

DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS BY BOYS AND GIRLS OF THE TEACHERS' LEADERSHIP STYLES

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ABSTRACT

The teacher-student interaction can affect child development, and teachers' beliefs about the boys' and girls' behavior can influence their practices. This study aimed to analyze the boys' and girls' perception in the 5th grade of elementary school about their teachers' Leadership Styles. 98 children from a public school who responded to the Teacher Leadership Styles Inventory participated. The results showed that girls perceived teachers as more demanding ($p < 0.05$) and responsive ($p = 0.06$) than boys. A higher percentage of boys perceived the use of greater coercive control by teachers. As for styles, there was a significant difference between girls and boys ($p < 0.05$), highlighting the higher percentage of boys who perceived their teachers as characteristics of negligent style. It was concluded that there were different perceptions between boys and girls about teachers, which is something important to be considered in intervention strategies in the school context.

Keywords: teacher characteristics; teacher student interaction; elementary school

Distintas percepciones de niños y niñas sobre los estilos de liderazgo de profesoras

RESUMEN

La interacción profesor(a)-alumno(a) puede repercutir sobre el desarrollo infantil, siendo que creencias de profesores(as) acerca del comportamiento de niños y niñas pueden influenciar sus prácticas. El estudio tuvo por objetivo analizar la percepción de niños y niñas de 5º curso de la Enseñanza Fundamental sobre los Estilos de Liderazgo de sus profesoras. Participaron 98 niños de una escuela pública que respondieron al Inventario de Estilos de Liderazgo de Profesores. Los resultados apuntaron que niñas percibieron las profesoras como más exigentes ($p < 0,05$) y responsivas ($p = 0,06$) de que niños. Mayor porcentaje de niños percibió utilización de más alto control coercitivo por parte de las profesoras. referente a los estilos, hubo diferencia significativa entre niñas y niños ($p < 0,05$), destacándose el porcentaje mayor de niños que percibió sus profesoras como características del estilo negligente. Se concluye que hubo distintas percepciones entre niños y niñas sobre profesoras, siendo algo importante a ser considerado en estrategias de intervención en el contexto escolar.

Palabras clave: características del profesor; interacción profesor-alumno; enseñanza básica

Diferentes percepções de meninos e meninas sobre os estilos de liderança de professoras

RESUMO

A interação professor(a)-aluno(a) pode repercutir sobre o desenvolvimento infantil, sendo que crenças de professores(as) acerca do comportamento de meninos e meninas podem influenciar suas práticas. O estudo objetivou analisar a percepção de meninos e meninas de 5º ano do Ensino Fundamental sobre os Estilos de Liderança de suas professoras. Participaram 98 crianças de uma escola pública que responderam ao Inventário de Estilos de Liderança de Professores. Os resultados mostraram que meninas perceberam as professoras como mais exigentes ($p < 0,05$) e responsivas ($p = 0,06$) do que meninos. Maior porcentagem de meninos percebeu a utilização de mais alto controle coercitivo por parte das professoras. Quanto aos estilos, houve diferença significativa entre meninas e meninos ($p < 0,05$), destacando-se a porcentagem maior de meninos que percebeu suas professoras como características do estilo negligente. Concluiu-se que houve diferentes percepções entre meninos e meninas sobre professoras, sendo algo importante a ser considerado em estratégias de intervenção no contexto escolar.

Palavras-chave: características do professor; interação professor-aluno; ensino fundamental

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout childhood, the contexts in which a child is inserted are fundamental for personal development. Be it in the family or at school, the relations established in these environments are conducive to the learning of important behaviors when it comes to the development of social behaviors, and the comprehension of values and norms that regulate life in society, according to Del Prette and Del Prette (2017).

The school environment is conducive to the development of interpersonal relations because the children learn, by means of the diverse relations constituted in that environment, academic and social behaviors (Dias, 2016). Besides that, according to Batista and Weber (2015), the interactions in the school environment, especially between teacher¹ and students, might lead to both cognitive development as well as the child's general development. To Osti and Brenelli (2013), the classroom establishes itself as a rich space for the exchange of knowledge and affection between teachers and students.

