

## Discussion

The objective of this systematic review was to investigate the role of the psychologist in the elementary school, punctuating the types of work that are currently being performed. According to the results, Quevedo and Conte (2017) and Miura *et al.* (2018), presented a work with group interventions aimed at emotional and psychoeducational development with students, relating, in both studies, pertinent themes of adolescence, such as sexuality, bullying, interpersonal relationships and social skills. Still, both studies reitered positive results for the students and for the functioning of the school.

Given these possibilities of work, the need for this professional working at school is perceived, punctuating a space for healthy emotional development. Still, it is highlighted the importance that the interventions are described in depth, pointing out materials that were used, dynamics, existing models of contents and theoretical basis that supports the dynamic

understanding of the Institution and the actors of the institution that were the target of interventions (students, teachers, staff, management team, family).

The articles used in this systematic review reflect a detailed description of the interventions, as well as those who were the target of the intervention and who coordinated the activities in schools. It becomes valuable to highlight the formation of professionals involved in the creation of activities and dynamics, in the choice of materials and how the target audience was inserted in the activities, their participation or difficulties resulting from the process.

Being able to share the positive and negative points of the acceptance process within the institution, as well as the intervention itself, values the work of the psychology professional, since there is not always a good acceptance on the part of the Institution or those who will receive the interventions. There may be conflicts and resistance, points that must be argued according to the literature and the possibilities within the institution. Each item and theme described in the articles that made up this review serve as a basis for other professionals, whether interns or graduates, to identify themselves so that the next articles that are written will make use of the knowledge that these sources can provide to psychologists who are going to work at the Elementary School.

## **Final considerations**

The possibilities of the psychologist's performance in the elementary school are diverse. However, considering the low production of articles with the analyzed theme, a research niche is still to be developed. Only one of the articles was carried out with professionals with formation in Psychology, the others being reports of internship experience of Psychology students. A possible hypothesis about this result would be that professionals lose interest in the publication of experience reports, since they turn to the practice itself or to research involving a more rigorous methodology, such as empirical research. A possible limitation, the experience reporting methodology is little valued in nationally published journals, and it is difficult to accept for publication of this type of study. In this way, professionals feel unmotivated to carry out this type of publication.

Among the limitations of this study, the number of articles included stands out, as well as the only way to access the databases was in its free form, that is, no paid databases were used and these could contain a larger number of results. In addition, all the articles included were written in Portuguese, which limits a discussion based on cultural differences in relation to performance, interventions, demands and needs between one country or another. It should also

be noted that limiting research in the last five years also generates a restriction on the number of publications, which could be in greater number if the proposal were, for example, to include articles from the last ten years.

It is suggested for future research related to the theme, that the limitations arising from this study be highlighted, carrying out reviews that contemplate aspects that it did not intend to contemplate. In addition, it is suggested that psychologists who work in elementary schools can write their work, so that the development of this work can be accessed by other professionals interested in the same area. The scientific contribution of experience reports is of great value for professionals, students and people who are interested in knowing the psychologist's work practice in an educational context.

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