

ARTICLE

PRACTICE OF YOUTH AND ADULT EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN SOCIAL SERVICE INDUSTRY IN THE STATE OF BAHIA

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ABSTRACT: This article resulted from qualitative and quantitative research about the practice of youth and adult education (EJA) management, offered by Social Service for Industry (SESI), in the state of Bahia. The main goal was to investigate how the practice and dominant style of management occurred in that context, based on the points of view of the subjects involved. The theoretical framework included Amorim (2012), Barbosa (1995), Campos (2004), Castro (1998), Cury (2002), Diniz - Pereira (2006), Freitas and Pilla (2006), Gadotti and Romão (2004), Libâneo (2001), Lück et al (2012), among others. As results, the subjects investigated declared that participation in managerial and pedagogical practices is fundamental for the establishment of democratic and participative managerial actions. They enlarge and strengthen managerial quality inside the organization.

Keywords: Education management; Youth and Adult education; SESI Bahia.

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A PRÁTICA DA GESTÃO DA EDUCAÇÃO DE JOVENS E ADULTOS NO SERVIÇO SOCIAL DA INDÚSTRIA NO ESTADO DA BAHIA

RESUMO: Este artigo resultou de pesquisa quali-quantitativa sobre as práticas da gestão da educação de jovens e adultos (EJA), oferecida pelo Serviço Social da Indústria (SESI), durante o ano de 2015, no estado da Bahia. O objetivo foi investigar, a partir dos olhares de sujeitos envolvidos, como ocorria a gestão nesse contexto da pesquisa e qual o estilo dominante. O referencial teórico envolveu Amorim (2012), Barbosa (1995), Campos (2004), Castro (1998), Cury (2002), Diniz-Pereira (2006), Freitas e Pilla (2006), Gadotti e Romão (2004), Libâneo (2001), Lück *et al* (2012), entre outros. Como resultados, podemos afirmar que os investigados declararam entender que a participação nas práticas gestoras e pedagógicas é fundamental para o estabelecimento de ações gestoras, democráticas e participativas. Elas ampliam e fortalecem a qualidade gestora no âmbito institucional.

Palavras-chave: Gestão da educação; Educação de Jovens e Adultos; SESI-Bahia.

INTRODUCTION

This article investigates the practices of youth and adult education management (EJA), offered by the Industry Social Service of the State of Bahia, and how they are implemented. This study aims to examine, from the perspectives of the participants who worked with EJA/SESI/Bahia, how management took place in this context, and what the predominant style was. To ensure a diversity of visions regarding the studied phenomenon, 19 out of 34 EJA professionals were surveyed. The sample comprised educational managers, pedagogical coordinators, the faculty, technical and pedagogical staff, and education assistants from 11 cities in Bahia.

The authors discuss the theme based on theorists such as Barbosa (1995), Campos (2004), Castro (1998), Amorim (2012), Freitas and Pilla (2006), Curry (2002), Diniz-Pereira (2006), Gadotti and Romão (2004), Libâneo (2001), Lück *et al.* (2012), and so on.

The article is organized as follows: First, the introduction highlights the issue, the subjects, the referenced theorists, and the aim of the study. Next, the investigation trajectory and the theoretical foundation promoting the reference concepts are presented. In addition, comments are provided on the EJA and SESI in the studied context, which outlines the examined institutional situation; the subjects' voices and the EJA/SESI Bahia management are then presented, along with the collected and analyzed data. Finally, the main conclusions and possible future courses of action are given.

INVESTIGATION TRAJECTORY

The research out of which this text developed integrated a set of activities for the Professional Master's Degree in Youth and Adult Education (MPEJA) in the University of the State of Bahia.

Using a qualitative and quantitative approach, the investigative work examined management practices, including pedagogical aspects, in EJA/SESI. The choice of the qualitative line resulted from the nature of the study object (EJA/SESI management practices), in view of considerations by Haguette (1992, p. 63), who states that “[...] the qualitative methods emphasize the specificities of a phenomenon in terms of their origins and their reason to be.” Qualitative results are important for signaling hits, misses, and detours from the initial aims. Moreover, they enable route correction and the identification of positive and negative aspects of the research, strengths and weaknesses, and the need for changes in the processes and results. The qualitative and quantitative approaches complement each other, leading to a better understanding when it comes to data analysis and conclusions.

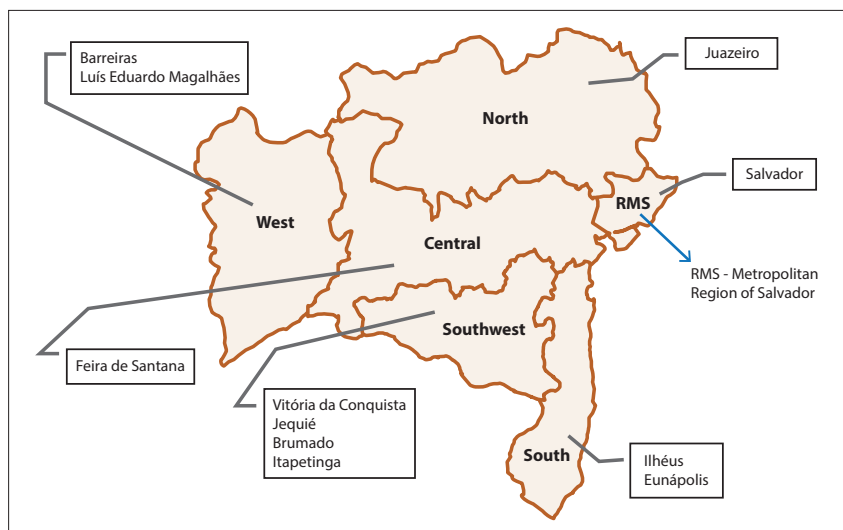
In this research, a convergence of qualitative and quantitative methods was chosen. According to Flick (2004), the combination provides legitimacy to the results, providing a total vision, with no reductionism of reality. According to Creswell (2007), that is why a mixed or combined method embodies both qualitative and quantitative approaches. In addition, according to the author, the qualitative-quantitative approach enables greater data integration, setting up a complete vision of the investigated element.