Some of the factors that influence learning and the quality of the teacher-student relation refer to the role played by the teacher and its characteristics. In addition to academic knowledge, several other features are highlighted by Martini and Del Prette (2002) as part of the pedagogical practice, that is, the beliefs, expectations, feelings, and skills possessed by the teachers.

The effective pedagogical practice will depend on the situations that occur in a classroom, based on the interactions between the children and the teacher (Novak & Pelaez, 2004). Therefore, the way the teacher perceives the students can be either a facilitator or an obstacle for a relationship and the creation of a connection, affecting the children's performance. According to Osti and Brenelli (2013):

The teachers' representation of the students works not only as a filter, which guides teachers into an interpretation of what the students do, but also as a means to deal the learned content and respond differently to progress and difficulties (p. 56).

These authors state that children build perceptions on themselves and might end up behaving according to the teacher's expectations, which are based on individual values and beliefs. Numerous elements might have influence on this system of expectations, including a child's gender.

¹ In the present article, the female version for the term "teacher", in Portuguese, "professora", will be used because most professionals in this area are women. However, when other authors are mentioned, the term they have employed will be used.

Society displays differences in race, class, and gender. Thus, we are all under the influence of these differences and they end up reverberating on the way children are assessed in their education process.

Concerning gender, this concept leads to a comprehension of the meaning of the complex interactions present in our society. It is a central part of the social relations and structures the perception and organization of all social life (Scott, 1995).

Based on this concept, it is possible to identify the naturalization of certain behaviors, attitudes, and experiences considered inherent to the Physiology of bodies and that are imposed by society and my culture. From a very early age, children end up developing behaviors based on expectations. Boys and girls are educated differently in order to live up to distinct expectations that are considered most suitable for a given context, and social or historical period. Such difference takes place in education as well, where boys and girls are educated in different ways by means of the modes of interaction between family members, teachers, and these children.

If, on the one hand, it is possible to observe the control of aggressiveness on girls, on the other hand, boys go through a similar process though in the opposite direction. Boys are not allowed to express feelings of sweet affection, or sensibility. The toys given to children loaded with expectations, symbology, and intentions. the expectations concerning the differences in behavior expected for boys and girls, justified by biological differences, end up leading to distinct body experiences [...] (Vianna & Finco, 2009, p. 273).

These inequalities can also be observed in the school environment; according to Barbosa, Campos and Valentim (2011) for example, when teachers report having a more affectionate relation with girls, and a more conflict-ridden one with boys. In the study by Carvalho (2009), it was possible to observe that features tend to construct a more negative view on boys, especially the ones from low-income families and Afro-descendants, which leads them to the necessity of tutoring lessons even though they have no learning problems. Such prejudice is justified by the fact that these children have difficulty in displaying behaviors considered essential to the school environment. According to the author, this is not a matter of learning. It is a matter of socially expected behaviors that would be obsolete.

Rodrigues and Mazotti (2013) assessed the relation between academic failure and the declared gender of the students. In a survey with 10,338 children, it was possible to verify that there was a statistically significant association between gender and the rate of failure. Also,

when the authors interviewed part of the group of the teachers on what they considered good student to be, they obtained in the answers diverse characteristics seen as typically female: “[...] the girl is sweet, quiet, obedient, never talks back, accomplishes all tasks, that is something that she has learned at home ...; whereas the boy is undisciplined, rebellious, impolite, restless, and disrespectful to the teacher” (p. 55).

Regarding academic performance, in the study by Osti and Brenelli (2013), 40 children were indicated by their teachers, while 20 of them presented satisfactory academic performance and 20 presented poor academic performance. Results demonstrated that in the group with satisfactory academic performance, 63% of the participants were female, whereas in the group with poor academic performance, 85% were male.

