

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF MARÍLIA (SAREM): USAGE OF RESULTS IN EDUCATIONAL POLICY

SISTEMA DE AVALIAÇÃO DO RENDIMENTO ESCOLAR DO MUNICÍPIO DE MARÍLIA (SAREM): USO DOS RESULTADOS NA POLÍTICA EDUCACIONAL

SISTEMA DE EVALUACIÓN DE INGRESOS ESCOLARES DEL MUNICIPIO DE MARILIA (SAREM): USO DE RESULTADOS EN POLÍTICA EDUCATIVA

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ABSTRACT: Study reports that at the state level, of the 27 Brazilian states, 20 already have their own evaluation systems and 1573 municipalities also have their own evaluation systems, most of which were created in 2005. In 2004, the municipality of Marília created its own evaluation system. The aim of this study is to identify the possible uses of SAREM results in the formulation and implementation of educational policy in the municipality. The research was developed in a qualitative approach and the methodology used bibliographic and documentary research. As a result, we present that SAREM have been guiding the management developed in schools, influencing the elaboration of the pedagogical project, directing the work of the teacher and spreading a restricted notion of quality to the public school, as it had practically considered the performance of students in large scale assessments as a quality indicator of the work developed by the school.

KEYWORDS: Educational evaluation. Large scale assessment. SAREM. Educational management. Continuing education.

RESUMO: Estudo informa que no âmbito estadual, dos 27 estados brasileiros, 20 já possuem sistemas próprios de avaliação e 1573 municípios já têm também os seus sistemas de avaliação, sendo a maior parte criado a partir de 2005. Em 2004 o município de Marília criou o seu sistema próprio de avaliação. O objetivo deste estudo é identificar os possíveis usos dos resultados do SAREM na formulação e implementação da política educacional no município. A pesquisa foi desenvolvida em uma abordagem qualitativa e a metodologia utilizou as pesquisas bibliográfica e documental. Como resultados apresentamos que o SAREM vêm orientando a gestão desenvolvida nas escolas, influenciando a elaboração do projeto pedagógico, direcionando o trabalho do professor e difundindo uma noção restrita de qualidade para a escola pública, pois considera praticamente o desempenho dos estudantes nas avaliações de larga escala como indicador de qualidade do trabalho desenvolvido pela escola.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Avaliação educacional. Avaliação de larga escala. SAREM. Gestão educacional. Formação continuada.

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RESUMEN: *El estudio informa que a nivel estatal, de los 27 estados brasileños, 20 ya tienen sus propios sistemas de evaluación y 1573 municipios también tienen sus propios sistemas de evaluación, la mayoría de los cuales fueron creados en 2005. En 2004, el municipio de Marília creó su propio propio sistema de evaluación. El objetivo de este estudio es identificar los posibles usos de los resultados del SAREM en la formulación e implementación de la política educativa en el municipio. La investigación se desarrolló con un enfoque cualitativo y la metodología utilizó la investigación bibliográfica y documental. Como resultado, presentamos que SAREM ha venido orientando la gestión desarrollada en las escuelas, incidiendo en la elaboración del proyecto pedagógico, dirigiendo el trabajo del docente y difundiendo una noción restringida de calidad a la escuela pública, ya que prácticamente había considerado el desempeño de los estudiantes en evaluaciones de gran escala como indicador de calidad del trabajo desarrollado por la escuela.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Evaluación educativa. Evaluación a gran escala. SAREM. Gestión Educativa. Educación Continua.*

Introduction

This study focuses on the large-scale evaluation called the Marília Municipal School Evaluation System (SAREM, Portuguese initials). According to Werle (2010):

large-scale assessment is a broad and extensive procedure, involving different types of assessment, carried out by agencies recognized for their technical specialization in tests and measures, covering an education system, that is, all schools of a certain level or series of this system, even if using sampling procedures, most of the time focused predominantly on student learning and with the purpose of obtaining results generalizable to the system. Therefore, large-scale assessment is always an assessment external to school institutions. (WERLE, 2010, p. 22, our translation).

Although a pilot experiment in large-scale assessment took place in the 1980s, the implementation of the national education assessment system in Brazil began in the following decade. The aim of this study is to identify the possible uses of the results of (SAREM) in the formulation and implementation of educational policy in the municipality of Marília.

The research was developed in a qualitative approach and the methodology will use bibliographic and documentary research. To support the theoretical deepening, we used the bibliographic research that consisted of the survey, selection and reading of works and articles contained in repositories of national journals (SciELO) and production of dissertations and theses at the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD).

For the survey of the educational policy of the municipality of Marília, the documentary research of the Laws of the Municipal Education Plans (PNE-2005/2015), PNE 2015-2025, Final Report of Monitoring and Evaluation of the Municipal Evaluation Plan - PME 1º

Biennium (2016-2017) - was used, among other documents made available on SAREM. We also use the National Education Plan (PNE 2014-2024), that is, Law 13,005/2014. Documentary research was also used to obtain enrollment data for the municipality on the website of the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP) in the 2019 Synopsis Statistical document.

