Self-regulation of learning and autonomy promoted in educational practices of Public Relations teachers

Autorregulação da aprendizagem e autonomia promovidas em práticas educativas docentes de Relações Públicas

Autorregulación del aprendizaje y autonomía promovidas en las prácticas educativas del docente de Relaciones Públicas

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Abstract: This article presents a survey carried out with teachers and/or coordinators of Public Relations courses at Higher Education Institutions in Brazil that sought to identify whether educational practices can be given new meanings through the promotion of self-regulation of learning and student autonomy. Through a literature review on the research object, the article's originality was noted. The research carried out was qualitative and considered quantifiable data when describing and analyzing the empirical data collected in the field through two stages and the use of two instruments: (i) questionnaire - structured with 20 multiple choice questions formulated based on the Likert scale and which had 18 participants; and (ii) structured interview – presented with 12 open questions and had 13 respondents (among the 18 participants in the previous stage). The sample indicated results that were grouped into three categories of analysis and twelve axes. It could be seen that the sample participants identified the importance of promoting self-regulation and autonomy in the teaching and learning process in higher education and understand that it is necessary to obtain due knowledge about the constructs of self-regulation of learning so that they can bring other contributions on the topic little explored and applied. It is expected that new studies will be presented based on the results presented in the research developed that sought to verify whether Public Relations teaching practices can be redefined through the promotion of self-regulation and autonomy.

Keywords: self-regulation; educational practices; public relations.

Resumo: Este artigo apresenta uma pesquisa realizada com docentes e/ou coordenadores dos cursos de Relações Públicas de Instituições de Ensino Superior do Brasil, que buscou identificar se as práticas educativas podem ser ressignificadas por meio da promoção da autorregulação da aprendizagem e da autonomia do discente. A partir de uma revisão de literatura sobre o objeto de pesquisa, notou-se o ineditismo do artigo. A pesquisa foi qualitativa e considerou dados quantitativos ao descrever e analisar os dados empíricos coletados em campo, em duas etapas, utilizando dois instrumentos: (i) questionário estruturado com 20 questões de múltipla escolha, formuladas com base na escala *Likert,* que contou com 18 participantes; e (ii) entrevista estruturada com 12 questões abertas, respondida por 13 dos 18 participantes da etapa anterior). A amostra indicou resultados que foram agrupados em três categorias de análises e doze eixos. Observou-se que os participantes da amostra identificaram a importância da promoção da autorregulação e da autonomia no processo de ensino e aprendizagem no ensino superior e entendem a necessidade de adquirir o devido conhecimento sobre os constructos da autorregulação da aprendizagem, para que possam trazer outras contribuições acerca de uma temática pouco explorada e aplicada. Espera-se que novos estudos surjam a partir dos resultados apresentados nesta pesquisa, que buscou verificar se as práticas docentes em Relações Públicas podem ser ressignificadas por meio da promoção da autorregulação e da autonomia.

Palavras-chave: autorregulação; práticas educativas; relações públicas.

Resumen: Este artículo presenta una encuesta realizada con profesores y/o coordinadores de cursos de Relaciones Públicas en Instituciones de Educación Superior en Brasil que buscó identificar si las prácticas educativas pueden adquirir nuevos significados a través de la promoción de la autorregulación del aprendizaje y la autonomía de los estudiantes. A través de una revisión de la literatura sobre el objeto de investigación, se constató la originalidad del artículo. La investigación realizada fue cualitativa y consideró datos cuantificables al describir y analizar los datos empíricos recolectados en campo a través de dos etapas y el uso de dos instrumentos: (i) cuestionario - estructurado con 20 preguntas de opción múltiple formuladas con base en la escala Likert y que tuvo 18 participantes; y (ii) entrevista estructurada – presentada con 12 preguntas abiertas y contó con 13 encuestados (entre los 18 participantes de la etapa anterior). La muestra indicó resultados que se agruparon en tres categorías de análisis y doce ejes. Se pudo observar que los participantes de la muestra identificaron la importancia de promover la autorregulación y la autonomía en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje en la educación superior y entienden que es necesario obtener el debido conocimiento sobre los constructos de autorregulación del aprendizaje para que puedan traer otros aportes sobre el tema poco explorado y aplicado. Se espera que se presenten nuevos estudios a partir de los resultados presentados en la investigación desarrollada que buscó verificar si las prácticas docentes en Relaciones Públicas pueden redefinirse a través de la promoción de la autorregulación y la autonomía.