Koepke and Harkins (2008) investigating the gender differences in the teacher-student relation based on the teacher’s perspective and on the child’s perspective by means of the *Student-Teacher Relationship Scale*, an instrument developed by Pianta (2001), and applied on 35 teachers and 698 children. According to the results, the teachers perceived their relations with the boys as being more distant and conflict-ridden, whereas with the girls, the relation was perceived as being closer and less troubled. From the students’ point of view, boys and girls perceive their relationships with the teachers as not as close as the way it was reported by the teachers and, besides that, the boys classified their relation with the teacher as troubled more often than the girls did.

Rudasill and Rimm-Kaufman (2009) also point at the difference in perception by teachers of boys and girls. Based on their studies, the authors point at the fact that girls are more likely to keep closer relations while students are more likely to keep troubled relations. Mariano and Bolsoni-Silva (2016) verified in their study that the teachers were less tactful and more punitive with the male students and, also, the girls displayed higher rates for social skills and fewer behavioral problems. Xavier (2018), by analyzing the perceptions of teachers concerning the students’ performance in mathematics, noticed that the teachers perceived differences in the performance of boys and girls. The author reported that, at a first moment, but teachers said that they did not notice any differences because they were afraid of seeming prejudiced with that statement. However, it was possible to perceive that the form of classification took place by means of the students’ behavior, while good behavior was associated to good performance in mathematics.

Based on the aforementioned studies, it is possible to observe that gender is a variable that can influence the behavior of teachers. It is essential that we do not naturalize differences instead of searching for means to reflect and analyze in depth such matters in order to

understand how they can reverberate in the present relations in the school context and in the students learning. It is known that the role played by teachers is fundamental and that their commitment to education is related to their mediation of the children’s learning and social relations. As a result, it is important to highlight the fact that a negative environment in the classroom, with coercion practices by the teachers might do damage to diverse aspects of a child’s development, according to Batista (2013).

Therefore, it is important to pay careful attention to the Kind of relationship teachers cultivate with their students, because when child notices that the teacher does not have good expectations concerning their potential performance, it is very likely that this child Will take the blame for the lack of learning conditions. Besides that, the relations established between teachers and students are important for the whole educational process, and the students’ interest in learning depends on the quality of this interaction. According to Osti and Martinelli (2014, p. 10): “The relations with knowledge are influenced by learning experiences, which can either benefit or hinder interest, creativity, motivation, and other necessary factors for learning”.

In order to better understand the interaction between teachers and students, researchers used the theoretical model named Teachers’ Styles of Leadership, described by Batista and Weber (2015, p. 28) as a “Set of attitudes directed at the studio, which when in combination, create an emotional environment where behaviors are expressed, Moderating the effectiveness of a particular practice and altering the receptiveness of the child regarding the teaching-learning process.”

3 constructs make up this theoretical model: demand, responsiveness, and coercive control. Demand refers to the teachers’ capacity to supervision, monitor, and control the student’s behavior in an attempt to make them follow rules and respect limitations in the classroom and in the school environment as well. Responsiveness is connected to the teachers’ behavior when it comes to expressing affection, demonstrating interest and commitment with the general well-being of the students, having good communication skills, and making an effort to keep a happy, pleasant environment in the classroom. Finally, coercive control refers to behaviors that the teachers display that end up creating a negative/adverse environment in the classroom, in which the inadequate threats and punishments to the children’s behavior are disconnected to pre-established rules (Batista & Weber, 2015; Batista, 2013).

The behaviors analyzed within the theoretical constructs for demand and responsiveness were crossed and identified four styles of leadership: authoritarian, permissive, negligent, and authority, while coercive control is assessed separately. The authoritarian control

can be characterized as the one that values order and discipline in the classroom would be the predominance of demanding behaviors rather than responsive behaviors. The permissive style is characterized by more responsive behaviors rather than demanding ones. Most often, rules are created but not followed. The negligent style refers to a low frequency of both demanding behaviors and responsiveness behaviors. At last, the authority style displays a balance between responsiveness and demand, and it is the style that yields the most benefits for the students (Batista & Weber, 2015; Batista, 2013).