The interpretative analysis was supported by theoretical studies and data obtained about educational evaluation policies. This analysis was developed in an approach that presents, among others, the characteristics of historicity and contextualization, which indicate that knowledge is historical and determined, occurs in the set of social relations and needs to be placed and analyzed in time and space in that are built.

To develop this work, we started with educational reforms in the 1990s, then the development of large-scale assessment in the country, and then, the implementation of (SAREM) in the municipality of Marília and the discussion of the use of its results.

The Context of Educational Reforms in the 1990s

We seek in this topic to explain the context in which the educational reforms of the 1990s were being outlined. The profound changes that have occurred in the world of work, bring new challenges to education. Capitalism experiences a new pattern of capital accumulation resulting from the globalization of the economy and the productive restructuring that, in turn, determine new forms of relationship between the State and Society. These new forms of relationship between the State and Society and its consequences for education, are identified in Brazil, particularly from the government of Fernando Henrique Cardoso (FHC).

In the administration of the president (FHC) the State Reform took place (MARE, 1995) and the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB), Law no. 9,394/96, and other complementary legislation that enabled the creation of national systems of evaluation were approved.

We also explain that the government of (FHC), implemented reforms in the State apparatus and in the current policies, with the objective of modernizing the country, reducing the Brazil cost, overcoming the economic crisis and establishing the conditions for the insertion of the country in the globalized economy. According to Aguiar (2019), these reforms reached the public and private spheres, with the privatization of state companies and the opening of the economy and imports.

We highlight the author's analysis of the changes promoted in the educational area:

the creation of the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Teaching (FUNDEF), the implementation of the Basic Education Assessment System (SAEB), the curricular reform with the design of the National Curriculum Parameters (PCNs), the improvement of information from the Educational Census and the approval of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (AGUIAR, 2019, p. 3, our translation).

We also bring the contribution of Pinto (2002), who, when assessing the financing of education in the management of (FHC), states that “the government's main guideline [...] was that the existing resources are sufficient, just needing to optimize its use” (PINTO, 2002, p. 108, our translation). Evidence of the impacts on the country's capacity to implement state policies that guarantee social rights, particularly the right to education, in a context of resource constraints and their “optimization”. In current administrative language, “optimization” means doing more with less resources available. Arelaro (2005) emphasizes how optimization occurs, “the traditional way of optimizing resources in the area of education is well known, that is, the minimum number of students in the classroom is increased, keeping the same number of teachers - this alternative is in full use in Brazil” (ARELARO, 2005, p. 1052, our translation).

In our analysis, with the increase, in this period, of enrollments in Elementary School due to the creation of Bolsa Escola (currently Bolsa Família), and with the decrease of resources in Elementary Education in the government of FHC, there was a deepening of the precariousness of the offer of this stage education. I retrieve a study by Arelaro (2005) that confirms our statement:

FUNDEF, called the “revolutionary” fund in terms of social justice - an “almost socialist” proposal, as the Minister of Education of the time liked to say -, managed to be a peculiar fund, because, in addition to competent marketing about its advantages, **the federal government spent, in the period from 1998 to 2002, the lowest percentages of the decade in elementary education.** The value established in 1997, as an annual expense/student, was R\$ 300.00, reaching the value of R\$ 418.00, for the first four grades, in 2002, the last year of the second FHC Government (1999/2002) , this value lagged by about 100% if the criteria established for its calculation were obeyed, under the terms of Law no. 9,424 (ARELARO, 2005, p. 1051-1052, author's highlights, our translation)

Despite this deepening of the precariousness of the provision of basic education, Horta Neto (2015) addresses the emphasis on the quality of public services provided, identified in the Master Plan for State Reform, stating that:

this Plan indicates some guidelines that would decisively influence the Brazilian educational process. Among them, we can mention decentralization, as a new vision for the management of public institutions, guided by the

principle of efficiency, autonomy and social participation; the latter considered as a factor of “improving quality and efficiency in the provision of public services” (BRASIL/MARE, 1995a, p.5) Another issue that gains relevance in the Plan is the quality of services provided by the State (HORTA NETO, 2015, p. 102, our translation).

The author adds that the Master Plan for State Reform also proposes the implementation of an evaluation system, based on the construction of performance indicators.

Regarding educational reforms, Torres (2001), taking stock of the ten years of the Education for All Conference held in Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990, analyzes that:

The uniformity of educational policy on a global scale is linked to the growing weight of international organizations in the design and implementation of educational policy in developing countries. This is particularly true for the World Bank, the strongest partner in Education for All, who led the educational landscape in the 1990s (TORRES, 2001, p. 79, our translation).

