

## Management of quality of life at work in public schools: Inquiries in municipal schools

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### ABSTRACT

Having systematic Quality of Life Management mechanisms may not be a guarantee of better conditions in the work environment, but it guides and makes it possible to anticipate and control what can negatively impact people's health and the organization's results. The absence of these mechanisms leads to a reactive management and without traceability of the origins of the problems, in addition to not enabling organizational evolution. This article seeks to explore the reasons why there are no mechanisms for Quality Management at Work in a Municipal Department of Education. Qualitative research was carried out, with documentary analysis, and it was noted that the laws and norms that regulate the hiring of managers emphasize training in pedagogy, to the detriment of greater specialization in administration. And managers, on a day-to-day basis, need to make management decisions. The study points out, for further research, that the lack of improvement of command personnel impacts the environment and the quality of these decisions, generating several consequences in the effectiveness of schools.

**Keywords:** Quality of Work Life Management, Organizational management, People management models.

### INTRODUCTION

Considering that Quality of Life at Work Management (QWL) can be defined as the "Set of actions of an organization in order to implement managerial, technological and structural improvements and innovations in the work environment, and involves the following areas of knowledge: health, ecology, ergonomics, psychology, sociology, economics, administration and engineering." (Limongi-França, 1996), it could be assumed that in a school environment this practice would be more than natural, since it is an environment in which the main product is the improvement and development of its students.

Having systematic mechanisms for Quality of Life Management may not be a guarantee of better conditions in the work environment, but it guides and makes it possible to verify, anticipate and control what can negatively impact people's health and the effectiveness of actions and practices that fall directly on students. The absence of these mechanisms leads to a reactive management and without traceability of the origins of the problems, in addition to not enabling organizational evolution.

The interaction of students with public servants reflects, to some degree, in their training. Of course, we are not asserting that the employees would have any function beyond their normal duties: it is being affirmed that the work itself of the employees is a didactic experience for the students, they are

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examples, although secondary, because evidently the main thing is in the classroom. In *The Pedagogy of Autonomy*, Paulo Freire states that "Education, whatever it may be, is always a theory of knowledge put into practice" (Freire, 1996). And the employees do this naturally and daily in front of the students, all in their profession serving as an example and educating.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this article is to draw people's attention to the issue of Quality of Life Management of people in the work environment of Elementary School through the study of the QWL literature, the analysis of organizational charts of a city hall and to raise some questions about the reasons for the lack of systematized mechanisms of QWL Management in order to raise more in-depth future surveys.

## **METHODOLOGY**

According to Selltiz (1960), an exploratory study is one whose main "accentuation is the discovery of ideas and intuitions, has as its objective the familiarization with the phenomenon or even a new understanding of it, to formulate a more precise research problem or create new hypotheses".

This is an exploratory study, to raise questions for future more in-depth studies, whose methods used were the analysis of documentary content, examining the laws and resolutions of the municipality under study, such as the organizational charts, and the descriptions of the positions pertinent to Management in Elementary Education, contained in two Career Plans implemented, in addition to the perceptions of the main author of this article about his experience in the area of management of three schools municipal elementary schools.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

"GQVT is concerned with providing a more adequate, beneficial and fundamental workplace for the activity of any organization and would be more than a benefit for the employee, but also a necessary factor for the survival of the company, as worker satisfaction also influences the performance and success of the organization." (Silva, 2023). In the case of the survival of the organization, called a company in the quoted excerpt, Municipal School, it is not something that is a problem, because its activities are financed by FUNDEB - Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals - whose objective is to distribute education resources according to the number of students in basic education in the municipality. However, the performance and success of schools will be evaluated through the results in literacy and training of students who graduate from them. And this aspect