Based on the theoretical model presented, Batista (2013) developed the Inventory of Teachers' Leadership Styles (IELP) in an attempt to identify the leadership style of teachers of the 4th and 5th years of elementary school. With the use of this instrument, it is possible to get to know more about the style of each teacher and, as a result, search for better ways to intervene in the classroom context and in the children's relations with their teachers.

Studies in the Teachers' Leadership Styles are still relatively recent. It is important to emphasize the necessity of more studies that assess such styles and relate them with different variables that influence the teacher-student relation and other situations of the academic context. It is known that the classroom behavior of teachers might influence the development of children and can be either a protection or a risk factor, depending on configuration (Batista & Weber, 2015). Considering the importance of this relation for the socioemotional and cognitive functioning of children, it is necessary to propose investigations that focus on a better comprehension of the aspects of the teacher-student interaction, while searching for better understanding of the gender differences that influence such interaction. Thus, the present research intends to contribute to this literature and foster new discussions on the topic by means of an analysis that helps the perception by boys and girls from the 5th year of elementary school on the teachers' leadership styles.

METHOD

Participants

The research was realized with 98 students from four classes of the 5th year of elementary school at a public school in the municipality in the countryside of Paraná. 44.89% of the participants were girls and 55.1% were boys. The age of the children ranged between 9 and 12 years while most of them were ten years old (70,4%).

Instrument

The inventory for teachers' leadership styles – IELP (Batista, 2013; Batista & Weber, 2015), complete version, displays a total number of 56 items that describe situations and behaviors related to the

teacher, and the children are supposed to report the frequency at which such situations and behaviors occur by choosing alternatives such as "never or almost never", "sometimes", or "always or almost always", which characterizes it as a Likert scale of three points. Out of the presented items, 21 refer to the scale for responsiveness, the demand scale was made up of 16 items, and the coercive control scale was composed by 19 items. The IELP filled out by each participant is corrected in accordance with the value proposed for each answer, that is, for "never almost never", value 1 will be attributed. To "sometimes", value 2. To "always or almost always", value 3. After that, researchers added the values representing the answers by each participant, and thus gross scores were obtained along with the percentage referring to the skills for responsiveness, demand, and coercive control. For each scale, researchers check the normative table for the obtained classification for the frequency at which the educational practices by the teachers take place, the categories are "low frequency", "tendency to low frequency", "tendency to high frequency", and "high frequency". After crossing the information concerning the demand and responsiveness dimensions, it is possible to establish the leadership styles corresponding to each participant as authoritarian, permissive, negligent, or authority. This article mentions only the leadership styles and not the types according to the frequency of such practices. Coercive control is analyzed separately and can be classified as "low", "tendency to low", "tendency to high", or "high", depending on the frequency of the teachers' behaviors, which were being classified by means of the normative table.

Procedures

After approval by the research Ethics Committee (approval protocol 90738518.7.0000.016), researchers contacted the school in order to know whether they were available to participate in the study. After all participants became aware of the research, volunteered to take part, and the students read and signed the free informed consent term (TCLE), researchers started collecting data. The application of the Inventory for Teachers' Leadership Styles (IELP) took place with four classes of the fifth year of elementary school.

The IELP (Batista, 2013) on each one of the four classes in a collective way at the time of class in the classroom environment. The application was conducted by the researcher and by a research assistant, who was suitably trained to do it. Initially, researchers presented the project, and explained the confidentiality of data and the fact that participation was voluntary. Participants signed the consent term and were required not to talk to each other during the application of the instrument. They were also instructed to raise their hands if they had any questions. The teachers of each class did not stay in

the classroom during the gathering of data. There were explanations concerning the completion and the types of answers provided to the IELP. Researchers read each item out loud while the teachers provided answers or had their questions answered during the application. The application lasted an average of 30 minutes for each class.

