SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY FOR PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION AT THE IFPIs: DEMANDS, PRACTICES, AND SIGNS OF CRITICALITY

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ABSTRACT

This field research aimed to analyze the practices developed by school psychologists at the Federal Institutes of Education, Science and Technology of Piauí (IFPIs). Ten school psychologists participated in the study. The theoretical and methodological assumptions of Cultural-Historical Psychology were used. Data analysis was carried out by means of empirical and theoretical descriptions, of the establishment of units of analysis, and of a return to the reality of the data with the objective to provide explanations. Results indicated that the practices developed by school psychologists encompassed actions with individual and collective focuses with the various social actors of the institution and in view of the different levels and / or educational modalities, suggesting traditional and emerging ways of acting. Evidence of criticality was perceived in the practice of psychologists, as there was a movement towards a change from a clinical perspective to an institutional perspective in Educational Psychology, considering the different educational segments and the institutional territory itself and its relations with the political, economic, and cultural context.

Keywords: psychologist's performance; educational psychology; professional education.

Psicología Escolar y Educación Profesional y Tecnológica en los IFPIs: demandas, prácticas e indicios de criticidad

RESUMEN

En esta investigación de campo se tuvo por objetivo analizar las prácticas desarrolladas por las psicólogas escolares en los Institutos Federales de Educación, Ciencia y Tecnología de Piauí (IFPIs). Participaron del estudio diez psicólogas escolares. Se utilizó los presupuestos teóricos y metodológicos de la Psicología Histórico-Cultural. El análisis de los datos sucedió en la realización de descripción empírica y teórica, en el establecimiento de unidades de análisis y en el retorno a la realidad de los datos para explicarlos. Los resultados indicaron que las prácticas desarrolladas por las psicólogas escolares abarcaron acciones con enfoque individual y colectivo junto a los variados actores sociales de la institución y delante de los diversos niveles y/o modalidades educacionales, sugiriendo formas de actuación tradicionales y emergentes. Se percibió indicios de criticidad en la práctica de las psicólogas, a la medida que se notó movimiento de cambio de una perspectiva clínica para una perspectiva institucional en Psicología Escolar, pensando los diferentes segmentos educacionales y el propio territorio institucional y sus relaciones con el contexto político, económico y cultural.

Palabras clave: actuación del psicólogo; psicología escolar; educación profesional.

Psicologia Escolar e Educação Profissional e Tecnológica nos IFPIs: demandas, práticas e indícios de criticidade

RESUMO

Esta pesquisa de campo objetivou analisar as práticas desenvolvidas pelas psicólogas escolares nos Institutos Federais de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia do Piauí (IFPIs). Participaram do estudo dez psicólogas escolares. Fez-se uso dos pressupostos teóricos e metodológicos da Psicologia Histórico-Cultural. A análise dos dados foi realizada a partir das descrições empírica e teórica, no estabelecimento de unidades de análise e no retorno à realidade dos dados para explicá-los. Os resultados indicaram que as práticas desenvolvidas pelas psicólogas escolares abrangeram ações com foco individual e coletivo junto aos variados atores sociais da instituição e diante dos diversos níveis e/ou modalidades educacionais, sugerindo formas de atuação tradicionais e emergentes. Perceberam-se indícios de criticidade na prática das psicólogas, à medida que se notou movimento de mudança de uma perspectiva clínica para uma perspectiva institucional em Psicologia Escolar, pensando os diferentes segmentos educacionais e o próprio território institucional e suas relações com o contexto político, econômico e cultural.

Palavras-chave: atuação do psicólogo; psicologia escolar; educação profissional.

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INTRODUCTION

The practice of educational psychologists began in elementary school (Santana, Pereira, & Rodrigues, 2014). In Brazil, Psychology was introduced to schools by means of a clinical model, based on a reductionist conception of school failure that held students accountable and provided schools with a much longed-for opportunity to assess, process, and fix "problem students" (Oliveira-Menegotto & Fontoura, 2015). However, studies by Maria Helena Souza Patto, such as: *Psychology and ideology: an introduction to school psychology* (1987), *The production of student failure: stories of submission and rebellion* (1990), and *Introduction to School Psychology* (1981), were milestones for other theoretical-critical studies in the area.

