



The teaching profession in focus: some factors that hinder joining the teaching career

Rafael Izidoro Martins Neto* and Cláudio Alves Pereira

Instituto Federal de Minas Gerais, Av. Juscelino Kubitschek, 485, Distrito Industrial II, 35588-000, Arcos, Minas Gerais, Brasil. *Author for correspondence: E-mail: rafael.izidoro18@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT. The present paper, seeking to identify evidence of the (de)valuation of the teaching career, surveyed third year High School students and collected data about the understanding that these young people had about the teaching career and their choices for the upcoming selection process. This research is justified by the fact that the official indexes of the School Census of Higher Education point to a progressive decrease in the number of recent high school graduates who choose to enrol in teaching degree courses in educational institutions, whether public or private. We interviewed students from two private and two public schools in the city of Bambuí, in Minas Gerais state's interior, with a total of seven classes and 128 students. To make this study possible, the researchers applied a questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using an exploratory qualitative approach. The results show that most of the young people interviewed do not find the teaching profession attractive and that this should not be their choice for studies in higher education. As evidence of this position, there are ideas related to the teaching profession, such as: poor working conditions, low remuneration, lack of social recognition, disrespect from students, among others, although these same young people recognize in the teaching activity the potential for social and political change.

Keywords: teaching; teaching career; social value of the teaching career.

La profesión de un profesor enfocado: algunos factores que dificen la adhesión a la carrera docente

RESUMEN. El presente trabajo, buscando identificar evidencias de la (des)valorización de la carrera profesional docente, realizó una encuesta con estudiantes de tercer año de bachillerato y recogió datos sobre la comprensión que estos jóvenes tenían sobre la carrera docente y su desempeño. opciones para el proceso de aproximación selectiva. Esta investigación se justifica por el hecho de que los índices oficiales del Censo Escolar de Educación Superior apuntan a una caída progresiva en el número de estudiantes recién egresados del bachillerato que optan por ingresar a carreras de grado en instituciones educativas, sean públicas o privadas. Se entrevistó a estudiantes de dos colegios privados y dos públicos de la ciudad de Bambuí, en el interior del estado de Minas Gerais, con un total de 7 clases y 128 alumnos entrevistados. Para hacer posible este estudio, los investigadores aplicaron un cuestionario, cuyos datos se analizaron mediante un enfoque cualitativo exploratorio. Los resultados muestran que la mayoría de los jóvenes entrevistados no consideran atractiva la profesión docente y que esta no debería ser la opción para continuar sus estudios en la educación superior. Como evidencia de esta posición, están las ideas relacionadas con la profesión docente: malas condiciones laborales, baja remuneración, falta de reconocimiento social, falta de respeto por parte de los estudiantes, entre otras, aunque estos mismos jóvenes reconocen en el docente el potencial de agente transformador social y político.

Palabras-clave: docencia; carrera docente; valor social de la carrera docente.

A profissão de professor em foco: alguns fatores que dificultam a adesão à carreira docente

RESUMO. O presente trabalho, buscando identificar evidências da (des)valorização da carreira profissional docente, realizou uma pesquisa com estudantes do terceiro ano do ensino médio e coletou dados sobre o entendimento que esses jovens tinham a respeito da carreira docente e das suas escolhas para o processo seletivo que se aproximava. Justifica-se a realização dessa pesquisa pelo fato de os índices oficiais do Censo Escolar da Educação Superior apontarem uma queda progressiva no número de alunos recém-formados no

ensino médio que optam por ingressar em cursos de licenciatura nas instituições de ensino, sejam públicas ou privadas. Foram entrevistados estudantes de duas escolas privadas e duas escolas públicas da cidade de Bambuí, interior do estado de Minas Gerais, com um total de 7 turmas e 128 estudantes entrevistados. Para que fosse possível realizar esse estudo, os pesquisadores aplicaram um questionário, sendo os dados analisados por uma abordagem qualitativa exploratória. Os resultados apontam que a maioria dos jovens entrevistados não consideram atrativa a profissão docente e que esta não deve ser a escolha para prosseguimento de estudos no ensino superior. Como indícios desse posicionamento, estão as ideias relacionadas à profissão docente: más condições de trabalho, baixa remuneração, falta de reconhecimento social, desrespeito por parte dos alunos, dentre outras, embora estes mesmos jovens reconheçam no professor o potencial de agente transformador social e político.

Palavras-chave: docência; carreira docente; valor social da carreira docente.

Received on December 13, 2019.
Accepted on November 03, 2020.

Introduction

Brazilian society has been experiencing economic, political, social, and technological changes, especially since the 1990s, causing alterations in the ways of organizing work in the most diverse fields of activity. It has been observed that younger individuals, especially, have presented different and distinct perspectives concerning their professional development. The economic and social aspects may cause a decrease in hiring and generate instability for those who hold a certain position and aim at career progression.

In the current scenario, formal, stable, and paid jobs are being replaced by selectable offers that do not guarantee a long-term sequence of activity. Work, regardless of whether it is a formal activity or not, will always be a difficult assignment, in many cases poorly valued, and with scarce opportunities. In this picture, the teaching profession mixes personal, social, and economic factors that, it is assumed, have caused the drop in the number of entrants to teaching degree courses and, consequently, in the number of graduates.

The participants of this research are students from public and private schools of a city in the interior of Minas Gerais, that were enrolled in High School's last year in May 2019. Being in the stage in which pressures are common to define their professional future, whether they will take an undergraduate course or what other directions they will give to their personal and professional lives, these young people have in mind, at different levels of perception, what are the signals sent by the market regarding professions that are 'on the rise' and which of them offer better salaries. This information creates in young people a scenario of desired professions and other unattractive ones, whose criteria permeate the juvenile ideals of social validation and future remuneration.

The decline in the interest of students in investing in academic education in teaching degrees is a worrisome fact. The lack of qualified teachers and the absence of trained people in the fields and contents applied to secondary and basic education is a topic of research and discussion in books, papers and forums throughout Brazil. Two other very important factors should be added to the analysis of this issue: i) the drop in the number of graduates (low number of entrants and low number of exists, as shown in the data of the Higher Education Census); and ii) the change in the teacher's profile, who, due to the scarcity of licensed teachers and to the increase in the number of educational institutions, causes the entry of bachelor professionals working in teaching, either as a definitive choice or as a temporary work option.