Palavras clave: autorregulación; prácticas educativas; relaciones públicas.

1 Introdução

Issues related to the field of education are complex and demand ongoing reflection. From this understanding, this study sought to identify, among other aspects, elements of the educational practices of Public Relations teachers in the context of teaching and learning in higher education.

This research adopted a socio-cognitive perspective, based on Bandura's (2005) social cognitive theory and studies that confirm that self-regulated students act more autonomously when facing educational challenges.

Another context described is the professional practice of Public Relations, where it is important to mention that this professional is responsible for managing relationships, image, and public opinion of the organization or individual to whom services are provided. This professional develops stages such as planning, organizing, executing, evaluating, and measuring results. Their work is governed by specific legislation, Law No. 5.377, of December 11, 1967, which regulates the profession and provides further guidelines for its proper exercise (CONFERP, 1967).

To further clarify Public Relations, Ferrari (2011, p. 157) broadly describes that this activity involves responsibility for building and maintaining the relationship networks of organizations with the publics with which they are connected:

> [...] public relations present themselves as a set of excessively broad and complex responsibilities, both due to their multidisciplinary nature and the multiplicity of options they offer to those who choose them as a profession, and also because of the wide spectrum of publics that revolve around the interests of institutions.

Thus, the main question guiding this study was formulated: For Public Relations teachers in Brazil, how is it possible to redefine educational practices in the teaching and learning process through self-regulation, with an emphasis on autonomy?

The objective was to analyze the concepts and educational practices that Public Relations teachers in Brazil consider as promoting self-regulation and student autonomy. To this end, the research was defined as qualitative in nature and considered quantitative data when describing and analyzing the empirical data collected in the field, through two stages and the use of two instruments: questionnaire and structured interview.

Thus, this article was structured, in addition to the introductory and conceptual parts, into sections on the method, results, and final considerations, addressing the process of theoretical and practical analysis of the proposed theme.

2 Theoretical Framework

It is relevant to mention that this section addresses the roles of Public Relations professionals, a profession regulated by specific legislation that governs its practice, Law No. 5.377, of December 11, 1967 (CONFERP, 1967). Concepts about self-regulation of learning, autonomy, and educational practices were presented, with the aim of theoretically contextualizing what was developed throughout this research.

Furthermore, the Public Relations course allows graduates to work in academic and/or market fields, meeting the demands of relationships between various types of publics, traditionally classified as internal, external, and mixed, with specific classifications, as well as in serving institutions, organizations, or individuals to whom they are linked.

Regarding the definition of publics, according to Cesca (2014, p. 80), the traditional classification of internal, external, and mixed publics "no longer meets the demands generated by the various transformations that occur in organizations, as new publics have emerged that do not fit into this classification." The author also presents a new classification of publics based on the legal and physical link between the publics and the organization, including their characteristics.

Addressing the classification of publics presented by Cesca (2014), it is pertinent to mention what França (2011) describes about corporate relationships, which, according to him, consist of relationships that can be permanent or punctual with specific publics, in order to enable the development of activities in the economic, sociopolitical, or institutional fields, as well as the types of relationships that arise depending on the publics.

Despite the different definitions presented by the authors, there is consensus that it is necessary to maintain mutual understanding between the organization and the publics, among the many responsibilities that fall to the professional. Thus, it is understood that the Public Relations professional is responsible for managing the image and public opinion regarding the organization and for maintaining relationships with the various publics to which the organization or the individual providing services is directly or indirectly linked.

In addition to the market activity of the aforementioned professional, it is considered that teaching in any course, including Public Relations, is a complex act that involves human interactions and requires skills and competencies for relating to others to transmit and exchange knowledge.

Teaching practice, therefore, is the role attributed to the teacher when they perform their activities in the classroom, differing from pedagogical practice, which corresponds to the fulfillment of activities defined in course pedagogical projects, in lesson plans, and other propositions contextualized within the school environment. It can be said, then, that pedagogical practices are carried out through teaching practices. From

this same perspective, the two practices are interrelated when the teacher employs diverse forms of knowledge transmission, aiming for students to effectively assimilate the content.