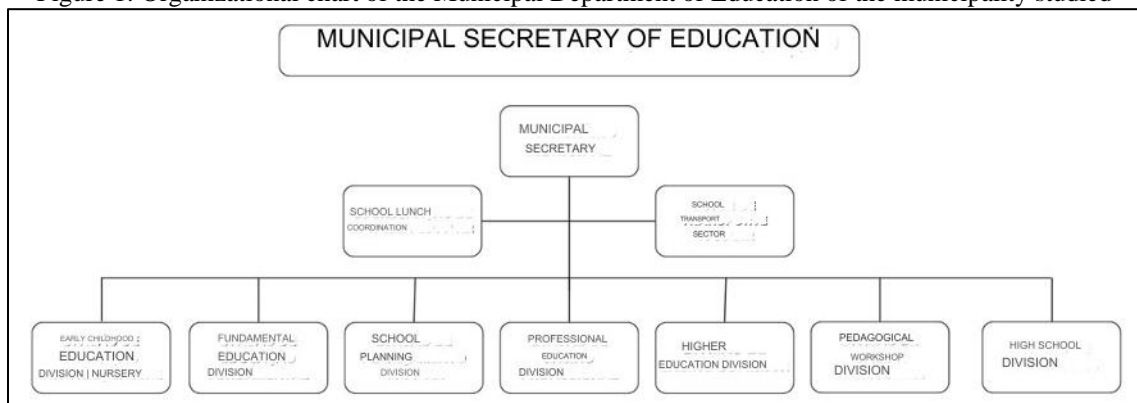
is seen on a daily basis in the media and in political debates, with many shouting that it is necessary to invest more in education. What investment would be missing?

The very meaning of the acronym of FUNDEB gives a clue: '... Valuing Education Professionals'. We know that Quality of Work Life Management mechanisms are ways of valuing professionals. Why wouldn't there be that?

Understanding the Appreciation of Professionals as something different from 'a pat on the back' and a compliment, or a leisure event, or even a gift at the end of the year, but a set of systematic actions, such as a GQWL program, this would leave marks on the organization. And the beginning of the search for these marks can be through a brief analysis of some of the Organizational Charts of the City Hall.

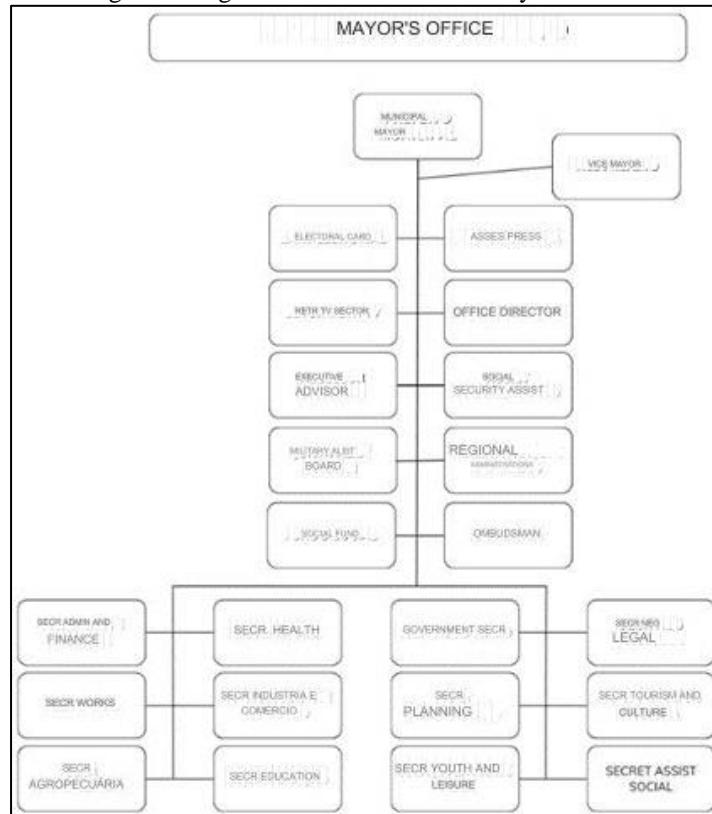
The following organizational chart (Figure 1) is that of the Department of Education:

Figure 1: Organizational chart of the Municipal Department of Education of the municipality studied