The research subjects were third year High School students from four educational institutions, two private and two public (of these, a state and a federal school) in the city of Bambuí, state of Minas Gerais. The aim was to collect data about their comprehension of the teaching career. As secondary objectives, the research sought to identify whether the teacher, in their point of view, is seen as an agent of social and political transformation, as well as to know the percentage of these young people who had a teaching degree course as their option for higher education.

This research is justified by the fact that official indexes show a progressive drop in the number of recent high school graduates who choose to enrol in undergraduate teaching courses in public or private educational institutions. As a contribution to the academic-scientific debate, we highlight the potential of the data presented here to the formulation of public policies that address to make the teaching career more attractive and thus contribute to the studies that aim to enhance the teaching career and teachers in Brazil.

Literature review

To weave the discussions proposed by this research, we selected theoretical references that show us paths to agree with them or to present new perspectives, new analyses and that, undeniably, contribute to the debate in the field of teacher education.

In order to optimize the reading and structure of the ideas, this section is organized in two discussion axes: the first deals with Formal Education and High School, while the second brings contributions about Undergraduate Teaching Degree and Teaching Career.

Formal Education and High School

For the research scenario, it is important to highlight the locus of the educational process: the educational institution. However, there is the family nucleus which is a fundamental partner in this education process. The various relationships that take place in and between the educational institution and the family directly affect the teaching career.

The formal educational process is, undoubtedly, one of the essential factors in the process of citizenship and should be considered as a priority, one of the foundations of public management, and more attention should be given to it in the investments made by those who manage the nation's resources. According to Facci (2004), the Brazilian educational system cannot be taken as a reference for investments, since it does not have an equal distribution and service for its needs, in addition to an investment well below that necessary to match its demand, which demonstrates negligence and failures on the part of the rulers.

Pereira (2004) also contributes to this discussion by bringing the role of the family as a partner in formal education. According to the author, the factors of teaching and learning cannot be solely linked to the school institution, but it is also up to the family nucleus to become active in a way that occurs a simultaneous contribution of performances so that the child, adolescent or any other student profile, has better conditions to develop and learn.

Also according to Pereira (2004), even before children arrive at school, several factors hinder their intellectual development, and these factors are socially related, notably scarce financial resources and the decisive role of the family (especially of parents/guardians) in the human formation of these individuals. It is salutary to point out the importance of the School and the Family as complimentary fabrics in the formation of individuals.

It was observed in the schools surveyed that some teaching areas in Basic Education already have a shortage of teachers and that, together with the lack of financial resources in Education, this is a delicate social issue: even after completing their academic training, some teachers are unwilling to teach. When excluding personal factors, the devaluation of the teaching career in Basic Education, the low salaries, and the working conditions may be keeping these professionals away from the classrooms. However, this hypothesis will not be detailed in this research, as it may constitute another investigative work with these subjects.

As analyzed by Mizukami (1986, p. 11), "[...] in the process of education, during the period in which the student attends school, he is confronted with models that may be useful to him in the course of his life during and after school" (Mizukami, 1986, p. 11, translated from the original)¹. As a citizenship construction project, therefore, it is necessary to take Education as a Nation Project.

Focusing on High School, the official data from the Ministry of Education (MEC) indicate that this scholar phase brings enormous challenges to Brazilian society. The social and psychological changes suffered by young people have potentiated the interference in academic achievement, although these cannot be held solely responsible for school failure. Statistical data produced by MEC indicate that about 30% of the students who reach High School are late to finish this stage or do not graduate; of those who enter, 28% leave school in the first year of High School. If we analyze the data from the last ten years, the growth of the high school is only 0.3%, that is, the value is almost null (Brazil, 2018).

In order to intervene in this scenario, the MEC proposed, and the federal government sanctioned, in late 2018, the new National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) for high school. The intention, according to the document, is to restructure this school phase, making it deeper and more stimulating in its regular development. It would be to bring the incentive to adolescents, for them to develop their protagonism with

¹ Translated from the original: "[...] no processo da educação, durante o período em que o aluno frequenta a escola, ele se confronta com modelos que lhe poderão ser úteis no decorrer de sua vida durante e pós-escola".

conviction and autonomy for their future choices (Brazil, 2018). By prioritizing the mandatory offer only of Mathematics and Portuguese Language, the document indicates that this would be the common curricular base for High School, with states and municipalities free to choose the itinerary of complementary formation that best suits the regional particularities. However, caution is needed to verify the benefits and setbacks that the law can bring to public school systems.

Motta and Frigotto (2017), in defence of the right to integral formation for all, call on all educators to initiate a counter-reform.

As a more general conclusion, this is a counter-reform that expresses and consolidates the project of the Brazilian ruling class in its anti-national, anti-people, anti-public education mark, in its political-economic bases of dependent capitalism, unequal and combined development, that condemns generations to simple work and denies the fundamentals of the sciences that allow young people to understand and master how the world of things and human society functions. A cynical violence of interdiction of the future of working-class children through the officialization of the intensified duality of high school and an emptied school, in the perspective of Antonio Gramsci. For the degree of violence and for what it interdicts, a counter-reform that must be confronted, unrelentingly, in whole and in detail (Motta & Frigotto, 2017, p. 369, translated from the original)².

As Ferrazo (2004, p. 113) argues, there is no more room for an established model of education "[...] that limits itself to teaching knowledge, that makes memorization its fundamental pillar and the prolongs the divorce with life [...]" (translated from the original)³, it does not make sense to think of a school that focuses the study in books only, and loses the richness of the possibilities of contextualization of the social reality of which it is part. It is possible that here lies the key for the young person to value knowledge and, thus, to place within his possibilities the desire to study for a teaching degree, an opportunity in which one could, besides teaching, contribute to this process of citizenship construction.

Adding to this debate by analyzing the daily routine of the classroom in basic education, Penteadó (1994, p. 55) states that:

The teacher has been witnessing the lack of interest, the boredom, the inattention of children and adolescents when faced with the demands of studying based only on book learning: the memorized answers that result only for tests and to please the teacher close the act of learning in the school. Little is taken from school to life. And so, life goes on repeating itself, conserving itself. Perpetuating and multiplying its problems (Translated from the original)⁴.

