

Relationships between the impacts of COVID-19 and teachers' quality of life



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ABSTRACT

Covid -19 pandemic has caused major disruptions in society, including education. Teachers suffered from several aspects, from possible contagion with the virus, as well as the adaptation of face-to-face classes to online teaching, which occurred abruptly, facing frustration, anxiety and the feeling of impotence in the face of the new reality. This study aimed to analyze the impact of the Covid -19 pandemic on the quality of life of a group of teachers from a municipality in the State of Goiás, surrounding the Federal District. Using the quantitative research method, we chose to use the Subjective Well-Being Scale (EBES) and assertive questions to make correlations between the questions. Among other results, the teachers showed that the greater the emotional self-control, the greater the desire to take advantage of life's opportunities and the less the feeling that life is bad.

Keywords: Teachers, Quality of life, Pandemic, Quantitative method.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 disease has affected millions of individuals worldwide, causing complications in various organs, tissues and even death. Given the absence of more effective means of prevention such as the vaccine or any appropriate treatment, in 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended social distancing as the main way to combat the pandemic, among other preventive measures.

Undeniably, the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated negative impacts on people's health as well as the world economy. Studies indicate that professionals who work in direct contact with the public, such as teachers, may be susceptible to the negative impacts of physical distancing imposed as



a preventive measure (ALEA et al., 2020; WANG et al., 2020). This group has peculiarities due to the intense contact with children, adolescents, and adults throughout daily work hours (KHLAIF et al., 2020).

Social distancing may have affected the quality of life (QoL) of these professionals, since it addresses different aspects of the existence of individuals, which differently influence the way they perceive their own QoL, since it is a subjective and intrinsic assessment related to cultural, educational, moral and lifestyle factors (PINTO et al., 2021). Thus, "QoL is altered by the condition of health, housing, employability, access to food and basic sanitation, among other factors" (PEDROLO et al., 2021, p. 3).

Therefore, the objective of the present study was to analyze the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the quality of life of a group of teachers in a municipality in the State of Goiás, neighboring the Federal District.

2 QUALITY OF LIFE (QOL)

According to Almeida, Gutierrez and Marques (2012), the vast material on quality of life (QoL) is expressed as a multidisciplinary area of knowledge that encompasses concepts that permeate the lives of individuals, as well as popular knowledge. From this perspective, it deals with "innumerable elements of the daily life of the human being, considering from the subjective perception and expectation about life, to more deterministic issues such as clinical action in the face of diseases and illnesses" (ALMEIDA; GUTIERREZ; MARQUES, 2012, p. 14).

The term QoL is said in the language of contemporary society, being used with various forms and meanings, however, there is a consensus that it is good to talk about QoL, even without defining exactly what it is about (ALMEIDA; GUTIERREZ; MARQUES, 2012). Like this

Common sense has appropriated this object in order to summarize improvements or a high standard of well-being in people's lives, whether economic, social or emotional. However, the area of knowledge in quality of life is in a phase of identity construction. Sometimes they identify it in relation to health, sometimes to housing, leisure, physical activity and eating habits, but the fact is that this way of knowing states that all these factors lead to a positive perception of well-being (ALMEIDA; GUTIERREZ; MARQUES, 2012, p. 15).

In this sense, studies on quality of life can focus on the search for alternatives to improve the standard of living of as many people as possible, as this does not depend only on the individual. Therefore, it is necessary to include the multiplicity of themes involving QoL, from social, health or professional parameters. These indicators can be analyzed (and are) by different areas of knowledge, with different references and procedures, and different definitions and conceptions are linked (ALMEIDA; GUTIERREZ; MARQUES, 2012).



For Martins et al. (2014), quality of life (QoL) is feeling good, safe, productive, healthy, depending on the lifestyle as daily actions of the human being. This reflects on opportunities and values from their eating habits to their professional and personal choices (FILENI et al., 2019).

Studies indicate (BROOKS, 2020) that the effects of confinement and collective trauma are the most responsible for the repercussions on the mental health of individuals, with the intensity of social distancing, the quality of family relationships, and the duration of this isolation being important variables in assessing emotional state.

It is important to note that the World Health Organization (WHO) defines QoL as the individual's perception of their position in life in the context of culture and value systems, always taking into account their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns (FRANCISCO, 2019). According to Francisco (2019, p. 11), quality of life

It is a fairly comprehensive term that is affected by physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships, and their relationship to the characteristics of their environment. The comprehension of QOL goes through several fields of human knowledge, biological, social, political, economic, medical, among others, in a constant interrelationship. QOL refers to the interest in life, so it is possible to establish that it is not something to be achieved, but rather a perception that is present in the life of the human being.