These works promoted a better understanding of the multiple factors that determine student failure and hinted at the beginning of a more critical Educational Psychology by problematizing the schooling process, while placing special emphasis on context and multiple educational actors. This was the beginning of a new moment for education. The recognition of Educational Psychology as an instrument at the service of dominant ideologies was an important step to transform it into Critical Psychology (Brasil, 2012).

It is considered that the theoretical perspective of Historical-Cultural Psychology provides the basis for practices that favor educational psychologists as mediators of educational relations. As possibilities, there is the development of actions with teachers, students, families, staff members, as well as other actors of the school community, overcoming palliative measures with an emphasis on the student. Such measures were characteristic of the beginning of Educational Psychology (Federal Council of Psychology, 2013; Tanamachi & Meira, 2003).

Law No. 11.892, of December 29 2008, created the Federal Institutes of Education, Science and Technology (IFETs), institutions offering basic, professional, and higher education, constituting educational spaces that include a diversity of levels and/or modalities of teaching (Brasil, 2008). The emergence of these educational institutions, together with their internalization process, resulted in an increase in the number of psychologists working in these spaces and, consequently, in Professional and Technological Education. Like the other Brazilian states, Piauí also experienced this expansionist reality. In 2009, the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Piauí (IFPI) had only five *Campi* in operation (IFPI, 2014). In 2018, it already had 21 units.

In the Brazilian scenario, Vocational Education was marked, initially, by a certain degree of welfarism, aimed at providing underprivileged social classes with professional training. In this way, Vocational Education was aimed at the popular classes, and Higher Education had its focus on the more privileged classes (Lima, Silva, & Silva, 2015).

At the beginning of the 21st century, Professional Education began to take over, in governments, the central discourse over an educational modality designed for providing young people, especially, with training and preparation for entering the labor market, and for ensuring the development and economic growth of the country (Lima et al. 2015).

At the same time, it is essential that these young people have access to an education that results in emancipation and not only in the production of technically trained individuals as fodder for capitalism. Professional Education no longer maintained its professional-qualification bias and turned towards the proposal of more comprehensive training for students (Lima et al. 2015). With this change of perspective, the psychologists' contribution in the field of Professional and Technological Education, especially due to the creation of the IFETs, is considered paramount and rich in possibilities.

There are few investigations in theses and dissertations emphasizing a specific regional context, especially the practices of the educational psychologists in Professional and Technological Education at the IFETs (Fonseca & Negreiros, 2019). Thus, this study aimed to analyze the practices developed by educational psychologists at the IFPIs, in the light of Historical-Cultural Psychology.

METHOD

Outline

This research adopted the theoretical and methodological assumptions of Cultural-Historical Psychology, based on the historical-dialectical materialist method (Lukács, 1967; Vigotsky, 2000/1934), and inspired by the analysis model used in Asbahr's doctoral thesis (2011).

Historical-dialectical materialism considers that "the understanding of phenomena in their procedural nature and totality will only find support in the dialectics of singularity, particularity, and universality" (Alves, 2010, p.08). The singularity of a phenomenon reveals itself in its immediacy. The universality of a phenomenon reveals itself in its complexity, its essence, and its social-historical totality. The particularity of a phenomenon reveals itself in the identification and tension between singularity and universality (Luke, 1970).

Therefore, our analysis is based on an understanding of the singularity, particularity, and universality of the practices developed by educational psychologists at the IFPIs, according to illustration 01.

Participants and Research Context

Ten educational psychologists from nine IFPI Campuses participated in the study, (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5,

P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10). Below, illustration 02 shows the IFPI units contemplated in the research, i.e.: Angical, Cocal, Corrente, Floriano, Oeiras, Parnaíba, Picos, Piripiri, and Teresina Zona Sul. There are IFPIs in the four mesoregions of Piaui (north; central-north; southeast; southwest).
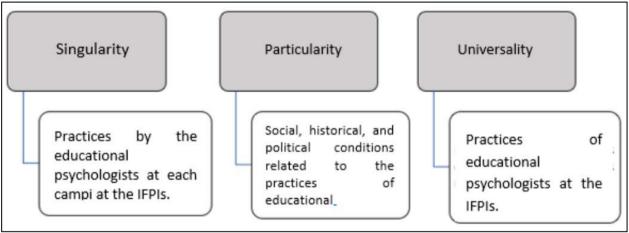
Procedures for the Gathering of Research Data and Ethical Matters

