

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND MUNICIPAL PUBLIC POLICIES: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the results of the inter-institutional research Educação Infantil e formação de profissionais no Estado do Rio de Janeiro (1999-2009), based on data of questionnaire. The first item develops methodological considerations on the universe investigated; the second concerns on early childhood education's organization in the municipalities and the coverage of educational care; the third discusses the professional training, career entry and path, as well as financial and material resources. The last part emphasizes the developments observed in the period and indicate the aspects that should urgently be part of the municipal public policies agenda.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION • PUBLIC POLICIES • VOCATIONAL
TRAINING • CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

We are inclined to think that the main quality of the sociologist is not as the final “interpreter” but as an artisan, concerned with details and the complete cycle of production. (LAHIRE, 2004, p. 16)

THIS ARTICLE IS THE RESULT OF A LONGITUDINAL STUDY with the aim of understanding Early Childhood Education and professional training in the public school system in the towns and cities of the State of Rio de Janeiro (NUNES; CORSINO; KRAMER, 2011).¹ In order to analyze management of municipal public education for children 0-6 years old, a study on early childhood education was made at a 10-year interval, comparing data collected via questionnaires in 1999 and 2009, on topics such as: organization of educational systems, educational services coverage, functioning of Early Childhood Education and staff training, admission and career requirements, among others. Analyses of the data obtained takes into account the fact that existing configurations result from experiences, from the historical and political context of municipalities, and from their relations with the state, the federal government and with society as a whole.

Just like Cunha (1992), who examined government proposals that promised to use schooling to create a democracy and to analyze the forces that drive or delay it (social movements, privatizing, communitarianism, municipalism), we believe that “finding a formula that allows for administrative continuity in departments of education and a certain independence of the member, without implying the depoliticization or techno-bureaucratic domination of the sector” (p. 484) is one of the measures for creation of a public school that replaces the government-run school under private management.

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METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING INVESTIGATION PARAMETERS

Collecting and comparing data on municipal policies aimed at Early Childhood Education during a decade-long period allows for an understanding of the dimensions of children's rights. Considering that the entire research procedure has limits and possibilities (LUNA, 2002), and the need for alignment between instrument and the investigated problem (BRANDÃO, 2002), a self-administered questionnaire with open and closed questions was selected, which was sent to all municipalities in the State of Rio de Janeiro, to be answered by the individual responsible for Early Childhood Education.

An issue taken into consideration included the field approach and the assumption that research data is not ready-made, but is constructed, as every era and every social group has their own different repertoires and forms of discussion (BAKHTIN, 1988). On the other hand, in addition to quantitative techniques, we deemed it pertinent to examine trends and recurrences from interviews and observations, expanding the possibilities for analysis. Interviews were conducted both in 1999 (KRAMER, 2005) and in 2009 (NUNES; CORSINO; KRAMER, 2011) with those responsible for Early Childhood Education in the Municipal Departments of Education. The observations generated a file of photographs and served as a base for theses and dissertations.

The questionnaire from 1999 had to be re-worked, given the changes in policies and legislation that occurred over the decade. The revision of the instrument brought a double challenge: to make as few changes as possible to facilitate the comparison of data and to consider the new political landscape.

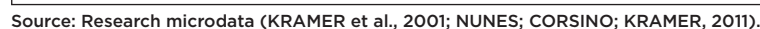
For database development, the SPSS Program was used. The answers were organized as frequencies and percentages. The frequency reports for the variables studied, the crosschecks and tabulations were conducted in accordance to the objectives, in order to compare the 1999 data (ZANINI, 2000) with the 2009 data. Field studies and reports made during the two timeframes were also consulted.

A problem identified both in 1999 and in 2009 was the lack of knowledge among informants in the Municipal Departments of Education regarding essential data for the management of educational policy, such as the number of children 0-6 years of age living in their municipalities, enrollment figures and unmet demand.

The timeframe allows for the measuring of the impact of Early Childhood Education for fifteen years by General Education Law (LDB) (BRASIL, 1996b), (Fundef-the Primary Education Funding System) (BRASIL, 1996a) and Fundeb (the Basic Education Funding System) (BRASIL, 2006e), the expansion of Primary Education from eight to nine years (BRASIL, 2005a) and inclusion of children of six years of age (BRASIL, 2006d).

In 1999, 54 of 92 State municipalities responded to the questionnaire and in 2009, 59 responded. Forty-three municipalities participated in the two versions of the study; 17 did not participate at any time. Map 1, which follows, presents the distribution of the municipalities according to participation in the research:

QUESTIONNAIRE MAP >> MUNICIPALITIES OF THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO



In 2009, the proportion of municipalities that responded to the survey, by classification by size, according to the number of inhabitants and participation in the state's population, shows the following configuration:

TABLE 1
PROPORTION OF MUNICIPALITIES IN THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO AND
MUNICIPALITIES THAT RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY, ACCORDING TO THE
NUMBER OF INHABITANTS (2009)

SIZE OF MUNICIPALITIES (NUMBER OF INHABITANTS)	TOTAL OF RJ (%)	RESPONDENTS (%)
Up to 20,000	30.4	22.0
More than 20,000 to 50,000	30.4	33.9
More than 50,000 to 250,000	28.3	32.2
More than 250,000 to 500,000	5.4	6.8
More than 500,000	5.4	5.1
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: IBGE, 2009.

As can be seen, the percentage of respondent municipalities by size class of population are very close to the values obtained in participation in state population composition, thus conferring representation for the sample and allowing approximations to be made with nonrespondent municipalities.