According to Nunes (2001, p. 27), teachers mobilize and articulate all knowledge, being responsible for the construction and reconstruction of knowledge:

> Research on teacher training and profession points to a revision of the under-standing of the teacher's pedagogical practice, which is seen as a mobilizer of professional knowledge. Thus, it is considered that, throughout their career, the teacher constructs and reconstructs their knowledge according to the need for its use, their experiences, and their formative and professional paths.

Therefore, it is observed that the teacher is the protagonist of their training, and through reflecting on their practices, they can analyze and consider their own needs, thus becoming responsible for outlining their self-training and the re-elaboration of their knowledge.

In addition, given the interest in investigating teaching educational practices and their potential relationship with self-regulation, it is important to present the contributions researched on self-regulation and its relationship with the Public Relations profession.

According to Bandura (1991), self-regulation is part of human life, and three factors are interrelated in a triadic reciprocity: person, behavior, and environment. The author explains that learning is based on experience, observation, and imitation, with the assimilation of content built from social interaction and stimuli from the social environment.

An important aspect of the Social Cognitive Theory proposed by Bandura (1991) is the concept of human agency, which is believed to be closely related to both the organization of practices that promote self-regulation of learning and student autonomy, as well as the student's action in actively participating in pedagogical situations. Thus, self-regulation from a socio-cognitive perspective is seen as:

> [...] the capacity of humans to intentionally intervene in their environment; that is, people do not merely react to the external environment, but they have the ability to reflect on it, anticipate cognitively constructed scenarios through actions and their effects, in order to envision and choose courses of action that they deem most convenient or necessary (Polydoro; Azzi, 2009, p. 75).

To further clarify self-regulation of learning, Polydoro and Azzi (2009, p. 75) describe that the process of self-regulation is:

> [...] a conscious and voluntary process of self-governance, enabling individuals to manage their own behaviors, thoughts, and emotions, cyclically directed and adapted to achieve personal goals and guided by general standards of conduct.

To conclude on social cognitive theory, they explain that it is "a multifaceted phenomenon that operates through subsidiary cognitive processes, including self-monitoring, self-evaluative judgments, and self-reactions" (Polydoro; Azzi, 2009, p. 75).

Finally, the concept of "autonomy" is proposed to be discussed from an educational perspective, considering the approaches brought in the book *Pedagogy of Autonomy: Necessary Knowledge for Educational Practice* (Freire, 1996, p. 49), which describes: "The more I think about educational practice, recognizing the responsibility it demands of us, the more I am convinced of our duty to strive to ensure that it is truly respected." Freire addresses, as a central theme, teacher education and the essential knowledge needed for it, highlighting the need for reflection on educational practice, which is notably progressive when analyzing individual autonomy, whether for teachers or students.

Guided by the Deweyan educational conception – more specifically by Enlightenment thought – Lourenço Filho and Mendonça (2014) point out that each person's education contributes to the realization of social participation – or active citizenship –, with autonomy being responsible for the connection between theory and everyday practice, and it is only achieved when it involves critical, participative, and emancipated individuals:

> The student's autonomy is, therefore, considered the element that connects the world of theory, present in educational activities, to the practical life of their daily routine, where they are positioned as a critical, participative, and ultimately emancipated citizen. For this reason, we might say, in the manner of Socrates, that autonomy is what "gives birth" to educational practice, as it gives it meaning and purpose, and its necessity and importance are independent of the historical moment or social condition in which the individual lives, as it must be present in all of them. After all, we cannot conceive of the idea of a citizen who would educate themselves with the intention of remaining inert, passive, dependent, and dominated (Lourenço Filho & Mendonça, 2014, p. 200).

In this way, Lourenço Filho and Mendonça (2014) make it clear that the student's autonomy – defined as a critical, participative, and also emancipated citizen – is the element responsible for connecting theory and practice in educational activities and everyday life.

After discussing the main concepts, the methodology adopted for the development of the research is presented, which includes the selection of subjects, the collection of empirical material, and the data analysis.

3 Method

As for the methodology, it is announced that the empirical data were collected in the field through a questionnaire and structured interview, undergoing a qualitative analysis that considered quantifiable data. The selection of participants was determined based on the objectives of this research, and contact was structured through the professional relationship of one of the authors with the Federal Public Relations Council (CONFERP), which enabled access to a spreadsheet with contact details for all course coordinators from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Brazil.