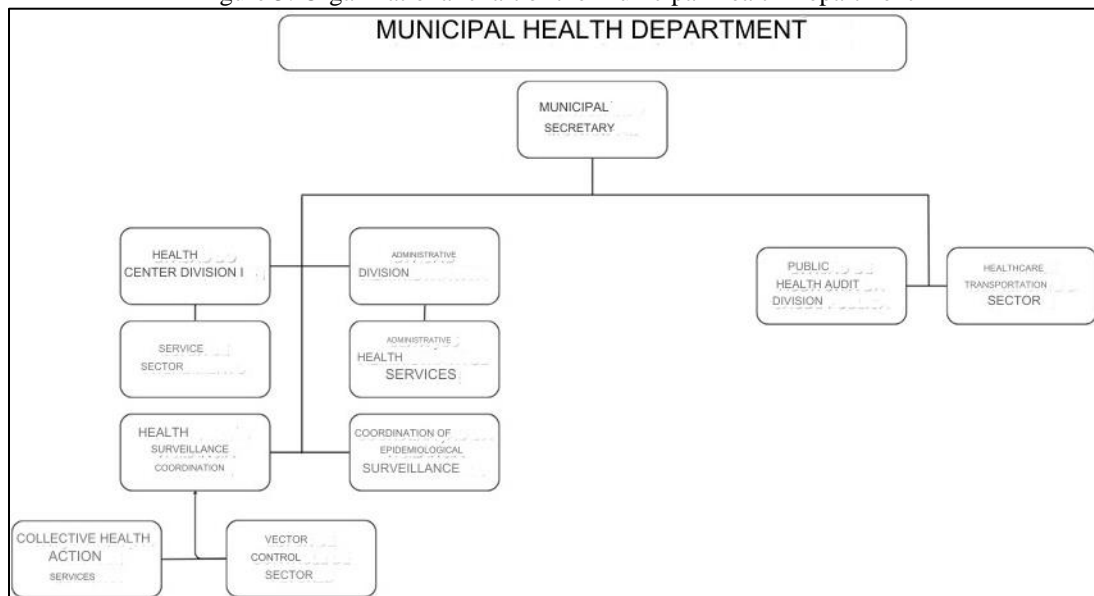
It is a functional organizational chart, with no room for an advisory function. One might think that some function of Development and Quality of Life Management would be outside the Department of Education, or at a hierarchical level directly linked to the Municipal Executive. However, it can be observed that this does not occur, according to the following organizational chart (Figure 2):

Figure 2: Organizational chart of the Mayor's Office



In addition to these two, analyzing the Organizational Chart of the Department of Health (Figure 3), which would be the area directly linked to Quality of Life at Work, completes this brief reflection.

Figure 3: Organizational chart of the Municipal Health Department



In this case, there is also no function that refers to mechanisms of Quality-of-Life Management at Work.



Thus, with the objective of only exemplifying the situation, it was found that in the three Organizational Charts of the City Hall presented, especially that of the Department of Education, there is no ancillary position of Management of Quality of Life at Work. It is no secret that city halls rarely hire people with training and experience in managing organizations, such as companies, for example. Nor is this part of any candidate's political platform, so it is not expected to be a political emphasis. And in this case, the question, which would be partially answered, is why is there no area in the administrative structure related to Quality of Life at Work Management Programs?

Continuing the investigation in search of motives, this time based on the description of three positions in the Department of Education: Secretary of Education, Supervisor of Teaching and School Principal.

From Complementary Law 00045, of 11/03/2005, which provides for an administrative restructuring carried out at the time, which involved the Framing of Civil Servants, we found that there was only a description of the positions, without mentioning the training required to occupy these positions, as presented below. The following are the job descriptions:

Position: Municipal Secretary of Education

Description: Promote, encourage and develop educational activities, coordinating and controlling their compliance, promote and maintain adult literacy in the Municipality, promote exchange with other related entities proposing agreements or joint action programs of interest to the Municipality, maintain, directly or through an agreement, services to daycare centers and municipal schools, approve the programs of complementary or vocational supplementary education courses, controlling and coordinating their compliance, promote, encourage, develop and coordinate programs and activities of assistance to students in the areas of health and social assistance, provide assistance to students, including the daily provision of school meals, perform other related tasks determined by the Municipal Mayor.

Position: Education Supervisor

Description: Plan, advise, coordinate, monitor and evaluate the pedagogical and administrative activities of the teaching-learning process, ensuring compliance with the educational legislation in force.

Job Title: School Principal

Description: To direct the basic education establishment (from kindergarten to high school), planning, organizing and coordinating the execution of teaching programs and administrative services to enable the regular performance of teaching and student activities.