The analysis did not show, in 1999 and 2009, any correlation between investment in Early Childhood Education and political party, contradicting the hypothesis that progressive municipal governments invested more in this area.

ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE COVERAGE IN THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO

This item illustrates the status of local education policies, verifying the existence or nonexistence of the system itself and the city council, organization of municipal departments, entry age and coverage of daycare centers and pre-schools.

The balance of the decade shows that a clear majority of the municipalities, since 1999, already had their own system as well as a city council – which may indicate greater autonomy from the state in the management of education.

A significant change in the decade with regard to the areas encompassed by the Municipal Departments of Education: in 1999, 65% responded also for other areas such as culture, sports and leisure, in 2009, the majority (59.6%) responded exclusively for education, with new structures having been created for the other areas.

Another change relates to Department of Education projects developed in conjunction with other departments. In 1999, they were limited primarily to medical and dental care and family assistance; in 2009, they extended to the organization of cultural activities such as theater festivals, movies at school, playrooms, gardens, story circles, student games, science fairs, environmental caravans and chess games.

Also with regard to organization, there was a breakthrough in the number of professionals within teaching staff responsible for monitoring daycares and pre-schools. In 1999, the departments had more professionals working in educational support staff, in 2009, there are more departments working with a fewer number of professionals. This leads to the assumption that staff in the beginning of the decade worked in all segments – Early Childhood Education and Primary School – started to work exclusively in Early Childhood Education.

Regarding the entry age of children in Primary School, it is worth noting that the State of Rio de Janeiro already included children of 6 years of age even before the Brazilian legislation so required, to some extent, because the public policies of the 1980s were directed towards literacy classes. The management of the time, unlike today, did not universalize access to children of 6 years of age and instituted strategies as part of the system: these classes were at times aligned to Preschool, and at times to the Primary School. In 2009, however, a disparity of criteria regarding enrollment in Primary School was observed, as shown in Figure 1:

FIGURE 1
QUANTITY OF MUNICIPALITIES IN ACCORDANCE
WITH THE DATE OF ENTRY OF CHILDREN OF
6 YEARS OF AGE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL (2009)

NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES	DATE OF ENTRY
1	January 31
1	February 8
1	February 9
4	February 28
4	March 30
13	March 31
21	April 30
1	May 30
5	June 30
1	December 31

Source: Research microdata (NUNES; CORSINO; KRAMER, 2011).

It is worth asking if the entry of children with less than 6 years of age in Primary School had been done starting with a reorganization of the education system, in fact creating conditions for inclusion, or whether it is merely a measure of early-enrollment. The cut-off date created a controversial issue. The resolution of the National Council of Education on the subject (CNE / CEB n. 5 of 12/17/2009) states that:

§ 2nd Enrollment in Early Childhood Education for children who turn 4 or 5 years of age as of March 31 of the year in which registration occurs is mandatory.

§ 3rd Children who turn six years of age after March 31 must be enrolled in Early Childhood Education. (BRASIL, 2009b)

The State Board of Education of Rio de Janeiro indicates December 31, and the registration resolution of the Municipal Department of Education of Rio de Janeiro, for example, indicates June 30. This demonstrates a disconnect between federal entities and, at times, autonomy of the Departments of Education, which formulate requirements for the school public systems in absentia of those issued by the councils. The lack of unity has an impact on the educational trajectory of children who run the risk missing one year of Early Childhood Education due to early entry into Primary School.

In the state of Rio de Janeiro in 1999, there were 1,611,584 children between 0 and 6 years of age, and about two-fifths between 4 and 6 years of age with service coverage of 52%. As noted, during this year there was no School Census to calculate the children attending daycare, which prevents the identification of the number of children between 0 and 3 years of age serviced. In 2009, according to Datasus, the panorama is 1,359,833 children between 0 and 5 years of age² (859,905 between 0 and 3 and 499,928 between 4 and 5 years of age), and a rate of service coverage for daycares at 16.1% and for pre-school at 66.2% for children between 4 and 5 years of age.

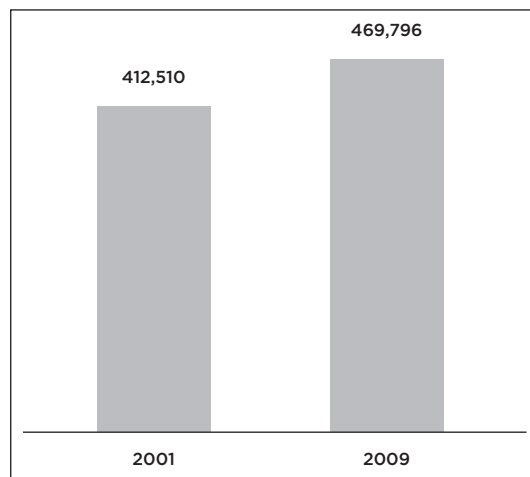
This would lead to asking why the State of Rio de Janeiro did not follow the trend of universalization that took place in the country. Did the state already care for children of 5 years of age in Primary School and, therefore, the data of Early Childhood Education are lower than the national average? It can be inferred that municipal governments boosted the attendance of compulsory Primary Education to the detriment of children's rights to Early Childhood Education, in addition to the significant participation of the private sector, especially in the municipalities of the Metropolitan Region and the Capital.

Following the expansion or reduction of service in daycares is very important to understand the biases of educational policy. In this sense, to create a balance of the decade, we opted for the 2001 School Census, instead of 1999, because, as mentioned, this was the first year of data collection for children in daycare centers.