According to the aforementioned author, the Education for All Conference recommended an emphasis on the evaluation of school performance and the implementation of national systems for evaluating results, in which the World Bank was its main sponsor. After addressing the context of educational reform in which we seek to emphasize the adoption of neoliberal policy in the governments of (FHC) and the deepening of the precariousness of the provision of basic education, we now present the implementation of the National Evaluation System that was recommended by the Conference of Education for All, among other events and highlighted in the State Reform (MARE, 1995).

The implantation of the National Evaluation System in Brazil

For Bonamino and Franco (2015), the origin of the Basic Education Assessment System (SAEB)

It relates to the demands of the World Bank (WB) regarding the need to develop a system for assessing the impact of the Project, Education segment, under the VI Agreement MEC/International Bank for Reconstruction and Development - IBRD (BRASIL, 1988). Such demand, combined with the interest of MEC in implementing a broad system of education evaluation, led to initiatives that resulted in the creation of the national system of Evaluation of Public Education of 1st Degree - SAEP (BONAMINO; FRANCO, 2015, p. 110, our translation).

The authors cited inform that in 1988, there was a pilot application of SAEP in the states of Paraná and Rio Grande do Norte to test the pertinence and adequacy of the instruments and procedures. However, financial difficulties prevented the project from proceeding.

According to Bauer (2010), many of the evaluation programs were developed from 1995, when the V Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government approved the Cooperation Program for the Development of National Systems for the Evaluation of the Quality of Education in San Carlos de Bariloche.

The context of the development of systems assessment in Brazil is explained by Bonamino (2002):

in the late 1980s, the recognition of the lack of studies that more clearly showed the educational assistance offered to the population and its weight on the performance of students within the school system led to the first experiences of first grade evaluation. In the 1990s, the basic education evaluation system started to be inserted in a more complex set of interrelations, within which operate the deepening of the administrative, financial and pedagogical decentralization policies of education, a new legal arrangement and a series of curricular reforms (BONAMINO, 2002, p. 15-16, our translation).

For this author, the logic of the development of evaluation systems was based on the concern with the indexes and the quality of educational services and the need for an effective management of the resources available for education, valuing the information obtained through the application of tests to students to support decision-making in the educational area.

Therefore, the implementation of the national evaluation system was perfectly aligned with the new role of the evaluating or regulating state. The evaluations of educational programs and systems begin to exercise a function of control over educational services and accountability, both to the State and to society.

The study by Gatti (2015) also indicates the concern of the Ministry of Education with the first results of the evaluation processes carried out in the late 1980s, as they were “far below expectations”. It is worth reiterating the author's analysis that:

the evaluations of school performance carried out between 1988-1991 brought the impact of low average results, far below what was expected, which had repercussions both in the Ministry, in the Education Departments and in the media, creating interest in the public institutions for the evaluation processes. [...] These first comprehensive studies of students and schools served as a basis for the implementation of the SAEB - System of Assessment of Brazilian Education (GATTI, 2015, p. 44, our translation).

At the national level, the National System of Basic Education (SAEB) was created in 1990. A few years later, the National Course Exam (ENC) was created to evaluate higher education courses in 1996 (currently the National Student Performance Exam). In 1998, the

National High School Examination (ENEM) was also created. We emphasize that in this decade of 90, several Brazilian states created their evaluation systems.

Resuming large-scale assessments at the national level, we emphasize the creation of the National Assessment of School Achievement (ANRESC) in 2005, known as *Prova Brasil* through the dismemberment of SAEB.

The national assessment system initially sought a general diagnosis of education systems. Based on *Prova Brasil*, it sought to establish relationships with each of the schools participating in the network when disseminating their results.

After the creation of Prova Brasil in 2007, the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB, Portuguese initials) was created. This indicator weighs the results of Prova Brasil and the performance indicators captured by the school census (dropout, pass and fail). IDEB ranges from zero to ten, broken down by state and municipality and education and school networks. IDEB was created with the release of the Education Development Plan. This plan was launched concurrently with Decree No. 6,094/2007, which instituted the All Commitment for Education Goals Plan.

Machado and Alavarse (2014) explain their objective:

Based on the data generated by *Prova Brasil*, the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) was created in 2007, with the objective of being an indicator of the quality of education (FERNANDES, 2007). For public elementary education, the Ministry of Education (MEC) publishes, every two years, the IDEB obtained in Brazil, in the states, municipalities and schools obtained from the approval rates and the proficiencies of the students in *Prova Brasil*, within from a scale of 0 to 10. In addition, goals were set in 2007 to be achieved for each of these segments (MACHADO; ALAVARSE, 2014, p. 414-415, our translation).