This research obtained institutional authorization from the IFPI with approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Piauí (UFPI), decision number 6,139,948.
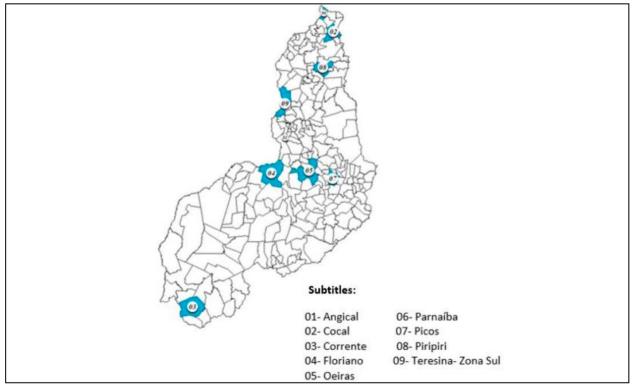
For the gathering of data, it was necessary to carry out a survey of the research context (see illustration 2), based on a script of institutional characterization and investigation in the area of activity of the IFPI psychologists, and a questionnaire on sociodemographic, professional data. Then, semi-structured interviews were conducted with educational psychologists working

Illustration 01. *Dialectical singularity-particularity-universality of the study.*

Source: Authors' (2018), inspired by Asbahr's study (2011).

Illustration 02. *IFPIs units contemplated in this study.*

Subtitles:

01- Angical
02- Cocal
03- Corrente
04- Floriano
05- Oeiras
06- Parnaíba
07- Picos
08- Piripiri
09- Teresina- Zona Sul

Source: the authors (2018).

at the IFPIs.

Analytical Research Procedures

In the Cultural-Historical Psychology Method, analytical procedures started with the seizure of *what was real and immediate and the initial, chaotic representation of the whole* (Luke, 1967), from the collected data, which evidenced the appearance of the phenomenon. Then, empirical description *was carried out, i*n which the elements were organized into descriptive categories that emerged from the most frequently occurring themes. Subsequently, the theoretical description *was carried out,* in which the information was organized into analytical categories or axes of analysis that emerged from the articulation of empirical data and theoretical assumptions aiming at the apprehension of the essence of the phenomenon (Meira, 2014).

Soon, the *central analysis unit of the research object was established,* that is, the unit of analysis of the practices developed by educational psychologists at the IFPIs (Vigotsky, 2000/1934). Finally, *we returned to the reality of the data in order to explain* it, mediated by abstractions and by the axes of analysis established in the theoretical description, while overcoming the description (Luke, 1967), in a movement of singularity, particularity, and universality (Luke, 1970). Such return to the reality of the data was due to the search for evidence of criticality revealed in the practices developed by educational psychologists.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the interviews, the results concerning practices in Educational Psychology made it possible to outline eight axes of analysis: Educational Demands; Target Audience; Levels/Modalities of Teaching; Developed Actions; Guidelines for the Psychologists' Performance; Educational Policies; Fragility of the Interdisciplinary and Intersectoral Support Network; And, finally, Indications of Criticality in the Practice of Educational Psychologists

at the IFPIs.

Educational Demands

Educational psychologists pointed out as main educational demands in their professional performance at the IFPIs:[1] Study guidance (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10), learning difficulties (P1, P4, P6, P7, P8 and P10), interpersonal relationships (P1, P2, P3, P6 and P8), family issues (P1, P2, P4, P7 and P10), inclusive education (P1, P3, P6 and P10), *bullying* (P4, P6, P8 and P10),adaptation to the reality of IFPIs (P2, P7 and P9), mental health (P5, P6 and P10), professional guidance (P1 and P4), self-mutilation (P7 and P10) and indiscipline (P4 and P5).

These demands, identified as results of this research, focus on learning or behavioral aspects of the students. The results are similar to the ones obtained in a research by Cavalcante and Aquino (2013) on conceptions and practices of educational psychologists in the Brazilian city of João Pessoa related to school complaints.

Target Audience

All educational psychologists pointed out more than one target audience of their professional performance: students, teachers, and family (P2, P6, P8, P9 and P10); students, teachers, family, and staff (P1, P3, P4 and P5); and students, teachers, and staff members (P7), as expressed in illustration 03.

Thus, all research participants (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) pointed out students and teachers as the target audience of their professional performance at the IFPIs. Also, most included the family (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9 and P10), and half the participants (P1, P3, P4, P5 and P7) included staff and/or management.