Graph 1 shows the evolution of enrollment in Early Childhood Education in the decade studied.

² Including the population between 0 and 6 years of age, according to Datasus in 2009, there were 1,620,017 children (BRASIL, 2009d).

GRAPH 1
ENROLLMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE STATE OF
RIO DE JANEIRO (2001 AND 2009)

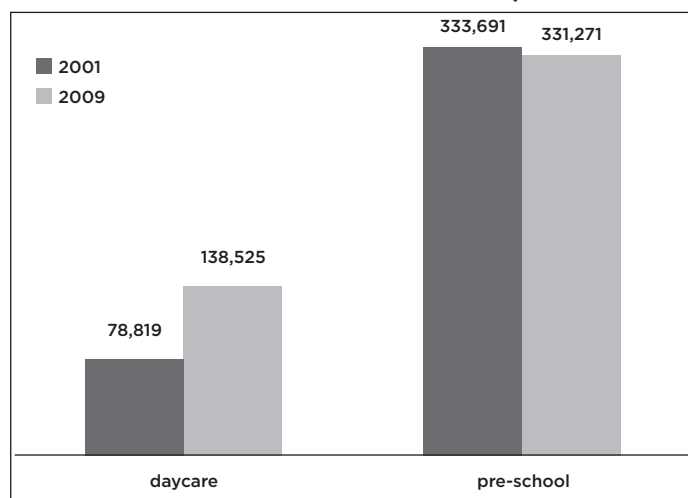


Source: Brasil, 2001; 2009c.

Note an expansion of 13.8% in the number of enrollments, which represent 57,248 new registrations. However, based on the municipalities of the State and the enrollment in daycare and pre-school in the 2001 and 2009 census, it is observed that, in the decade, in absolute numbers, there was an expansion of 75.7% in daycares and a decrease of 0.7% in pre-school.

Graph 2, which shows the absolute number of children enrolled in daycares and pre-schools, provides elements to give some dimension to those receiving service, and, more importantly, who sat out or entered early into primary school. The information relating to registrations include federal, state, municipal and private systems.

GRAPH 2
ENROLLMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, SEPARATED BY
SEGMENT IN THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO (2001 AND 2009)

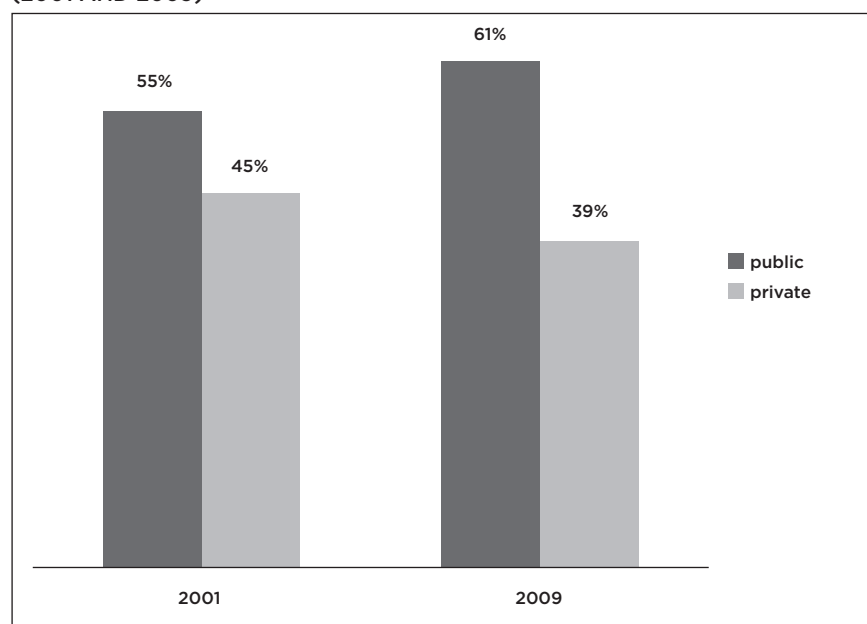


Source: Brasil, 2001; 2009c.

The increase in enrollment in the daycare segment is a result of inducing of the public sector to have responsibility for this service as well as the consensus on the important effect of education in the early years of a child's life on educational trajectory. The decrease in preschool enrollment stems from Fundef, which, in Rio de Janeiro, «pushed» literacy classes towards Primary School; and from the institutionalization of this stage to nine years. It is also worth mentioning the reduction in population growth in the decade.

Since the largest portion private system coverage focuses on Early Childhood Education, some questions of the survey were intended to map enrollments in public and private systems. The participation of the public sector, which in 2009 becomes more significant, was almost equal to that of the private sector in 2001, as shown in Graph 3.

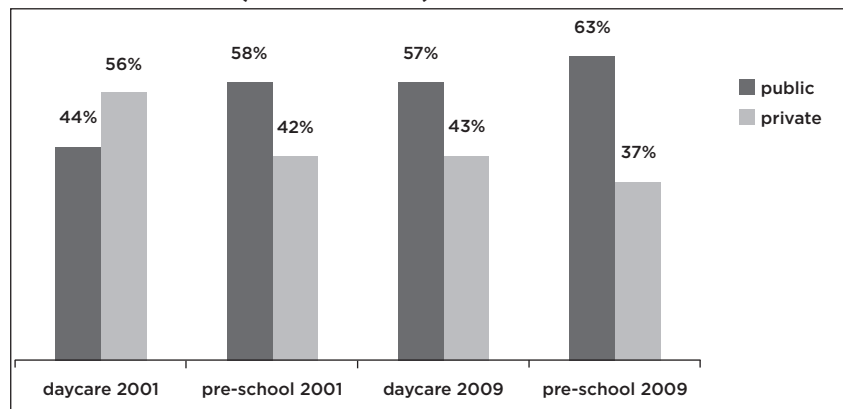
GRAPH 3
PROPORTION OF ENROLLMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, BY ADMINISTRATIVE DEPENDENCY, IN THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO (2001 AND 2009)



Source: Brasil, 2001; 2009c.