The research instrument was a questionnaire that was specifically formulated for data collection; it was sent via Internet to a total of 34 professionals after telephone contact. The respondents were teachers, managers, and pedagogical coordinators who worked at EJA/SESI/Bahia, who agreed to participate in the research. The questionnaires were answered by more than half of the total group, that is, by 56%, equivalent to 19 members of the team of working professionals. They made up the sample, which consisted of nine teachers, six pedagogical coordinators, and two educational managers, a pedagogical assistant, and an educational assistant. The selection criteria for selecting the study participants were: a) they had to be working with EJA/SESI/Bahia.; b) they had to agree to answer the data collection instruments online; c) they had to sign the consent form; d) they had to be from the 11 municipalities in Bahia where SESI maintained EJA; and e) they had to be representative of all six regions of the state of Bahia: north, west, southeast, south, metropolitan region of Salvador (RMS), and the central region, as shown in Figure 1.

In geographical terms, the participants were distributed across 11 cities of Bahia where EJA/SESI was offered: Salvador, Vitória da Conquista, Feira de Santana, Juazeiro, Luís Eduardo Magalhães, Ilhéus, Barreiras, Eunápolis, Itapetinga, Brumado, and Jequié.

Figure 1 shows the 11 participating municipalities in the study; in it, the territorial dimension of the research, as well as the extent of the state territory (composed of 417 municipalities), can be seen.

FIGURE 1. Territorial dimension of this study



Source: Prepared by the researchers, 2017.

All the sample components worked in fields related to the investigated course. Nonetheless, even though they had different responsibilities, all participants performed activities from an EJA management perspective. In conclusion, they are responsible for the success and failure of institutional formation results, according to Libâneo (2001).

The data collection instrument was a questionnaire with open- and closed-ended questions that seek to achieve the proposed objective. Data collection was conducted online between the months of August and September 2015. A Google Drive survey was used due to the diversity of cities covered and the difficulty of physical access, which would require financial resources and travel time between the eleven cities investigated in the state of Bahia.

The completed and received questionnaires were categorized and coded to protect the respondents' identity, according to the

social research code of ethics. They were then tabulated by analysis categories defined a priori. These categories were supplemented by new ones that emerged throughout the study.

The most frequent and relevant answers regarding the set goals were selected and analyzed, and some analysis categories were added. The main ideas, the most frequent and pertinent according to the researchers, were transformed into word clouds, a graphic resource that displays the frequency of words found in the recorded answers. The more frequent the words were in the text, the larger the font that was used to record the words. For the analysis, categories were built based on the theoretical framework and the pertinence to the obtained information.

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Educational management can be understood as the managing of a school in all its facets, constituent parts, and purposes. It involves procedures and people with a diversity of profiles and functions, aspirations, interests, conflicts, and goals (LÜCK, 2008). Furthermore, it should maintain a focus on the end activity of the education journey and the teaching program aims. Santos, Souza and Amorim (2015) claim that the management tasks are focused on classroom routines and are shared among the members. In a school's daily practice, the decision-making, staff preparation, referrals, and intentions may not deviate from the collectively defined objectives, aims, and actions except for when unforeseen circumstances arise and changes are required to meet specific needs that were not considered in the initial planning.

Educational organizations are educational bodies that exchange inputs with the context and the people who integrate them (LIBÂNEO, 2001). According to the literature, participative management is required from educational organizations in order for them to be successful. This type of management is carried out with the cooperation, communication and participation of all people involved with the organization.

In this new design, the command chain is not verticalized, becoming more cooperative and communicative. In spite of this concept, there is no doubt that school management comprises planning, organization, evaluation, supervision, and implementation of educational pathways. It is still referred to as administration, a thought common in the beginning of the last century. Nevertheless, Curry (2002, p. 165) moves forward, distancing himself from the traditional concept, stating that: “[...] management is a democratic way of running a reality exercised by communication, collective

development and dialogue.” Curry’s thought is shared by theorists such as Freitas and others, incorporating the concept of participation in democracy in all education instances. There is an inclusive nuance in the discussion on democratic management and participatory education, which finds its legitimacy and support in the 1988 Federal Constitution (CF/88, Guidelines and Bases for Education Act - LDB - Law 9394/96), in the current National Education Plan (PNE - Law 13.005, 2014), and in the previous PNE (Law 10,172/2001), as well as in subsequent laws, opinions, and decrees.

