Teacher appreciation policies in the public municipal education network of Angicos/RN

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Abstract
The article aims to present some of the results of the research entitled “Politics of teacher appreciation in the public municipal education network of Angicos/RN”. The fulfillment of the PNE goals that deal with these policies, the Municipal Education Plan and the career structure and remuneration of public basic education teachers organized in the network's PCCR were considered. We used a literature review, document research and data analysis of the teacher valorization policy requested from the Angicos Public Servants Union (SINDSPAN). The nuances of the implementation of the PCCR in the Municipality and elements of contradiction were identified, with regard to the role of the union. We miss the local guidelines of the municipal teaching category. The process of implementing the PNE and the PME has also been marked by difficulties and material conditions that make them unfeasible.

Keywords: Teacher appreciation. Municipal Education Plan. Career. Remuneration.

Políticas de valorização docente na rede pública de educação municipal de Angicos/RN

Resumo
O artigo possui o objetivo de apresentar alguns dos resultados da pesquisa intitulada “Políticas de valorização docente na rede pública de educação municipal de Angicos/RN”. Considerou-se o cumprimento das metas do PNE que tratam dessas políticas, o Plano Municipal de Educação e a estrutura da carreira e da remuneração dos docentes da educação básica pública organizada no Plano de Cargos, Carreira e Remuneração (PCCR) da rede. Utilizou-se revisão da literatura, pesquisa documental e análise de dados da política de valorização docente solicitados ao Sindicato dos Servidores Públicos de Angicos (SINDSPAN). Identificou-se as nuances da implementação do PCCR no Município e elementos de contradição, no que se refere ao papel do sindicato. Sentimos falta das pautas locais da categoria docente do município. O processo de implementação do PNE e do PME também vem sendo marcado por dificuldades e condições materiais que os inviabilizam.

1 Introduction

The importance of teachers to the Brazilian education system is almost unquestionable. However, valuing these professionals in order to achieve educational quality is a point that is the subject of countless discussions, especially since this depends on at least four elements being taken into account: career, working conditions, training (initial and continuing) and remuneration.

Over the years, a number of measures have been taken with a view to enabling public policies in the field of education that recognize the importance of the social role of teachers and consider their contribution to the transformation of education systems. These include: the 1988 Federal Constitution; the National Education Guidelines and Bases Law - Law no. 9.394/96; the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Teaching Staff Law (Fundef); the National Education Plan (2001-2010); the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and the Valorization of Education Professionals Law (Fundeb); the Education Development Plan (2007), the National Guidelines for Teaching Careers - Resolution no. 02/09; the National Education Plan (2007); and the National Education Plan (2014-2024), among other documents and legislation that highlight teachers as fundamental elements in education policy.

On the other hand, these policies are also the subject of movements and demands from the teaching profession, as they have gaps and texts that generate different interpretations and, consequently, different forms of implementation in education systems, thus generating internal conflicts within the teaching profession.

These documents and pieces of legislation that deal with valuing basic education teachers are linked to the constraints of the educational reform of the 1990s and 2000s, based on the idea of a global project (Neoliberalism) and a set of sectoral plans (PROMEDLAC, PRELAC) resulting from international agreements to formulate the political-educational agenda for Latin American countries, specifically Brazil.
We also recognize that these documents point to an evolution, albeit slow, in the valorization of teachers, as well as allowing us to confirm that the valorization of teachers is a crucial element in educational policy and thus comprises a long-standing historical struggle of education professionals.

Aware of this configuration, we felt it was important to research the policies for valuing teachers in public basic education schools in the municipality of Angicos/RN, considering our concerns about the current configuration of valuing education professionals, given that this is provided for in Brazilian documents and legislation, from the 1988 Federal Constitution to the National Education Plan (PNE, 2014-2024) - approved by Law No. 13.005/2014 - which has important implications for national and local education.

We recognize the need to investigate this issue because, although valuing teachers is a priority in the documents and legislation mentioned above, basic education teachers still face working conditions, careers and pay that are neither attractive nor rewarding, and the training they undergo is far from meeting their needs in the teaching profession, especially when it comes to the municipal level. This fact can be seen in the low attractiveness of the profession for the younger generations and the high number of mobilizations among these professionals, indicating discomfort with salaries and careers, according to studies carried out by Gatti (2009, 2011).