Consistent with the emphasis on Early Childhood Education in different instances of public policy, the action of social movements and the consequential legal conquests, there is significant expansion of the public sphere, even though democratization has had unequal development in daycare and preschool. In the first case, there is a reversal: in 2001, the majority was private daycares (55.7% of enrollments), in 2009, there were more public daycares (57.3%). In the case of pre-school, the participation of the public sector, which was already a majority in 2001, went from 57.6% to 63.1% in the decade.

GRAPH 4
PROPORTION OF ENROLLMENT BY SEGMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION ACCORDING TO MANAGEMENT DEPENDENCY, IN THE STATE
OF RIO DE JANEIRO (2001 AND 2009)



Source: Brasil, 2001a; 2009c.

Based on the census population data and the School Census, it can be stated that the increase in enrollment is a result of the expansion of the public system, in the case of daycares, as well as the decrease in enrollment in preschool, due to the migration of children to Primary School.

As for the geographical distribution of enrollment by regions, daycare expanded in all regions of the state, totaling, in absolute terms, an increase of nearly 60,000 enrollments. In 2001, 70% of the total enrollment in daycares was concentrated in the capital and 7.2% in the Metropolitan Region. In 2009, the participation of the capital in relation to the State suffers a decline, falling to 50%, while in the Metropolitan Region participation is doubled, now representing 15% of enrollments.

In the reverse direction to that of daycares, between 1999 and 2009, pre-schools experienced a reduction of 1,610 enrollments, which indicates the entry of children of 5 and 6 years of age in Primary School. There are several opinions held by public administrators regarding the age of entry into Primary School, which has accepted enrollment of children of less than 6 years of age, as already pointed out. In addition, there is a strong institutionalization of this stage nationwide, with legal priority for municipalities that, traditionally, accommodate school systems with greater acceptance, without presenting political and administrative challenges nor demands for investment in age-specific equipment, as happens in Early Childhood Education.

In the State, the expansion of enrollment in daycare during the decade reached 75.7% for all regions, except the capital, while in pre-school there was a reduction of about 1%. This downward trend was not displayed only in the Metropolitan Region and in the Baixadas Litorâneas. Considering total enrollment in Early Childhood Education (daycare and preschool), there was an increase of almost 14% in the decade.

Taking the regions of the state as parameters to measure the distribution of enrollments in 2001, Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of the resident population by region of the State of Rio de Janeiro and the distribution of enrollment in daycare and pre-school in the State.

TABLE 2
RESIDENT POPULATION AND ENROLLMENT IN DAYCARE AND PRE-SCHOOL
IN REGIONS OF THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO IN 2001 (IN %)

REGIONS OF THE STATE	RESIDENT POPULATION	DAYCARE ENROLLMENTS	PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENTS
Capital	41.4	69.6	44.6
Metropolitana*	34.5	7.2	18.8
Serrana	5.3	5.2	6.1
Baixada Litorâneas	3.5	3.4	6.5
Médio Paraíba	5.5	3.7	6.5
Centro Sul Fluminense	1.7	1.1	2.8
Litoral Sul Fluminense**	1.1	1.0	1.9
Norte Fluminense	4.9	6.7	8.7
Noroeste Fluminense	2.1	2.2	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: IBGE, 2000.

*Excluding the city of Rio de Janeiro. ** In 2009 this Region is called Costa Verde.

During the decade, migration in the State intensified, causing some regions to lose population to others, which became more dynamic due to urbanization processes. Data from the Equity Observatory (IBGE, 2007) show that sociodemographic factors of the population determined access to education in the 2000s. The largest gap between rich and poor can be measured, among other indicators, through frequency of attendance at daycare. To be born and live in areas with less access to education affect people's lives, as indicated by Santos (2009) when he refers to the geographic space and its constraints: "The effectiveness of actions is closely related to its location. The most powerful actors save the best portions of the territory for themselves and leave the rest for the others" (p. 79).

The increase in economic activity in some regions contributed to the reorganization of productive activity, influencing intraregional migration. However, regional disparities remained, since the local population quota was not absorbed in industrial activities.

In 2001, an uneven distribution of enrollment in daycare in relation to the population size of the regions was observed, being negatively pronounced in the Metropolitan Region and positively in the capital and the Norte Fluminense. The Metropolitan Region, accounting for 34.6% of the population of the state has 7.2% of enrollments, while

the Norte Fluminense, with only 4.9% of the population, accounts for 6.7% of enrollments. The scenario is different for pre-school, though most inequality remains in the Metropolitan Region. The other regions have a more balanced distribution.

In 2009, the scenario of the distribution of enrollment in daycare in the State is altered substantially, with an increase in the Metropolitan Region and in the Baixadas Litorâneas, which display twice the percentage achieved in 2001, and in the Norte Fluminense, which accounts for 10% of the total.

