

## SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION: THE CHALLENGES OF THE SCHOOL MANAGER NOWADAYS

### *GESTÃO E AVALIAÇÃO ESCOLAR: OS DESAFIOS DO GESTOR ESCOLAR NA ATUALIDADE*

### *GESTIÓN Y EVALUACIÓN ESCOLAR: LOS DESAFÍOS DEL GERENTE ESCOLAR HOY*

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**ABSTRACT:** The aim of the study is to present the main challenges that school managers encounter in their professional trajectory. Research on the topic of Institutional Management and Evaluation has increased and has focused on the analysis of the leader as a person and on leadership roles and tasks. The justification and relevance for this study lies in the influencing action that school management has historically had related to the role and functions of its staff in the educational unit it operates. What are the structures and strategies for training and qualifying managers so that they can overcome the constant challenges in management using institutional evaluation as a tool for better effectiveness in school management? The article is a systematic review. This study sought to demonstrate that the leadership exercised by managers is fundamental and can have a positive impact on the learning outcomes of students, given the challenges encountered in the management

**KEYWORDS:** Management. Evaluation. Leadership. School.

**RESUMO:** *O objetivo do estudo é apresentar os principais desafios que os gestores escolares encontram na sua trajetória profissional. As pesquisas sobre o tema da Gestão e Avaliação institucional aumentaram e se concentraram na análise do líder como pessoa e em funções e tarefas de liderança. A justificativa e relevância para este estudo estão na ação de influenciar que a gestão escolar tem tido historicamente relacionada com o papel e as funções de sua equipe na unidade educacional que atua. Quais são as estruturas e estratégias de capacitação e qualificação de gestores, para que eles possam superar os constantes desafios no âmbito da gestão utilizando a avaliação institucional como ferramenta de melhor eficácia na gestão escolar? O artigo é uma revisão sistemática. Este estudo procurou demonstrar que a liderança exercida pelos gestores é fundamental e pode ter um impacto*

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positivo nos resultados de aprendizagem de educandos, tendo em vista os desafios encontrados na gestão.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Gestão. Avaliação. Liderança. Escola.*

**RESUMEN:** *El objetivo del estudio es presentar los principales retos a los que se enfrentan los gestores escolares en su trayectoria profesional. La investigación sobre el tema de la Gestión y Evaluación Institucional aumentó y se centró en el análisis del líder como persona y en las funciones y tareas de liderazgo. La justificación y relevancia de este estudio son la acción de influir en que la gestión escolar ha estado históricamente relacionada con el papel y las funciones de su equipo en la unidad educativa que opera. ¿Cuáles son las estructuras y estrategias de formación y cualificación de los directivos, para que puedan superar los constantes desafíos en el ámbito de la gestión utilizando la evaluación institucional como herramienta de mayor eficacia en la gestión escolar? El artículo es una revisión sistemática. Este estudio buscó demostrar que el liderazgo ejercido por los gerentes es fundamental y puede tener un impacto positivo en los resultados de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, en vista de los desafíos encontrados en la gestión.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Gestión. Evaluación. Liderazgo. Escuela.*

## Introduction

School Management has been identified in recent years in several international reports as a key function for ensuring quality in education (OECD, 2013). Research on the topic of School Management has increased and has focused on the analysis of the leader as a person and on leadership roles and tasks. In addition, it has been emphasized in studies that qualified management with planned actions through institutional evaluation can alleviate or solve many problems that arise in schools (BOLÍVAR *et al.*, 2013).

The justification and relevance for this study are in the need to involve that school management has historically been related to the role and functions of its teams (WELCH, 2011). Over the past decade it has been stressed in both international organizations' reports and academic papers that leadership involves a culture of shared expectations in which everyone is responsible for individual contributions to the collective outcome. The National System for Evaluation of Basic Education [SAEB], and other large-scale assessments are intended to be a "piècemaître" (masterpiece) in decision making for educational change in this country, however, institutional assessments with participation of the local school community in conjunction with other evaluative modalities can better support school management action.

Within this context, what are the structures and strategies for training, qualification

and continuing education of school managers, so that they can overcome the constant challenges in the field of school management? The responsibilities and tasks of school leaders have increased in the last decade considering the greater autonomy granted to schools. Many countries are, therefore, trying to create conditions to adapt educational environments to the new demands that may arise.