An attempt was made to contact the coordinators of the 55 Public Relations courses offered by HEIs across Brazil, and the data obtained were updated and entered into a research control spreadsheet. Following this contact, 18 teachers agreed to participate in the research, which, in its first phase, involved the application of a questionnaire. The second phase, which included data collection and structured interviews, involved the participation of 13 out of the 18 teachers. In general, of the 18 participants, nine are from the state of São Paulo (from eight different HEIs); four are from Rio Grande do Sul (four HEIs); two are from Bahia (two HEIs); one is from Rio de Janeiro (one HEI); one from Minas Gerais (one HEI); and one from Amazonas (one HEI).

The profile of the 18 participants was gathered through the questionnaire, which requested the following information: age group; name of HEI; type of HEI (federal, state, or private); city; state; whether they are currently teaching; the class period; their education background; position; whether they are a professor; years of experience; whether they are a coordinator; contact phone number; and whether they have knowledge of self-regulation of learning. Some personal data that could lead to the identification of participants were concealed in Table 1, in order to maintain confidentiality and protect the information.

Chart 1 – Data on respondents from the first phase

Name Initials	Age Group	HEI	State	Participated in the Structured interview?
AN	40-50	Federal	RS	Yes
AM	40-50	Private	SP	Yes
LC	50-60	Federal	RS	Yes
AP	40-50	Private	RS	No
PB	40-50	Private	SP	Yes
RC	40-50	State	SP	Yes
VL	50-60	State	SP	Yes
CC	60-70	Private	SP	No
MR	30-40	Private	SP	Yes
SA	50-60	Private	SP	Yes
VO	30-40	Federal	MG	Yes
ZP	50-60	State	BA	Yes
RP	30-40	Private	RJ	Não
MF	70+	State	SP	No

IR	40-50	Federal	AM	No
MC	50-60	Private	BA	Yes
NM	30-40	Private	SP	Yes
MT	40-50	Federal	RS	Yes

Source: Own elaboration.

The first phase, which used the questionnaire for data collection, applied the Likert scale for data analysis, and the questions were structured according to the study's objectives, seeking to obtain answers to the question that guided the study. The questionnaire, formatted in Google Forms, was sent by email along with the invitation letter (the body of the email message) and all explanations about the research, as well as information about the second phase, the structured interview.

The online questionnaire questions, based on Likert scale criteria, were presented as follows: I) I have carried out various educational practices in the classroom, in person or remotely, during the period from 2017 to 2022 (active methodologies, mind maps, word clouds, content panels, brainstorming, among others). II) The practices developed have shown positive changes in the process of learning to learn. III) The practices developed in a virtual environment can be applied in a face-to-face environment. IV) The use of more diverse practices can contribute to and improve the teaching and learning process of students. V) When planning my classes, I consider the phases of anticipation, execution, and self-reflection of each proposed activity. VI) When planning my classes, I organize activities in which students can use cognitive strategies (e.g., mind maps, summaries, highlighting main ideas). VII) When planning my classes, I organize activities in which students can use metacognitive strategies (e.g., setting goals, planning the environment, reviewing completed work). VIII) During my classes, I encourage students to seek help from peers. IX) During my classes, I encourage students to seek help from teachers. X) During my classes, I try to encourage students to seek additional information from non-social sources when completing a task. XI) During my classes, there are efforts and initiatives from students to review information or prepare for a class or activity (exercise). XII) I encourage my students to become teachers and/or researchers in their area of expertise. XIII) I try to maintain bonds of affection when implementing practices in the virtual environment. XIV) My activities have been developed with a corrective approach in the teaching and learning process. XV) My activities have been developed with a preventive approach in the teaching and learning process. XVI) Affective and support strategies are used so that students maintain attention and motivation in the teaching and learning process. XVII) My teaching practices have been innovative and effective after evaluations. XVIII) I feel motivated to develop other models of educational practices. XIX) Having a degree in my area of

expertise helps me in my preparation as a teacher. XX) I sought additional training after assuming a teaching role.