Little research has been carried out on the policy of valuing basic education teachers in the municipalities of the state of Rio Grande do Norte, which prompts the search for information to expand this knowledge, so that it can be analyzed and made available through written materials that can support research, planning and the formulation of public policies for education professionals. Furthermore, in the municipality of Angicos/RN, we are unaware of any research carried out with these objectives. Existing research at state level has scientifically disseminated a general overview of the teacher development policy in the state and helped us to realize the need to deepen some studies on this policy, such as analyzing the careers of these teachers, since this is the main instrument that reflects the real working conditions in which teachers find themselves.
The aim of this article is to present some of the results of the research entitled "Teacher development policies in the Angicos/RN municipal public education network", considering the objective of analyzing the teacher development policies developed in the Angicos/RN municipal public education network through compliance with the PNE goals that deal with teacher development policies, the Angicos/RN Municipal Education Plan (PME), and the career structure and remuneration of public basic education teachers organized in the municipal network's Position, Career and Remuneration Plan (PCCR).

2 Methodology

The research was exploratory to identify the research field. The following procedures were used in the investigation: literature review, highlighting authors such as Gatti (2011), Oliveira (2014), Arelaro (2007), among other scholars in the field; documentary research (PNE, PME and PCCR); and collection and analysis of data on the teacher development policy that covers the career, remuneration, training (initial and continuing) and working conditions of teachers in the Angicos/RN municipal public network, requested from the Angicos Public Servants' Union (SINDSPAN).

The research was carried out by consulting and analyzing books, theses and dissertations, periodicals, reports, official documents and legislation on the subject, in a process of bibliographical research, contemplating three simultaneous and articulated axes: a) the analysis of sources on the historical and political context; b) the content of official documents at local level; and c) the considerations of authors on the subject in question.

We checked with the Municipal Department of Education (SME) in the municipality of Angicos/RN for documents and legislation dealing with the careers of teachers in the municipal public school system. We visited the municipal union (SINDSPAN) to present and join the research.

Among the students who took part in the research project, we carried out studies on the theoretical basis of teacher development policies at national, regional and local level.
During the course of the research, the students produced partial reports and scientific articles for publication and socialization of the results found at academic events.

This research was carried out considering the essence of the events arising from educational policy at national and local level, with regard to policies for valuing teachers in basic education, and not just their appearance. Thus, we tried to unveil the contradictions of the object under investigation, since it is not isolated from the social, economic and political aspects that comprise it.

To this end, we looked at the object under investigation through a historical, critical and dialectical analysis that allowed us to consider reality in a social, political and economic context. We are therefore concerned with the research process as a whole, and not just the results or products. For this reason, data collection was defined in qualitative and quantitative terms, as we focused on comparing and analyzing the information.

We also revisited the general objective of the research and its specific objectives to confirm our assumption. We started from the assumption that the teacher development policy proposed in documents and legislation (national and local) has not been enough to guarantee effective teacher development, especially through the four elements that comprise it: career, working conditions, training (initial and continuing) and remuneration.

3 Results and Discussion

Goals 15, 16, 17 and 18 of the National Education Plan - Law No. 13.005/2014 - include plans for teacher development. Goal 15 aims to guarantee, on a collaborative basis, a national teacher training policy, with the aim of ensuring that teachers obtain a degree in the area of education in which they work. Goal 16 aims to train at least 50% of teachers at postgraduate level, as well as offering continuing training based on the contexts and demands of teaching. Goal 17 establishes the projection of valuing teaching workers by the sixth year of the National Education Plan (PNE), with other professionals with equivalent schooling. Goal 18 aims to guarantee, within a minimum of two (2) years, a Plan
of Positions, Careers and Remuneration (PCCR) for Public Basic Education and Public Higher Education.

Therefore, it can be seen that the legislation in force aims to guarantee a policy to overcome the challenges that comprise the realization of teacher appreciation through all the elements that comprise it. However, the National Education Plan (2014-2024) has not been implemented as expected. According to Araújo (2015), in its first few years in force, there were cuts in various sectors of education, limiting and preventing the achievement of its goals, for example, in the government of Dilma Rousseff, in her second term, she cut 70 billion from the Federal Budget, which resulted in a loss of R$9.47 billion for education, announced in May 2015 by Education Minister Aloizio Mercadante, contradicting himself in his speeches with the slogan "Brazil, Educating Homeland".

With the coup of 2016, resulting in the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, Michel Temer took over the presidency, and during his government, he limited investments in education for 20 years, through Constitutional Amendment 95/2016, which will establish the minimum ceiling for public spending, impacting education, health, infrastructure, as well as social segments. This will directly affect the implementation of the teacher development goals and policy.

Aguiar (2010) reiterates the need for an integrated professional development and development policy as one of the challenges in the process of building the National Education Plan, given the fact that there is a significant range of legislation. At the same time, we note that the implementation of this Plan also leaves something to be desired in terms of meeting the targets set for achieving the desired policy of professional development.