Tani (2002) explains that quality of life means much more than having the basic needs of survival such as food, clothing, work and housing met. It implies physical and mental health, harmonious and constructive social relationships, permanent education, respectful and friendly relationship with the environment, free time for leisure and opportunities to fully enjoy culture (PEREIRA et al., 2009, p. 16).

We found the theme of quality of life in several areas of interest, as a synonym of health (SCHMIDT; POWER; BULLINGER, 2005), happiness and personal satisfaction (RENEWICK; BROWN, 1996), living conditions (BUSS, 2000), lifestyle (NAHAS, 2003). social, physical or psychological conditions (PEREIRA et al., 2006), concerns with the culture and context in which people are inserted (SCHMIDT; POWER; BULLINGER, 2005), religious aspects (MOREIRA-ALMEIDA; LOTUFO NETO; KOENIG, 2006) and the worker's quality of life (LACAZ, 2000; VASCONCELOS, 2001).

In addition to studying the quality of life of individuals through the qualitative approach, the construct can also be investigated by means of measurement instruments.

2.1 QUALITY OF LIFE (QOL) MEASUREMENT INSTRUMENTS

Some instruments were developed to measure quality of life. One of the most widely used was developed by the WHO group of scholars, the WHOQOL-Brief in the form of a questionnaire.



The WHOQOLBREVE questionnaire investigates teachers' perception of QoL. Composed of 26 questions extracted from the complete questionnaire, the WHOQOLBREVE is composed of four domains: physical, psychological, social relationships and the environment.

There is the Quality of Life (QOL) scale, which allows measuring quality of life (ALMEIDA, 2013). It consists of two versions: the parental form and the adolescent form that focus on the different concerns in the respective groups. The parental form encompasses 40 items spread across 11 dimensions: marriage and family life, friends, health, household aspects, education, time, religion, employment, *media*, financial well-being, and neighbourhood and community. The adolescent form does not contain the dimensions of marriage and employment.

In Brazil, the Psychometric Scale for the Assessment of Quality of Life (EQV) in adults consists of 23 items, divided into two factors: behavioral and psychological, and was developed by Soares et al., (2019).

Similarly, quality of life is demonstrated in the Satisfaction with Life dimension, belonging to the Subjective Well-Being Scale (EBES), by Albuquerque and Tróccoli (2004). This dimension consists of 15 items in order to cover the theme in all its fullness. Life satisfaction is a cognitive judgment of some specific domain in a person's life; a process of judgment and general evaluation of one's own life; an evaluation of life according to its own criterion (ALBUQUERQUE; TRÓCCOLI, 2004).

In view of the panorama presented in the period of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was necessary to investigate the relationships between the impacts of the pandemic phenomenon and the quality of life of teachers who work in the public school system of the Municipality of Cidade Oeste, located in the Eastern Region of the State of Goiás.

3 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

Using the quantitative approach, this study used the 'life satisfaction' subscale of the Subjective Well-Being Scale (EBES) (ALBUQUERQUE; TRÓCCOLI, 2004) to measure the quality of life of teachers.

The team of the Pedagogical Center of the Municipal Department of Education of the investigated municipality elaborated assertive questions that addressed social isolation, mental health and self-control in emotions, among others, to correlate with the items of the satisfaction with life dimension of EBES. The assertive questions had significant relevance due to the urgency and concern in understanding the effects of the pandemic on the quality of life of teachers.

Data analysis was performed by the statistical program SPSS - *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*, which is a useful Data Editor for statistical tests, such as the correlation analysis discussed in this study.



The correlation technique is used when we need to evaluate the degree of relationship between two or more variables. It is possible to find out precisely how much one variable interferes with the result of another. The techniques associated with Correlation Analysis represent a fundamental tool for application in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, Engineering and Natural Sciences. The importance of knowing the different methods and their application assumptions is precisely because of the care that must be taken not to use an inappropriate technique.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 161 teachers (N=141; 87.6%) and teachers (N=20; 12.4%) from the public school system participated in the research, but it is possible to present an overview of the impacts of Covid-19 on their lives and the effects of social isolation on the daily lives of teachers.

Table 1 shows some of the main results of the participants' profile.

Table 1: Profile of the participants

Variable	Category	N	%
Marital status	Married	107	66,5
	Single	23	14,3
	Divorciado(a)	20	12,4
Age group	20 to 29 years old	7	4,3
	30 to 39 years old	44	27,3
	40 to 49 years old	66	41,0
	50 to 59 years old	34	21,2
	60 to 69 years old	10	6,2
Source: Survey data			

The instrument on people's "quality of life" is composed of 15 statements (ALBUQUERQUE; TRÓCCOLI, 2004). For the present study, there are three assertions that were analyzed by the correlation technique with Spearman's correlation index, called by the Greek letter *rho* (ρ).