The objective of this study is to present the main challenges that school managers encounter in their educational trajectory. Having as specific objectives: To describe concepts and contexts related to the subject; to understand the challenges and changes in the approach towards 2022; to describe the review presentation of three case studies related to these challenges. School leadership policies have been appropriately adapted to new environments and emerging challenges in many countries.

Hypothetically, well-rounded school management grounded in knowledge gained through studies makes educators and other members of an educational institution overcome all challenges in the course of their events. Expectations regarding school leaders have changed and the distribution of their tasks must be reconsidered, as well as the type of training, support, and appreciation of these professionals.

The research is a systematic review. A literature review was conducted that pointed to identify the distinct approaches to school management. In this review, the focus was to evaluate what researchers have studied and the conclusions obtained on the subject. It therefore brings an arranged exploratory nature that uses the techniques provided by Gray (2012). In this regard, the research was done through books, journals, and internet publications. It sought articles, theses, and books with the majority of publication from the last 10 years, without restriction of nationality or any other type, and limited only the "subject area".

## **Material and methods**

The exploratory research method was used with the purpose of analyzing school management through an in-depth study in the area of education, starting with a bibliographic review and analysis composed of the main authors on this theme, with a qualitative study with emphasis on documentary studies. The purpose is to point out tools that can contribute to a more assertive management. For this, the research is based on studies of authors such as, Afonso (2002), Barreto and Novaes (2016), Bizol and Luz (2018) and Sousa (2000), among other authors and web pages that have elaborated works and contents on the theme. Starting

from the concepts presented by the authors, the article analyzes school management and the challenges of the school manager today.

The approaches to educational leadership have undergone major changes from the 2000s to the present 2021. Attention has shifted from the role of leadership in school management to the role of leadership in actions that promote students' learning. Leadership is understood today in its broader sense of being shared or distributed, and is fundamental to the educational system (BOLÍVAR *et al.*, 2013). In the 2000s, the leadership debate focused on "what" (people, structures, functions, and roles), while interest currently focuses on "how" (practices and functions).

The shift in approach is evident in research as well, as it has moved from the analysis of models to the study of processes aimed at developing good leadership practices. Robinson, Hohepa, and Lloyd (2011) notes that knowledge of leadership and quality education must be improved in the coming years so that research can be integrated into effective pedagogical practices and actions, i.e., that ensure learning.

Effective school management leadership is therefore one of the factors with significant impact on the quality of education (OECD, 2012). School leadership has now become an international priority on the education policy agenda, so the question arises as to what policies will achieve successful school leadership. In this regard, in the report by Pont, Nusche and Moorman(2008).

Below we have the chronological order of the evolution of School Management in Brazil from 1932 to 2020.

**Chart 1**

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF BRAZILIAN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT	
YEAR	HISTORIC EVENT
1932	The Pioneers Manifesto - 1932
1941	The 1934 Constitution, the 1937 PNE, and the 1st Conae of 1941
1962	The Constitution of 1946, JK's Target Plan, the LDB of 1961, and the PNE of 1962
1974	Sectorial Plan of Education and Culture for that period - I PSEC 1972-1974
1975 a 1979	II PND - 1975-1979 and the Education and Culture Sector Plan - II PSEC 1975-1979
1980 a 1985	III PND - 1980-1985
1986 a 1989	National Development Plan of the New Republic - I PND/NR -1986-1989
1996	The 1988 Constitution, the Decennial Plan of Education for All, and the 1996 LDB
1993 a 2003	Ten Year Plan of Education for All - 1993-2003

2001 a 2010	The National Education Plan 2001-2011
2004 a 2011	PPA 2004-2007 (Law nº 10.933/2004)
2007 a 2011	PPA 2007-2011 (Law nº 11.653/2008)
2001 a 2010	Actions and evaluations of the PNE 2001-2010 and the Education Development Plan - PDE
2010	The National Education Conference (Conae/2010)
2007 a 2011	The Education Development Plan - PDE Law 11.653/2008, PPA 2007- 2011
2020	THE NATIONAL EDUCATION PLAN 2011-2020
2011 a 2020	CNE Contributions - National Education Plan 2011-2020
2020	The 2011-2020 PNE proposal (PL 8035/2010)

Source: Original research data

The recruitment and training of principals and school leaders are very important, because they are the people who implement education policies in schools, so if they do not have adequate training and constant professional development, no policy, national or regional or local, can be effective. However, despite the trends observed, there is great heterogeneity among regions and countries. Effective school management practices depend on the characteristics of educational systems, as well as on the status and work of teachers (PONT; NUSCHE; MOORMAN, 2008). In the next section, we will address some of these specificities by analyzing three cases in different environments.