In the spirit of the democratization of the country, the 1988 Federal Constitution, Article 206, subsection VI was initiated in the 1980s and defines “lawfully democratic management of public education.” The same teaching is contained in Article 14 of the aforementioned LDB/96, regarding democratic management “with participation of school and local communities...,” as shown below:

Art. 14. The education systems will define the standards of democratic management of public education in basic education, in accordance with its peculiarities and the following principles: I - participation of educational professionals in the formulation of the school pedagogical project of the school; II - participation of school and local communities in school boards or equivalent ones. (BRAZIL, LDB, 1996, p. 4)

According to the current understanding of the terminology, management councils are an expression of community participation, represented by those who have been democratically elected. These councils use participatory activity within educational institutions, strengthening pedagogical, administrative, and financial processes. According to Souza (2009), education democratic management is a political activity in which the involved agents identify problems, plan, decide, provide solutions, follow, control, and assess the set of actions focused on school and student development, as well as define objectives relevant to the represented people and society.

The people’s involvement is characterized by the participative management to be performed to seek alternative solutions to pedagogical, administrative, financial and relational problems, as well as to enhance the quality of the education to be offered. For this to function, dialogue with internal and external school members is required. This should be based on acknowledgment and respect for the technical specificities of each of the various functions present in school and in society. Effective participation of all school and local community segments, respect for collective formulated norms to support decision-making, and guaranteed access to information are fundamental to the managers. This posture requires transparency,

ethics, and responsibility from each citizen. The school belongs to everyone, and it is made for everyone. Education elevates human beings' quality of life and the possibility of engagement in the workplace, enabling improvement of quality of life in society.

Democratic participation is a political phenomenon leading to citizen formation to participate in joint actions, maintain collective dialogue, and understand and observe reference standards established to guide citizens, as well as propose new ones. For this reason, Freitas and Pilla (2006, p. 17) emphasize the relevance of “[...] technical, political and human concepts” indispensable to develop communities of dialogues, propositions, and actions in the educational field. The education literature in the last 21 years has stressed the importance of the political participation of the local and school community in the decision-making, monitoring, and evaluation of institutionalized educational activities.

Using this perspective, Amorim (2012) has discussed the importance of the community participating in activities pertaining to school life, highlighting the participatory, democratic, and inclusive aspects of a society with education institutions. Similarly, Luck (2008) emphasizes the social, labor, and democratic value of community participation in daily school life. According to her, these are institutional ties that greatly value the social meaning of school and promote citizenship.

Authors like Freitas (2006) and Libâneo (2001) also highlight the effective participation of society, indicating that it dominates the educational destiny of a school. The social subjects' participation reveals the transparency of school management and the work that is performed there, especially when it comes to an educational institution dealing with adolescents, young people, and adults. Cherishing the educational process takes place by strengthening and integrating the collective work and extending society's view of the school. Therefore, the experience shown by the community in daily life, along with the search for contemporary management processes, may integrate and boost the political, labor, and social meaning that a school should promote.

All people interested in school and education who value social and education quality must act politically and democratically to strengthen institutional citizenship and the qualitatively pertinent preparation of people involved with education. The current emphasis includes collective work, dialogue, and cooperation with planning, along with decision-making and strategic actions to improve results and citizen awareness. In this case, the participation of the community

internal and external to EJA/SESI Bahia, society, entrepreneurs and employers, the National Confederation of Industry (CNI), and State and Municipality Departments of Education is required. The reasons are obvious: such participation would allow for the implementation of an education that qualifies students for citizen and work life.

The concepts advocated by Amorim (2012), Freitas (2006), and Libâneo (2001) corroborate the hypothesis that participation in management education enables quality student training to achieve collective and individual aims that may help with social and work contexts.

SESI AND EJA IN THE INVESTIGATED CONTEXT

The Brazilian industry greatly developed between 1929 and 1937. The international scene had been rather troubled, with political conflicts in several countries. Brazil was undergoing political difficulties and had to prepare people for changes introduced by the recent industrialization. Entrepreneurs at the time, led by Roberto Simonsen and Euvaldo Lodi, identified the need to improve relations and solidarity between employers and employees, the workers' quality of life, and the work environment, in addition to their skills. They agreed that better prepared workers would be more efficient. In that context, President Eurico Gaspar Dutra signed Decree-Law no. 9.403 in 1946, which assigned the task of creating, organizing, and directing SESI to the National Confederation of Industry (CNI) (SESI, 2008). This initiative aimed to improve Brazilian workers' training at the time and prepare them to manage the innovations implemented by industry that were changing the employment world in Brazil. In that period, the Brazilian illiteracy rate was nearly 56.8% among people 10 years old and older.¹

The SESI mission statement lists certain purposes, including: taking care of social welfare as a foundation for economic development, supporting industry and workers, and taking on challenges in continuing education to meet Brazilian industry expectations in the new work context that is unfolding in Brazil. A population with a high quality education is a potential force for industrial and economic development. A study conducted by CNI (2011) showed that more than two-thirds of the national industry lacked skilled workers. The country needed a skilled workforce for industry and all forms of education, whether formal, informal, or non-formal. According to Castro (2012, p. 10), “[...] vocational education is only a part of education for the world of work.”

