

Influences Exercised By Teachers' Social and Family Relations in Teaching Profession

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Abstract: Assuming that the dimension of the personal life of educational professionals is not unrelated to professional activities, this study aims to investigate the influence exerted by the social and family relations of teachers in relation to the teaching profession. Field research was carried out with five male Brazilian teachers, with recording individualized interviews. The results indicate that: teachers were children of illiterate parents or those with low educational level, but both the family and the community where they lived, valued school education and these family and social relationships contributed to the successful development of the professional career of the teachers; the research participants built integrated families who supported them in the profession, including because most of the wives were also teachers, thus facilitating the balance between personal and professional life. In this way, we understand that the social and family relations of the teachers were considered preponderant so that they could develop with quality their professional activities in the area of education..

Keywords: teaching; family; formation; personal life; professional life.

Introduction

In view of the fact that teachers are human people and is construed by meio of relações em contexts socioculturais, mainly family, interest arose to better understand the personal life issues of male teachers who chose the teaching profession as their main profession and have worked in basic education and higher education in the State of Paraná.

The relation between life and the teaching profession is interrelated, one exerting influence on the other, since it is not possible to separate these two dimensions, as Nóvoa (1994, p. 17) relates: “The way each of us teaches is directly dependent on what we are as a person when we carry out the teaching [...] It is impossible to separate the professional self from the personal self”.

Also Day Day (2007, p. 250) mentions that “[...] teacher identity itself is a composite of the interactions between professional, situated, and personal dimensions [...] The personal dimension is based on life outside school and is linked to family and social roles”.

In relation to social roles, it is important to consider the propositions of Timm, Mosquera & Stobäus (2008, p. 44) that “As a human being called a teacher, we are not oblivious to what happens in the world. Because we are in the world. We are also the world”.

That is, what occurs in a particular historical and cultural context influences the personal and professional life of teachers. This is the case, for example, of the valorization of the teaching profession, which historically had a greater social recognition, but which over time was losing professional status, as Stobäus; Mosquera & Santos (2007, p. 262) says:

In the past, the teacher was considered one of the sources of knowledge more respected, it was like a traveling encyclopedia, today there is no person capable of storing and processing all this information, besides the decentralization or democratization of knowledge, his own status of authority on the subject is threatened.

Evidently, social changes influence the education, career and identity of education professionals. Thus, Braga, Ferreira & Gonçalves (2018, p. 46) affirm that social relations experienced by a teacher “establishes his own identity in the course of his life, characterizing the interweaving of personal and social aspects, which can be understood in several contextual dimensions”.

As for the family roles, cited by Day (2007), it is possible to affirm that they also influence the development of teaching activities, because the way in which these relationships are established can contribute to or hinder the dimension of professional life. However, the opposite may also occur if teaching activities are detrimental to the family relationships of education professionals.

In this perspective, a study carried out in Ankara, Capital of Turkey, sought to understand what causes conflict among teachers, whether it is the relationship between work-family or family-work. The sample included 364 teachers in total 240 of which were in the primary education level and 124 were in the secondary education level, and the results show that “work-family conflict was experienced more than family-work conflict. In general, individuals prefer fulfilling the responsibilities resulting from their jobs and sacrificing their household responsibilities” (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014, p. 4923). These results corroborate with the studies of Anafarta (2011), since the professional activities of teachers are the ones that result in greater conflicts in the family context and not the other, because the family members generally support the teaching work.

However, there were some exceptions, where family relationships provoked conflicting situations, especially among female teachers, because when they did many domestic activities, the teachers did not sleep very much and, consequently, reflected in the income of the work in the school. There were also cases of teachers who presented the two types of

conflicts, that is, family issues interfered in teaching activities and work or school issues exert influence on family relationships. Such situations appeared more frequently among teachers in younger or early career (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014).

Another research on family issues and teaching profession was conducted by Durham-Barnes (2011) in the state of Indiana, United States, by analyzing the professional trajectory of four teachers. The results showed that three of them presented difficulties in establishing a balance between personal and professional life, because they were charged for recognized with competent professionals and as good mothers and housewives. Only one of the teachers showed less concern, because she received the support of the family members to develop the teaching work with ease.

One of the teachers who had difficulty keeping the balance between personal and professional life reported that the son said that he did not want her to work because he liked to see her at home when he arrived from school. This request of the child bothered the teacher, who chose to continue her professional career by her own decision and also because her husband supported her in his professional activities (Durham-Barnes, 2011).

The support of the family is fundamental for teachers to perform well their educational actions and the balance between personal and professional life is equally important so that teachers are well both in their professional space and in the family. Based on this assumption, we emphasize that this research had the objective of ascertaining about the influences exerted by the social and familiar reactions of teachers in relation to the teaching profession.