Based on the answers to the 20 questions described above, 12 questions were developed for further exploration of the information through the structured interview, presented as follows: I- What do you understand by autonomy in the teaching practice of the Public Relations course? II- What do you understand by self-regulation of learning in the teaching practice of the Public Relations course? III- Does the PR course train students for the promotion of autonomy? Justify your answer. IV- What is the role of the Public Relations course in forming processes that involve students' self-regulation of learning? V- Describe the practices you use in the classroom in the Public Relations course that you consider to promote student autonomy. Justify your answer. VI- Do you consider that the means used in the teaching process can lead to different outcomes regarding self-regulatory processes? Justify your answer. VII- Have your practices enabled students to develop their intellectual and emotional capacities (cognitive activities)? How do you describe them in the Public Relations course? VIII- Have your practices helped stimulate the awareness and monitoring of the act of learning (meta-cognitive activities)? Describe their practical application in the Public Relations course. IX- Do you use differentiated self-regulated practices to address the programmatic content of the curricular components? Which ones? X- In your view, can self-regulation bring contribution(s) to the profession and the practices of Public Relations? Justify your answer. XI- In your view, what contributions can self-regulation bring to the training of Public Relations students? XII- Describe which teaching practices you develop in the classroom to promote self-regulation of learning with Public Relations students?

For the analysis of the empirical material from the structured interviews, categories were established, and themes were created to obtain information from the Public Relations teachers participating in the research about their educational practices and possible redefinitions through the promotion of self-regulation and autonomy. The analyses carried out made it possible to verify that self-regulation of learning needs to be further explored by the study participants, and the interviewees believe in the contributions that promoting self-regulation can bring to the teaching and learning process.

As three categories created from the collected data were structured based on content analysis suggested by Bardin (1977), following the phases of pre-analysis; material exploration and result treatment; inference and interpretation. The categories were: I - Teacher and student autonomy; II - Understandings and redefinitions through self-regulation; III - Training and awareness regarding educational practices. The categories highlighted the novelty of this study and revealed that self-regulation is still a concept to be learned by Public Relations teachers and that it can redefine teaching practices, provided it is studied and intentionally promoted.

For the first category, the themes created were: I - Teaching practice; II - Teacher training; and III - Classroom practices. The second category brought the themes: I - Teaching practice; II - The role of the course in the formation of processes; III - Means used to achieve results; IV - Differentiated practices for addressing content; V - Contributions to the profession and practices; VI - Contributions to student training. The third and final category determined the themes: I - Cognitive activities; II - Metacognitive activities; III - Promotion of self-regulation.

The following item presents the main results obtained, based on the analysis of the empirical material collected through interview questions. Although categories and themes were defined for the analysis that gave rise to this article, what is presented here is a selection of the results. Therefore, there was no division of the final text into subtopics, aiming at conciseness and better presentation of the work.

4 Results

In seeking to bring out the elements of the results found in the empirical data during the initial analysis, it was noted that the application of the first research instrument (questionnaire) - which aimed to survey the prior knowledge about self-regulation among Public Relations teachers and/or coordinators - was positive and made it possible to understand how each teacher positioned themselves regarding each question.

When formulating the questions for the questionnaire, presented in the first phase of data collection, aspects involving educational practices were considered, particularly the teaching practices directed at students and the teacher's own preparation for the exercise of teaching. Thus, the questionnaire included specific questions about: educational practices; the teaching and learning process; the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies; teacher training; among other topics.

The participants' responses show that, generally speaking, knowledge about the self-regulatory process is still very limited and superficial among most teachers.

It is noted, in the responses presented in the questionnaire's empirical material, that diversified teaching practices have been increasingly adopted in recent years. Regarding active methodologies, it was found that teachers adopted various educational practices in the classroom with a frequency classified as "always," "often," and "sometimes," with none of them indicating they used such practices rarely or not at all (it should be noted that only the teachers' perspectives were analyzed here, making it impossible to infer how students receive these proposals or how teachers apply what they indicated in the survey in the classroom—this point, in fact, is left open for further exploration in future proposals).

It was observed that teachers learn, practice, and explore new tools and methodologies that suit the content being taught, with the goal of contributing to the ongoing search for motivating practices and assertive learning. Likewise, students experience moments of change and learning as they continue in their pursuit of knowledge, needing to adapt to the new tools and methodologies presented by teachers to fulfill their academic duties.