Data analysis

In order to analyze data, a correction of the instrument was realized with the Batista and Weber (2015) manual and researchers employed the *Statis* software. In addition to the verification of data normality and the use of Student's T and Chi-squared Distribution tests. Based from the obtained results, researchers analyzed the average score in the responsiveness and demand constructs. For coercive control, there was analysis of the four types.

RESULTS

Initially, researchers verified the distribution normality of the research data by means of an observation of the: (a) The *Kolmogorov-Smirnov test*, in which the P value must be greater than 0,05 in order to indicate the normal distribution of data, while the value obtained in this research was $p > 0,05$ and (b) the analysis of the histogram for an observation of the distribution of the frequency of obtained scores, why are the bell shape hence at normal distribution, which was the case of the data of the present research as well. Therefore, researchers chose to use the parametric inferential statistical analysis in the comparison between groups, while the student's T test was used. Figure 1 presents data referring to the perception by boys and girls regarding the scales for responsiveness and demand.

In Figure 1, it is possible to observe that the score for the demand dimension who is higher for girls than for

boys, and the researchers found a statistically significant difference between these groups ($t: -2,962$, $p < 0,05$). For the responsiveness scale, researchers observed that the average of scores who was also greater for girls than for boys, and it was possible to detect a tendency the statistically significant difference between these groups ($t: -1,857$, $p = 0,06$).

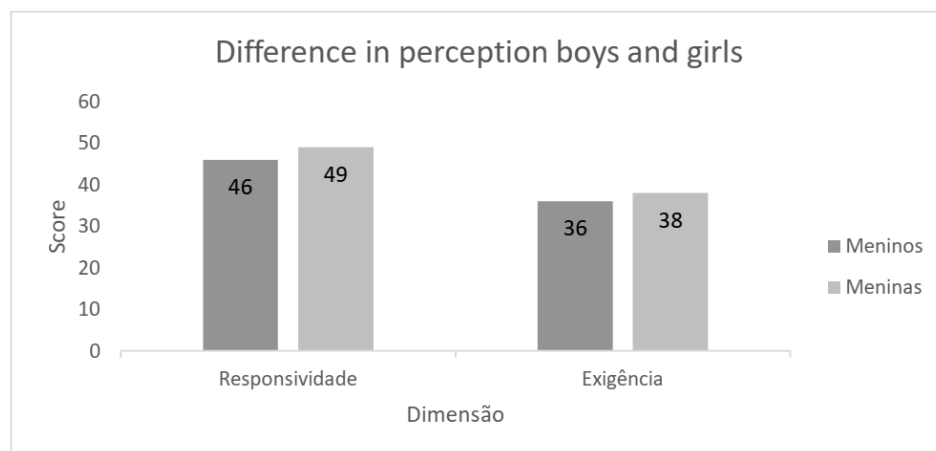
Figure 2 displays the distribution of the answers among the types of coercive control perceived by boys and girls.

In Figure 2, it is possible to observe that a greater number of boys perceived the coercive control of type 3 (tendency to high frequency) and of type 4 (high frequency) brain compared to girls for the same types of coercive control. For types 1 (low frequency) and 2 (tendency to low frequency), more girls perceived the coercive control. In the comparison of the average score by girls and boys this scale, researchers did not find any statistically significant differences.

Concerning the perception of the teachers' leadership styles by the children, Figure 3 displayed the four styles and the percentage of students who received each one of them.