Methodology

The research was characterized as qualitative, that according to Fraser & Gondin (2004, p.141), “Human action is intentional and reflexive, whose meaning is apprehended from the reasons and motives of the social actors inserted in the context of the occurrence of phenomenon, which does not happen with the physical objects, focus of analysis of the natural sciences”. Thus, it becomes necessary to “Know the reasons and motives that give meaning to the aspirations, beliefs, values and attitudes of men in their social interactions is the most important for the social sciences”.

The research was carried out through bibliographical and field research, and the instrument used for data collection was characterized by interviews recording, based on a

previously prepared script. For Fraser & Gondin (2004, p.140), the use of interviews in qualitative research is considered important by:

to favor the intersubjective relationship of the interviewer with the interviewee, and, through the verbal and non-verbal exchanges that are established in this interaction context, allow a better understanding of the meanings, values and opinions of the social actors regarding personal situations and experiences.

The criteria for choosing the research participants were: to have the teaching profession as the main profession; have acted in basic education and higher education; be over 35 years old; and be a male teacher; residing in the State of Paraná. To preserve the participants' identities, we used for this study fictitious names beginning with the first five letters of the alphabet, such as:

André: 43 years old, married, two children, graduated in Philosophy.

Bento: 38 years old, married, two children, graduated in Philosophy, Master in Applied Social Sciences.

Cosme: 45 years old, married, three children, graduated in Mathematics, Master of Science in Production Engineering.

Dante: 59 years old, married, two children, graduated in Philosophy, Master in Education.

Elton: 64 years old, married, two children, graduated in Pedagogy, Master in Education, PhD in Business Sciences in Argentina.

The data obtained through the interviews were transcribed, systematized and later selected those referring to the relative issues of the social and family dimension of the teachers, as presented in the sequence.

Positive Influences of the Family of Origin

The family of origin, understood as the one that, since childhood, is responsible for the education of a person, according to Marasca; Colossi & Falcke (2013), was emphasized differently by respondents. As might be expected, the more experienced teachers attributed more value to their family of origin, while the others were more concerned about their new family, which was in the process of formation, as was the case of André and Bento who had children.

According to Papalia & Feldeman (2013), in each age of life subjects have roles to play and, in the case of adults who have minor children, they tend to be concerned with the education and development of their children, of the professional activities that occupy much of their time. Possibly these concerns existed among the teachers interviewed, to the point of not making as many comments about their families of origin. They just stated that, in relation to the choice of profession, “My family had no prejudice because as I was already heading for the priesthood, then I would continue to work with people” (BENTO).

Or the opposite happened, as in the case of André, who recalled the fact that his relatives lived on farms and believed that teaching was a profession for “teachers”. He argued that “My father was semi-literate, my mother is illiterate, I have no written language in my Family”.

It is noteworthy that both teachers were seminarians, this being a determining factor in the choice of the teaching profession and, perhaps because they did not have so many professional options, André went ahead, even without the support of his family.

Cosme, who was the father of two teenage children and a child, also did not comment as much on his family of origin, but pointed out (as mentioned earlier) that the grandfather was influenced by the priests, who, when coming back from abroad , encouraged that it was important to study. The grandfather influenced his father, who influenced him. As for the choice for teaching, he said, “I had full support at home. Within the family we already have several teachers, from uncles, a sister... these uncles also worked in the area of Mathematics ... so I had no problem, I really had total support”.

Professors Dante and Elton, who even retired, continued to work in the area of education, were thrilled to speak of their ancestors. Elton recalled that “Mama was very happy, her first child, the son of that maid, would go to college”. Likewise, the maternal grandparents felt “tremendous joy” and “had a tremendous pride in telling people their first grandson was in college”. For Braga, Ferreira & Gonçalves (2018, p. 45), these memories make people rebuild the formation process, because “in narrating their history, he (a) (re) experiences the events that marked him, making it possible to develop formative actions and giving experiences that will be part of his own teaching practice”.

As he talked about his family of origin, it became clear that Professor Elton began to be thrilled to recall his trajectory and what he represented to his family, especially to his mother, who died at an important point in his professional training.

Finally when we doctored ourselves, a week before we defended our thesis, we still had the opportunity to talk to her. And seeing her joy of having one more son who would be Doctor and not Doctor who would be a doctor, would be doctor greater! She felt that, in her humble awareness and wisdom, she understood that the real Doctors are the ones doing the doctorate... (ELTON)

He also took the opportunity to pay tribute to his mother through this research: “And every child that was formed... I repeat from the 14 brothers 12 have higher education and of these 12, 6 are teachers and of these 6, 5 are doctors! So I think it's a moment of homage to her”. Elton also commented on his mother's concern about her professional practice:

She always tried to ask me how my relationship was in relation to the evaluation I made with my students, and when we told about some of the experiences we had in terms of formative evaluation, evaluation of process regulation, she listened attentively and said that ... you see well in an era that was not talked about inclusive education, it told us that was the same way, that the school could not put out those who were inside.