TABLE 3
RESIDENT POPULATION AND ENROLLMENT IN DAYCARE AND PRE-SCHOOL
IN REGIONS OF THE STATE OF RIO DE JANEIRO IN 2009 (%)

REGIONS OF THE STATE	RESIDENT POPULATION	DAYCARE ENROLLMENTS	PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENTS
Capital	36.7	50.0	38.8
Metropolitana*	32.3	15.0	25.1
Serrana	10.0	5.9	6.1
Baixada Litorâneas	5.3	7.1	7.6
Médio Paraíba	5.3	5.8	6.3
Centro Sul Fluminense	1.6	1.5	2.5
Costa Verde	2.0	2.4	2.4
Norte Fluminense	4.8	10.4	7.8
Noroeste Fluminense	1.9	1.8	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Brasil, 2007a; 2009d; 2009c.

* Excluding the city of Rio de Janeiro

It is worth drawing attention to the fact that in addition to intensification and economic imbalance between the municipalities, the State of Rio de Janeiro already suffered the consequences of its geopolitical situation. Originating from the fusion of two states (Guanabara and Rio de Janeiro) in 1975, with serious political party disputes, marked by the clashes between local powers, the current state of Rio de Janeiro inherited inequality between municipalities and regions, extreme concentration of social and cultural equipment as well as public services, creating a condition that, in the words of Santos (2009), impacts people's lives, their access to education, health and housing, and – with regard to the research presented here – their right to quality education in daycare, pre-schools and schools.

As for the size of the municipalities that responded to the survey, 34 have a population of 50,000 inhabitants (small scale), 23 had a population of up to 900,000 inhabitants (medium and large scale) and two are metropolises with over 900,000 inhabitants. These three groups were analyzed with respect to the coverage of services, organization of the Municipal Department of Education, specificity of Early Childhood Education in the management of the Departments and mechanism of

appointment of directors of daycares and pre-schools, focusing on the differences and approaches in the management of Early Childhood Education. Would smaller municipalities have the same pattern of policies than that of medium and large municipalities?

Analysis showed that having a specific sector responsible for Early Childhood Education in Departments and an educational support staff focused on Early Childhood Education are factors that differentiate municipalities the most according to their size. Nearly half of small municipalities (16) have no specific sector for Early Childhood Education, while in medium size municipalities that absence is observed in less than 10% (two counties) and in metropolises it is nonexistent. Even without a specific sector, most of the municipalities stated that they monitor and guide Early Childhood Education; only four reported having no support staff, and all are considered “small”. Regarding frequency, more than half of the responses from small and medium size municipalities show weekly monitoring, while the responses from the two metropolises are vague (according to the needs of each institution; sometimes weekly, sometimes fortnightly, sometimes monthly etc.). When asked about whether there was staff with a specific coordinator for Early Childhood Education, the vast majority of respondents responded positively: 73% in small municipalities, 87% in the medium municipalities and in the two metropolises. The number of staff in small municipalities varies from one to six professionals and in medium ones, from two to nine. The two large municipalities have, respectively, three and twelve professionals, showing that there is not always proportionality between the number of staff in the Departments and the number of serviced institutions.

The survey, the interviews and the documents that were sent to us help to establish a complex picture of the expansion of Early Childhood Education in the municipalities and the main problems and achievements.

TRAINING OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS

Teacher training has been shown by research and official documents (BRASIL, 2006b, 2006c) to be one of the main factors affecting quality in Early Childhood Education. From this assumption, the research aimed to identify the projects that the Municipal Department of Education developed together with professionals who work in this area and verify whether in the last ten years there have been changes in the proposals, considering the new policies in force.

On the one hand, the numerous clashes over training, public policy and professionalization might have affected training proposals. On the other hand, changes in Brazilian Early Childhood Education may have impacted training. A third change concerns the Decree n. 6755/09

establishing the National Policy of Training of Basic Education Professionals (BRASIL, 2009e), understood as a public commitment to the State and a permanent stimulus for professionalization.

The decree establishes the expansion of adult education in public Higher Education Institutions, the raising of the quality of education, democratic management, the guarantee of public funding under a regime of cooperation and the accountability of federal agencies, and assigns teachers to the role of agents of cultural formation. The objectives to be achieved are: unique path, career advancement, continuing education, exclusive dedication to teaching, improvement of remuneration conditions, guarantee of decent working conditions, equity in access to initial and continuing training, and links between initial and continuing training. States, Municipalities and the the Federal District must therefore commit to a policy of continuous training, monitoring and evaluating the definitions of school systems and units in relation to training as well as in developing proposals for specific training, in addition to expanding the supply of adult-level education.

Studies on teacher training value multidimensionality, the ongoing process of connection between disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge and knowledge obtained through individual and collective experience (TARDIF, 2002). Quality training, according to Nóvoa (1992), links together personal, professional and organizational development. It is in the interaction between knowledge and everyday situations, reflections and exchanges that training is found. Teacher, personal and professional training is carried out in context and in conjunction with the culture of the school, where it is also located. There is a continuum of reciprocal links between macro (political concepts, theories) and micro (daily life, conditions, culture) contexts that influence and are influenced by each other, producing knowledge of different natures. Considering the current situation of the Brazilian Early Childhood Education, one must think about the training of teachers responsible for children between birth and 6 years of age in a multidimensional way too, where personal and professional development means institutional and organizational development and vice versa.

In the survey, when asked if they implemented any project in-service training involving professionals of Early Childhood Education, the answer was negative for slightly more than 10% of the municipalities that responded to the survey (11.1% in 1999 and 13.6% in 2009). Since political discussion and theoretical production in Early Childhood Education and teacher training were significant in the decade, it is surprising that there are municipalities where training of Early Childhood Education teachers did not enter the agenda.