For Leher (2014), the creation of IDEB was a victory for the business community that managed to place its agenda for education as a government policy. For the author:

[...] an important victory of this movement was the conviction of the Lula da Silva government to incorporate its agenda as government policy, which was carried out with the Education Development Plan/PDE (Decree 6,094/07, Law 12,695/12, law 13,005/14) which, not casually, was baptized by Haddad as “PDE: Commitment All for Education”. An important educational policy tool was conquered by the business community: the creation of IDEB. Now, not only does the evaluation system measure whether schools are on the “right path”, but they can impose goals and, thereby, interfere in the schools' planning itself, now marked by palpable, quantitative indices, as assessed by centralized evaluation. Schools and teachers have become hostages to indexes that empty the public sense of the school, reduce what is given to think (skills in Portuguese and mathematics, disregarding the other dimensions of human

formation), deepening educational apartheid between social classes (LEHER, 2014, p. 4, our translation).

Leher (2014) and Freitas (2007) denounce the creation of Prova Brasil with the ranking among schools and the concealment of social inequality with indicators such as IDEB. According to Freitas (2007, p. 966, our translation),

[...] the surprise in the matter of evaluating elementary education, at this moment, is due to the deepening of the liberal policies of the FHC era under the government of Luís Inácio Lula da Silva. Those who voted for it expected, already in the first term, a significant change of route. It did not happen. Now, we are witnessing its full conversion to the liberal proposals of “accountability” and privatization of the public. The *Prova Brasil* and the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) (FERNANDES, 2007b) are the tip of the iceberg of this same conception.

We also highlight that for Freitas (2007):

[...] the real limit to the universal improvement of school quality is the liberal meritocratic ideology itself. If the evaluation is placed at its service, then it will be limited to the measurement of merit and the concealment of social inequality in the form of 'neutral' indicators, such as the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) created by MEC (FREITAS, 2007, p. 971, our translation).

Although the authors cited criticize IDEB for the fact that this indicator does not include the socioeconomic level (NSE) in its composition, among other relevant aspects, we highlight that IDEB was adopted as a quality criterion for basic Brazilian education in the current PNE (2014-2024) in its goal 7. According to Law 13,005/2014, we reproduce goal 7:

to promote the quality of basic education in all stages and modalities, with the improvement of the school flow and of learning in order to reach the following national averages for IDEB: - initial grades of elementary school are 5.2; 5.5; 5.7 and 6.0 for the years 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021 (respectively); final grades of elementary school are 4.7; 5.0; 5.2 and 5.5 for the years 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021 (respectively); high school are 4.3; 4.7; 5.0 and 5.2 for the years 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021 (respectively) (BRASIL, 2014, our translation).

We also note that goal 7 was not discussed in the plenary sessions of the 2010 National Education Conference (CONAE) and the government incorporated it into the current PNE project. Bodião (2016, p. 343) reports that:

Also noteworthy is the inclusion of proposals that were not discussed during the conference process, such as: (i) goal 7, which institutes the implementation of IDEB, as an indicator of the evolution of the quality of Brazilian schools, (ii) the strategy 13.1, which proposes to deepen and improve SINAES and (iii)

strategy 13.2, which proposes to expand ENADE's coverage. Interestingly, the conference that had been convened to guide the construction of the National Articulated Education System, was used for the government to move forward, in large steps, in the institutional consolidation of a National Evaluation System (BODIÃO, 2016, p. 343, our translation).

We consider that Bodião (2016) sought to emphasize the fact that the establishment of IDEB as a national goal, was imposed by the government without its discussion and vote at the National Education Conference (CONAE) (2010). This report points out that goal 7 was incorporated into the PNE (2014-2024) without having been discussed and approved at the Conference. We also highlight that some research groups, such as the Laboratory of Descriptive Studies (LOED) of the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP), created by Professor Luiz Carlos de Freitas, who has been studying educational assessment for many years, understand that the assessment must be committed to other conceptions of education and school. Although the focus in this study is not IDEB, it was necessary this brief journey on the context of development of large-scale evaluation in Brazil and its consequences as the creation of *Prova Brasil* and IDEB, since, from them, we have the implementation of the accountability of the school and its professionals for the educational results obtained and the replication in the state and municipal systems of school performance evaluation systems. In view of the context presented for the implementation of the National Assessment System and the creation of IDEB, we will present in the next topic the Marília School Performance Assessment System (SAREM).

Marília School Performance Assessment System (SAREM)

According to Bauer *et al.* (2017) Brazilian states and municipalities have been implementing their own educational assessment systems. According to the authors cited:

[...] of the 27 Brazilian states, twenty already have their own assessment systems and 1,573 municipalities also have their own assessment systems, most of which have been created since 2005. The study cited also presents evidence of the consolidation of large-scale assessment as an educational management tool for municipalities (BAUER *et al.*, 2017, p. 3, our translation).

The author states that most municipal assessment systems were created after 2005. In the case of the Municipality of Marília, the Marília School Performance Assessment System (SAREM) was created in 2004. As of this year, the external assessment system is applied in the first semester to all students of the 4th grade of Elementary School with questions of Portuguese

and Mathematics. The Assessment is prepared and corrected by professionals from the Municipal Education Secretariat (SME, Portuguese initials).