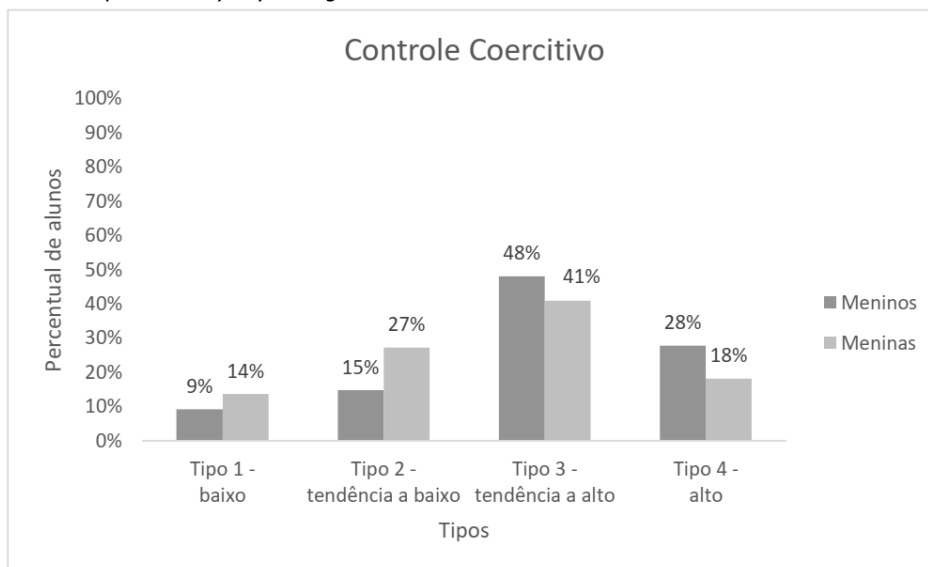
Based on the Chi-squared test result, researchers observed that there is a statistically significant relation ($\chi^2 = 9,53$, $gl = 3$, $p < 0,05$) between the groups (boys and girls) and the leadership styles adopted by the teachers. Researchers found a higher frequency of boys that perceived teachers as negligent. It is important to emphasize that 74.1% of the boys perceived the teachers as negligence when compared to 50% of the girls. The second most perceived style by both groups was the permissive one, in which 20.45% of the girls and 18.51% of the boys perceived this style in their teacher. Concerning the authority and authoritarian style, the girls characterized their teachers with a higher

Figure 1. Difference in perception by boys and girls regarding the responsiveness and demand dimensions.



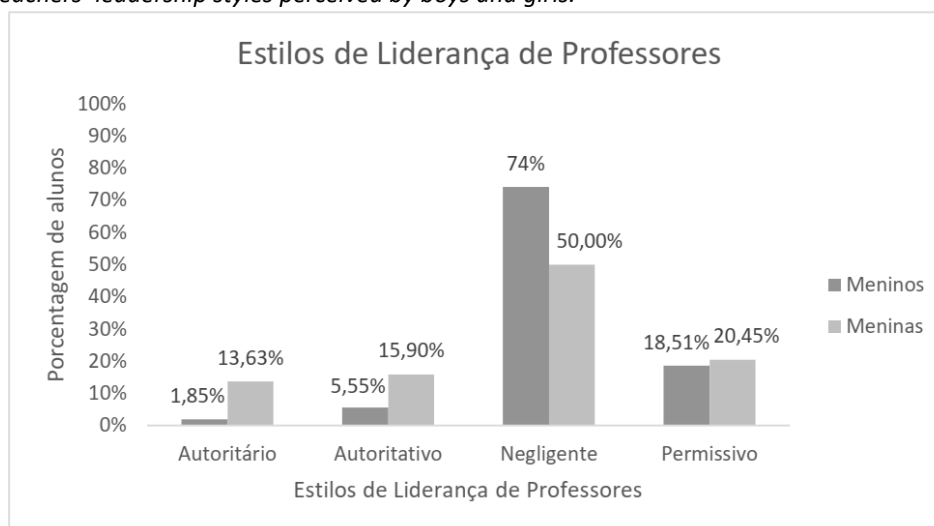
Meninos: boys; Meninas: girls; Responsividade: responsiveness; Dimensão: dimension; Exigência: demand

Figure 2. Coercive control perceived by boys and girls.



Controle coercivo: coercive control; Percentual de alunos: percentage of students; Meninos: boys; Meninas: girls; Tipo 1 baixo: type 1 low; Tipo 2 tendencia a baixo: type 2 tendency to low; Tipo 3 tendencia a alto: type 3 tendency to high; Tipo 4 alto: type 4 high

Figure 3. Teachers' leadership styles perceived by boys and girls.