Through these words it is possible to notice that the mother herself was influenced by the teachers' children, who became Doctors. She had an up-to-date view of education, a vision ahead of her time, to the point of exerting influence over her child's pedagogical practice. Corroborating with such ideas, Braga, Ferreira & Gonçalves (2018, pp. 52-53) emphasize that:

an important part of professional competence has roots so deeply rooted in its life history, marked by the passage of some influences both family and school, that the teacher can change their decision making on their conceptions as a future educator.

In addition to Professor Elton, Dante mentioned that he had influences from his family of origin in his training process. Despite the few conditions, the family struggled to get their children to study and now they feel proud to remember that:

Fortunately, practically everyone in the family studied: 4 brothers were lawyers, 2 were in the teaching area and others in the technical area. We consider that the family was a success, the father we always said that although he had not had study beyond the primary education of the time, as it was called, but he was always a great teacher for us. An interesting story because within his knowledge of life he always had a word of motivation, so they looked well at our choice to be a teacher (DANTE).

Knowing that the family is proud of the child's evolution is a way of reinforcing the behavior that brings personal gratification and to their families. Another important fact cited by Dante is the beginning of his professional career, when the teaching profession was valued.

By the time we started, the teacher had a lot of regard for society. So the family was proud to have a teacher, the teacher was valued. Regardless of the degree of education, he was a reference in the city, especially in the smaller cities he was a reference and even a good party for a marriage (DANTE).

In a similar way, Ramirez (2011) presents the report of a teacher who in the 1960s began her training and recalls that in that historical and cultural context there was a great appreciation of the education professionals.

in my family, teaching is a profession that has been widely explored. It is a profession considered as rewarding and with great social status. Formerly, the teachers had a social position very close to that of a priest or a priest in a city. Then, from there, one could see the importance of the teacher. And the emphasis that the society itself gave to the teacher in the sense that it influences the local decisions (RAMIREZ, 2011, p. 121-122).

Unfortunately, this same valuation and social recognition in relation to education professionals is no longer the same, as Ferreira points out (2002: 44): “Teachers constitute the most important cultural heritage in the education of a country, although they do not receive such recognition in many societies”, especially in Brazil.

In light of the above on the family of origin, we can conclude that, in fact, it exerted many influences on the professional life of the teachers interviewed and the knowledge acquired in the family context continued to influence the process of teaching performance.

Integrated Family Formation

Through the reports presented by the five teachers interviewed, it was possible to verify that they had a good family organization, being an important factor for them to feel with themselves with themselves and with their work. Ackerman (1989), in researching family styles, found that there are some variations in the forms of communication and patterns for conflict resolution that characterize a family group as healthy or not.

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The author classified in five the styles of groups found, that is: a) integrated, communicative and reinforcing families, which, by favoring the growth of their members, are considered a healthy style; b) integrated, but not very communicative families, which have the greatest value of the occupation around the production - are still healthy, but already present interactive difficulties; c) very immature families, with excessive dependence on the family of origin and that already present problems; d) families with egocentric parents whose predominance of behavior is indifference towards their children, whether children or young

people, are already considered problematic; e) disintegrated families, which, having neither cohesion nor exchange, are extremely conflictive and characterized as a sick and difficult group.

Based on the classification of Ackerman (1989), we can say that the teachers interviewed constituted integrated families, and it is not necessary here to deepen if they were very or not very communicative, but to verify that they were types A and B, that is, integrated families and considered healthy. Such a statement can be evidenced especially by the demonstration of pride that they demonstrated in speaking of their children who had a good route, according to socially accepted standards. They still made it a point to emphasize that they were part of this process of growth of the children, being their incentive. This is the case, for example, which was reported by Cosme:

I have a daughter in Thailand. She asked for help in the house and I was there. I have that moment in the classroom, that moment of the course, but when I'm at home I'm together with my children, I'm following their activities. So I have the condition to accompany my son, my daughter who is here, my daughter from Thailand ... We have the condition of being there everyday communicating with her on the internet, guiding her, within the reality of themselves.

Another teacher who was proud of his family's constitution is Dante, who mentioned: "We have been married for 31 years. We have two children, one couple. The two are already graduates of higher education. One is an expert and the daughter is a master, practically a master of mathematics. So that's the profile of our family."

Professor Dante repeatedly commented on the family and, reflecting on when he planned to quit, considering that he was retired, he commented: "I do not know when I will stop. I will complete, in two years, 40 years of teaching. I always play with the family so I'm going to write a work about 40 years of teaching. Forty Years of Teaching: An Unforgettable Experience" (Dante).