This teacher, who attests to the indexes brought by the governments, affirms or contests them, bring with him or her a body of knowledge and meaning produced during his or her education. The next section will discuss the teaching undergraduate courses, which, although are not the only way to enter the teaching career, have the specificity of training teachers for Basic Education. As Oliveira (1998) points out in general terms, teaching is going through a deep crisis process that remains and does not seem to change any time soon. Perhaps not only Education but also many other parameters related to living in society are in a relationship crisis.

At the end of High School, opting for a teaching career is a choice that brings social and professional challenges for young people. Muhlstedt and Hagemayer (2015) researched with a focus group composed of teachers who worked in the Londrina state network in 2013 aiming to investigate how the insertion process of the subject to the teaching profession happened, including the circumstances, life contexts and the first approximation with this activity that they experienced. In the end, the researchers concluded that those who choose teaching as a profession do so based on vast experience and on their own opinions as students. Thus, the process of choice is also based on their own judgment as a student who is about to leave school, that is, both the choice and their teaching activity is a mixture of personal and professional experiences.

The professional who works in Education deals on a daily basis with integration, communication, and contact with diverse individuals, with different thoughts, knowledge, whether they are co-workers, students, parents, or community members. Consequently, the teacher is inserted in a very complex space where social interaction with people and the environment is active. According to Veiga (2004), perhaps it is in High School that the teacher has

² Translated from the original: "Como conclusão mais geral, trata-se de uma contrarreforma que expressa e consolida o projeto da classe dominante brasileira em sua marca antinacional, antipovo, antieducação pública, em suas bases político-econômicas de capitalismo dependente, desenvolvimento desigual e combinado, que condena gerações ao trabalho simples e nega os fundamentos das ciências que permitem aos jovens entender e dominar como funciona o mundo das coisas e a sociedade humana. Uma violência cínica de interdição do futuro dos filhos da classe trabalhadora por meio da oficialização da dualidade intensificada do Ensino Médio e de uma escola esvaziada, na perspectiva de Antônio Gramsci. Pelo grau de violência e pelo que interdita, uma contrarreforma que tem que ser confrontada, sem tréguas, no todo e nos detalhes".

³ Translated from the original: "[...] que se limita a ensinar saberes, que faz da memorização o seu pilar fundamental e que prolonga o divórcio com a vida [...]".

⁴ Translated from the original: "O professor vem atestando o desinteresse, o enfado, a desatenção de crianças e adolescentes quando colocados diante das exigências do estudo calcado apenas no ensino livreiro; as respostas decoradas que daí resultam para as provas e para agradar o professor encerrando na própria escola o ato de aprender. Pouco se leva da escola para a vida. E assim a vida vai se repetindo, se conservando. Perpetuando e multiplicando seus problemas".

a fundamental role in guiding students, especially those who are close to graduating and will have to make some decisions, where they will possibly define which course and profession they want for their future.

Undergraduate Teaching Degree and the Teaching Career

Undoubtedly, it is inside a classroom that the teacher becomes the spokesperson and mediator of cognizance, and from there his or her students can begin or continue the process of knowledge construction. Much of what is accomplished in the school environment has to do with the profile of the teacher and his or her science of pedagogy. Thus, this physical space, created for the formal and systemic educational encounter, is a privileged environment for transformation, a place where teachers and students come face to face to manage their dilemmas, work out their needs and contestations about life, about teaching, about people and develop their ways of thinking and acting (Veiga, 2004).

The Census of Higher Education recorded a decrease in the number of students entering the teaching undergraduate courses. In 2010, one-fifth of the total undergraduate enrollment, including in-class and distance learning courses, was in teaching undergraduate courses, representing, at the time, 21.1% of the total enrollment. In the last survey (2017), this number decrease to 7.14% (Brazil, 2018).

The direct choice for teaching is linked to the context aforementioned. Valle (2006) explains that the interest of young people in the current scenario for the teaching career is directly related to some logic of thought: its representativeness, the space offered in the labour market and, especially, of the profession, its function and attribution as an educator. Amidst the formula of describing what is the true logic of wanting to be a teacher, perhaps the great motivation is directly linked to altruistic values and to professional fulfilment itself strongly related to the image of an educator reference, to the experience offered by everyday life, the knowledge itself, the talent, and much in function of the love for the profession itself, which can awaken the desire to teach, to help, and to believe in a possibility to transform people, to change the social environment of the country through one's own effort.

Society has followed countless debates raised about the insufficiency of teachers in schools, the lack of interest in the profession, and the range of factors that culminate in the devaluation of the teaching profession. The lack of teachers for basic, professional and higher education subjects is always a topic of discussion in the national media and research articles from large university centres. The Ministry of Education (MEC) itself, in recently exposed data, states that in Brazil, only about 2% of students who will graduate from High School have as their main goal to become teachers (Brazil, 2018)

The index indicated by the MEC is alarming for the Educational future in Brazil since the expectation for improvement concerning this data does not appear optimistic. Regardless of the particular claims of each teacher, about what needs to be done and worked on to improve this scenario, it is still necessary to convince and show to the newly graduated that the choice for the profession is positive and should be considered. But, for this, there is a lack of a well-defined career plan, salaries compatible with the difficulty of the action, a motivational enhancement, and acceptable working conditions. While this does not occur gradually, on the contrary, the reverse process of disinterest in the profession happens, driving more people away from the classroom (Tartuce, Nunes & Almeida, 2010).

According to Tardif and Lessard (2012, apud Muhlstedt and Hagemayer, 2015), the teacher's professional figure occupies a prominent place in contemporary society, since its high number of representatives places it as one of the most important occupational groups and one of the main 'pieces' of the economy. However, Muhlstedt and Hagemayer (2015) point out that the teaching career has suffered a historical process of devaluation, disqualification, and social discredit. In this same research, the authors highlight that the choice for teaching career has some reasons, being the result of external factors and others of personal nature, combining in different ways, concluding that,

[...] when choosing a degree course in higher education institution, the subject, given his or her life circumstances, is involved by situational and educational aspects, and others, such as employability prospects, income rate of return, the status associated with the career or vocation, as well as identification, self-concept, interests, skills, maturity, values, personality traits, and expectations regarding the future. (Muhlstedt & Hagemayer, 2015, p. 37, translated from the original)⁵.