Thus, SESI continued to foster educational opportunities. Currently, it offers a 9-year elementary education, full-time education, a general education high school, high school linked with vocational education developed by the National Industrial Training Service (SENAI), and youth and adult education (SESI, 2008).

EJA is a strategic action by the National SESI to meet population and industry demand for continuous improvement of workers' qualifications, which will increase productivity and maintain Brazil's competitiveness. It focuses on young and adult industrial workers, employed or unemployed, who did not conclude their studies at an age deemed "appropriate" by article 37 of LDB/9394/96.

In Bahia, SESI began its activities in 1948, with legal, medical, dental, alimentary, sport, and cultural programs. It currently acts in several segments, with activities centered on the education and quality of life of industry workers and their dependents. It maintains regular basic education programs, youth and adult education (EJA), and continuing education adapted to industry workforce qualification needs.

The performance of EJA in SESI Bahia started in the 1990s, when the first classrooms were built in the metropolitan region of Salvador and the North Coast (SESI, 2008). Between 1996 and 2017, there were 115,601 registrations at EJA SESI Bahia, as shown in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1. Registration at EJA/SESI/Bahia- 1996 to 2017

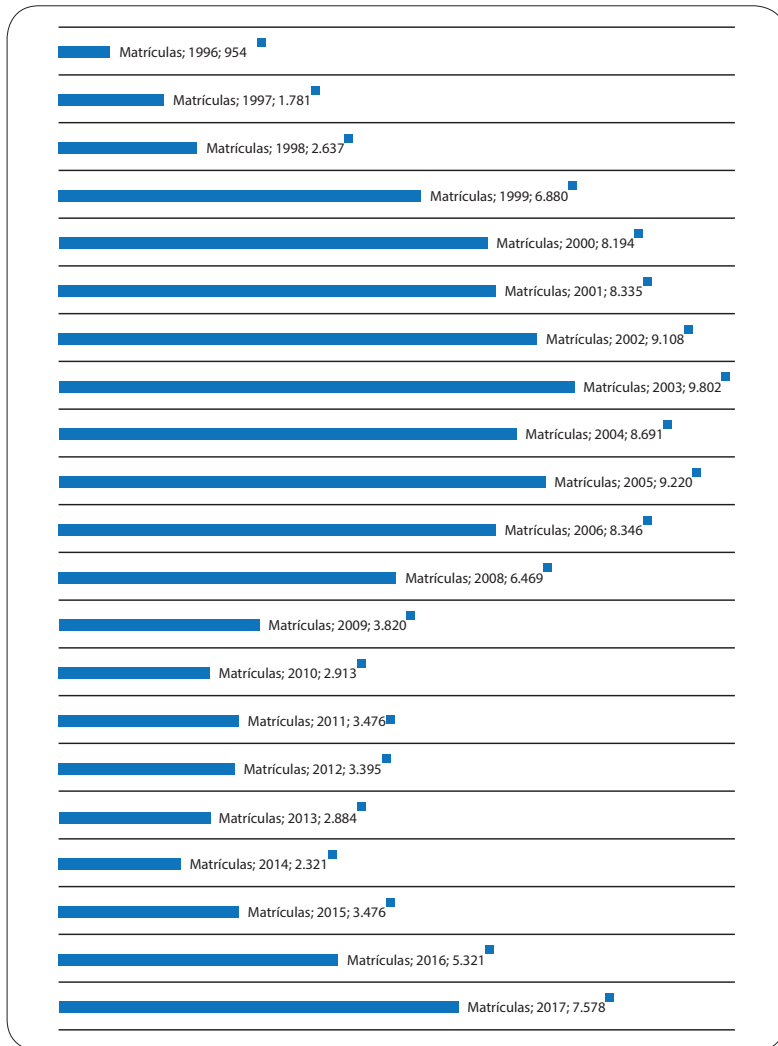
Year	Registration	Year	Registration
1996	954	2008	6,469
1997	1,781	2009	3,820
1998	2,637	2010	2,913
1999	6,880	2011	3,476
2000	8,194	2012	3,395
2001	8,335	2013	2,884
2002	9,108	2014	2,321
2003	9,802	2015	3,476
2004	8,691	2016	5,321
2005	9,220	2017	7,578
2006	8,346	Total	115,601
2007	5,776		

Source: SESI Report (2017)

The registration numbers have fluctuated; in 1996, there were 954 registrations, and in the following years there was a substantial increase, reaching 9,802 registrations in 2003. These figures have since decreased; in 2015, the total number of enrolled students at EJA/SESI/Bahia only reached 3,476.

In 2013, SESI Bahia changed its work methodology, offering EJA in a distance-learning modality. After this change, there was a significant increase in the number of young and adult students in this type of education; 7,578 young and adult students enrolled in this course in 2017.

GRAPH 1. Registration at EJA/SESI/Bahia - 1996 to 2017 (Enrolment EJA SESI BAHIA)



Source: Adapted from a SESI report (2017)

EJA/SESI/Bahia has already worked with more than 115,000 registered students. From 1999 to 2008, there was a greater concentration of enrollment, probably reflecting the employment opportunities in the civil construction segment in the state of Bahia in addition to National SESI policies enabling the implementation of classes in great scale. A decrease in enrollment, which began in 2009, occurred during a national financial crisis that directly influenced civil construction. Workers from this segment make up one of the categories that have most frequently sought EJA/SESI/Bahia. Economic and political crises have impacted the supply and demand of EJA in the state of Bahia.