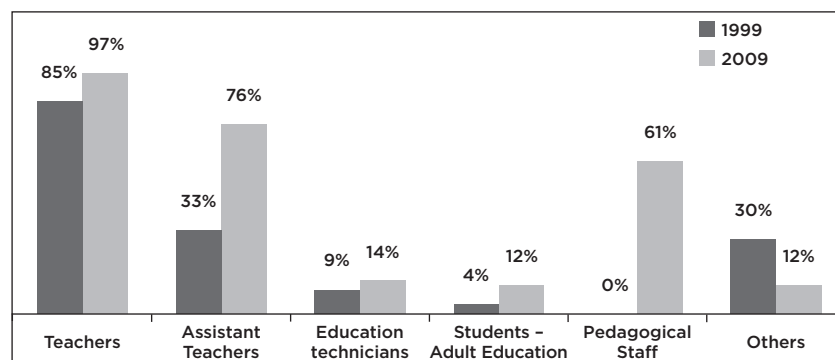
In most municipalities that develop training projects, they are implemented by the Departments of Education. To a lesser extent, the Health and Culture Departments also participate in the training. A lower

participation is also observed from the Departments of Social Assistance/Development, probably due to the transfer of daycare to Education, the decrease in the private network and the increase in the federal sphere from 17%, in 1999, to 34%, in 2009 – which seems indicate that public universities are gaining ground in education, as objective to the National Policy of Training for Early Childhood Education Professionals.

Regarding the responsibility for the planning of training, little has changed in ten years: it remains primarily a responsibility of the Municipal Departments of Education and, secondly, of supervisors. In 2009, there was increased participation of the State Department of Education and universities, suggesting greater involvement of federal agencies in the exercise of its residual function in the training of teachers of municipalities in Rio de Janeiro. However, between 1999 and 2009, participation of teachers and teaching assistants involved in teaching practice remained low, which indicates that the planning of training is a task centered on managers. The question is, with other research procedures, what managers base the development of training plans on, how choices are made regarding training mode and topic, what the concepts underlying these choices are and if this planning provides continuity and development of the training activities.

With regard to professionals involved service training projects, it can be observed, in the decade, a significant increase in municipalities where there is participation of teachers, teaching assistants and staff. The number of municipalities that include ancillary projects in training more than doubled. And those that offer training projects for the teaching staff – missing data in 1999 – correspond to 61% of respondents in 2009, as can be seen in Graph 5.

GRAPH 5
PERCENTAGE OF MUNICIPALITIES PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY WHERE THERE WERE PROFESSIONALS INVOLVED IN PROJECTS OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING (1999 AND 2009)



Source: Research microdata (NUNES; CORSINO; KRAMER, 2011).

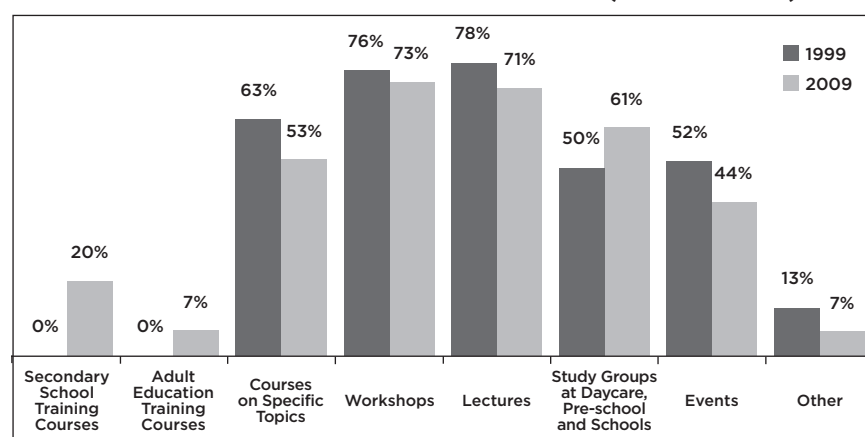
The significant increase in the number of municipalities with training projects suggests not only greater participation, but also

the presence of specific staff for Early Childhood Education. If the involvement of teaching assistants, on the one hand, may mean better organizational structure of the institutions, on the other hand, it can show that there is greater hiring of teaching assistants rather at the detriment of hiring of teachers. Even with this consideration, in the decade studied there was involvement of staff working directly with children of 0 to 6 years of age in training projects, indicating higher qualification of professionals in the municipalities.

In relation to the topics covered in the training, few changes were observed between 1999 and 2009. The predominant didactic-pedagogical aspects remain, followed by art and culture. In 2009, a slight increase on topics relating to pedagogical aspects and a decrease on topics related to family, health and food. This increase probably is due to the development of political-pedagogical projects in daycares and pre-schools, a requirement that, with the inclusion of Early Childhood Education in educational systems, over these ten years, may have been relevant in studies and training projects.

As for in-service training offered by municipalities, in 2009, 20% of respondents indicate training in technical Secondary school, a category that, in 1999, was not present. This expresses commitment to the minimum qualification required by the General Law of Education (LDB). The implementation of Proinfantil (Early Childhood teacher's training program)³ in the State, in July 2009, may have contributed to this increase. Graph 6 illustrates this situation.

GRAPH 6
PERCENTAGE OF MUNICIPALITIES PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY WHERE THERE WAS EACH OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING OF PROFESSIONALS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (1999 AND 2009)



Source: Research microdata (NUNES; CORSINO; KRAMER, 2011).