It should be noted that the teacher was happy with the interview and stressed the importance of resuming and reflecting on his own professional career. In this way, we realize that this type of research is a way to enable the teacher to reflect on their professional practice and on their life history.

Returning to comment on the importance of the marital family in the lives of the teachers interviewed, we present some of Elton's phrases about his children. He said:

- We have 2 children, both of whom have graduated in Dentistry ... We spent some time studying our children, raising children, when my two children were in Curitiba studying Dentistry ...
- The daughter lives in Curitiba and presents us with 2 beautiful granddaughters, her son abandoned Dentistry and today works with us, since after we retired, we created a higher education institution ...
- Thank God our children are raised, we have our way of life ...

The other two teachers interviewed still had their minor children, but they referred to the family at various times, such as Bento, who said, "I have a wife and two children: a 6 year old son and a 10 month old son" or "we eventually force a schedule and go out with the boys to have ice cream 'and still' the attention I need to give my children and wife...".

André also referred to the family as follows: "The question of the family that today I have, that is wife and now children, certainly had a very great weight because I have had full support from my wife since the engagement. And I think the family is this support ..."

According to Wagner (2002, p. 35), "The family is the stage where one experiences the most intense and striking emotions of human experience. It is the place where it is possible the coexistence of love and hate, joy and sadness, despair and hopelessness". That is, in the family one experiences several experiences, whether they are good or not so favorable. However, when family relationships are more positive, they can be seen as a balance and support for their members, as was mentioned by André, who attributes great value to his family.

Professor Dante also cited an experience that involves educational situations of gender relations and at the same time shows how personal examples can have an impact on society or on other people's lives:

An interesting thing that happened in our lives, because a while ago the woman did not study, it was not very recommended by the family, it would not be her job to acquire the study and we had a challenge. The wife when she started college was something very new and people were asking me, "Are you going to let your woman study, away, away?" And I would answer "Why? What's the problem?" "So normally she was studying along with men. She went from one city to another to study and it was interesting because after she graduated, and from there I always say you add hunger to the urge to eat, other colleagues started to value the woman and a large part encouraged their wives to profession of teaching. It's the couples today (Dante).

Dante's account portrays Vygotsky's ideas (1996), which, when analyzing the relationship between subject and society, states that the individual appropriates the social in a particular way, and that, while being influenced by the influence on the social context.

The teachers also commented on the relationship with the wives, evidencing that they also, for the most part, acted in the area of education.

- My wife is a teacher, too, so our life has always been school (Dante).
- My wife is a pedagogue, she works 20 hours supervising a school (Bento).
- My wife, she works in school, I have the condition to discuss with her the reality of the student, so this is favoring ... (Cosme).
- Today we are owners with my children and my wife of the Institute San Francisco de Assis, the space that is developing the postgraduate course of the level *Latu Sensu* ... (Elton).

In analyzing the importance of working together with the wife in the area of education, Cosme reported that “If I were in a company it would not be a reality for my children. As I am studying, I am inside the school and my wife too, so we have communication as much professional, as of father and educator.”

Perhaps a study on the couple that acts in the area of education, with the objective of verifying to what extent it contributes or not in the development of the professional career. One could imagine that at home they would have many activities connected to the school environment, because it is a profession that is usually part of the work at home. What the teachers researched showed that the fact that they worked in the same area helped in the educational process of the children and resulted in motivation for the couple:

I think the motivation you have for the partnership is worth a lot. The wife has a lot in this aspect, it is the same profession, we discussed the right problems, if motivated. So I think the achievement comes from this coexistence, the environment and especially when you see results (Dante).

When I started to work as a teacher, that's where our family came from, it was interesting because we took something together, lamented together, was happy together, vibrated together ... So I guess there's nothing to deny , and especially in this phase in which we leave for a specialization, for a master's degree is a moment that we need a lot of the understanding of who is on the other side (Dante).

Through the reports of the teachers, it becomes evident that the support of the wives for the formation process and development of the professional career was important, because they had the necessary support, even when they had to go to study. These reports suggest that the fact that the teachers belong to families characterized as integrated contributed to the good development of the career and the accomplishment of the teaching activities.

Finals considerations

The research carried out with five professors from the State of Paraná showed that social and family relations really influence the teaching profession. The social dimension concerns the historical and cultural context in which the practitioners of the research lived before the option of teaching. Thus, even from rural areas or inland cities, teachers received incentives from the community in which they were inserted, including from the Catholic Church, to invest in school education.

With regard to the family of origin, it was possible to note that the five teachers were children of illiterate or low educational parents who encouraged them to study and these family relationships contributed to the development of professional career and teaching practice.

The five teachers interviewed built integrated families who also supported them in the profession, including because most of the wives were also teachers, thus facilitating the balance between personal and professional life.

In this way, we understand that the social and family relations of teachers were considered important for teachers to develop their professional activities with quality.

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