There are management functions, especially control, in the descriptions, but, as already mentioned, no training prerequisites. This same Law was updated by a Career Plan for Education Employees, through Complementary Law 000319, of December 13, 2023. In this update, the requirements for the position are already specified, as follows:

NAME: School Principal

Description: To manage in a democratic manner all the educational policy in the School Unit; Elaborate, with the assistance of the Teaching Supervision, the Pedagogical Proposal of the School, ensuring the effective participation of the school community in the



preparation and operationalization of the Teaching Plan of the School Unit; Monitor the delivery of the weeklies and the Individualized Educational Plan; Apply disciplinary measures; To serve, to serve and as a public servant to seek excellence in serving the citizen, acting with safety, clarity, objectivity, education, cordiality, transparency and efficiency; Act in a planned and organized manner, optimizing time and material resources; Systematically seek to expand knowledge related to subjects related to its activities; Predict situations and act in advance, adopting proactive actions instead of acting only through reactive actions; Perform their professional activities with accuracy, order and care; Possess the ability to deal with different types of situations in the exercise of the function; Perform specific duties in order to achieve the established results; Keep all school unit material inventoried and up to date; Direct, build, implement and participate in all pedagogical activities of the unit; Articulate educational actions developed by the different segments of the school unit, aiming at improving the quality of teaching; Stimulate reflection on teaching practice; To encourage the exchange of experience; ensuring the achievement of the objectives of the educational process; coordinate the various pedagogical activities, guiding the elaboration of projects aimed at the teaching-learning process; Develop, monitor and guide projects and/or activities of classification, reclassification, acceleration, inclusion and grouping of students into classes. Systematically monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning processes; Point out and prioritize the educational problems to be addressed; Propose alternatives to solve the problems raised; Supervise students' learning recovery activities; Monitor all administrative acts essential to the proper functioning of the School Unit, such as: time book, absences, medical records, letters, etc.; coordinate the administrative work, supervising the activities, organizing work schedules, vacation schedules, forwarding, duly informed, the documents, petitions or processes that are processed by the establishment; comply with and enforce education legislation and all decisions and determinations of higher authorities; represent the School Unit and foster the closest collaboration between parents, students and the community; Coordinate the elaboration and execution of the school's pedagogical political project. Communicate to the immediate superior and to the Personnel Department any and all absences from the School Unit; Create conditions for organization, discipline and interpersonal interaction in the School Unit; Supervise school meals in the School Unit; Organize the civic and commemorative events of the School Unit; Sign all documents related to the students' school life, issued by the School Unit; To be responsible for the fulfillment, within the scope of the school, of the laws, regulations and determinations, as well as of the deadlines for the execution of the work established by the higher authorities; Investigate or cause to be investigated irregularities of which he or she becomes aware within the scope of the school and report it to the immediate superior; Perform tasks related to those described above and those determined by the immediate supervisor; Subordinate, comply with and enforce all determinations of the Municipal Department of Education; To invoke for himself the duties of his subordinates in their absence. Execute the programs and projects, be accountable to the school community and the responsible bodies in a democratic manner

**REQUIREMENTS FOR FILLING THE POSITION:** Have at least 05 (five) years of teaching experience, effectively provided in the official Magisterium, provided that it is exercised in a duly authorized and recognized school; and Higher Education in an Undergraduate course in Full Pedagogy with qualification in School Management or School Administration; or *Stricto Sensu* Post-Graduation in School Management or School Administration duly recognized by the MEC.

**NAME:** Teaching Supervisor

**FORMS OF PROVISION:** Public Competition of Tests and Titles – permanent position of effective provision.

**Description:** To guide the monitoring, control and evaluation of the pedagogical proposals of the Schools of the Municipal Education System. Ensure constant feedback on the pedagogical proposals of the schools in its area of operation; To assist, technically, the school principals on the preparation, execution and evaluation of pedagogical proposals and projects related to their school units; Supervise the delivery of the weeklies and the Individualized Educational Plan; To make the projects of the administrative and technical-pedagogical area compatible at the inter-school level and with those of the Municipal Education Service. Analyze the data related to the schools that are part of the Municipal Education System and develop alternative solutions to the specific problems of each level