Regarding the practices developed in the virtual environment and their applicability in the face-to-face environment, the result was that many of the activities proposed by teachers in the virtual environment do not apply to the face-to-face setting. Teachers mentioned that lesson plans guide their educational practices, directing the activities to be developed to meet the course's pedagogical project (PPC). It is clear from the responses that access to remote classes requires the use of technological resources and tools that are not always available for activities in the classroom environment.

In the question regarding the stages of the self-regulation process involved in lesson planning, it is noted that, often, these stages are present in the routines of activities developed by Public Relations teachers, being referred to as stages of the self-regulation process, without the teachers having a clear perception of this.

One of the questions in the questionnaire sought to identify whether the participant seeks to maintain emotional bonds when implementing practices in the virtual environment, reflecting the need for changes in the teaching and learning process, as both teachers and students quickly adapted to the virtual environment, and consequently, learned to use new technological platforms in school settings. The results show that 12 respondents chose the option "always," 4 teachers selected "often," and only 2 responded "sometimes".

When asked about developing corrective activities in the teaching and learning process, only 1 respondent selected the option "always," 7 selected "often," 5 chose "sometimes," 3 responded "rarely," and 1 responded "never." On the question addressing preventive activities, the responses showed results very similar to the previous question. Again, only 1 teacher selected "always," 8 responded "often," 6 chose "sometimes," 2 responded "rarely," and 1 participant did not answer this question.

On the question of affective and support strategies to keep students' attention and motivation in the teaching and learning process, the responses were: 7 occurrences of "always," 6 of "often," 3 of "sometimes," and 2 of "rarely." The results indicate that most teachers aim to plan actions that encourage students to maintain focus, striving to stimulate and/or maintain students' motivation throughout the process.

It was noted, therefore, that changes have been implemented in schools, universities, and throughout the educational context, and with that, diverse teaching practices have emerged over time. The educational environment, in all areas, levels, and

spaces, went through a process of reflection and analysis regarding the need for continuity. Teachers prepared themselves, re-educated themselves, and adapted to new technologies, seeking assertive implementation of the reinvention of teaching and learning.

Additionally, when analyzing the responses from the structured interviews, it was evident that the participants perceive self-regulation and autonomy as relevant characteristics in the educational trajectory of teaching and learning in Public Relations. However, for many, there is a lack of clarity regarding the concept of self-regulation of learning and how to redefine educational practices to promote self-regulation processes with an emphasis on autonomy. This result will be further explored throughout this section, which sought to relate and compare teachers' responses with the theoretical framework in an attempt to understand their teaching practices and how these promote self-regulation and autonomy in the teaching and learning process.

Questions I, III, and V are classified under the category "teacher and student autonomy" and emerge from the following themes: 1- teaching practice; 2- teacher training; and 3- classroom practices.

Among the contributions brought by the participants, it stands out that participant AM understands autonomy as the methodology adopted by the teacher to allow integration between theory and practice in the students' formative process. He refers to autonomy as the element that determines, in the teaching process, how the teacher will apply the practices, which theories they will use, and which evaluation tools will be adopted. He adds that some models are already pre-defined, weakening or even excluding the autonomy of teaching, emphasizing that "*teacher autonomy involves many things. It involves everything from creating the teaching and learning plan to implementing it*".

One of the interviewees, in turn, states that autonomy is present in any pedagogical process and manifests itself in the choice of methodologies that contribute to learning. Autonomy, as defined by VL, assigns the teacher the role of facilitator and places the student at the center of the teaching and learning process.

Therefore, from the teachers' perspectives and based on the data obtained, it became evident that the promotion of autonomy is present in their day-to-day classroom activities. Moreover, when analyzing the responses and reflecting on the content studied in my research, it is noted that the desires and realities of teachers align in relation to social and individual aspects, which corresponds to the theoretical framework.

All participants expressed their views and presented their arguments based on their teaching experiences. When analyzing the responses, it is clear that there is a strong stance on the importance of autonomous attitudes in relation to the roles they play and the practices they develop to stimulate students' professional growth.

It was identified, therefore, throughout the entire analysis, that the participants are aware of the concept of autonomy in their teaching practice, as they presented their practices and some observations about its applicability.