Estilos de liderança dos professores: teachers' leadership styles; Porcentagem de alunos: percentage of students; Meninos: boys; Meninas: girls; Autoritário: authoritarian; Autoritativo: authority; Negligente: negligent; Permissivo: permissive

frequency for behaviors referring to these two styles than the boys did.

DISCUSSION

In general, the results of the present study demonstrate that boys and girls perceived differently the educational practices that make up the leadership styles of their teachers. Subsequently, we raised the issue of how much the perception of difference of gender by teachers might influence the educational practices that they use in the classroom, which consequently

reverberates on the perception by children of such practices and leadership styles.

Gender, according to Scott (1995), consists of the differences between men and women based on a cultural and historical character, rather than merely biological. It is a central component of the social relations and of the construction of differences, "Gender, therefore, provides a means to decode the meaning of understanding the complex connections between the diverse forms of human interaction" (p. 89).

School, because it is one of the most important

environments in which children are inserted and where they stay for a considerable length of time, might contribute with its social character to the formation of gender roles, since the gender relations are present in the students' socialization process. According to Ruis and Perez (2017), during classroom practices, teachers most often reinforce female and male stereotypes by means of expectations and demands regarding behavior patterns by each student, which is a reflection of the way children are educated.

Based on the point of view that the gender differences are taught and constructed within a process - and it is also influenced by the interaction between teachers and students - it is possible to reflect, from a different point of view, on how all this reverberates on the perceptions by boys and girls concerning the educational practices used by their teachers. Osti and Martinelli (2013) point to the fact that the teaching learning process is influenced by the relations that are established in the classroom context. This reflects on the perceptions that the students will have on performance and on teachers' expectations, in a relation of mutual influence: the way a student perceives their relationship with teachers reverberates in their performance and behavior in the classroom. Batista (2013) also highlights the relation of reciprocal influence between the behaviors of teachers and students.

Thus, the behaviors and characteristics of the children also contribute to the teachers' perception and influence the way each teacher behaves for each student, which reverberates on the way every relation takes place.

A study realized by Bayraktar (2011) attempted to assess the possible influences have gender on the interactions between teacher and student based on the observation of the relation of the students with the teacher at the moment of correction of texts produced by the students. Researchers analyzed the number and function of the questions, the frequency of conversations, compliments, speech and interruptions made by the teacher curious it was verified that the teacher presented different styles of correction depending on the gender of the student, and for the girls, the corrections took longer, were more focused, provided more feedback, and the girls were more active. In addition, it was possible to observe that, by means of the scale for self- efficiency applied and on the produced texts, but the girls were more confident and competent than the boys regarding academic activities, such as writing.

Other authors also studied this difference and affirm that but teachers reported the boys as being more undisciplined, aggressive, and disobedient (Silva, Halpern, & Silva, 1999; Rudasill, 2011; Maia, Navarro, & Maia, 2011). In the present study, researchers

concerning the teachers' leadership styles, while 74% of the boy's sample perceived their teachers as negligent, that is, displaying low responsiveness and low demand, while 50% of the girls shared the same perception. 76% of the boys perceived coercive control as high or with a tendency to high, while 59% of girls shared the same perception. This type of relation, more distant and with a high level of adversity, might lead to a troubled relation between boys and their teachers, and have an impact on their future relations. Rudasill (2011) found a similar result by assessing, in a longitudinal study, the relations between general and the quality of relation between teacher and students in the first and third years, among other variables. In this study, it was observed that boys have a greater probability to have conflict with their teachers in the first year than girls do, and likewise, and the third year, teachers were more likely to assess the relation with boys as being more troubled than with girls' period to the author, these data suggest that there are interaction patterns being perpetuated along the years.