### **Brazil - Leadership and the continuing education program for educational managers**

Formal education in Brazil is enshrined as a right in the Constitution and is compulsory for all from the age of 4. In the interest of efficiency and challenges in Brazil, a school head plays the role that goes beyond administration and manager when he mobilizes and uses resources rationally to achieve goals (VIANNA, 2003).

It is assumed that, in performing his duties, he must be able to organize the beginning of the school year, inform about events that arise in the life of the school, ensure the monthly, bimonthly and semiannual reports, write the return and end of year reports, to ensure in his school the respect of legislation, observe and guide his teaching and administrative staff regarding the assignment of their respective positions.

The State Department of Education formulated the program proposal and was responsible for its supervision and management, defining curricular content, producing teaching materials and videos used, and providing the operational logistics needed to carry out

point to point activities in the school itself and distance learning activities.

The peer-to-peer activities included analysis of printed material, video-based discussions, and retrospectives on teaching practice that teachers and principals were encouraged to hold with their own students using a Pedagogical Activity Plan they formulated.

The participants were instructed to take the actions planned for the four modules, each lasting 24 hours and totaling 96 hours of training, at their workplaces, bringing experiences for group discussion with the theoretical basis studied.

The most obvious effects observed were: greater awareness, opening of perspectives for the interpretation of educational challenges, recognition of the importance of affective relationships for the development of students and appreciation of teamwork, among others (MENEZES-FILHO *et al.*, 2011).

The school-centered continuous development, the adoption of external incentives and a more passive attitude of elementary school teachers towards training seem to have contributed to a greater acceptance of the program.

Both contributed more to raising awareness and regarding basic aspects of teaching, dealing more adequately with individual differences among students, using diversified pedagogical and didactic materials, and valuing teamwork, than to sustaining significant changes in teaching practice (PONT; NUSCHE; MOORMAN, 2008).

### **Evaluation as a School Management Tool**

Educational evaluation is related to the production of information, to the production of information about specific and predetermined elements of education in a school unit. The survey and analysis of this information should assist decision making that, in turn, needs to have as a guide the reorganization in order to assist decision making to reorganize, restructure, and continue or not some action of educational character.

Classroom assessment, which focuses on the teaching-development-learning process, aims to guide the pedagogical action, helping educators to reflect on possible strategies, methods, and ways of planning their educational actions so that children, young people, and adults can achieve a significant learning of competencies and skills of the artistic, scientific, cultural, and social heritage of humanity.

In Early Childhood Education, children are assessed by means of descriptive reports, and this dimension of assessment does not fit, since school performance is not assessed in

Early Childhood Education, but their full development, i.e., learning and development are synonymous. While the child develops, it learns and, at the same time, while it learns, it develops, fitting to the pedagogical actions in an intentional way to develop activities and experiences that enhance this development and, in the perception of some inadequacy, to reflect on the case, this occurs through descriptive records, and make the necessary referrals (SOUSA, 2000).

According to Sousa (2000), program and project evaluation makes it possible to improve practices according to the governmental public policies in effect, considering the definition of objectives, goals, strategies, and resources to be used that are usually defined by the programs. Bureaucratic evaluation, in which the evaluator is aligned with the thinking of those who hire him/her, provides information for political purposes, without any control over the use that can be made of the information. Considering this characteristic of the curriculum it can be seen that the evaluation of the curriculum would be the investigation of the various elements that are part of the curriculum document prepared in a dialogical way and its applicability or implementation, contrasted with the expected results.

In this perspective, the curriculum should be evaluated not only in relation to how learning occurs, but also in relation to which learning is essential for the development of children, in which context are performed and what is the meaning of these experiences for children.