In 2009, a high percentage of episodic training models (events, lectures, workshops) is maintained: 6.8% of respondents claim to have undergone adult education and there is a 10% drop in courses on specific

³ This is a Secondary School course, of the technical model, of an emergency type, developed by the federal government in partnership with the federal universities, states and municipalities.

topics. There was an increase of almost 10% for respondents who report the presence of study groups as a form of training, which may indicate that the school becomes the locus of training, with greater involvement of teachers and other school staff in collective studies.

Regarding cultural training projects for teachers of Early Childhood Education in institutions/cultural spaces (museums, cinemas, theaters, cultural centers, cultural canvases, libraries), the results in the two years surveyed are similar: in 1999, 74% responded that they did not develop such projects and, in 2009, 72.9% made this affirmation. Those who responded positively cited events in public squares, museum exhibitions, theater plays and movies, reading programs, book fairs, sporting and ecological events and activities in schools.

As for the training of teachers and teaching assistants, in 1999, 59% of respondents claimed to have specific in-service training projects for teachers of Early Childhood Education, and in 2009, 65% made this claim. This increase reveals greater visibility of the first stage of Early Childhood Education in the Departments. Regarding teaching assistants, in 1999, 30% developed specific projects and, in 2009, 51% did. It is worth saying that «teaching assistant» means, depending on the municipality, the hired professional that has the function of supporting a teacher in charge of a class or one that assumes the function of a teacher. Thus, the increase could mean more investment in those who deal with children, teacher or not, or it may mean a higher hiring rate for teaching assistants. Hiring assistants deserve specific research in the municipalities.

In relation to the partnership of municipalities for in-service training projects, in 1999, 26% reported developing specific projects. The percentage was reduced and the partners mentioned were public universities (federal and state), foundations, private colleges and religious institutions. In 1999 public universities were cited in 41% of responses, with little mention of private universities. In 2009, of the municipalities that developed specific projects for professionals of Early Childhood Education, 42% had partnerships, a significant increase in comparison to 1999, the majority with federal universities. The Brazilian Ministry of Education was mentioned by 20% of respondents, and NGOs and private institutions, by 25%. Therefore, for training projects for Early Childhood Educations, it can be inferred that there is a policy of ongoing training led by the federal government.

ENTRY AND CAREER

Regarding the minimum qualification required by municipalities for the entry of teachers in Early Childhood Education, in 1999, 92.6% of respondents indicated Secondary school as a requirement. In 2009, there is an increase in the demands of education: Secondary school

(88.4%), Further Studies (5.3%) and Adult Education (6.2%). Regarding the minimum qualification required for the entry of teaching assistants, in 1999, 40.7% indicated Primary School, 14% Technical Secondary school and 46.3% did not know or did not answer. In 2009, 41% of the respondents indicated Primary School as a prerequisite, in 32% of the responses Secondary school was mentioned and in 25%, Further Studies. This significant change indicates that the position of teaching assistant is dubious regarding educational requirements for entry as well as the function performed in schools.

The non-realization of specific public examination process for entry into Early Childhood Education in municipal school systems is a constant in the two years studied. Most municipalities have one single competitive exam for teachers of Early Childhood Education and the early years of Primary School, not recognizing, at the beginning, the specificity of Early Childhood Education. The consequences, both pedagogical and administrative, of this choice are felt throughout the decade. What are the selection or allocation criteria for the teachers selected through competitive examination in Early Childhood Education classes and what are the conditions that schools present for the entrant teacher to work with the specificities of each stage of Early Childhood Education? Without a doubt, in terms of training and career permanence, it could be very beneficial to replace comprehensive comprehensive exams with specific exams.

In 1999, of the municipalities that responded to the survey, 50% reported having a career plan. In 2009, this percentage rose to 72.9%, and 23.7% reported being in the process of development and/or regulation of a plan. Probably, this significant increase in the number of municipalities with career plans is a result of Law No. 11,738, of July 16, 2008, which, in addition to establishing the national minimum wage for public Early Childhood Education teachers, defined a deadline of end-2009 for states and municipalities to develop their teaching career plans.

The salary of teachers, both in 1999 as in 2009, ranged from more than one minimum wage to three minimum wages. However, there is an inversion in the period: in 1999, 16.7% of municipalities reported that teachers earned between one and two minimum wages and 40.7%, between two and three minimum wages; in 2009, 66.1% of the municipalities paid between one and two minimum wages to teachers and 16.9%, two to three minimum wages. On the other hand, the wages of teaching assistants remained the same between 1999 and 2009, in the range of half a minimum wage to two minimum wages. There is a decreasing trend in the number of minimum wages paid to teachers, which may be a consequence of the real increase of the minimum wage in the decade, or it may indicate that, in terms of salary,

a teaching career has become increasingly less attractive and that it differs little from other careers that require lower qualifications.

Regarding the workload aimed at planning, meetings and study centers, in 1999, 30% of municipalities left this question blank, while in 2009 the percentage was 10%. Analyzing the responses, there is greater workload specification: both in daycares and in pre-schools, over 60% indicate that teachers spend up to 4 hours per week for these activities, and 25% say that time is of 6-10 hours per week. In 1999 and 2009, teaching assistants participate less than teachers in these activities. However, the larger number of responses in 2009 may indicate that these professionals have come to participate in the planning and training or, else, that there is a greater knowledge of the respondents regarding the workload of these activities: 39% of daycare teaching assistants and 35.6 % of preschool teaching assistants have up to 4 hours per week directed to these activities.