As in other studies that had as object of study the performance of educational psychologists, (Yamamoto, Santos, Galafassi, Pasqualini & Souza, 2013), their

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[1] All participants in the research were women. Thus, it was decided the female version of certain terms were chosen for the entire article.

Illustration 03. *Percentage of the target audience in the practice of educational psychologists at the IFPIs.*

Legend:
- 50% teachers, students, and families
- 40% students, teachers, families, and staff members
- 10% students, teachers, and staff members.

Source: Semi-structured interview script. The authors (2018).

target audience encompassed several educational actors. Such data is relevant because they suggest evidence of criticality in the professional practice in the educational environment by involving the entire school community as recommended by research and/ or guidance documents (CFP, 2013).

Education Levels/Modalities

All educational psychologists reported developing practices at more than one level and/or modality of teaching at the IFPIs: Integrated Technical Education for High School, Technical Education after High school and College (P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10); Integrated Technical Education for High School, college, and educational projects for young people and adults and the Brazilian National Program for Access to Technical Education and Employment (PRONATEC) (P1); Integrated Technical Education for High School, Technical Education after High School and college, and educational projects for young people and adults (P3), as shown in illustration 04.

Thus, all survey participants (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) developed practices with Integrated Technical Education for High School and college. Most participants (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) also developed actions with Technical Training for high school students. Two participants (P1 and P3) included educational projects for young people and adults and one participant (P1) included the PRONATEC.

All school and educational psychologists in this research revealed that they work with Integrated Technical Education for High School. The same was true concerning the psychologists' performance at the IFETs (David, 2017; Iron, 2017), which indicated that the focus of action was at this level and/or modality of teaching. However, the difference in the results was that the psychologists' practice at the IFPIs involved a broader scope of activities. It was restricted to only one level and/or modality of teaching.

It is also worth mentioning that the actions developed with Integrated Technical Education for high school are more systematic when compared to the actions developed with the other levels and/or modalities of teaching, which are sporadic, punctual, and take place by spontaneous request only. In addition, it is important to consider that all participants reported that they developed actions with half (P5, P6, P7 and P8) and/or most (P1, P2, P3, P4, P9 and P10) of the levels or modalities offered on their *Campuses,* which is a relevant piece of information considering that federal institutes are characterized by the provision of higher, basic, and professional education (Brasil, 2008).
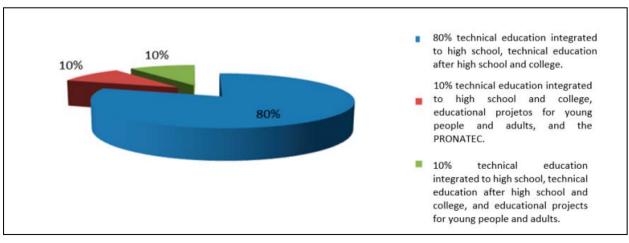
Thus, the practice of these educational psychologists proved to be significant in that they sought to meet diverse audiences and demands, although their *campi* are provided, almost invariably, with only one psychologist.

Developed Actions

Concerning the actions developed by educational *psychologists with students,* all participants reported that they provided individualized professional care directed at guidance and/or counseling, collective projects in the form of lectures, workshops, and/or discussions aimed at various topics such *as bullying, career* guidance, and study guidance (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10).

Furthermore, the participants mentioned they worked on the selection and support for students registered in the "Política de Assistência Estudantil" (POLAE), or Student Assistance Policy. Their work included: home visits (P1, P4, P6, P7, P9 and P10);

Illustration 04. *Percentage of teaching levels/modalities contemplated in the practice of educational psychologists at the IFPIs.*

Source: Semi-structured interview script. The authors (2018).

welcoming new students from Integrated Technical Education for high school by means of the "Programa de Acolhimento ao Estudante Ingressante" (PRAEI), or Welcome Beginners Program, or new students from college by means of a project in collaboration with the coordinators of some courses (P4, P5, P7 and P10); educational research on student profiles and learning styles to support other actions (P3, P8 and P9); collective activity in the classroom when spontaneously requested (P1, P2 and P6); professional guidance (P1 and P4); and conflict mediation (P2).

Concerning actions conducted with *teachers,* (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9 and P10) participated in moments of pedagogical discussion, such as Class Councils and PTA meetings; (P1, P2, P3, P5, P9 and P10) attended pedagogical meetings and lectures; (P4, P6, P7, P8 and P10) provided guidance to teachers; and (P3 and P9) promoted collective projects. The *actions developed with the families* included lectures at PTA meetings and individual support for special orientations (P1, P2, P5, P6, P9 and P10).