⁵ Translated from the original: "[...] ao fazer a escolha do curso de licenciatura em instituição de ensino superior, o sujeito, tendo em vista suas circunstâncias de vida, é envolvido por aspectos situacionais e de sua formação, e, outros, como as perspectivas de empregabilidade, renda, taxa de retorno, status associado à carreira ou vocação, bem como identificação, autoconceito, interesses, habilidades, maturidade, valores, traços de personalidade e expectativas com relação ao futuro".

Undergraduate teaching courses are increasingly less chosen as the first choice of course among young graduates who wish to enter college. According to Tartuce, Nunes & Almeida (2010), there is an important point of analysis to be verified between those candidates who choose a bachelor's degree and those who choose a teaching degree. According to the authors, most young people in the final years of basic education have chosen courses in which, in the end, they will not have to work with teaching; thus, becoming a teacher has been a secondary plan in the final choice of these young people.

When talking about undergraduate teaching courses, we focus on the fact that these courses have the function of training teachers for basic education, to qualify undergraduates to be mediators of the knowledge historically accumulated in a certain teaching area, in addition to contributing to the process of building citizenship in their students.

Being a teacher demand dedication, preparation and responsibility. The teacher must captivate the student's attention and organize the process of presenting knowledge, bringing meaning to it. Teaching is a dialogical process in which teacher and student, student and student, all together bring meaning to the teaching-learning process. This process is part of the functions and ways that the educator has as an alternative to try to perform in the classroom, to teach his students and, who knows, to motivate new students to be interested in the profession in the future. The undergraduate teaching degree is the area to form professionals who will perform and act in the magisterium (Moraes, 2009).

Moraes (2009) also points out that bachelor's courses are more directed to different areas, such as technology, research, and the labour market itself. This does not mean that the academic area such as teaching is discarded, nor it is unused. Also, according to the author, the bachelor's degree is part of a more technocratic connection of academics, emphasizing the importance of more technical work, valuing the practical knowledge of other types of knowledge and resources.

Discussing the movement of bachelor professionals to assume teaching as a professional practice, Gomes (2009) argues that this is a condition that does not always guarantee a professional exercise with 'critical, creative and scientific posture' required of people who are dedicated to the teaching profession. For the author, to have a critical posture in teaching lies in the teacher's ability to problematize the reality in which we live, to highlight and not condone the lack of commitment to education, and to arouse interest in students so that they can identify and discuss the problems, a practice that makes room for criticism and self-criticism. About the term Creative Spirit indicated by the author, here is lodged the ability to reorganize all the observation, experiences, and learning stored in our minds and to identify the right moment to resort to them to subsidize a new response to old situations or an adjusted response to a new situation. Finally, as for the Scientific attitude, the author explains that the teacher must have a sound scientific knowledge of this or her area and know how to select what will be taught at a given time and place.

Another point of analysis that is necessary is brought by Souza Neto et al. (2007): the choice of the teaching degree course through the influence of others and without knowledge of the particularities of the future profession. In the author's research, carried out in 2005 in the city of Limeira, state of São Paulo, one of the objectives was to identify how the teachers at an early childhood education school understood their professional choice and teaching as a profession.

Souza Neto et al. (2007) observed that, of the approved subjects, a portion of 25.8% were already sure that they would apply in the vestibular⁶ for a vacancy in the undergraduate teaching course. For these subjects, according to the authors, the determining factor of choice would have been the affective or affective-social dimension linked to a "[...] moral obligation of the teaching professionalism, the concern, the respect and the interest for the students, which would imply in an affectivity and morality" (Souza Net et al., 2007, p. 581, translated from the original)⁷.

Next, the topic of the methodology chosen for the research will be presented, where the path adopted by the researchers for the development of this study will be explained. The data collection instruments and how the approach to the research subjects was planned will be detailed.

Methodology

The present study has a qualitative exploratory approach, using as an instrument for the data collection a semi-structured questionnaire presented to last year's High School students⁸.

⁶ The vestibular is an entrance exam for higher education institutes in Brazil.

⁷ Translated from the original: "[...] obrigação moral da profissionalidade docente, a preocupação, o respeito e o interesse pelos escolares o que implicaria numa afetividade e moralidade".

⁸ Ethics Committee Opinion No. 4.884.995

The locus of the research consists of a set of four schools in the city of Bambuí, the state of Minas Gerais, which the students frequented during the last year of High School. The first contact with the directors of the educational institutions happened from May 01 to 03, 2019, with the approval of all managers.

One of the institutions is set with the federal scope, with two classes of integrated technical education surveyed, for a total of 38 students, being these classes identified as FED A and FED B. Another educational institution is set within the state jurisdiction and had three classes surveyed, two of them from the morning shift and the third from the evening shift, with a total of 70 students (to organize the data treatment, these classes were randomly identified as EST A, EST B, and EST C). The other two institutions are in the private education sector and had one class each, with 13 and 07 students, and were identified in this research as PART A and PART B, respectively. The difference in the publics serves, when considering the social strata, was planned to achieve representativeness, and thus to seek legitimacy for the notes made at the end of this research.

The inclusion criterion for the subjects of this research was that they had to be students regularly enrolled in the third year of High School in one of the four selected schools. It was explained to them that participation in the research would be voluntary and that there would be no benefits to the participants and no harm to those who did not want to participate.

The questionnaire application took place between May 14 and 24, 2019. As postulated by Mattar (1996), the data collected through questionnaires are of primary origin, i.e., they are information not found or directed collected from other studies and research, being obtained by researchers to solve the proposed problems. Once the data collection stage was completed, the 128 questionnaires were organized.

For data analysis, transcription of the questionnaires and information collected, the researchers used a computer with the Office tool version 2019. The data were treated qualitatively in light of the chosen theoretical framework and the results will be presented below.