Regarding the mechanism of appointment of director of daycare and pre-schools, the data show an increase of over 10% in recommendations and a decrease of the same proportion for election.

TABLE 4
DISTRIBUTION OF MUNICIPALITIES PARTICIPANTING IN THE STUDY
ACCORDING TO MECHANISM OF APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF
DAYCARES AND PRE-SCHOOLS (1999 AND 2009)

MECHANISM FOR RIGHTS TO APPOINT	MUNICIPALITIES %	
	1999	2009
Election	21.6	9.6
Competitive Exam	0.0	0.0
Recommendation	78.4	88.6
Others	0.0	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: Nunes; Corsino; Kramer, 2011.

Of the 59 municipalities that responded to the survey, only two indicated election criteria, and both are small municipalities. For the appointment of director of pre-school, seven indicated election, being two small, four medium and one large. Since no data were found on specific competitive exams for directors, and taking into account that democratic management is one way to settle political, party and/or local influences, this result can be considered a major setback.

FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL RESOURCES

For the question concerning the source of funds, the largest participation in the development and maintenance of Early Childhood Education still derives from the municipal budget. There is, however, a significant increase in the participation of the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC) in the execution of agreements with municipalities,

24%, in 1999, to 83%, in 2009. This participation shows, once again, the exercise of residual and collaborative function of the Union alongside the municipal level in developing actions aimed at this stage of education.

The exception is that, since 2007, the Joint Action Plan of Municipalities – PAR – has been consolidated within the framework of educational policies. It is a plan consisting of targets drawn up by municipalities from the diagnostic evaluation of the local educational reality, linked to the Development Plan for Basic Education – PDE, in order to «address structurally the inequalities of educational opportunities with a goal of reducing social and regional inequalities» (ref.?). In this plan, consolidated demand is the instrument of the collaboration regime among federal agencies. As such, the presence of Early Childhood Education in the diagnostic evaluation is essential for the systemic vision of Basic Education advocated by PDE to be realized. The following are, thus, combined, the PAR demand, the PDE goals and the supply of projects and programs from the Brazilian Ministry of Education in the exercise of its collaborative function. As a result, there is greater accountability of federal entities in their competencies, which requires partnerships, mutual commitments and coordination between programs and projects to leverage processes, as evidenced in the responses, especially in the programs Proinfantil and Proinfância.

Regarding the maintenance of agreements of the municipalities with private daycares and pre-schools, the result is similar in the two years studied: around 25% of affirmative responses from daycares and 10% from pre-schools. In terms of the ways Departments support daycares, the 2009 data show an increase in the assignment of teachers (from 4% to 17%), the training of staff (from 2% to 19%) and the provision of meals (from 11% to 22%). This trend is repeated in the support for pre-schools, which indicates a process of municipalization of private institutions with some state support and greater accountability of the municipal level in staff training. Incidentally, the granting of space as support offered to private daycares, question that has suffered a considerable decrease (from 20% to 3%), is another factor that corroborates decentralization. The interviews with those responsible for Early Childhood Education of the Departments of Education revealed that, for the expansion of the municipal network, it was necessary to rent space for public institutions, but not for private institutions with some state support.

The responses concerning materials that the Department regularly provides daycares and pre-schools indicate a significant increase for toys, books and cleaning supplies, as shown in Table 5 below.

TABLE 5
MUNICIPALITIES PARTICIPANTING IN THE STUDY, ACCORDING TO MATERIALS
REGULARLY PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO MUNICIPAL
DAYCARES AND PRE-SCHOOLS (1999 AND 2009)

TYPE OF MATERIAL	NUMBER OF MUNICIPALITIES %	
	1999	2009
Toys	40.7	72.9
Literature books	25.9	81.4
Cleaning supplies	5.6	96.6
Does not provide materials	7.4	5.1

Source: Nunes; Corsino; Kramer, 2011.

Although the spaces are still not ideal, more attention to the general conditions of the institutions can be observed. The quality indicators and the new curriculum guidelines for Early Childhood Education, in valuing literature books and toys for children, may have induced the regular supply of these materials.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The comparative study shows that progress has been made: expansion of enrollment in public daycares, organization and functioning of the Departments in terms of assuming the specificity of education and teaching staff monitoring of Early Childhood Education. Throughout the decade, there was a greater concern of municipalities about involving staff working directly with children of 0 to 6 years of age with training projects, indicating growing investment in the training of these professionals.

However, several aspects need to urgently enter the municipal public policy agenda: cultural training for teachers, specific competitive exams for Early Childhood Education teachers, including hours devoted to planning and in-service training as workload, salary increase, democratic processes of appointment for directors, especially in daycares. It is important to emphasize the illegality of hiring teaching assistants to act as teachers. Early Childhood Education, as the first stage of basic education, requires the presence of a teacher with groups of children. The position of teaching assistant needs to be discussed and the tasks performed by this professional in daycares and pre-schools, needs to be better defined.

The legacy of the 2000s presented changes in the field of Early Childhood Education, bringing new concerns or questions. These concerns translate into challenges in relation to educational assistance of infants and children of 1 to 3 years of age (who now have greater visibility with the age reduction for children in pre-school) and the transition processes of home/daycare, daycare/pre-school, pre-school/primary school, including literacy processes. In addition to the demand

for correction for different data collection instruments, such as the School Census, for the monitoring and evaluation of school admission and retention, current issues highlighted by the survey can serve as an agenda for municipal policies in Early Childhood Education.

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