Finally, the educational psychologists reported that they gave lectures *and conducted* specific collective activities for the socialization of new members of staff (P1, P3, P4 and P5) and individualized service for staff members under their spontaneous request (P1).

Thus, it was possible to observe a greater diversity of actions developed with students, followed by those developed with teachers and, finally, with families and staff. The projects, in particular, were only developed with students and teachers.

All school and educational psychologists reported developing projects that had students as the target and encompassed topics such as *bullying,* sexuality, emotional intelligence, social skills, the value of life, etc. (P2, P3, P4, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10); career guidance (P1, P4, P5, P7 and P10); health education, White January, Yellow September, etc. (P1, P4 and P6); Support and guidance for students going through the same year for a second time (P1 and P5); training for class leaders (P4 and P8) and arts and human formation (P3). Two participants reported developing a project with teachers aimed at discussing topics such as curricular adaptation, inclusive education, etc. (P3 and P9).

This information was similar to the one obtained in a research in which most of the projects developed were directed to students and had themes related to the children and young people (Yamamoto et al., 2013). The previously mentioned practices hinted, concurrently, at actions with both individual and collective focus with the various target audiences of the psychologists' action: teachers, family and/or staff members.

Thus, traditional (individualized care, study guidance, collective activity in the classroom in the face of demands, professional guidance, conflict mediation,

guidance to teachers, specific lectures at the Pedagogical Meetings, PTA meetings and/or staff members) and emerging (collective projects, selection and follow-up of POLAE scholarship students, welcoming beginners, educational research, participation in moments of pedagogical discussion) forms of action coexisted in the plans by the educational psychologists participating in the research (Martinez, 2009).

It was also noticed that the practices were similar to those recommended by the governing bodies of the profession (CFP, 2013). It is important to highlight their performance in public educational policies. The actions by educational psychologists in this context should be considered an expression of their commitment to the educational processes (Martínez, 2009; Souza, 2010).

In a nutshell, among the main practices in the field of Educational Psychology reported in this research, it was noticed that emerging forms of action began to gain notoriety at the IFETs, spaces that are in the process of construction and consolidation of their practices (Jorge, 2017; Martínez, 2009).

Furthermore, it was possible to observe the involvement of the various educational actors in the practices developed (CFP, 2013; Tanamachi & Meira, 2003), while seeking to overcome the clinical-medical model established historically (Barbosa, 2012; Oliveira-Menegotto & Fontoura, 2015) and achieve a model of institutional action, from the critical perspective of Educational Psychology (Barbosa, 2012; Campos, 2010; Oliveira-Menegotto & Fontoura, 2015).

It should also be added that, In accordance with studies on psychologists' performances in Higher Education, there was an action characterized by the review of historically consolidated practices, the insertion of new practices (Santos, Souto, Silveira, Perron & Dias, 2015), and the work on the relationships present in the educational environment, focusing on educational policies and other factors involved in the teaching and learning process (Jorge, 2017), which hints at a critical bias in these practices.

Thus, it is important to emphasize the need for the work of educational psychologists in new educational contexts (Barbosa, 2012). Such as in the context of Professional and Technological Education, so that the practices developed in the field of Educational Psychology in these places can be strengthened, contextualized, and effective.

Guidelines for psychologist's performance

An important aspect regarding the practice of educational psychologists referred to the guidelines for the psychologists' performance at the IFPIs. All educational psychologists mentioned the job description contained in official newsletter No. 015/2005/CGGP/SAA/SE/MEC (Brasil, 2005). However, they emphasized

the difficulty in guiding their practices by means of this document (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10).

This is a generalist document and it covers several areas of Psychology, which ends up reflecting on the identity of the psychologist, as also indicated by Sommer and Bordas (2018) in a report on the practices of psychologists at the Instituto Federal de Educação Profissional e Tecnológica da Bahia (IFBA) or Federal Institute of Professional and Technological Education of Bahia. These authors reflect that psychologists may be disconnected in their professional identity due to the amount of attributions required from these professionals.

Therefore, three psychologists mentioned being guided by the POLAE (P1, P2 and P5) and six mentioned a trend among the psychologists of the IFPIs towards defending the development of their own practices in Educational Psychology, (P1, P4, P6, P7, P9 and P10), which revealed an important political position.