Results and discussion

In profiling the students who answered the questionnaires, it was found that 40.62% are male and 59.38% are female. The age range of the participants is varied, although most of them are within the correct age-series indicator: 22.64% was between 16 and 17 years old; 65.63% was between 17 and 18 years old, and 11.73% is over 18 years old. It would have been possible to insert other questions identifying the socioeconomic profile of the research subjects, but the researchers chose to insert only these two questions to create a minimum gender and age profile, leaving the focus of the research to their perceptions of the teaching profession.

In order to analyze the perception regarding the focus of the teaching profession and obtain as much detail as possible, objective and subjective questions were included in the questionnaire given to the students. One of the objective questions asked was: 'When you finish High School, do you intend to enrol in a higher education course?' and presented as options the answers Yes (with variations: 'Yes, undergraduate teaching course', and 'Yes, undergraduate course other than teaching undergraduate course'), and No (with variation 'No, I intend to take a professional technician course', and 'No, I intend to stop studying and just work') and the opportunity to present another option (there was space for the student to identify it). The data can be analyzed in Figure 1.

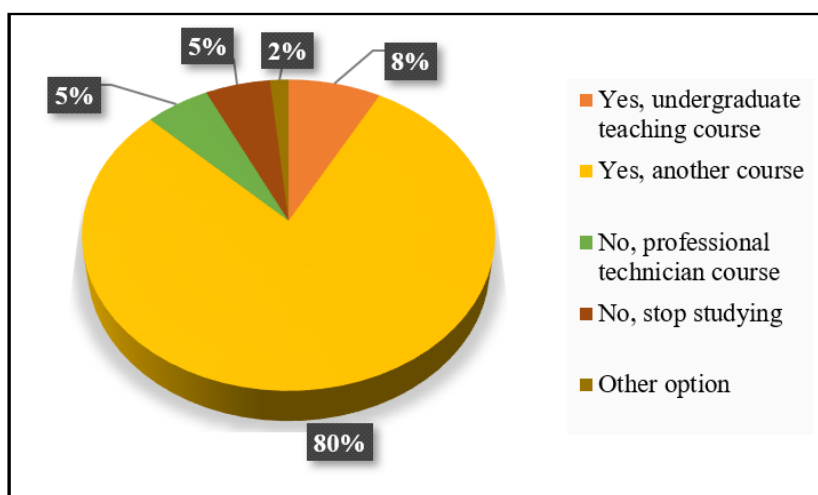


Figure 1. Intention to enter a higher education course.

Source: The authors.

As a comparison, the answers from all the schools were very similar, showing a high rate of rejection of lack of interest by the students in pursuing a teaching degree as an option for higher education and, consequently, as their choice for the future job market.

Another objective question in the survey had the aim to identify how the social teacher figure was seen by the students and constructed by the years experienced at school and in society. Thus, the question asked, 'Do you think that being a TEACHER is a valued profession in the labour market?' and presented as options only 'Yes' or 'No'. The data can be seen in Figure 2.

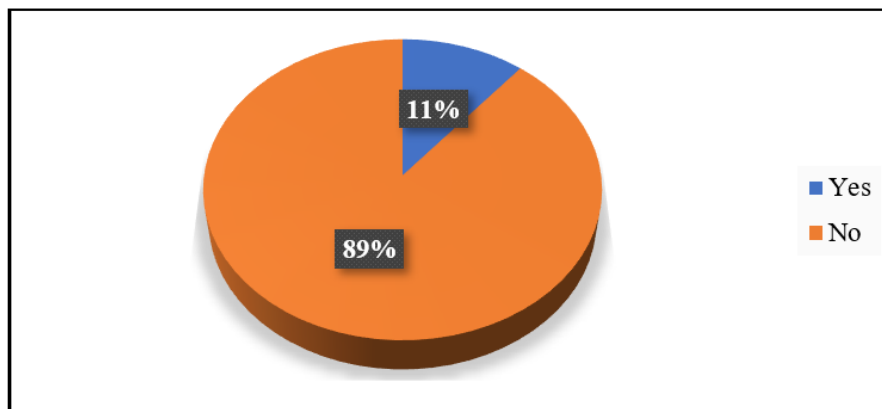


Figure 2. (De)valuing the teaching profession.
 Fonte: The authors.

What can be noted is a very low rate of conviction of the students about the professional valorization of the teacher. It can be noticed that even the students of FED A and FED B, who in theory have teachers who are more valued than the other teachers, considering remuneration, career plan, and benefits of the federal public career; consider that the teaching career is little valued in the labour market. As a possible analysis for this scenario, the data show that the view of the value or devaluation of the teaching profession is less influenced by direct contact with this professional, and more by a global perception of the teaching profession at the country level. Therefore, from the answers obtained, we can emphasize that the teaching profession is not valued in our country, and this perception has a strong influence on the answers obtained for the previous question, after all, the market's appreciation is one of the markers in the phase of choosing the professional future of these students.

Seeking to refine the students' positioning on the previous questions of the survey, the next question was: 'Tick below the terms that you associate with the PROFESSION OF TEACHING'. To obtain a reliable result, it was made clear to the students that they were allowed to mark more than one option, because the perception of the valorization or devaluation of the teaching career is considered multifactorial, involving personal, family, social and financial factors, among other. The researchers listed the options: a) Low remuneration; b) Dedication to students; c) Poor working conditions; d) Work Overload; e) Lack of incentive from the government; f) Positive societal recognition; g) Professional devaluation; h) Lack of opportunity for growth within the profession; i) Disrespect from students, and Other (with enough space to be listed; other terms, however, were not pointed out by the students).

From Figure 3, some indices of teacher-related terms called our attention, and for these, we will take a closer look.

Due to the limited number of pages to display the complete survey results, we advise readers to use the QR Code reader to access other graphs from the survey. Graphs 4 to 12 are available in the QR Code below.



Source: The authors.