According to Xavier (2008, p. 14):

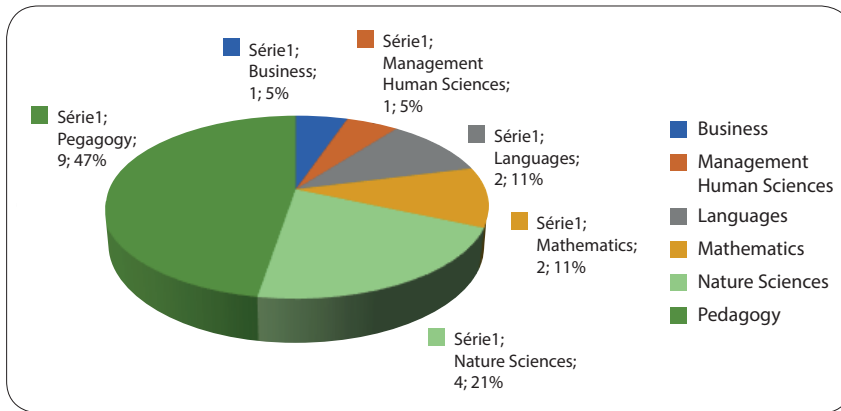
[...] educational practice in EJA is linked to a project of a society project committed to fighting of social inequality and exclusion. This practice aims to transform an excluding society, and acknowledge subjects' diversity, their multiple practices and varied ways of insertion in the social world, as well as their trajectories, needs and projects.

EJA/SESI/Bahia focuses on collective improvement. Thus, it must consider students' and industry's diversity, as well as the skills required in an employment world managing constant changes and innovations. This is a complex task, focused on elevating and maintaining quality results obtained from the preparation of young people and adults for employment.

SUBJECTS' VOICES AND EJA/SESI/BAHIA MANAGEMENT

The questionnaire employed to collect the requested information contained two sets of questions: the first aimed to collect demographic data from the interviewees and the second, composed of 28 questions, aimed to reveal perspectives on EJA/SESI/Bahia management practices. Below are data pertaining to research subjects' occupations and educational backgrounds.

Nine of the respondents are teachers, six are pedagogical coordinators, two are leaders/managers, one is a pedagogical assistant, and one is a continuing education assistant. Nine of them graduated with training in pedagogy, four in the natural sciences, two in languages, one in social sciences, and one in business management (see Graph 1, below).

GRAPH 2. Interviewees' educational background

Source: Research data, 2017

Teachers made up 47% of the subjects who answered the questionnaire; they did not officially hold coordination or management posts. This information is important for understanding the management practice from the perspective of someone who is involved in the institutional educational aspect but does not directly occupy a post identified as management in the investigated institution. According to researchers, these people contribute to management, since they actually participate in some of the decisions that impact management and teaching.

A total of 95% of the subjects stated that they have teaching licenses, in six areas. The high rate of graduates facilitates a positive perception of the professionals working at EJA/SESI/Bahia. Theoretically, they perform their activities with pedagogical competence.

However, Soares (2008) states that, until 2006, teaching licenses did not include theoretical discussions about EJA or systematic practices. This might indicate that, although these professionals are licensed, their initial teaching certification process may not have prepared them for working with youth and adult education. In reality, only recently have these discussions been gradually included in teaching license curricula. This inclusion may be linked to the population's demand for EJA courses and Paulo Freire's work with adult literacy, initiated in 1960, which ended in opening up space to prepare new professionals and value youth and adults who sought education. Teacher and manager training has recently included theoretical and practical principles supporting youth and adult education, which may occur in undergraduate or graduate studies (2012; This FREITAS, 2015).

TABLE 2. Understanding EJA management

Alternatives	%
1. Administration of human and material resources, planning of activities, distribution of functions and tasks in interpersonal relationships of work and power in EJA	47%
2. The involvement of the local and school community to establish purposes and adequate means and guarantee the role of social transformation to EJA schools	32%
3. The organization and management of all work in schools to achieve goals and objectives established by the system to EJA.	21%

Source: This study's researchers, 2017.

To capture views on EJA management and its practices, alternatives on the subject that were based on studies were included in the questionnaires. Although all the alternatives are possible and valid, each comes from a distinct perspective on the topic. Chart 1 summarizes the relative frequency of the marked alternatives, indicating an understanding of what the EJA/SESI/Bahia management practice is. The first listed item received the largest frequency of responses, i.e., 47%. This points to the idea that management involves “administration of human and material resources, activity planning, function and task distribution, work, and power interpersonal relationships within EJA.” This perspective was analyzed, and a significant proportion of the respondents value the aspects of planning, administration, and interpersonal relations of institutional management. They believe that support activities are fundamental to the institutional performance of school life.

The second item received 32% of the responses, revealing that less than half of the respondents understand the importance of participation in management decisions from people both internal and external to the EJA/SESI community. This is an important aspect of management that may exemplify the difficulty experienced by the community to strengthen the sense of participatory democracy, within an educational institution that increasingly requires the integration of internal and external members of society.

The third item, with 21% reported frequency, indicates that compliance with goals and objectives are the focus of management. This reveals an issue experienced in the coordination of managers, teachers, and staff who only partially value compliance with the institutional aims and objectives. These aims are laid out in programs and plans within the SESI/Bahia.