Questions II, IV, VI, IX, X, and XI are classified under the category "understandings and redefinitions of teaching practices through self-regulation" and relate to the following themes: teaching practice, the role of the course in the formation of processes, means used to achieve results, differentiated practices for addressing content, and contributions to the profession and practices.

Among the collected data, it is possible to present some participants' responses: the content points to a lack of understanding of the concept of self-regulation and raises doubts among teachers about its definition: "[...] *I don't know*, [...] *I am not familiar with the specific term, but it must be something related to students understanding that they are progressing in the learning process* [...]" (PB); "*it seems that this is something we work on very little*" (AN); "*see if I'm correct, please. If I'm not, feel free to correct me. I think the word, I'm not sure if it's monitoring, you self-regulate, you monitor your own performance*" (AM); "*self-learning, [...] if we take the literal meaning of the word, then it's not about doing. Specifically, there's the PR, but self-regulation, in my understanding, means we must always be improving ourselves*" (LC); "[...] *in terms of self-regulation, I believe it would involve some competency issues*," [...] "*it would mean thinking about the role of the course committees as a decision-making body with the competency to think about it*" (RC)

The responses pointed in several directions, such as: the fact that there are still few studies on self-regulation in the field of communication and education; the need for greater preparation in teacher knowledge; the difficulty in answering due to the complexity of the topic; and the need to apply concepts in all disciplines, not just one.

In their response, AN commented that they believe this concept is still unclear, that the topic is not discussed, and that teachers continue to follow traditional teaching methods within their usual role.

For respondent PB, it is the means, the work, the approach, the teacher, and the learning plan that end up impacting self-regulation and learning processes. AM, in turn, asserts that the results will be different depending on the resource used. LC, although fully agreeing, states that "this doesn't come ready-made and isn't found in a recipe book." Teacher AN reinforces the importance of the method and the medium, while another AN points out the importance of research on the topic.

It is observed that the responses regarding the teaching practices adopted in the classroom are not necessarily linked to the implementation of self-regulatory processes. Such a process may offer benefits to the student, as according to Ganda and Boruchovitch (2018), it has guiding principles and foundations.

It is verified that self-regulated practices are developed, but the concept of self-regulation has not yet been thoroughly explored by many teachers. Only with a clear understanding can the teacher self-regulate their planning and teaching practices, structuring activities in a way that prepares students to be more self-regulated and, consequently, autonomous. AN argues that the teacher cannot carry out their activities in isolation when using active teaching and learning methodologies, believing that the collective work of teachers is responsible for the formation of the professional. She highlights that she does not develop this type of activity, which requires several hours of pedagogical training to deepen the understanding of self-regulation concepts.

Due to the significant relevance of the question "In your view, can self-regulation contribute to the profession and Public Relations practices? Justify your answer," it is noted that there is a (lack of) knowledge among participants about the concepts of self-regulation and their effective application, as demonstrated in their responses.

When analyzing the responses, it was observed that participants answered affirmatively, even when believing or assuming the answer, with some expressing certainty and others providing additional agreement, as follows: "I believe so" (AN, LC, RC, VO); "Yes" (AM, PB, MC); "I think so" (VL, MR, ZP, MT); "Without a doubt" (SA); "Yes, certainly" (NM).

It is noted that self-regulated practices are developed, but the concept of self-regulation has not yet been thoroughly explored by many teachers. Only with a clearer understanding can the teacher self-regulate their planning and teaching practices, structuring their activities in a way that prepares students to be more self-regulated and, consequently, autonomous.

AN argues that teachers cannot carry out their activities in isolation when using active teaching and learning techniques and methodologies, believing that the collective work of teachers is responsible for the professional formation. She states that she does not develop such activities, as these require several hours of pedagogical training to elaborate on the understanding of self-regulation concepts. MT, on the other hand, sees self-regulation as a major contribution within the formative process, noting that students begin their first semester one way and end it entirely transformed:

"*This structuring, with self-regulation, is fundamental. I think we can think more about this, write more about it, but also research more on it, because I believe that this, for Public Relations and communication in general, is a significant challenge, just as it is in journalism and advertising*" (MT).

It was identified, therefore, in the responses from LC and MT, that teachers recognize the importance of the issues addressed in this research, as well as their relevance to redefining Public Relations teaching practices through self-regulation, with an

emphasis on autonomy. Respondent LC mentioned that this research will be very useful and even committed to ensuring that it is published and disseminated as a book.