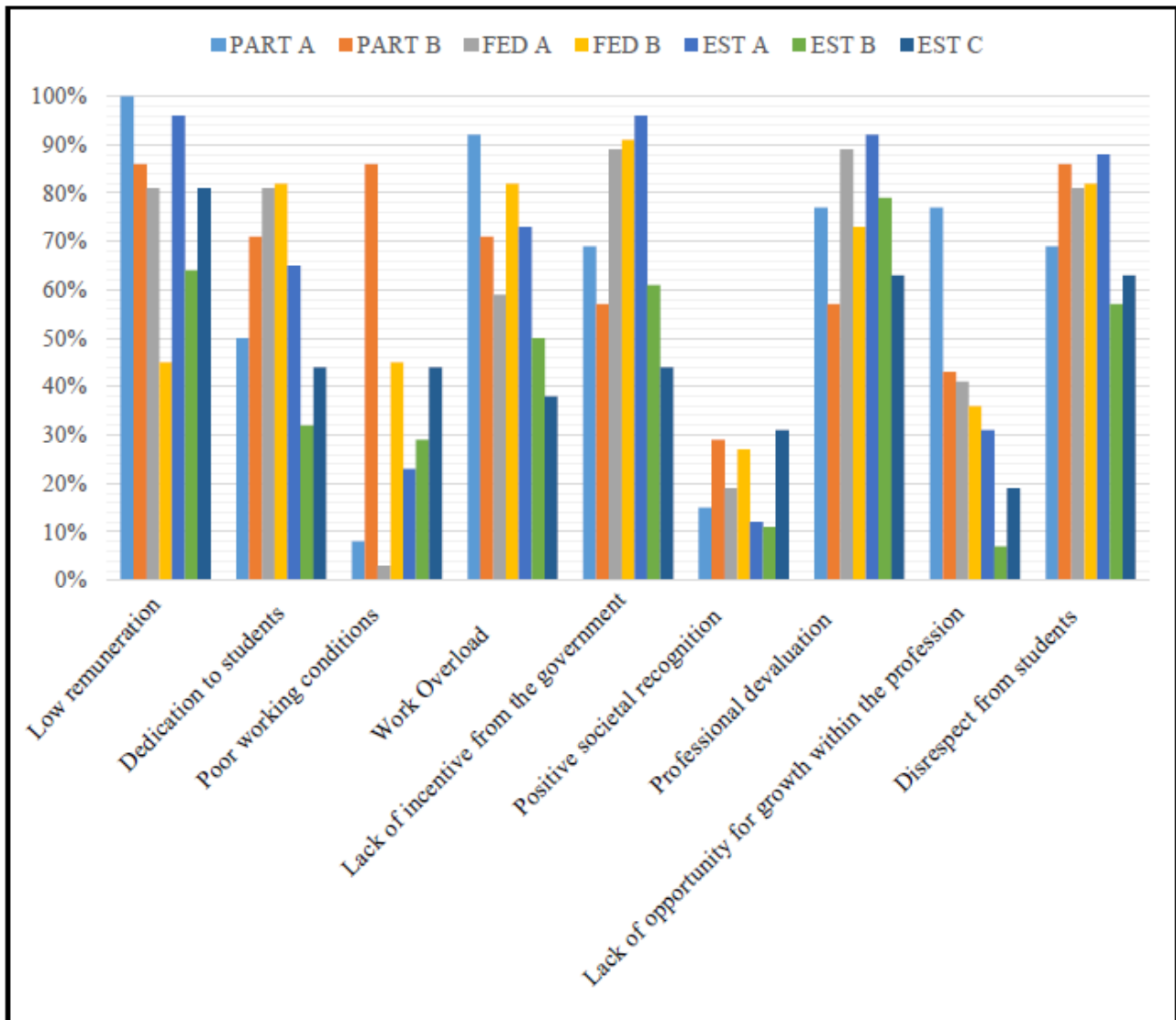


Figure 3. Terms and characteristics linked to the teacher and the teaching profession. Source: The authors.

Graph 4 will discuss the term 'low remuneration'. This is associated with the teaching profession by 100% of the students at PART A, 86% of those interviewed at PART B, 85% of the class EST A, 96% of the class EST B, and 81% of the class EST C. The data collected in the federal school was once again controversial: low pay was associated with the teaching career by 81% of the students in FED A, but only 45% of FED B.

Another term involved would be 'dedication to students' and the answers were quite diversified, dividing opinions into the surveyed classes (Graph 5). For 50% of the subjects of PART A, this term would be linked to the figure of the teacher, while for the students of PART B, the linking index was 71%. In the federal institution, the two classes presented very similar results, with 81% for FED A and 82% for FED B. In the state school, the variation was greater, with 65% (EST A), 32% (EST B), and 44% (EST C) linking the term to the teaching figure. This question is important because it identifies how much the student, throughout one's career, felt welcomed and valued by the teacher. Consequently, the greater the feeling of welcome by the teacher, the greater would be (hypothetically, at this point) the feeling of gratitude towards the individual teacher and the perception of appreciation of the teaching profession.

The term 'poor working conditions' (shown in Graph 6) also obtained different positions from the students. While we observe a minimum extreme in FED A, indicating that only 3% of the students associated the term to the teaching profession, passing through PART A with 8%, we observe that EST C indicated 23% and EST B 29%, we have a maximum extreme result in PART 8, with 86% identified. The other classes are spread out in this spectrum (EST C, 44% and FED B, 45% of the interviewees). We quickly noticed a significant distancing, although a certain balance between the three classes of the state institution is observed, with the EST C class

standing out in considering the teacher as not having good working conditions (it is important to point out that this class is from the evening shift). It is also worth mentioning the difference in the understandings of the federal institution's classes, where class A, had an index of 3% and class B with 45%. For future study, a focus group with these students could be an opportunity to deepen this analysis.

Graph 7 shows in detail the results regarding the term 'work overload'. It also obtained great variation in indices between schools and between classes, although the majority agreed with the linking of the term to the teaching profession. The students in the PART A class considered this aspect in 92% of the answers, while PART B had a rate of 72%. Between the two classes of the federal institution, we also have a considerable gap: FED A with 59% and FED B with 82%. The state educational institution pointed out different understandings for this link: for the morning shift classes, 73% (class EST A) and 50% (class EST B); while for class EST C (night shift), only for 38% of the students connect the teacher to overload of work.