The question, “What do you understand about EJA democratic management” revealed that most of the participants (58%) declared it was “implementation of school and local community participation actions, such as direct elections for principals, student council members, and school boards.”

The second choice, representing 42% of answers, shows that democratic management is characterized by “[...] a clear definition of roles and definition of responsibilities of school agents, such as director, coordinator, teacher, and student.” In the first case, there is an obvious acceptance of community participation and the collegiate structures required to conduct management. However, daily practice does not reflect this understanding. Sometimes, the traditional definition of roles overlaps with the implementation of community participation in a school. This shows that theory and practice are not always in line with EJA management.

According to Gadotti and Romão (2004), schools experience serious problems that hinder the progress of pedagogic proposals. This leads managers to seek solutions beyond the school. That is, there are questions regarding whether priorities and government investment in social policies limit school autonomy. Managers must confront external issues to have greater quality.

Regarding EJA management effectiveness, 68% of respondents answered that it is found when “there is a propositional, strict, professionally competent pedagogical leadership that values school staff and student performance.” Moreover, the proposition “there is training focused on practice, results, and difficulties involving the team, with certain control by the school regarding content and methodologies” was indicated by 32% of respondents.

Both checked propositions support the current literature. To Nigel Brooke (2014), a successful school is one that effectively teaches curriculum content and is concerned about the global student, as well as about value formation, ethics, citizenship, and providing opportunities. Extending this concept to EJA, in addition to those elements, it is possible to draw attention to the creation of job opportunities associated with training students to perform increasingly required professional activities.

Furthermore, developing creativity and adaptability are key to inserting youth and adults into conditions where they can benefit from the scarce job vacancies in such uncertain times as the current economic scenario, in addition to providing them with stability in those conditions. In the same interview as above, given to School Management magazine, Brooke (2014) highlights the variables impacting school result efficacy,

This study found different perspectives in the opinions of those occupying management positions and those who do not occupy such positions. When asked about management issues, those who were not in managerial positions highlighted the following aspects: a) “Propositional, collaborative, participative, democratic leadership -management puts forward proposals that support implementation of projects and welcomes opinions and suggestions”; b) “Understanding EJA peculiarities”; and c) “Effective and contextualized actions favoring industry workers’ learning.” Conversely, the managers mentioned the importance of teamwork, continuous training, competence management, a focus on results, and human and financial aspects as positive characteristics of management.

The managers did not mention the negative characteristics of “bureaucratic process,” “a high number of demands for a small team,” or “centralization of functions.” Instead, they emphasized the lack of financial autonomy, low wages, lack of resources, lack of teachers with EJA training, and workload as negative points. The other respondents mentioned the bureaucratic process, the large number of work demands, bad organization of each professional’s roles, and centralization of functions as negative aspects of management.

The positive aspects reported contradict the negative ones. On the one hand, participative, democratic leadership is mentioned; on the other, there is reference to the centralization of functions. The two items are contradictory. In a democratic, participative management, functions should not be centralized, but shared, favoring the participation and involvement of everyone.

Despite the observed contradictions, the participants regard participative management as a foundational to EJA/SESI/Bahia. The meaning of this model is discussed by Luck et al. (2012, p. 25):

The experiences observed around the world regarding democratic school management suggest that the essence of the participative approach and its precepts reside in the fact that school managers are capable professionals who work to manage schools.

Although the participants view participative management as important to a democratic education, this research shows that the youth and adult education management model implemented at SESI/Bahia has a participatory bias. Nonetheless, it diverges from democratic management concepts that are understood and employed in public institutions due to specific organizational characteristics of the institution. Consequently, it is believed that the democratic process has not been expanded, as proposed by Libâneo (2001), Lück (2012), and Amorim (2012). This would mean that the democratic

management involves the social subjects' validation to act on management and qualitative changes within educational institutions.

Regarding interpersonal relationships, it is important to have synergy among peers, team and work appreciation, affection, the participation of all individuals involved in the teaching/learning process, management and participative leadership, and democratization of access to the pedagogical process. Behavioral and procedural aspects such as teamwork and collaborative leadership, propositional leadership, and decentralization of responsibilities are vital in order for managers to reflect upon how they can contribute to the harmony of the organizational climate and participative management practice, facilitating the involvement of the whole team in the educational pathways. Barbosa *et al.* (1995, p. 3) describe that:

[...] to manage an organization is to promote a harmonic relationship between its various sectors so that it can achieve its objectives as perfectly and economically as possible. To manage is also to provide each sector or element department with methods, techniques, and tools that enable people to work productively and happily, according to the objectives of the organization.

Thus, the school as an organization of society must have objectives, principles, and values that strengthen an integration and ongoing dialogue among the members of the school community (AMORIM, 2007). There have been advances in the sense of increasing community participation in pedagogical decisions and implementing participatory management. The established changes are leading to greater school and local community participation in decisions regarding courses, curricula and programs, as well as management.

The collected information regarding school autonomy in EJA is summarized in Table 2. These data are quite representative, since participants selected the alternatives closest to what, in their understanding, is most significant.