However, the Municipality of Marília adhered to the process of Municipalization of Elementary Education only six years before the creation of SAREM. According to information from the Municipal Education Plan (2005-2015), from the incentive to expand the municipal networks through a State-Municipal educational partnership, Marília created its own Elementary School network in 1998.

Militão (2007) clarifies that the reasons for the adhesion of the municipalities of the Region of Marília to the Municipalization process of Elementary Education, was the transfer of funds made available by the creation of the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Elementary Education and the Valorization of Teaching (FUNDEF) created in 1996 by Constitutional Amendment 14/1996.

It is undeniable that the decision to municipalize elementary education in the Administrative Region of Marília, similar to what occurred in most municipalities in São Paulo, was clearly motivated by the predominantly economic approach, since a considerable part of local administrations assumes enrollment only after the creation and regulation of FUNDEF (MILITÃO, 2007, p. 116, our translation).

According to Freitas (2015) at the beginning of the municipalization process, the network had 08 elementary schools. The creation of its own network was facilitated by the fact that the municipality has 10 own buildings that were loaned to the state network and already functioning as elementary schools. At the time, the network had the capacity to serve 5,000 students. Currently, the Municipal Network has 20 schools that offer the initial years of elementary school, with 14 part-time schools and 06 full-time schools. It has 8,141 students (54.89%) enrolled and shares the offer of the initial years of Elementary School with the state network which has 2,791 students (18.82%) and the private network which has 3,898 students (26.29%) enrolled as data from the 2019 Statistical Synopsis (BRASIL, 2019).

After these clarifications about the municipalization process of the initial years of Elementary Education, we resume on the creation of SAREM in 2004. According to Freitas (2015, p. 73, our translation), “there is no legal document in the secretariat that would standardize the implementation of this evaluation in municipality's education system”.

The aforementioned author informs from a report by the Director of Management about what motivated the implementation of SAREM:

[...] we did not have an overview of the network, the pedagogical situation of our network, in terms of external evaluation. So, I had the idea and the secretary at the time accepted the idea. We started to build all the instruments for this evaluation and through this evaluation all the difficulties of the time were raised, this facilitated it. Some things were confirmed, others [...] there was not much that could be done, in pedagogical terms. So, I asked for a teacher-coordinator and started working with these coordinators, but I realized that even though we had a diagnosis by school, looking at the student portfolio, something more general was missing, systematized at the secretariat level. Then came the idea of SAREM - Marília School Performance Assessment System (DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT *apud* FREITAS, 2015, p. 72-73, our translation).

According to the Director of School Management mentioned, the purpose of SAREM is to evaluate the teaching and learning process developed in the school units of the Municipal Education Network of Marília and, based on its results, to propose actions aimed at correcting distortions (FREITAS, 2015).

One year after the implementation of SAREM, the municipality obtained an average of 5.4 in IDEB 2005, while the country average was 3.8. In the 2007 and 2009 IDEB editions, the municipality reached averages 5.6 and 6.4 respectively. While the national averages were 4.2 and 4.6 in the same period. This result obtained in the first editions of IDEB caused the municipality of Marília to be selected to participate, between the years 2009 and 2010, in a survey called “Good results from the Basic Education Development Index: an exploratory study of explanatory factors”.

According to the authors of the research: “the recognition that there is a tendency for municipalities to create their own evaluation proposals and that research on such initiatives is still scarce, was the factor that motivated the development of the study” (SOUSA; PIMENTA; MACHADO, 2012, p. 14, our translation).

Sousa, Pimenta and Machado (2012) also report that it was evident in this study, the interest of managers of municipal systems in monitoring the quality of education through the creation of their own proposals for evaluating the network, demonstrating the valuation of evaluation as an educational management tool.

The municipalities of the State of São Paulo that participated in this research were: Barrinha, Barueri, Brotas, Cajuru, Catanduva, Indaiatuba, Itanhaém, Jardinópolis, Lorena, Marília, Santa Bárbara D’Oeste, São José dos Campos, Porto Ferreira and Valparaíso. The authors inform how the data collection occurred.

The data were collected through interviews with the secretaries and former education secretaries, and/or advisors and technicians from the education networks. In some municipalities, information was also available on the

websites of the secretariats, as well as in documents produced by them on their evaluation systems (SOUSA; PIMENTA; MACHADO, 2012, p. 20, our translation).

The study shows that “the reasons that motivated the creation of the students' performance evaluation proposals, declared by the interviewees, coincide in the affirmation that this is a way for the municipality to have a diagnosis of the students' development” (SOUSA; PIMENTA; MACHADO, 2012, p. 22, our translation).

We supported the authors cited to demonstrate the alleged reason for the creation of the municipal system specifically in the municipality of Marília.

[...] it is an evaluation made [...] to indicate what the deficiencies of each school, each class and the network as a whole would be. Search, through the evaluation, where the knot is [...] and, from there, promote actions to improve the teaching-learning process. (Secretary of Education of Marília, interview on 06/11/2009 *apud* SOUSA; PIMENTA; MACHADO, 2012, p. 22-23, our translation).