and modality of education. To serve is to serve and as a public servant to seek excellence in serving the citizen, acting with safety, clarity, objectivity, education, cordiality, transparency and efficiency; Act in a planned and organized manner, optimizing time and material resources; Systematically seek to expand knowledge related to subjects related to its activities; Predict situations and act in advance, adopting proactive actions instead of acting only through reactive actions; Possess the ability to deal with different types of situations in the exercise of the function; Perform specific duties in order to achieve the established results; Comply with and enforce the legal provisions relating to the pedagogical and administrative organization of schools, as well as the norms and guidelines issued by higher bodies. Ensure the reciprocal flow of information between the school units and the Municipal Department of Education, through weekly visits and meetings with their principals and teachers. Diagnose the need and opportunity to offer courses for the improvement and updating of the human resources that are part of the Municipal Department of Education. Giving opinions, conducting studies and developing activities related to teaching supervision. Collaborate in the dissemination and implementation of projects and programs prepared by higher bodies. Apply analytical tools to evaluate the overall performance of the Municipal Education System in its administrative and pedagogical work. Investigate or cause to be investigated irregularities of which they become aware within the scope of the school and report them to their immediate superior. Advise the Municipal Department of Education in its global programming and in its administrative and pedagogical tasks.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR FILLING THE POSITION:** Have at least 08 (eight) years of exercise, effectively rendered in the official Magisterium, provided that it is exercised in a duly authorized and recognized school; and Higher Education in an Undergraduate course in Full Pedagogy with qualification in School Management or School Administration or School Supervision; or *Stricto Sensu* Post-Graduation in School Management or School Administration or School Supervision; duly recognized by the Ministry of Education.

It can be seen that the greatest evolution in the job description is the specification of the requirements to occupy the position, mentioning the need for the occupants to have some specialty in School Management or School Administration.

For the managers who took over during the first plan, it was enough to have a higher education course in full pedagogy. That is: for positions with an emphasis on management, it is not necessary to have a degree in organizational management. The logic of Administration being the process of achieving results through people management ends up being forgotten: given the emphasis on thinking that the Department of Education is imperative to have Pedagogy, management is left aside, as a second-line discipline. What should be made very clear is that there is nothing against Pedagogy professionals doing their work in the classroom, in terms of education. However, in the management of organizations such as a Department of Education or a School, pedagogy requires training in Management of Organizations or Companies.

And to corroborate this secundarization of management, management employees are subordinated to pedagogy employees: the mechanisms of control, incentive, and leadership are quite different, which only worsens the situation of people management. They get worse because these professionals are not prepared to manage people, but students. Students have a well-defined list of obligations according to each stage of the cycle and the year in which they are attending. Employees don't always have something so



clear, since they are subject to the day-to-day, which often brings completely unexpected situations. And as a consequence, the charges and control over each one (students and employees) must be very different.

Perhaps due to the Public Organizational Culture, which is reflected in the organizational chart and job descriptions, in which only the core activity is considered and not all the management that should be involved so that this core activity is carried out in the best possible way, with the available resources, there are also some issues to be explored, of the reasons why there are no Systematic Quality of Life Management Programs in this Municipal Department of Education.

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

As initially proposed, this article seeks to raise questions about the absence of Quality of Life Management Programs at Work based on an exploratory study in a Basic Education School.

What was verified is that the organizational structure of the Department of Education is lined, considering only final positions, without taking into account that all this must be managed: it is considered that if each one does his or her function, the "invisible hand" (paraphrasing the invisible hand of Adam Smith's Market) of the administration will make everything work perfectly and the organization will achieve its goals. It would be like an orchestra without a conductor, with an assumption that if everyone performs their duties well, they would not be necessary.

Possibly, the absence of the Programs is due to some factors such as:

- Organizational Structure, thought only of the core activities;
- absence of Knowledge Management;
- absence of management professionals who know the Programs;
- control of core activity professionals without training in organizational management;
- requirement for management positions to have management training only as a specialization; and
- the need to better study what FUNDEB contemplates and to make better use of the funds, because the improvement of professionals is foreseen.

The article contributes by bringing to light points hitherto invisible to municipal managers, such as FUNDEB's plan to finance, in addition to remuneration, the improvement of education professionals, who go beyond its discussions, and above all to ask: how is the management of public schools?





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