TABLE 3. School autonomy

1. The management of EJA/SESI/Bahia has sought to collectively build autonomy through the implementation of participation channels and power sharing.	47%
2. The school community has not implemented effective actions to seek school autonomy.	21%
3. The school autonomy in the context of EJA is not yet being discussed.	21%
4. The school unit is self-contained, having the political, administrative, pedagogical conditions for this prerogative.	11%

Source: Study research data, 2017.

Concerning the EJA/SESI/Bahia management autonomy, 47% of the respondents stated that there is a collective effort to validate it; however, 21% of them highlighted that the school community has not executed actions relating to autonomy, and 21% of them declared that autonomy is not yet a theme discussed in the context of EJA. Results show that 42% of the interviewees contradict the 47% of respondents who claim that there is an effort toward autonomy. This reveals a possible dissatisfaction of interviewees regarding the management model implemented by EJA/SESI/Bahia.

Some definitions require greater reflection and debate, but in general, concern with autonomy is one of the concepts discussed by the EJA/SESI/Bahia professionals. The research results indicate that there are initiatives in place in pursuit of collective construction and participative management. Nonetheless, it has been found that there are improvements to be made, and the experienced management model was mentioned by 42% of the respondents in relation to school autonomy, as shown in Table 2 above.

Some of the respondents' opinions, selected from the open-ended questions of the survey, are listed below. They exemplify the interviewees' aspirations, but do not necessarily reflect the management model experienced at EJA/SESI/Bahia. The respondents are referred to by letters in order to preserve their anonymity. Respondent A declared that:

[...] school autonomy is linked to the freedom of regulating, idealizing, and operationalizing administrative and pedagogical aspects regarding society in the middle of constant and intense changes, so that the school can adapt in the best possible way.

Respondent B declared that institution autonomy is “[...] characterized by the decentralization of power, directing its efforts to maintain education quality through managing financial, legal, and pedagogical spheres.” Respondent C added, “The school should be a creative pathway consolidating various kinds of knowledge, always fostering the delegation of responsibilities, and creating communication and dialogue between areas that lead to meaningful learning.”

The statements above promoted necessary actions in relation to EJA/SESI/Bahia management autonomy, participation, and creativity. However, there is still a long way to go to master the autonomy that differs from the one experienced by government-managed schools. The opinions are focused on reflections on education and management, which highlights the importance of pedagogical and administrative autonomy, as well as creativity for knowledge consolidation.

[...] organization of the collaborative space so that it does not become empty, without objectives, and can be understood in its diversity. Spaces where education occurs in a democratic, contextualized way, with efficient planning, focused on the meaning of learning in the adult world.

In addition, a contribution by respondent C focuses on the importance of “an organization with a balance between financial and pedagogical administration. It must be disciplined and firm when it comes to decision making, although flexible enough to adapt to changes.” Similarly, respondent H views the following procedures as relevant:

[...] establishment of targets for all the people involved in the school; acting with a contextualized curriculum; material and financial resources available for the development of this modality considering teaching and learning quality; trained professionals; assessment of working professionals with established periods; and a correction plan for deviations.

The respondents identified some mechanisms to increase employee participation in EJA management according to the statements below. Respondent E mentioned that, to increase the participation of all people involved in the educational process, it is important to “promote participative management, research, and assessments in students’ educational processes, and to integrate the school community in decisions and develop collective actions at the school.”

Respondent A stated that to increase participation, it is important to implement the following activities:

Clear, objective meetings; efficient planning, based on collective construction with teachers; prioritizing methodologies to resonate with the young adult world; appreciating the worldviews and experiences that lead to learning.

The reflections indicate possible paths to be followed while seeking a better education to be provided to youth and adult education by SESI. Similarly, respondent B believes that it is important to:

[...] create a specific timetable for the participation of everyone in meetings requiring decision making in the public interest, and prepare balanced, clear, and quick agendas to foster continuous participation by the community.

It is possible that the meetings did not have robust attendance because there was no specific timetable and the agendas did not foster participant contribution. For this reason, respondent B suggested that the meetings be planned and organized, and have clear, explicit goals that are defined in a timetable so that everyone can be aware of them in advance and participate.

According to Libâneo (2001), the new tasks require managers to have the abilities to live collectively, manage increasingly complex environments, manage abstraction, manage emerging technologies, have a long-term vision, be willing to take responsibility for results, engage in communication skills (to know how to **speak** and listen), work with improvisation (creativity), hold an interest in theoretically basing his/her decisions, demonstrate a commitment to emancipation and employee autonomy, hold a pluralist view of situations, and maintain honesty, credibility, and awareness of opportunities and limitations.

For Castro, a manager's qualification to meet challenges and demands is crucial, requiring:

[...] a profound revision of training procedures in which the management's coordination, leadership, joining forces, and developing the institutional project are determining factors to improve education quality (CASTRO, 1998, p. 46).

The questionnaire also contained questions about the importance of the Political Pedagogical Project (PPP). A total of 63% of the responses confirmed that the PPP enables them to define goals and objectives and ways to achieve expected results, while 32% of them suggested it was a management tool that enables managers and official departments to be accountable for the school performance and 5% of them stated that the PPP was not fully effective, since their manager had no autonomy or resources to achieve the established goals.