Regarding the reference used for the construction of the tests, Freitas (2015) informs that the evaluation contemplates the two components of the curriculum that make up the common national base (Portuguese Language, involving comprehension and text production and Mathematics), in the same way as the other evaluations developed in the state of São Paulo and by the federation. The author also reports that since the first edition of SAREM, its elaboration is formulated based on descriptors.

In this regard, the research by Sousa, Pimenta and Machado (2012) considers that it is not possible to affirm, but that it is possible to assume, that the reference for the construction of the tests is the matrix of the System of Assessment of Basic Education (SAEB) from the data collected from the municipalities analyzed, including the municipality of Marília. The authors also point out that: “there is no evidence that methodological criteria are met in the construction of measurement instruments and in their application, which give them technical reliability” (SOUSA; PIMENTA; MACHADO, 2012, p. 26, our translation).

According to Bravo (2011) “the evaluation matrices of *Prova Brasil* are worked with teachers, said the secretary of education. The results of the national assessment and that carried out in the municipality are very similar, she added” (BRAVO, 2011, p. 11, our translation).

Regarding the treatment of SAREM data, Sousa, Pimenta and Machado (2012) clarify that:

the Marília Secretariat, after about a month of applying the tests, returns the results, in spreadsheets, by school, by grade, by class and by student.

Comparisons are not made between schools based on the Marília School Performance Assessment System (Sarem), explained the secretary's advisor, even though averages of results are produced per school. The treatment of the data includes a report prepared for each school, including an examination of each question, saying how many students got it right; how many made mistakes; and what were the errors (SOUSA; PIMENTA; MACHADO, 2012, p. 27, our translation).

We also seek support in Freitas (2015) to explain in detail the treatment of the data obtained from the SAREM results. According to the author,

the results referring to the evaluations (Text comprehension, Text production and Mathematics) are organized in specific worksheets, one worksheet with the results by school, another with the results of all schools and a table with the ranking of schools. The first two worksheets have basically the same format, however, the worksheet sent to the school presents the results by classroom. Thus, the data refer to the total number of students in the class, the total number of students who participated in the assessment, the total number of students with special needs, the name of the class teacher, the final class average, the school average and secretariat average. Regarding the evaluated aspects (descriptors), the number and percentage of correct answers for each item are presented. In a spreadsheet attached to the document, the school's average for the last years of the evaluation is presented, always referring to the average presented by the Secretariat (FREITAS, 2015, p. 75, our translation).

Freitas (2015) also informs that the Municipal Education Secretariat (SME) of Marília developed a proficiency scale that fits the student's level of learning according to the answers to standardized tests. The framing criteria used are: below basic, basic, adequate and advanced. It is worth mentioning that the São Paulo State School Performance Assessment System (SARESP) uses the same proficiency scale. The author adds that, based on the errors with the highest incidence, the Secretariat prepares the document called "Performance Analysis" that should be used as support material by pedagogical coordinators and teachers and that will be discussed in a meeting at the Time for Collective Studies (HEC).

In 2017 SAREM was modified and called the New SAREM. In preliminary contact, to request the approval of the collection of documents, the Advisor of the Municipal Secretary of Education informed that this year SAREM was applied to all years of Elementary School. However, the SAREM was corrected only in the 3rd year due to the change of directors. The SAREM team at the Secretariat is made up of six professionals (4 technical assistants and 02 teaching supervisors). The following documents were collected:

- "External Evaluation 2018 (SAREM) General Guidelines" which presents the general guidelines and duties for the School Director, Assistant Director and Applicant Teacher for the application of this year's SAREM, which was aimed at 4th grade students;

- Document “Assessing SAREM 2018” in which each school must assess SAREM 2018 in relation to: assessment instruments in the disciplines of Portuguese Language (Reading and Understanding Text and Text Production), Mathematics, Devolutive SAREM 2018; to the organization, regarding the application and suggestions for the next SAREM.

- Document "Guidelines for Correction of SAREM 2018" which contains thorough and detailed guidelines regarding the criteria for the correction of the applied test.

- “4th and 5th year Reinforcement Teachers Training Minutes” whose agenda included a reading of the text, the role of the reinforcement teacher, literacy, guidance on the class diary, organization of students' materials, the intervention plan (reinforcement), routine and didactic sequence.

- Minutes 1st Meeting “Tracking Literature in the Classroom” whose agenda included an opening with the book “*A última história antes de dormir*” (The last story before going to sleep), general guidelines, literature in the classroom and what is Reading?

- Document "Devolutive SAREM - 2018", the document has 10 pages and analyzes SAREM 2018 with positive and negative points of the assessment instruments: Reading, Text Production and Mathematics with detailed illustrations of some of the students' tests taken as a model. Also presents the post-SAREM reflections with the goals and actions established for the 4th year (2018) and 5th year/2019 with short-term goals (which should be resolved by the end of the 2018 term), medium-term goals (until the first semester of 2019) and long-term goals (until the second semester of 2019).

