FORMAÇÃO CONTINUADA DE PROFESSORES A DISTÂNCIA

DISTANCE CONTINUING EDUCATION OF TEACHERS

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Pesquisa e avaliação

Educação continuada em geral

Relatório de pesquisa

Investigação científica

Abstract

This paper analyzes the High School Network (EMR – in portuguese Ensino Médio em Rede) – a program of distance and continuing education, in a city of the state of São Paulo, verifying "if" and "how" this program contributed to the improvement on the High School education based on the perception of its participants. Methodologically, we chose the study of case, because we want to understand a particular reality (EMR in a particular city), treated as a unit inside a larger system (EMR in the state of São Paulo). The High School Network is a program of distance and continuing education implemented by the Board of Education of the State of São Paulo, in the years of 2004 thru 2006. The program involved, in the researched city, a total of 45 schools and 776 people, whom we interviewed 40 (forty). The majority of the interviewed people said that used what they have learned in the program EMR in their pedagogical practices in the class room, and of these, a group of teachers developed collective projects in their respective schools. This meets the general goal of EMR – improvement on the quality of high school. In this matter, we can conclude that, according to the interviewed participants of EMR, this program supported the innovation of educational practices.

Key-words: Distance and continuing education, continuing education of teachers, High School Network.

INTRODUCTION

This paper analyzes the continuing and distance learning of teachers in public schools in the state of São Paulo, through the High School Network Program (EMR – in portuguese Ensino Médio em Rede), in a city of the state.

To the completion of the research, we chose the methodology of study of case, because we want to understand a particular reality (EMR in a particular city), treated as a unit inside a larger system (EMR in the state of São Paulo).

> Lead a study of case to build profound understanding today is continuous, under social and human science, and it's compatible with different schools of thought, with different investigation techniques and with different epistemológicos patterns. (OLIVEIRA-FORMOSINHO, 2002, p. 91)

The research tools used were: interviews with Pedagogical Technical Assistants (ATP – in portuguese Assistentes Técnicos Pedagógicos), with the coordinator teachers and with teachers; watching teleconferences; and analysis of the EMR Code.

CONTINUING EDUCATION OF TEACHERS

From the References for Teacher Education (BRASIL/MEC/SEF. 1999), it is possible to understand that continuing education of teachers is a permanent process of professional development, that must promote the updating and deepening of the educational themes and the consideration of pedagogical practices, taking to its improvement.

Perrenoud (1997, p. 35) states that *the change in practices goes through a transformation in the concepts and in the availability of action.* In this aspect, continuing education grew as an important kind of teacher education, specially in the developing countries because of the large differences seen in the end of the basic teacher education.

We understand that teacher's continuing education must happen focused in the everyday activities of the class room, next to the real problem teachers go through, taking as central reference the work of teacher teams, therefore, assuming a participatory, investigative and flexible dimension. In this way, Nóvoa (1995) says that continuing education is only taken place with the testing, the innovation, the rehearsal of new ways of pedagogical work and with a critical reflection about its use.

This way, pedagogical practices must stimulate creativity in the context in which they emerge and gain shape, allowing a generation of innovate proposals and contributing to the changing process (PORTO, 2000).

Although, in the different actions of continuing education, the visible behaviors of the teachers facing new lessons and information also establish another thing that turns to and that deserve the educator's attention, because, facing the recognition that they don't know a certain subject or aspect of his own work, the teacher's reactions may vary from the desire and the effort to learn to the total blockade and resistance to learn something new (MONTEIRO; GIOVANNI, 2000).

With the release of new technology, available to educators, new possibilities to destroy patterns appear at the same time in which cultural isolation the majority of Education "professionals" find themselves can be

eliminated. Relating new technologies and teacher continuing education, Valente (1997) states that:

> The teacher's continuing education must provide conditions that he, the teacher, can build knowledge about computer techniques, understand why and how to integrate the computer in his pedagogical practice and be capable of breaking through administrative and pedagogical problems. This practice allows the transition from a fragmented educational system to an integrated approach of subject and turned to the answer of specific problems of the interest of each student. Finally, it must create conditions so the teacher knows how to contextualize again the knowledge and the experience lived in his continuing education to his class room reality matching the necessities of its students and the pedagogical goals that he is willing to achieve (p. 14).