First. Assertive: addressed social isolation

Assertion Item	Quality of Life Item	Correlation Index
During social isolation, the routine has been normal	My life could be better	- 0.172*
* Correlation level $p < 0.05$		

The results indicated that the teachers disagreed that the routine has been normal during social isolation, interfering with the quality of life. The negative correlation index ($\rho = - 0.172$; $p < 0.05$) indicated inversely proportional information, i.e., the more routine activities were intensified, even during social isolation, the lower the feeling of improved life.

For Mozzato et al. (2022), the teacher's routine was full of social and professional interactions, with different interests and in constant socialization. The various social bonds broken during the



pandemic allowed isolation to trigger various "symptoms, which, in turn, can evolve into psychological disorders" (MOZZATO et al., 2022, p. 1850).

The mental health of people in social isolation can be affected by the fear of contamination, including family members (SHIGEMURA et al., 2020). The "isolation of the teacher, regardless of their will, has the potential to bring feelings of fear and anxiety that can worsen" (MOZZATO et al., 2022, p. 1850), since, during a pandemic, they are constantly faced with inconstancies and uncertainties (SHIGEMURA et al., 2020).

Second. Assertive: dealt with the mental health of the participants

Assertion Item	Quality of Life Items	Correlation Index
Mental health is healthy	I evaluate my life positively	0,344**
	I consider myself a happy person	0,288**
	I have more moments of sadness than joy in my life	- 0.328**
** Correlation level $p < 0.01$		

Information on mental health was correlated with three items of quality of life. Two relationships showed positive indices, showing that the more teachers evaluated life positively ($\rho = 0.344$; $p < 0.01$) and considered themselves happy ($\rho = 0.288$; $p < 0.01$), the more they perceived mental health as healthy.

However, the results also indicated, by the negative correlation index, that teachers showed that during the pandemic they had more moments of sadness than joy, thus affecting mental health during isolation. It is possible to infer that the teachers were influenced by the various news of increased illnesses and contagion of the disease, reaching worrying levels of deaths in the population.

With all the situation caused by the pandemic process, teachers faced other situations such as the use and mastery of tools and technologies (MACHYNSKA; DZIKOVSKA, 2020) as teaching strategies for remote work to replace face-to-face meetings to continue the educational process.

Thus, Araúo et al. (2020) and Gusso et al. (2020) addressed the illness of teachers, "especially due to the numerous uncertainties, fears, and insecurities, raising the level of stress, anxiety, and depression, often reaching exhaustion" (MOZZATO et al., 2022, p. 1851).

Third. Assertive: addressed emotional self-control

Assertion Item	Quality of Life Items	Correlation Index
I can maintain self-control in my emotions and fears	I've been taking advantage of life's opportunities	0,308**
	My life is bad	- 0.262**
** Correlation level $p < 0.01$		



The results on the correlations of the teachers' assertion of emotional self-control showed optimism in the quality of life. There is evidence that the greater the emotional self-control, the greater the desire to take advantage of life's opportunities ($\rho= 0.308$; $p<0.01$) and the lower the feeling that life is bad ($\rho= -0.262$; $p<0.01$).

For Lima and Gonçalves (2020), self-control proved to be indispensable at the time of the covid-19 pandemic due to the various confrontations faced by teachers. As Almeida and Alves (2020) point out, the adaptation of classes to online teaching occurred abruptly, facing frustration, anxiety, and the feeling of powerlessness in the face of the new reality.

On the part of teachers, self-control in emotions was necessary to avoid possible weaknesses in teaching (SANTANA FILHO, 2020). It is worth remembering that many students were demotivated during the pandemic, as emotions and feelings are closely related to motivation for learning and, consequently, to school success (TESSARO; LAMPERT, 2019).

5 FINAL THOUGHTS

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused numerous disruptions in the lives of teachers, including changes in educational practices. The transition from face-to-face to virtual classes was surrounded by unimaginable confrontations and challenges.

The mental health and self-control of teachers were of great importance for maintaining quality of life. Even with this feeling of robustness and resistance, the routine was modified, provoking, in many cases, serious symptoms of anxiety and fear.

Therefore, it is always valid to investigate the emotional state of teachers motivated by the sad experiences of the covid-19 pandemic, aiming to understand mental health to propose intervention care projects.



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