Educational Policies

The Educational psychologists reported being included in student assistance policies (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) and Inclusion (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 and P10). In this way, there are psychologists both acting in only one (P1, P3, P8 and P9) or in both policies (P2, P4, P5, P6, P7 and P10), as shown in illustration 05.

The emerging practice in educational policies has been discussed as a relevant axis and form of action for psychologists. Their participation not only in the implementation but also in the discussion and development of public policies is essential (Martínez, 2009; Souza, 2010). Thus, it is important that the educational psychologists at the IFPIs develop practices and contribute to the implementation of student assistance and inclusion policies.

Fragility of the Interdisciplinary and Intersectoral Support Network

Most participants (P1, P2, P4, P6, P9 and P10) revealed a certain fragility of the interdisciplinary and intersectoral support network of the municipalities in which they operate, which reflected the need for individualized monitoring in the context of the IFPIs in order to provide better support for students in risk situations. The following reports provide examples of the precariousness of the network:

> [...] it is very likely that we will have to provide clinical care, like t*herapy. Especially in the countryside where there aren't so many psychologists available. People really need this kind of service but the public network for psychological support is still deficient. R*ight? [...] *P1.*

> [...] *there is a lot of demand for mental health care, sometimes I even try to get away a little bit, but it's kind of hard. The people we treat are very needy and none of them have health insurance. Sometimes it takes way too long for these people to get assistance from outside. Sometimes, serious cases of suicidal ideation or even attempts at suicide naturally end up taking up too much of our precious time, so we have to provide support without external help* [...] *P6.*

> [...] *we have to deal with a considerable amount of suicide ideations. It's surprisingly frequent here in this town* [...] *It is hard to avoid clinical issues, especially for psychologists working in the countryside. When we refer students at risk of suicide to the CAPS, they take too long to respond. So it's quite difficult. P9.*

> [...] *there have been cases in which the support I was providing was more focused on psychotherapy due to the fragility of the network, the student had suicidal ideations and I was very worried that he would not be able to get support from the network and I would end up being accused of neglect* [...] *P10.*

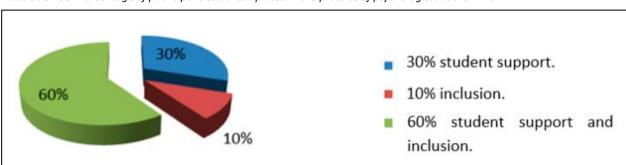In a decontextualized way, previous reports could be criticized for having indicated a clinical

Illustration 05. *Percentage of public policies contemplated in the practice of psychologists at the IFPIs.*

Source: Semi-structured interview script. The authors (2018).

bias in Educational Psychology, to the extent that they suggested individualized support similar to psychotherapy performed with the student in the school environment. However, based on the singularity-particularity-universality understanding of the study and considering the entire social, historical, cultural, and educational context, educational psychologists revealed the careful, thoughtful approach of the psychologists in order to provide quality support for the students targeted by their activities. It was also observed that this support which combined with other actions for the benefit of the students by means of interventions with other educational actors (family members, teachers, members of staff).

Furthermore, psychologists were complying with the ethical principles of the profession, in accordance with its second and third fundamental principles according to which, respectively, psychologists "must work to promote health and quality of life. They must contribute to the eradication of any forms of neglect, discrimination, exploitation, violence, cruelty, and oppression." (Federal Council of Psychology, 2005, p. 07) And they must "act with social responsibility, while critically and historically analyzing our political, economic, social, and cultural reality" (CFP, 2005, p. 07). The statements also portrayed an ethical-political commitment (Pact, 1987) with the profession.

Indications of Criticality in the Practice of Educational Psychologists at the IFPIs

Authors such as Meira (1997), Patto (1987), Souza (2010; 2017), Tanamachi (1997), and Tanamachi and Meira (2003) conducted studies in which they looked at evidence of critical basis in Educational Psychology, by means of observations of the performance of this professional with the various educational actors.

In this research it was also possible to find evidence of criticality in the practices developed by educational psychologists at the IFPIs. Such evidence includes an understanding of the importance of taking a distance from the clinical perspective of the psychologists' performance at the IFPIs (P6, P8 and P10) and that it is not possible to do clinical practice at school (P3), which revealed their questioning of clinical-therapeutic practices that disregard the other determinants of the schooling process (Meira, 1997; Patto, 1987; Souza, 2017).