In this same approach to curriculum evaluation, Franco (1997) proposes that curriculum evaluation should include three dimensions as shown in the table below:

**Chart 2**

Context Evaluation	Evaluation of Institutional dynamics	Product and Results Evaluation
Considers the preceding variables. Example: infrastructure conditions.	It is intended to be continuous and systematic to correct distortions in the process of curriculum implementation.	It confers results to the course evaluation. Example: quality, respectability, prestige

Source: Prepared by the author based on Sousa (2000, p. 108 apud FRANCO, 1997, p.10)

The system evaluation considers in its matrix references, in this case, in accordance with the national curriculum parameters, focusing on the results and conditions to achieve a certain result. To evaluate a given system, stage, modality or level of education, criteria are required that consider some theoretical and methodological assumptions related to educational

purposes and their cultural, political, social and economic conditions that configure various conceptions of individual and society.

In this sense, to better understand the meaning of evaluation it is necessary to consider the historical and social context in which it is performed, in addition to the methodological approach, resources, instruments, procedures, analysis criteria, results exposure, purposes, among other dimensions adopted by the evaluator, which can be the State, an individual, a public or private institute, agencies or other bodies.

For Guba and Lincoln (1989), the evaluation went through four evolutionary phases, also called generations, the first generation associated with measurement, the second generation associated with description, the third generation associated with judgment, and the fourth generation associated with negotiation.

In the first generation of evaluation, which in Guba and Lincoln's studies covers until the 1930s, there are strong influences of positivism, of methods from the natural sciences used in social phenomena, with many contributions from the field of educational psychology.

Galton, who in 1882 opened a testing laboratory in London and later founded psychometrics, gave birth to differential psychology, which aimed to apply statistical methods to prove the differences and human inheritance of intelligence.

Despite the limitations of its method, this generation contributed significantly to the evolution of data collection and production of instruments suitable for its purpose, however, it became inappropriate in the evaluation of programs, methods among other objects that were not the individual (BIZOL; LUZ, 2018). The second generation, between 1930 and 1945, and based on the studies of Ralph Tyler (1902-1994) - American educator who worked in the field of evaluation - proposes that quantification is a means used to evaluate not constituting, itself, the evaluation itself. It is characterized by the similarity of what is known today as formative assessment, however with a reorientation of the points to be adjusted after the end of the process and not during the process as is the case of formative assessment and being applied in evaluative analysis of curriculum and programs.

Tyler was a precursor of the Eight Year Study program, one of the first large longitudinal evaluation studies, which had as one of its objectives to settle doubts about the differential efficiency of the various types of schools operating in the United States, both those that offered a traditional curriculum and those that offered a progressive curriculum.

His studies also sought to answer questions from Colleges and Universities about the efficiency of the progressive curriculum proposal, since these institutions feared that students



coming from schools with unconventional proposals, when reaching higher education, would not be able to effectively follow the program of courses offered by these higher education institutions.

This responsive constructivist approach highlights the establishment of assessment parameters and limits through interactive and negotiated processes involving interest groups, unlike the three previous generations whose parameters and limits are pre-established a priori in a relationship between evaluator and client, called by Stake (1975) as preordained assessment (GUBA; LINCOLN, 2011, p. 47).

## **Results and discussions**

This study sought to demonstrate that the leadership exercised by managers is fundamental and has a positive impact on the learning outcomes of children and adolescents, given the challenges encountered in management and evaluation. When leadership is weak or nonexistent, however, the opposite effect can occur, hindering student learning and affecting the quality of schools. In many countries, it appears that educational policy is an obstacle to effective school leadership. There are well-known deficiencies in the selection, promotion, and professional development of management teams. In addition, there is an excess of bureaucratic and administrative tasks to the detriment of other more important educational activities.

As part of an increasingly globalized world, successive democratic governments in Brazil, starting in the 1990s, participated in international large-scale assessment initiatives that showed that Brazilian students, when compared to other countries, need to have their competencies and skills improved, both in language and mathematics. Similarly, studies in Brazil have shown that students spent a lot of time in school but still left without acquiring these skills, challenging a hitherto held view that early dropouts were responsible for this situation.

Moreover, although economic growth in Brazil has been achieved so far, an even better qualified labor force needs to be fostered by a solid educational system. These factors have fed the logic of what constitutes school evaluation in Brazil today, with a move toward central government policies that strongly emphasize standardized evaluation systems.

In the future, stronger empirical evidence must be gathered to prove the effect that school leadership has on student learning and on teachers' professional development. This has been a primary concern in educational research around the world, and should be placed on the education agenda in many countries. There is a need to better understand how school

principals can positively influence student outcomes and to clearly identify which leadership practices promote adequate teacher performance in schools. Studies in this field will not only overcome major gaps in educational research, but more importantly, will also help policy makers develop programs to support principals in educational leadership.