The Angicos/RN Municipal Education Plan (Law 1.024/2015) shows a tendency to repeat the PNE targets, but with strategies to be achieved specifically in the municipality. Among the strategies analyzed is the one that refers to updating/revising the Career, Position and Remuneration Plan (PCCR) for teaching professionals in public basic education in Angicos/RN (18.1), through a study commission with representatives from the Municipal Executive and teacher representative bodies, in the first year of the PME's
validity. However, the current PCCR in the municipality analyzed refers to 2009, which means that the planned strategy has not been fulfilled.

When analyzing the Plan of Positions, Career and Remuneration of Public Basic Education Teaching Professionals - Angicos/RN, it was observed that the document is materialized in Municipal Law no. 759, of December 31, 2009, which provides for the Career and Remuneration Plan for Public Basic Education Teaching Professionals in the Municipality of Angicos, and makes other provisions. Chapter I - THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE CAREER, article 6, item III, provides for progression by changing class through periodic promotions for length of service or performance evaluation, interspersed every 3 (three) years. Subsection IV provides for access to a career through a public examination of tests and titles aimed at ensuring the quality of educational action. Point VII provides for salary progression with a change in career level based on qualifications.

Chapter II - THE STRUCTURE OF THE CAREER - Art. 10 - defines that Level is the group of teaching professionals, occupying the permanent position of teacher, with the same degree of training or qualification on which the career is structured, corresponding to: I - Special Level 1, training in a high school course, with a specific qualification for teaching or with an unspecified degree - (level in extinction); II - Level 1, training in a higher education course with a full degree, with a specific qualification for teaching basic education; III - Level 2, training in a higher education course with a full degree, with a specific qualification for teaching basic education and a postgraduate diploma in the area of education, at a specialization level; IV - Level 3, training in a full degree course, with specific qualification for teaching basic education and a post-graduate diploma in the field of education, at master's level; V - Level 4, training in a full degree course, with specific qualification for teaching basic education and a post-graduate diploma in the field of education, at doctorate level.

Still on the career structure for teachers in Angicos/RN, article 11 defines that Class is the position of teaching professionals, occupying a permanent teaching position, in the career levels based on factors of length of service, performance and professional qualifications, designated by letters from "A" to "J".
In addition, the evaluation of teaching performance takes into account the fulfillment of duties, efficiency in the exercise of the position, performance and quality of work, cooperation, relevant projects in the artistic, cultural or welfare area. However, it is important to reflect that the target audience for these demands is not always given the material conditions to carry them out. Most of the time, meeting these demands involves factors and elements that may not be within the reach of these professionals. Therefore, there are many things to consider when drafting, approving and implementing a document of this magnitude, especially when it comes to professionals who are inserted in a reality that is not conducive to its implementation.

In other words, it is also necessary to consider possible external factors that go beyond the teacher, such as the material conditions, on the part of the student, for the studies to be developed and the material resources available within the scope of the teacher's work.

With regard to the PCCR in general, Araújo and França (2016, p. 154) report that the job plans in most of the country's states and municipalities came into existence influenced by national legislation, given that decentralized resources began to be applied to state and municipal governments as of the Funds policy established in the 1990s.

Interviews with the Angicos/RN Municipal Public Servants’ Union (SINDSPAN) made it possible to understand the nuances of the implementation of the Positions, Careers and Remuneration Plan in the municipality. We agree with Gil (2002, p. 117) regarding the conduct of the interview:

In surveys that use interviews as a data collection technique, they take on a more or less structured form. Even if the possible answers are not fixed in advance, the interviewer is guided by some kind of script, which can be memorized or recorded on sheets of paper.

The partially structured interview script was created beforehand, after reading the municipality’s job plan and organizing 24 (twenty-four) questions about the document. The interview was conducted with the general representative of Sindspan and a representative
of the Angicos/RN Municipal Education Department, who received us at the union's headquarters.

We asked the representative of the municipal education department about the change from the old PCCR (Law no. 507/98) to the current one (Law no. 759/2009 - Career and Remuneration Plan for Teaching Professionals in Angicos Municipal Public Basic Education), whether there had been any changes and whether they were positive, advantageous or if there had been any losses. The representative replied that:

*This repeal of Law 671 of 2008, based on the new Job, Career and Remuneration Plan, has seen a lot of changes. In my experience as a civil servant, as a teacher in the network, I see that many changes have taken place. According to the advantages that used to be vertical, horizontal, today we have by level, by time every three years, we change the level in the law, and the remuneration, right? This guarantees an incentive, a change for the teacher.*

It was thus observed that there are misinterpretations about what vertical and horizontal change and change of level and class mean, since vertical and horizontal advantages correspond to the design of the level and class bonus table. In contrast to the representative of the municipal education department, the general representative of the union said that:

*In order for this to happen, for the civil servant, in this case the teacher [to achieve progression], we have to make a request to the municipality, so that they have this right, this percentage. A doctorate is 30%, 25% for those with a master's degree and 20% for specializations. Teachers don't have the right [to a change in level] because they already have the right to a letter change. Only the change of letter. Only letter changes.*

This answer contradicts what is stated in the PCCR of the Angicos/RN municipal public education network, which provides for a change of level in Chapter I, on the basic principles of the career, which in its paragraph VII establishes salary progression with a change of level in the career for qualifications that include a degree.