One of the possibilities that new technologies give is the Distance Learning (EaD – in portuguese Ensino a Distância).

DISTANCE LEARNING

In Brazil, according to Niskier (1999) the beginning of the EaD is associated to the beginning of the spreading of radio as an educational source, what happened, in Brazil, in 1923 with the Rio de Janeiro's Radio Society, that broadcasted several different classes. In 1941, the Brazilian Universal Institute created the courses by mail, that can still be found today. Other traces of EaD are: in 1970 was created the Project Minerva; in 1978, the Telecourse of middle and high school; in 1995, the Telecourse 2000; and in 1996, the School TV. Besides the governmental programs, in the 1990's, started the college and PHD distance courses, as their goal was to reach the youth that didn't have access to attendance based Higher Education courses.

In terms of Brazilian legislation that rules the EaD, we want to highlight the Law of Guidelines and Bases of the National Education – Law 9394/96, from December 20 1996, in which Article 80 states:

> The Public Power will encourage the development and the broadcasting of distance learning, in all levels and kinds of education, and continuing education.

As for the understanding about distance education, we find different definitions (BELONI, 1999 and NISKIER, 1999), that are usually describing, about the conventional class room teaching. The common item in all definitions is the distance and the variables include the interactions, the information and communication technologies used and the pedagogical models adopted. The Decree 5622, Article 1º, of 2005, defines EaD as:

> Educational kind in which the pedagogical reflection in the teaching and learning process occurs with the use of information and communication technologies, with students and teachers developing educational activities in different places or time.

In continuing education, the EaD has been favoring the culture of learning or of performance, in a way in which the learning and the reflection of

the activities developed with the help of what's new, promotes changing and the improvement of the professional work. And the program High School Network is an example of distance and continuing education.

HIGH SCHOOL NETWORK

Guided by the principles found in the Law of Guidelines and Bases of the National Education (LDBEN) # 9394/96, the Education State Department (MEC) implemented starting in 1998 changes in High School, establishing the National Curricular Guideline to High School (PCNEM). This movement of transformation of high school and its schedule, by the redefinition of its social part, was called High School Reform.

The impressive growing, needed, in such short time, added to the new economic and social demands, transformed the work and the everyday living in each school. We know that she can no longer be the same and that the different educational agents (teachers, coordinators, pedagogical technical assistants, supervisors) and teachers need to rethink the practice of their collective work facing the commitment of providing the quality needed to the education of the youth – need of continuing education.

The definitions induced and legitimized a change in the purpose of High School and, consequently, in order to select the contents, organize the situations of learning, reorganize the evaluation procedures, manage the spaces and time of education and, as condition, rethink the teacher and educational agents responsible for the school work.

In this context, the policy of the Board of Education of the State of São Paulo (SEE-SP) considered necessary to discuss and change its organization, rethinking the work culture and the teacher and educational agents, creating the Program High School Network (EMR) – distance and continuing education. This process explored the possibilities of the collective work and developed the skills and knowledge necessary to new challenges proposed in the implementation of the reform of High School.

The program was developed in the years of 2004 thru 2006 and connected the cities of the state by the Knowledge's Net (in Portuguese Rede do Saber), in shape of courses, seeking the high school quality's improvement as a consequence of the distance and continuing education, promoting the implementation of the schedule reform, highlighting the reading and writing process, the school's democratic management and the adaptation of the school's pedagogical spaces.

THE RESEARCH

The High School Net developed itself from two activities set: the FORMATIVE EXPERIENCE, in which the participant enlarged his knowledge about the curriculum and analyzed his own pedagogical practice, and the EDUCATIVE EXPERIENCES, in which were proposed activities to be developed in the specific place of acting – school unit or school district office – by work projects for each of the segments, totalizing 666 printed pages; a CD-ROM with an article and research collection, also legislations, guidelines and

curricular models about High School; and videos (total of 3 hours and 42 minutes of duration) produced for the discussion of questions relevant to the Program. The work included collective activities – during the hours of work in the HTPCs (Collective Pedagogical Work Hour - in Portuguese), in the class room, in the school district's office and in the Knowledge's Net and with individual activities, besides the work hours.