The second question related to the PPP revealed that 58% of the interviewees believed in the collective construction of the PPP, with participation of management, pedagogical staff, teachers, parents, and students, while 42% of them chose other options that did not incorporate this participation. Of these, 11% of the respondents only referred to participation by the school principal's office and pedagogical staff, and 32% of them mentioned the school principal's office, the pedagogical team, and teachers as accountable for developing the PPP. Both alternatives excluded the students. It is worth noting that the main protagonists of the political pedagogical project are the subjects (the EJA students), and their participation in developing the PPP is essential.

Table 3 summarizes the most significant answers regarding the importance of quality in the EJA/SESI/Bahia education.

TABLE 4. Importance of the EJA/SESI/Bahia education quality

1. Teachers must commit more, but this commitment must be monitored by effective conditions in order for their work to be carried out successfully.	37%
2. This is not only a matter of teacher commitment; the organizational conditions and school operation hinder better results.	21%
3. Teachers should commit more; the implementation of performance assessment mechanisms according to work outcomes would be timely.	16%
4. Teachers are committed, but their work conditions do not facilitate their activity to the fullest level possible.	16%
5. This is a problem that concerns teachers in addition to the school principal's office and the technical team.	10%

Source: Study research data, 2017

As shown in the table above, 37% of the respondents believed that the educational institution working conditions interfered with their commitment to the work quality. In addition, 21% of them thought that work conditions at the school must be improved, and 16% of them also complained about work conditions at school. From these three percentages, it may be concluded that about 74% of the professionals were not satisfied with the institutional work conditions. However, 16% of them indicated a need for assessment of performance and results, while only 10% of them extended the problem to the managers and technical staff.

With this in mind, Perrenoud (1993, p. 94) states that,

[...] apparently, almost every criticism leveled at the school system is concentrated on the same scapegoat: teacher training of teachers, which is deemed too short, inadequate, insufficient, and outdated. Nevertheless, it does not deserve this honor or dignity!

Thus, the percentage of dissatisfaction of the people involved in EJA/SESI/Bahia was high. It is of paramount importance to discuss the causes leading to this effect so that the staff members (managers, teachers, and others) are not regarded as the villains of the educational system or as people who are not committed to work under specific conditions in a dignified way. In addition, a professional practice does not always include appropriate preparation for the reality of EJA in which a professional will act or is already acting.

Still, referring back to the aforementioned statement by Perrenoud, it makes no sense to entirely allocate such responsibility to teacher training; other aspects of dissatisfaction, like working conditions, also contribute to this overall sentiment.

FINAL REMARKS

The research on EJA/SESI/Bahia management practices enables researchers to understand the viewpoints and opinions of the nineteen participants (teachers, pedagogical coordinators, a manager, an educational leader, and a pedagogical assistant) professionally based in 11 cities in the state of Bahia. All of them worked as youth and adult education professionals at the Industry Social Service (SESI/Bahia). The subjects answered an online survey with open- and closed-ended questions about management practices, its predominant style, and its importance to the quality of Youth and Adult Education. The results, based on the respondents' perceptions, suggest that there is little participation of these professionals in management. They also reveal the importance of variables that need to be fostered on a daily basis to enhance quality, such as a thorough understanding of school management and the importance of participative democratic management in effective management. These are key factors for achieving the objectives proposed for the EJA.

Positive and negative characteristics inherent to EJA management were also mentioned. School autonomy was considered essential to its quality. The findings of the research demonstrate the importance of the involvement of different school segments in deliberations. Even though the PPP was viewed as an instrument of participation and dialogue, it was not fully put into practice due to limitations of resources and autonomy. This is one of the priorities that EJA must consider in the dynamic space of actions focused on enhancing EJA quality.

In conclusion, the desired goals of this study were met, for it was possible to deepen the understanding of the issues inherent in the EJA/SESI/Bahia management practice from the viewpoints and understanding of the people involved in its pedagogical activity and course management. The analysis of the data collected suggests strategies that are already in progress toward participative management. These strategies could foster responsible action and universal involvement in improving and updating the quality of managerial and teaching actions, and consequently, achieve better results. The contributions are relevant to the analysis of management

practices and teaching focused on quality improvement, citizenship building, and work training. This is the essence of the EJA/SESI/Bahia courses. The authors would like to thank all the people who agreed to participate in this study, enabling this study to be carried out.

The converging and diverging voices expressed during this research reveal contextualized views of the pedagogical and managerial development of EJA/SESI/Bahia and the search for new management styles. The analyses led to routes for constructive changes that must be undertaken by all professionals working in this field. It is of paramount importance to strive for a managerial daily routine with the following characteristics: a) the consolidation of creative teacher praxis from the participation of those involved, and b) participative management as the engine pushing the dynamic education to constantly improve according to the reality of innovations, work, and youth and adult student profiles and needs, fostering a willingness to improve and involving all parties as they take innovative, contextualized action.

The participants highlighted the importance of appropriate work conditions and the possibility of increasing the involvement of everyone in management and learning. In addition, they emphasized each person's role in learning, management, and democratic citizenship building and the values, competences, and attitudes required to enable them to properly develop young and adult people for a social and employment world in constant change; which is one of the objectives of EJA/SESI/Bahia.

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¹ <<http://www.tribunapr.com.br/noticias/brasil/como-em-1940-brasil-tem-16-milhoes-de-analfabetos/>>, Accessed on: May 16, 2016.

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