Graph 8 was constructed about the 'lack of incentive from the government'. Most of the classes surveyed consider government policies regarding the teaching profession to be insufficient. The very close data for classes A and B of the federal school is striking: 89 and 91%, respectively. Among the classes of the two private institutions, PART A and PART B, there was also uniformity in their positions: 69 and 57%, respectively. In the state school, we had a gap between the indexes: class EST A had an index of 96% class EST B with 61% and class EST C with 44%. Considering the percentages, a large part of the student class believes that the government lacks incentives for education. It is significant to point out that the period in which the questionnaire was applied overlapped with the federal government's announcement of its policy to cut spending on education, and the consequent reverberations in the press and the mobilization of unions, although we cannot relate the positions of the research subjects to this fact, since we have no way of measuring how much the theme was discussed in the classroom and other social environments that those students frequented.

It is possible that the topic that evidences the most the students' view of the teaching profession is in the responses condensed in Graph 9. For the topic 'positive societal recognition about the teaching profession. In general, all classes did not link the term to the profession, a societal portrait of the social importance given to the teacher. For the private institutions, only 15% (PART A) and 29% (PART B). In the federal institutions, the indicators point to 19 and 27% for FED A and FED B, respectively. For state school students, the figure of the teacher is definitely not socially recognized: 11% (EST B), 12% (EST A), and 31% (EST C). Again, it is worth noting that the students' cultural framework is an important factor that influences their choice of professional future. Thus, by identifying that the teaching profession is not socially recognized, the tendency is that we will have fewer and fewer trained teachers, although this is one of many other angles of analysis of this issue.

The next term is presented as a counterpoint to the previous one (recognition) and the interviewee is given the possibility to point out if the teaching profession can be related to 'professional devaluation' (Graph 10). Accordingly, if the term previously analyzed already pointed to the positive non-recognition for the teaching profession, now the indexes of all the classes pointed to values higher than 50% for its devaluation: 57% (PART B), 63% (EST C), 73% (FED B), 77% (PART A), 79% (EST B), 89% (FED A) and 92% (EST A). Thus, we can conclude that, for the interviewees, the teaching profession is undervalued.

The 'lack of opportunity to develop within the profession' was a topic of debate in the questionnaire and presented very variable indexes, as shown in Graph 11. While 77% of the respondents from the PART A class considered the term to be linked to the teaching profession, at the other extreme we have the EST B class in which only 7% had this same understanding. For this question too, it would be interesting, for a future study, to investigate with a focus group the reasons for this distance. The other classes occupy spots in between the spectrum of these extremes.

The last term that stands out is the issue of the respectful relationship between students and teachers. Thus, the term 'disrespect on the part of students' is quite interesting to analyze, since obtaining a positive result would align or confront the individual and collective behaviours of students in the school environment. The data in Graph 12 show that for 69% of the students in the PART A class the teacher suffers from disrespectful actions by the students, and this becomes a term associated with the teaching profession. In the other class of the private institution (PART B), the result is even higher: 86%. High rates were also observed in classes A and B of the federal school, with 81 and 82%, respectively. Respondents from the state institution had rates of 88, 57 and 63% for classes A, B and C, respectively. So, according to the understanding of the interviewed students, regardless of whether they are from public or private schools, the teacher has not been respected by the students.

The last question that will be analyzed sought to get, briefly, what was the student's understanding, based on their experience in the school environment and the social environment, about the social role of the teacher (Figure 4). Therefore, the question "Take the profession of a TEACHER as a basis. If I tell you that the teacher is an important agent of social and political transformation, do you agree with this statement?" was presented with the options 'Yes', 'No', or 'Partially'.

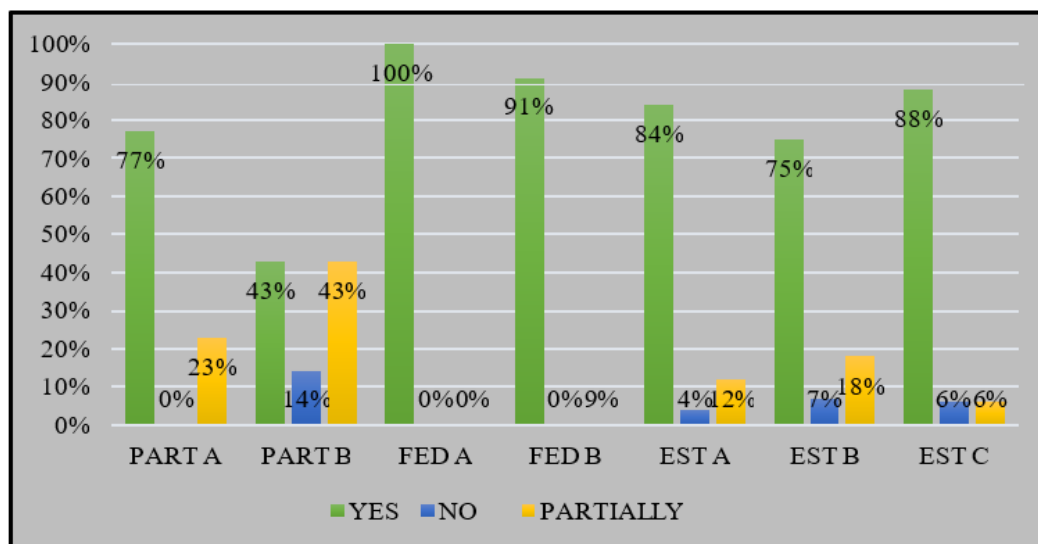


Figure 4. The importance of the teacher as an agent (or not) of social and political transformation.
Source: The authors.

All the classes consulted registered rates above 75% for the option 'Yes, understanding the teacher to be an important agent of social and political transformation. The exception was PART B, where only 44% of the respondents considered the teacher an example of a transforming agent.

Final considerations

Through the survey and the treatment of the data presented, the observation made in the places where the questionnaires were applied, we can consider that the teaching profession is not valued, nor is it interesting in the current social and political scenario.

From the answers collected, it can be seen that the students interviewed of the High School's third year carry the idea of the teaching profession as being poorly or not valued professionally and socially, without good working conditions, with an overload of tasks and cases of disrespect from their students. This scenario is decisive in leaving in second place or even blocking the possibilities of these subjects in choosing to be teachers.