When we asked how the National Professional Wage Floor (PSPN) is applied in the Municipality of Angicos/RN, we received a reply from the Sindspan representative that the implementation of the floor is monitored through dialogues with members of the RN
Public Education Workers' Union - SINTE/RN and with members of the Federation of Rural Farmers and Family Farmers of the State of Rio Grande do Norte - FETARN, who pass on information to the union about changes in the careers and remuneration of civil servants.

We were unsure and asked the union representative again about the same subject, and received confirmation of the previous answer. Therefore, we understand that the monitoring and appropriation of laws that value the teaching profession is not carried out and studied by the union itself and that they depend on other associations to carry out these demands.

When asked about the payment of the 33.23% adjustment to the national floor, approved in 2022, as provided for in Law 11.738 of 2008 - PSPN, we were told that the Angicos/RN city council had paid the 33.23% adjustment and that it was an achievement of Sindspan, which organized a dialogue together with the mayor, the education department and the legal advisors. Based on this statement, we asked the union representative if Sinte/RN had been involved in organizing the readjustment, since there is an exchange of guidelines for the struggle between the associations, and the information we received was that Sinte/RN had not been involved in the dialogue with the mayor, the education department and the legal advisors.

Considering this response, we find an element of contradiction in the role of the union: we feel that the local agendas of the teaching category in the municipality are missing. This perspective corresponds to what Biavatti (2006) points out when he emphasizes that: "official trade union historiography usually approaches the formation of trade unionism as a mere effect of the different arrangements in the modes of production", and this thinking is understood as determinant. Biavatti (2006) presents us with Michel Foucault's conception of the historiography of trade unionism:

The contemporaneity of teachers' unionism in the society of control, which as a union force emerged in the midst of the decline of workers' unionism, gave a new form to union history. These power relations are investigated to see how the forces at play in these disputes subsidized the formation of modes of teacher subjectivation engaged in an implication that takes into account the superimposition of the binomial utility/docility of the body of the disciplinary society by the
utility/participation of the control society, as well as the differences in participation that neoliberalism as an arrangement on a planetary scale provides.

This change took place during the liberal perspectives and occurred due to the implementation of neoliberalism in the economic model in the 1990s, driving a reconfiguration in the trade union model of organization, articulation and struggle.

4 Final considerations

The National Education Plan (2014-2024) addresses the issue of valuing teachers in at least four of its 20 goals. However, in order to achieve them, it will be necessary to overcome a number of shortcomings, such as the difficulty of building consensus on the various issues in the plan and the contradictions of local governments in implementing their state and municipal plans. The construction of this plan comprised a process of elaboration permeated by advances and setbacks: from the 2010 National Education Conference (CONAE) to the National Congress. In addition, in November 2014, there was also the 2014 National Education Conference (CONAE), which presented a set of proposals that supported the implementation of the National Education Plan (PNE), indicating responsibilities, co-responsibilities, concurrent, complementary and collaborative attributions between the federated entities and the education systems.

The studies carried out allowed us to see that the process of implementing this plan has also been marked by difficulties and material conditions that make it unfeasible. We realized that it is not enough to create a set of laws to promote improvements in the quality of education, nor teacher appreciation, because these laws have some limitations and it is necessary to guarantee comprehensive and continuous public education policies.

Educational policies, in the way they have been implemented, from a neoliberal perspective, do not reflect the changes that are desired in education, especially with regard to the teacher development policy, as they reinforce the reproduction of inequalities, since
the redefinition of the role of the state as regulator of educational policies has been characterized as the reproduction of a false improvement in the quality of education.

With regard to the local policies analyzed, there are contradictions and misunderstandings on the part of those who materialize and are part of the implementation of the teacher development policy in the municipality analyzed, which hinders its coherent implementation.

The research carried out was able to contribute to deepening the studies of students on the Pedagogy degree course at Ufersa/Angicos about the teacher development policy that comprises their future area of work, so that these students could recognize themselves in the process of demanding better career conditions, work and pay in their field.

References


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