Moreira *et al*. (2016) also contribute to the discussion by pointing out that a lack of awareness of self-regulation in individuals can lead to underperformance, given the relevance of self-reflection and awareness about the pathways that drive and enhance knowledge and the teaching and learning process. The authors describe that the ability for individuals to self-regulate is considered innate, but in order to achieve their goals, everyone develops their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral capacities, although not always consciously. They further argue that the first step in the self-regulation process is becoming aware of the capacity to self-regulate.

The category "Training and awareness of educational practices" encompasses questions VII, VIII, and XII and the themes: cognitive activities, metacognitive activities, and promotion of self-regulation.

Among the responses, it is worth noting that teacher AN describes the question as interesting and reports that, always aiming at autonomy, they discuss with students the development of capacities that go beyond the classroom. LC stated that they like to offer students, through the proposed dynamics, opportunities for developing their intellectual and emotional capacities.

When analyzing the responses, it was found that teachers have been seeking to develop students' awareness and monitoring of the learning process in various ways in the classroom. It is also noted that the responses indicate the activities that teachers develop in the classroom to promote self-regulation. From AN's perspective, what can be developed "are methods that lead the student to think about their relationship with the content and their relationship with the world," considering an interrelation between the disciplines.

Various dynamics were mentioned as practices developed in the classroom by the participants, in accordance with their lesson plans, the course's pedagogical projects, and the specificities of each HEI.

5 Final Considerations

This research aimed to analyze the conceptions and aspects of educational practices that Public Relations teachers in Brazil consider to be promoters of self-regulation and student autonomy.

The starting point was the desire to delve into specific studies on the Public Relations profession (within the field of Social Communication) and the perception that, through listening to other teachers, the perceived need for change and the constructs of self-regulation could bring a redefinition of Public Relations teachers' educational practices in the teaching and learning process.

It is considered that it was a great challenge to bring the Public Relations profession into the field of education and seek to identify interfaces or contributions of self-regulation to teaching practices.

In order to achieve the outlined objectives, a literature review was first conducted on the concepts of Public Relations and self-regulation of learning, and finally, an effort was made to verify whether there was literature or any connection between the aspects of Public Relations teachers' educational practices and the characteristics for promoting self-regulation of learning. It was found that there were no studies that brought a connection and research on both subjects.

Furthermore, in the questionnaire and structured interview responses, it was noted that participants demonstrated clarity about autonomy. However, in many responses, it was not possible to identify whether the practices described do indeed promote self-regulation.

By analyzing the responses and the specific objectives, it was possible to identify that: (i) educational practices promoting student autonomy were mentioned; (ii) the practices indicated are related to self-regulatory processes; (iii) elements were found that point to self-regulated and autonomous educational practices by teachers; (iv) it was verified that participants were not fully knowledgeable about self-regulation and the aspects of educational practices that promote self-regulation in the classroom. However, the educational practices pointed out indicate the existence of characteristics promoted by self-regulatory constructs, without the specific concept having been mentioned.

It was possible to understand that the conditions offered for promoting autonomy, both for teachers and students, are clear and present in educational practices.

It is believed that, due to the novelty identified in this study and with the possibility and interest expressed by some participants in the data collection, they will want to learn more about the concepts of self-regulation of learning. This could spark contributions that promote improvements in the teaching and learning process.

Regarding the results, it was found that some Public Relations teachers still do not know the concepts of self-regulation, while for others, the concept is still underexplored.

Finally, it should be reported that the empirical material allowed the conclusion that it is not possible to affirm that teachers fully understand the theory that comprises the constructs of self-regulation of learning in their educational practices, meaning that what constitutes the promotion of self-regulation with an emphasis on autonomy was not identified. Characteristics of self-regulation were observed, but this should not be confused with a complete understanding of the concept or with the specific practices that promote self-regulation. Given this, the intention is to continue this study, in the

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hope that an invitation and an explanation of the self-regulatory constructs will enable further results to be obtained.

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Authors' Contributions

Célia Christina de A. Padreca Nicoletti – Coordinator of the research, responsible for data collection and analysis, and writing of the text.

Samuel Mendonça – Research advisor, with active participation in data analysis and review of the final writing.

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