Even recreating different scenarios, when asked about the teaching profession and relating it as a possible choice for their professional future, the students recognized the teacher as an important social agent who exerts influence in the social and political environments and who, according to their views, lives up to the title of a transforming agent, obviously crossing the school environment. However, despite the recognition of the social and political importance of the teacher's figure, and even believing in the teaching profession transforming potential, the number of students who express interest in pursuing a teaching degree reflects the official indexes. The search for these courses is decreasing, that is, the declining number in teacher training has become a point of social and political concern. Socially, it is clear from the position of the students questioned that the teacher continues to be seen as a power to transform society. Yet, these same young people identify the teacher as a socially and politically marginalized professional.

If the school is an extension of society, the positions of the respondents of this research represent each one of us, social subjects, because they bring with them the voices of many other individuals who live with them. Thus, to overcome this devaluation of the teaching career, Brazilian social and political leaders must work so that teachers have decent work conditions, fair remuneration, and possibilities to progress in their careers. If we act in this way, we will take important steps so that "being a teacher" becomes an attractive

professional option for young people who finish High School. Besides, at this stage of social evolution, the teachers will be able to exercise, in all its fullness, their role as an agent of social and political transformation, sensitizing other young people and maintaining a virtuous cycle of training new teachers.

References

- Facci, M. G. D. (2004). *Valorização ou esvaziamento do trabalho do professor? Um estudo crítico-comparativo da teoria do professor reflexivo, do construtivismo e da psicologia vigotskiana*. São Paulo, SP: Autores Associados.
- Ferraço, C. E. (2004). Os sujeitos praticantes dos cotidianos das escolas e a invenção dos currículos. In A. F. B. Moreira, J. A. Pacheco & R. L. Garcia, (Orgs.), *Currículo: pensar, sentir e diferir* (p. 77-94). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: DP&A.
- Gomes, J. M. S. (2009). O trabalho docente no contexto angolano: a postura crítica, criativa e científica como requisitos fundamentais. *Paidéia*, 6, 11-24.
- Mattar, N. F. (1996). *Pesquisa de marketing* (3a ed.). São Paulo, SP: Atlas.
- Ministério da Educação. (2017). *Novo Ensino Médio – perguntas e respostas: O que é o Novo Ensino Médio?* Recuperado de <http://portal.mec.gov.br/component/content/article?id=40361>
- Ministério da Educação. (2018). *Guia de Implementação do Novo Ensino Médio*. Recuperado de <http://novoensinomedio.mec.gov.br/#!/guia>
- Mizukami, M. G. N. (1986). *Ensino: as abordagens do processo*. São Paulo, SP: EPU.
- Moraes, V. S. (2009). No elo entre o bacharelado e a licenciatura, a chave para a melhor formação do professor de geografia. In *Anais do Encontro nacional de prática ensino de geografia* (p. 715-721). Porto Alegre.
- Motta, V. C. & Frigotto, G. (2017). Por que a urgência da reforma do ensino médio? Medida Provisória nº 746/2016 (Lei nº 13.415/2017). *Educação e Sociedade*, 38(139), 355-372.
DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1590/es0101-73302017176606>
- Muhlstedt, A., & Hagemayer, R. C. C. (2015). Escolha da profissão e trajetórias de vida do professor. *Cadernos da Pedagogia*, 8(16), 28-39. Recuperado de <https://bitlybr.com/st0TT>
- Oliveira, A. U. (1998). *Para onde vai o ensino da Geografia?* (7a ed.). São Paulo, SP: Contexto.
- Penteado, H. D. (1994). *Meio ambiente e formação de professores*. São Paulo, SP: Cortez.
- Pereira, J. (2004). *De quem é a culpa*. Manaus, AM: Uirapuru.
- Souza Neto, S., Cardozo, A., Benelli, B., Cesana, J., Benites, L., & Motta, A. (2007). O magistério como escolha profissional: questões e reflexões. In S. Z. Pinho & J. R. Saglietti (Orgs.), *Núcleos de ensino da Unesp* (p. 564-593). São Paulo, SP: Cultura Acadêmica. Recuperado de <https://bit.ly/3ieUtDY>
- Tartuce, G. L. B. P., Nunes, M. M. R., & Almeida, P. C. A. (2010). Alunos do ensino médio e atratividade da carreira docente no Brasil. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, 40(140), 445-477. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1590/S0100-15742010000200008>
- Valle, I. R. (2006). Carreira do magistério: uma escolha profissional deliberada? *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Pedagógicos*, 87(216), 178-187. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.24109/2176-6681.rbep.87i216.792>
- Veiga, I. P. A. (2004). *Repensando a didática* (27a ed.) São Paulo, SP: Papirus.

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Rafael Izidoro Martins Neto: Master's student in Administration at the IFMG Formiga campus. Specialist in Teaching for Education by the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Minas Gerais - IFMG advanced campus Arcos (2020). He has a bachelor's degree in Administration from IFMG - Bambuí campus (2018). He worked as a substitute teacher at the Cooperativa de Ensino de Bambuí - Coopen-Bí, teaching Philosophy and Sociology for Elementary and High School. He participated as a member as Marketing Coordinator for the Group of Studies and Research in Administration - GEPAD (2017). He teaches courses on text formation, ABNT standards, creation and editing of slides and public speaking for academic presentations. Currently has an interest in the following research topics: Finance, Decision Making, Investment, Teaching, Education and Scientific Methodology. ResearchID: AAV-6739-2020, E-mail: Rafaelizidoromartins@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6837-0994>

E-mail: rafael.izidoro18@hotmail.com

Cláudio Alves Pereira: PhD student in Education at the Federal University of Espírito Santo (UFES), Master's in education at the Federal University of Lavras (UFLA), Bachelor's in Physics at the Nova Iguaçu University (UNIG), currently a professor in the Post-Graduation in Teaching course offered by the IFMG Advanced Campus Arcos. He develops research in the areas of Basic Education Curriculum, Professional and Technological Education and Teacher Training.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000.0002.4829.6272>

E-mail: claudioapessoal@gmail.com

Note:

The authors were responsible for the design, analysis, and interpretation of the data; writing and critical review of the manuscript content, and approval of the final version to be published.