### **School management in the Covid-19 pandemic period**

A democratic school management must necessarily have the sharing of ideas and the involvement of all who are part of the school in terms of pedagogical and organizational processes.

School management needs to be different from other organizations, as Borgignon and Gracinho (2000) state; proposals related to teaching and social relations need to have the same functional perspective and not be two distinct things that do not communicate with each other. Libâneo (2012) states that school management is sociocritical because, in addition to bringing people together, it takes into account the most democratic forms of decision-making. In this way, collective decisions involve everyone to participate actively in school processes.

Libâneo (2012) considers autonomy fundamental to the active participation of the school community in decisions, this democracy and community participation in school are positive in a management.

School management has suffered a major impact because its teaching-learning format has always been mainly classroom lessons, with the Covid-19 pandemic, managers and all faculty had to adapt to technologies so that communication between parents, students and teachers were not affected, with this the use of social media grew a lot and technology is more present to teach online classes, Continuing education had to be more assertive at home with the family, and the students in a family environment had to adapt and focus on the classes so that distractions from home didn't hinder their studies, and the students who don't have access to the internet had to learn to study with physical materials at home, or going to school to participate in semi face-to-face classes or even using computer labs inside the school to not be hindered.

The pedagogical actions will be assertive when they are democratic and when the school community is part of this action. In this way, the current management models will be resized to a lighter and fluid management, thus detaching themselves from a more rigid management. Flexibility and communication must be present all the time in all sectors of education, secretariat, coordination, board of directors, and the like; a school is good when it

is effective for everyone, knowing how to listen and speak is essential for good internal and external communication.

Investing in technology at school is essential these days because not only are software tools that assist in school management and internal and external communication, but paid and free applications can be used as a pedagogical tool, such as Facebook and Whatsapp that can be used for tips and notifications for a group of students and parents, and the internal use in school with all its teaching staff, in addition it is possible to exchange files and digital documents facilitating and optimizing the time of both students and the school office.

For students the advantage of studying with tools that they already know is interesting because they start to learn by playing and without realizing that the pedagogical practices are being applied there through videos on Youtube with movies, documentaries and even video lessons with a deeper content of the subject thus making a continued education and the good thing about it is that the student can use this tool anywhere he is and not only at school.

In this way, everyone wins: the school for having a more assertive communication internally and externally, and the students for having more dynamism in their classes. Working with technologies that students like can make them more enthusiastic in the classroom, gamification is a technological educational method that uses dynamic games for learning, making an immersion experience with students.

The school management technology is another challenge for teachers, coordinators, and principals, because not everyone is prepared to master management tools and social media tools where students meet to ask questions, ask for tips, pass messages, in addition to the chat room of various programs that can be used to teach the classes.

## **Conclusion**

The challenges of School Management are constructed and refer to the ability to guide, inspire, and motivate students and teachers. This skill is not innate, but can be promoted and developed through continuing education, collaboration, and peer exchange. The international situation, and in particular the three cases presented in this research, show that there is no single solution. There are several strategies for developing school leadership.

The present work reveals only a short and partial comparison between school management in Brazil. A deeper and more comprehensive analysis is needed to account for all the factors that influence these issues. Even so, some important conclusions and questions for further discussion can be drawn from this comparison based on the analyses and statements

cited.

The complexity and ecological dimension should be kept in mind when studying evaluation in education, developed in multicultural contexts such as Brazil. The article illustrates assessment challenges aimed at increasing academic excellence and social justice and inclusion, as pursued by Brazil. By attempting to balance the two perspectives, the ongoing process of building evaluation policies in Brazil could be enriched by an ecological and multicultural approach, in addition to the tendency towards a standardized evaluation perspective, and thus more likely to contribute in the future to new perspectives on educational evaluation policies, multicultural countries around the world.

Finally, the post-2015 agenda highlights the need to develop sustainable leadership in the future. The challenge is twofold: on the one hand, the quality of current leadership must be improved, and on the other hand, sustainable leadership must be developed for the future. School principals need to be recognized and valued for their heavy workloads and should receive adequate compensation and support. Selection processes should be transparent, ideally via public tender, to avoid uncertainty and provide adequate guarantees.

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