Furthermore, the contribution of educational psychologists to the teaching and learning process (P1, P6, P7, P8 and P10), the political position of following the principles of Educational Psychology at the IFPIs (P1, P4, P6, P7, P9 and P10) and the request to change over-staffed departments at the IFPIs (P4) revealed the psychologists' commitment to the educational cause (Meira, 1997; Patto, 1987; Souza, 2010; Tanamachi,

1997).

Another indication of criticality was their awareness of Educational Psychology and human development based on a global conception of man (P1, P5, P6, P7 and P9), because they revealed their agreement with the basis for this conception, as indicated by Tanamachi (1997) and Patto (1987).

The development of projects with students (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) and teachers (P3 and P9); the presentation of lectures at PTA meetings (P1, P2, P5, P6, P9 and P10) and pedagogical meetings (P1, P2, P3, P5, P9 and P10); and participation in moments of pedagogical discussion (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P9 and P10) revealed that there is a lot of reflection on pedagogical practices going on within the school environment (Meira, 1997; Souza, 2010), as well as the construction of relationships that have been conducive to maximum possible development (Tanamachi & Meira, 2003).

Their alignment with policies of Student Assistance (P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) and Inclusion (P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 and P10) revealed the contribution by educational psychologists in the implementation of public policies (Souza, 2010).

Collective projects with teachers (P3 and P9) and lectures in pedagogical meetings (P1, P2, P3, P5, P9 and P10) revealed the performance of educational psychologists in teacher education (Souza, 2010). Also, the partnership of teachers in the realization of projects with students (P2, P3 and P7) and the partnership of other IFPIs professionals for the development of health education actions (P1, P4 and P6) revealed the realization of interdisciplinary and multi-professional work (Souza, 2010).

The development of projects for the formation of class leaders (P4 and P8) revealed actions that led to an increase in popular participation at school (Tanamachi & Meira, 2003). The realization of educational research on the students' profile and learning styles (P3, P8 and P9), revealed that personal interests and reality of the students were taken into consideration when planning educational actions (Tanamachi & Meira, 2003).

The fact that they continued to develop their own professional skills in the educational area, either at the *lato* sensu or *stricto sensu postgraduate* level, or whether at the level of complementary courses (P1, P3, P5, P7, P8 and P9), revealed their search for theoretical reflections to support their actions (More, 1997).

Furthermore, psychologists' conception of the importance of Educational Psychology at the IFETs and, in a specific way, at the IFPIs for public education (P1, P2 and P10); and the need to reinvent themselves in the face of professional challenges by means of collective debate over their practices at the IFPIs (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9 and P10) are also indications of

relevant criticism. Thus, taking a critical stance is the way to transform the current scenario of educational institutions.

INTEGRATIVE SYNTHESIS

This research is based on the assumptions of Cultural-Historical Psychology. Our objective was to analyze the practices developed by educational psychologists at the IFPIs.

The results obtained indicated actions with an individual and collective focus with the various contingencies of the educational institution, suggesting traditional and emerging forms of action. The latter stood out for their innovative character in defense of Educational Psychology. Especially after we consider the fact that these professionals take part in public competitions and submit to job descriptions that are tolerant to different profiles of action within the institution.

There were indications of criticality in the practice of psychologists as there was a movement of change from a clinical perspective to an institutional perspective in Educational Psychology. Also, there is greater awareness regarding the different educational segments and the institutional territory itself and its relations with political, economic, and cultural contexts.

The longitudinal geographical topography of the state was a major challenge during this research and it is also one of the challenges that these professionals must overcome in their practices. There is a tendency to centralize specialized and training services in the state capital. However, in a strategic and innovative way, they built what can be called a collectiveness in order to discuss practices and enhance their educational environment.

In the face of this panorama, the realization of this scientific research contributed to fill the gap concerning the theme of the psychologists' performance in Professional and Technological Education at the IFPIs. In addition, there is also plenty of evidence of the relevance of studies covering new modalities and educational contexts, mainly at the regional level. Such studies promote reflection on the need to develop contextualized practices and reaffirm that learning in an organized teaching environment also promotes the development and transformation of the individuals.

It is concluded that the participation of school and educational psychologists in educational policies, combining operationalization with critical thinking, is an effective way to insert these professionals into public educational institutions. Likewise, the formation of collaborations by professionals in Educational Psychology is fundamental for the strengthening of practices in emerging contexts for Educational Psychology.

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