We wish to emphasize the importance of paying attention to the influence of coercive control on but children's development. Sidman (1989/2003) states that the presence of coercive control reverberates negatively on a child's relation with school, leading this child to find ways to escape or avoid situations of punishment, which is something that does not contribute do the teaching of behavior is more adequate to the school environment. In addition, students very often get angry at school, and that leads to cases of vandalism against the school, as well as physical or verbal aggression against teachers, according to accounts by Skinner (1968/1972).

Still concerning the results found in the present study, it was possible to observe that girls perceived their teachers as being more permissive, authority type, authoritarian, and with lesser frequency of coercive control than the boys did. In the demand dimension, the score average for girls was higher than the one for boys and researchers found statistically significant values. In the responsiveness dimension, the values were also greater for the group of girls and had a tendency to be statistically significant. Therefore, it is possible to say that there is better interaction between the teachers and the girls than with the boys. Maia et al. (2011) point out, in their study, that the teachers stated that there were differences in the management of teaching, wild girls were favorably seen as better, because they were "more responsible and dedicated, which made them more suitable for learning" (p. 36). This rather positive perception by the teachers regarding the girls can be a variable that leads to a more positive environment in the interaction with the girls and might have an impact the way the girls see that relation, as in the present study in which the girls demonstrated a lesser perception of

coercive control exercised by their teachers.

Likewise, a study realized in Spain by Menédez (2010) verified that a great part of the teachers were more interested in the girls how would they considered to be more obedient and better behaved, whereas the boys were seen as more agitated, careless, and less focused. The author also states that because they display adequate behaviors and are regarded well in the school environment, such characteristics of the girls end up facilitating their relations in the classroom, while contributing to the creation of a more positive environment for learning and influencing a more positive perception by girls concerning their teachers.

Gardinal and Marturano (2007), in a study realized for child education, also observed that the teachers, when assessing the performance and behaviors of their students, considered the behavior of girls more positively than the one by boys. The teachers described the boys as more aggressive, disrespectful, disobedient, and impulsive. In contrast, the girls were more respectful, tolerant, and self-controlled in the teachers view.

In another study (Maia et al., 2011), it was possible to verify that, in the teachers' discourse, many affirmed that there were no differences between the genders concerning the behaviors displayed in the classroom and in the relation with the teacher. However, the authors detected that, most often, gender ended up influencing expectations and teachers' practices with the students. Thus, they emphasize the necessity to increase the number of discussions on gender in the school environment and of advertising scientific productions in the area but aim at elaborating pedagogical resources in order to prevent inequality in the treatment for boys and girls.

Based on what has been exposed, it is possible to observe that the data from the present study are in accordance with data from literature when it comes to the existence of difference in the teacher-student interaction caused by gender. However, here we have tried to assess the perception by boys and girls on that relation. Many of the presented studies have already assessed the perception by teachers regarding differences in this interaction. Anyway, there is consonance between the Bush studies regarding the importance of considering the effect of the gender variable, especially when it comes to proposing strategies of intervention on the teacher student interaction in the school environment.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

With the present study, it was possible to verify the differences in the perceptions that boys and girls have regarding the leadership styles of their teachers, while the boys more often perceived practices connected to

the negligent style, that is, they noticed fewer practices related to demand and responsiveness. Besides that, the boys also detected a higher frequency of coercive control.

As limitations to this research work, we can point out that the sample of students who answered the inventory was relatively small, and the application of the instrument on a greater number of students in order to get a wider assessment is advisable. For future studies, we recommend that the inventory be combined with other methods for data collection, such as classroom observations, interviews with teachers on their conceptions over boys and girls, and interviews with the children themselves in order to produce a greater abundance of data and information as the foundation for this discussion. This will contribute to a wider analysis by also considering the perception of teachers on the relation with students, as well as in order to analyze the influence of the teacher's gender on this relation.

The present study concludes that there are differences in the perceptions by boys and girls on the practices used in the classroom by the teachers, which might have reverberations on the quality of established interactions and on the children's development.

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