In 2019, the 16th edition of SAREM was applied and the Monitoring and Evaluation Report of the Municipal Education Plan (PME 2015-2025) was approved through Law 8,355 of 21 February 2019. In this document it reaffirms the defined goal of the PME “to implement annually the SAREM (School Performance Evaluation System of the Municipality of Marília in the fourth years of elementary school)” (MARÍLIA, 2019, p. 27, our translation), indicating the maintenance of SAREM as a proper evaluation tool of the Municipal Education Network of Marília.

From what we could learn about the uses of SAREM results in the formulation and implementation of educational policy in the municipality of Marília, this evaluation has been guiding the management developed in schools, influencing the elaboration of the pedagogical project and directing the teacher's work.

Freitas' study (2015) presents an interview made with teachers in which the following question was asked: In your opinion, has SAREM influenced school management in setting goals and proposing projects? Why? Like?

Yes, building our pedagogical standard (P3-SCHOOL A).

Yes, because after analyzing the results of Sarem, decisions are made according to the results obtained (P4-SCHOOL B).

Yes, because this analysis of data from the Sarem results helps in decision making and points to a “north”. In this way, activities, projects and goals are directed with the same purpose (P5-SCHOOL B).

Yes, because we are committed to our good performance in the assessment (P6-SCHOOL B) (P3-SCHOOL A, P4, P5, P6 SCHOOL B apud FREITAS, 2015, p. 93, our translation).

According to the aforementioned author, the Pedagogical Political Projects (PPP) of the schools surveyed are explicit in pointing SAREM as a determinant in its elaboration, focusing on the goals established for Portuguese and Mathematics. There are indications that emphasize curriculum development guided to meet the external evaluation developed by SME.

Regarding the direction of the teacher's work, Freitas (2015) states that:

From the analysis of the data, we can identify that 87.5% of the teachers indicate that they have used the SAREM results in their pedagogical practice, that they have directed their work to meet the purposes of this assessment and claim that the Sarem descriptors agree with the Curricular Proposal of the municipality. 75% of respondents say that SAREM guides their teaching work, 100% of teachers do not see SAREM as a process that hinders their practice and 62.5% of the answers are affirmative regarding the influence of SAREM in the elaboration of the school curriculum (FREITAS, 2015, p. 100, our translation).

Freitas (2015) also considers that the interviewees' reports confirm these implications in the management, in the PPP and in the direction of the teacher's work and “it appear that the process reverberates in the school units, generating tension and discomfort in the managers and teachers who are concerned with presenting/maintain a satisfactory result” (FREITAS, 2015, p. 111, our translation).

In addition to directing the work of the teacher pointed out by Freitas (2015), the study by Mazzini (2017), entitled “*A Precarização do Trabalho das Professoras da rede Municipal de Marília/SP*” (The Precarious Work of Teachers from the Municipal network of Marília/SP), presents the overload of teaching work after the municipalization of elementary education and the partnership carried out by the municipality with the Ayrton Sena Institute (IAS) between 2001 and 2004 with the implementation of the Champion School Program. According to the author, the Program's principle is centered on management and large-scale evaluations as instruments to promote effective schools, as well as actions that optimize financial and human resources.

in the network under study, a series of actions prepared by the IAS was assigned to teachers, principals and the Municipal Secretariat of Education that would be responsible for carrying it out. Everything started with an Annual Goals Plan, similar to the protocols of companies affiliated to Total Quality management, analyzed in chapter I, composed of rationalization and division of labor strategies, organized as follows: **a) definition of goals to be achieved by each segment involved; b) description of actions to be taken in order to achieve the stipulated goals; c) evaluation of the results achieved, usually obtained through external evaluations (in the case of verifying student performance)** and analysis of the data produced daily by the agencies involved, including teachers, from an arsenal of instruments proposed by the IAS; d) resumption and correction of initial actions and redesign of initial goals (MAZZINI, 2017, p. 102, author' highlights).

The study by Mazzini (2017) exacerbates the precariousness of teaching work, also emphasizing the loss of autonomy: “There was a clear division of tasks between those who decide/elaborate and those who execute, fragmenting the educational process and removing the possibility of conception, elaboration, control and decision of teachers” (MAZZINI, 2017, p. 103, our translation).

The author also points out the 50% reduction in the salary of teachers in the Municipal Network of Marília in the last twenty years.

[...] The teachers' analyzes and perceptions are corroborated by the official numbers of salaries in the category. Thus, in 1997, that is, one year before the municipalization of elementary education, the starting salary of a teacher of Early Childhood Education was R\$ 396.05 (reference 13 in the salary reference table of the Municipality of Marília), while the value minimum wage at the time was R\$ 120.00. Therefore, teachers received a remuneration that corresponded to 3.3 minimum wages. Establishing a parallel with current wage levels, we found that in 2017 the starting salary for this same category of teachers is R\$ 1,422.75, while the national minimum wage in 2017 is R \$ 937.00, that is, the category remuneration in 2017 corresponds to 1.5 minimum wages. Thus, over these twenty years the amount of minimum wages received by the category has reduced by more than fifty percent (MAZZINI, 2017, p. 89, our translation).