The teleconference would go on in a room (of a state public school, localized in downtown) prepared with equipments, two television, one VCR apparatus, a multimedia projector, microphone and a computer with printer. There was a sound system in the room, adequate lighting and ventilation. The room's capacity was 35/40 teachers. The teleconference was broadcasted, live, from the headquarters in São Paulo and all the schools that hosted the EMR watched the same teleconference in their cities. Usually participated in discussions, with the researched EMR group, the cities of Guaratinguetá, Jundiaí, Santos, Guarulhos e Limeira. In average, in the researched EMR, participated 30 people, being the majority female. Independent of the worked theme, the work dynamic was always the same, teleconference, coffee, discussion and activity.

The researched EMR involved 776 people total, being: 01 education supervisor, 04 Pedagogical Technical Assistants, 55 coordinator teachers, 671 high school teachers and 45 schools. We interviewed 40 (forty) people, between teachers and educational agents, from different areas and randomly chosen: I – Languages, codes and its technologies – 10; II – Nature Sciences and Mathematics and its technologies – 10; III – Social Studies and its technologies – 10; IV – Coordinators – 08 and V – Pedagogical Technical Assistants – 02. All of the interviewed has completed college degree and some of them have an Education major. From the 40 teachers and educational agents interviewed 17 of them started EMR in the year of 2004, 10 in the year of 2005 and 13 in the year of 2006. The average time of service of the interviewed is of 07 years (maximum of 15 and minimum of 05 years).

From the 40 interviewed, 33 understand that the EMR contributed to their continuing education, two disagree and five answered partially. According to them, the contribution happens when there's a reflection over the pedagogical practices, relating the theme with the routine (stated by 88% of the interviewed), exchanging experiences (stated by 65% of the interviewed), using the given material (20%) and the development of collective projects, that articulate subjects and alternate the practice in the class room (20%). This way, the majority interviewed evaluates that the EMR contributes to his/her continuing education by the reflections of the group, with exchange of experiences, relating practice with theory and taking a new practice, especially by the collective projects. This meets the statement:

> To work collectively is important because it provides opportunities so that the student *(in our case – the teacher in process of continuing education – our highlight)* exposes to the group his interpretations and thoughts, contributing, therefore to the activities' development (MAIA & MATTAR, 2007, p. 88).

Most part of the interviewed (38) said that uses (with different periodicity) the contents learned in the EMR program and some (5) are developing projects with other teachers in their school, changing the pedagogical practice with

students. This reveals the effectiveness of distance and continuing education, once the contents learned won't just be accumulated knowledge, but reflected in changes on the educational practices and learning. Evidence, also, that the most relevant activities in the distance learning model are: *search, find, select and apply, and not more receive and memorize* (MAIA & MATTAR, 2007, p. 85).

In the comments made in the EMR encounters and in the analysis of its code, we verify that is given emphasis to the use of technology, in special, the use of computer, justified by the necessity of the student's digital inclusion. During the research period, talking to some teachers, these showed what EMR provided:

- Knowledge, planning and developing of interdisciplinary and pedagogical resources in the class room practices projects;
- Innovation of the classes, with a more directed to the public work, favoring the student's learning;
- Diversification of the pedagogical practice, developed in the everyday basis of the class room;
- Interdisciplinary practices and the collective planning in the schools, from the discussion in the HTPCs;
- Developing of new attitudes facing the school's management (larger participation), the HTPC meetings and the given classes, specially incentive to the critical thinking of the student.

Concluding from these thoughts, it's possible to state that:

a) according to the interviewed EMR participants, this program supported the innovation of the school practices - *... it's transforming the reality in my school* (says a LCT teacher), in other words, provided improvement in the high school quality, at least in some participating of the EMR schools;

b) the State of São Paulo has been offering alternatives to the continuing education of its teachers and the EMR is an example. From the given research, it is possible to verify that the EMR provided a distance and continuing education to teachers, especially by the thematic reflections related with the pedagogical practices that made possible the implementation of collective projects, with the articulation of different subjects. We believe that what is still missing is a more consistent policy for continuing education (specially, distance learning), that combine the alternatives offered, making them more effective.

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