The survey highlights the use of SAREM results to monitor the performance of the Marília Teaching Network for pedagogical planning with the prioritization of students' proficiency in Portuguese and Mathematics. We also consider that this process causes the narrowing of the curriculum and directing it from pedagogical work to the preparation of tests or training for tests.

Regarding the emphasis on formative actions for teachers and pedagogical coordinators aimed at gaps in students' proficiency, as pointed out in the collected SAREM documents, we bring the statement by the authors Sousa, Pimenta and Machado (2012) that:

the results of external evaluations have guided formative actions for pedagogical coordinators of schools and teachers, who focus primarily on the gaps found in the proficiency of students in Portuguese and Mathematics, through tests. Initiatives were registered, by Education Departments, that induce schools to rethink their pedagogical actions, establishing actions that can contribute to the improvement of the results of the evaluations, based on the analysis of the students' performance in the tests (SOUSA; PIMENTA; MACHADO, 2012, p. 28, our translation).

Regarding the preparation for the tests, we bring the contribution of Ravitch (2011) who makes a series of notes on the strategies used to improve the results of tests undertaken in the United States, without improving education. He points out that preparing for the test distorts its purpose, which is to assess learning and knowledge, not just to produce higher scores. According to the author, the consequence of this training is that the student may be able to pass the test, mastering methods of performing them, but not the subject itself. She further emphasizes that the tests are not perfect and that a test score is not an accurate measure of a student's knowledge and skills. “[...] Our schools must be ‘informed by the data’, not ‘driven by the data’” (RAVITCH, 2011, p. 255, our translation).

Fischer (2010) also considers that the evaluation process cannot be limited to tests and exams by appointment. According to the cited author

[...] by radically altering our understanding of how the student learns, it is necessary, as a result, **to radically change our way of teaching and evaluating**. If we understand that knowledge is not something that is only in books, or in the minds of some, or in a certain place; if we accept that every object will never be fully apprehended, that there are always incompleteness, if we admit that form and content are interdependent parts of a dynamic totality; if we believe that there is an unobservable process, that is, that something happens to the student (in the “black box”) when he is learning; and that this process is just as or more important than the final product; **if we agree that questioning, raising a hypothesis is as or more important than answering**; if we assume that making mistakes is an indispensable part of the constructive process of knowing, if we bet on all that, then the classroom cannot be as it was before. In other words, **the evaluation process cannot be reduced to tests by appointment** (FISCHER, 2010, p. 45-46, author' highlights, our translation).

Final considerations

In view of the presented context, we identified that the SAREM results have been used as the main reference for the quality of education in the municipality, expressing a convergence to the notion of quality as an expression of proficiency in the subjects of Portuguese and Mathematics. In this way, the Municipal Network of Marília has emphasized products at the

expense of processes, not considering school contexts in the analysis of results and spreading a restricted notion of quality.

We cite as an example the partnership established more than 17 years ago between the Research Group Observations and Descriptive Studies (LOED) of the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP) and the Municipal Education Secretariat (SME) of Campinas that implemented in its network the Participatory Institutional Assessment (AIP).

The Participatory Institutional Assessment (AIP) model used in the partnership between LOED and SME in Campinas does not underestimate the models of external evaluation, such as the SAREM studied in this work, and other external evaluations, such as Prova Brasil, SARESP, but seeks to adapt them to the reality and needs of each school unit or system. In this sense, this model is built by the school and not for the school. The development of this partnership allowed the creation of seven dimensions to assess the social quality of work in schools in the Municipal Network of Campinas: pedagogical practices, access and permanence, school-community relations, commitment to learning for all, participation and collective work (DALBEN *et al.*, 2017).

Therefore, we want to emphasize the need to consider other indicators to assess the quality of the work developed by the school. I conclude with the study by Sordi (2017) that expresses my understanding of the complexity of educational assessment:

The obsessive emphasis on results that seek to mirror the quality of the school, when defined from the outside to the inside and almost always decontextualized from the existing objective conditions, tends to produce suffering in the different actors affected by them. Be it for the summary blaming of the teachers for the failure in obtaining the indexes by their students; either by disqualifying the pedagogical practices that they choose and that insist on teaching “generalities” to students, depriving them from learning the basic contents that will make them succeed in the exams; be it due to the kidnapping it does to students, of expanded learning opportunities guided by a matrix of human formation in the center of which are values of solidarity, social justice and citizenship; or because of the school's disrepute in its relations with the environment, in which everyone, in some way, suffers due to the numbers that the evaluation makes circulate without due mediation and interrogations (SORDI, 2017, p. 88, our translation).

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