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SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PLANNING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A TOOL FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary society demands high-quality schooling that promotes human potential and positively impacts social and economic development. Within this scenario, the school management plan emerges as a paramount tool for educational leadership. This study analyzes the development and application of such a plan from the perspective of democratic and participatory management, drawing on authors such as Day (2001), Lück (2009), Nóvoa (1992), and Paro (2010). The research proposes a multidimensional approach to planning, structured across administrative, pedagogical, and relational dimensions. Methodologically, the work confronts leadership theories with school practice, identifying the management plan not merely as a bureaucratic tool, but as an object of interpretation. The results demonstrate that management effectiveness lies in the ability to collectively engage school actors, treating the management plan as an opportunity for dialogue and improvement.

Keywords: School management plan. Participatory management. School organization. Educational leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Today's basic education schools are immersed in a scenario of constant social, technological, and economic changes. In what has become known as the "knowledge society," schools are required to respond not only to productivity and competitiveness indices but, primarily, to the holistic development of the human being. In this sense, school management ceases to be a merely bureaucratic or administrative activity and presents itself as a form of leadership capable of articulating the tensions between social demands and the specificities of the community.

Authors writing on this subject, such as Heloísa Lück (2009), Antônio Nóvoa (1992), and Vitor Paro (2010), share the understanding that the quality of education is intrinsically linked to the nature and performance of management. For Lück (2009), the type of leadership is capable of mobilizing subjects around a common and greater goal. However, to prevent this leadership from turning into authoritarianism, the exercise of participatory management is essential, where power is shared and responsibility for results is a collective achievement.

The management tool that enables this intentionality is the school management plan. More than a document or a bureaucratic requirement, the management plan must be understood as a living document that translates the community's aspirations and the guidelines of educational policies, such as the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC). According to Libâneo et al. (2007), planning is the moment when a minimum consensus on objectives and methods is ensured, allowing the school to have clarity regarding its identity and purpose.

This study proposes an analysis of the management plan under three fundamental dimensions: the administrative, understood as the management of resources and spaces; the pedagogical, focused on the teaching-learning process and the curriculum; and the relational, which looks at conflict mediation and communication. The challenge set here is to investigate how this plan acts as a tool for participatory leadership, capable of transforming a diagnosis of reality into effective improvement actions. Therefore, it seeks to understand to what extent the management plan is fulfilling its guiding function for schools in the pursuit of quality education.

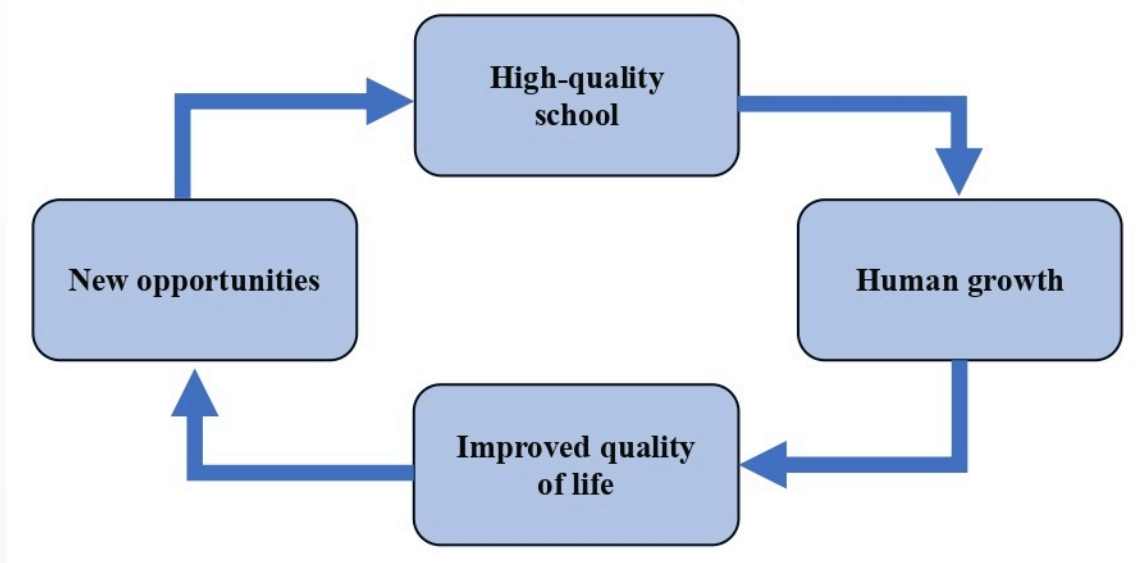
DEVELOPMENT

With globalization, contemporary society can be characterized as a knowledge society, as information is available and accessible, shortening distances and providing networks of contacts and relationships at an unprecedented speed, just a touch away on a cell phone or computer. The development of communication technologies and tools has added to the transformations in society, politics, and economy, serving education as another significant option for change and improvement.

This scenario demands a high-quality school, connected to the world, that promotes the potential growth of the human material it forms and reflects positively on the economy, given its insertion in society and its response to population demands. Thus, a virtuous circle emerges in which education transforms the population by representing a reduction in economic inequalities, better living conditions, and new opportunities for access to a better-qualified labor market, feeding back into a system that returns to the school, impacting quality and more refined educational demands.

The proposed challenge is the sharing of responsibilities and actions, which can be executed through participatory management in basic education schools. To this end, the school thinks of the curriculum in terms of competencies and skills, as proposed by the BNCC – National Common Curricular Base, in a search for the articulation of knowledge. Consequently, there is a strong trend in the school curriculum toward organization by areas of knowledge, project-based work, and even thematic axes, involving a reorganization of materials, teaching resources, learning times,

differentiated learning spaces, and intensive training for both teachers and managers.



In this sense, the school increasingly assumes its political and economic importance, as it is the institution capable of reaching society as a whole by educating the population and reflecting on the market as graduates integrate into the world of work. The school also reaches society directly and indirectly through its actors: students, parents, families, teachers, managers, administrative staff, and various suppliers (e.g., educational materials, textbooks, food). The result of the actions of all these stakeholders appears in society heterogeneously but with a common goal: the search for improvements in the performance of the teaching and learning process, since the school is an agent of social and economic change.

In political terms, participatory management presents itself as a real and feasible opportunity for action. It presupposes organization and planning. Thus, schools develop plans that outline paths, vehicles, and objectives in compliance with educational policies, which are always linked to broader political expressions. Therefore, in school, the management plan is a tool to be used as a leadership strategy. The school plan, understood as such, is a way to enable the development of education to improve its quality. The plan articulates guidelines, High-quality school Human growth Improved quality of life New opportunities 4 intentionalities, and respect for social yearnings, expressed through commitments translated into goals and actions, which, in turn, are guided by initial diagnosis, processual evaluation, and regular monitoring of results.

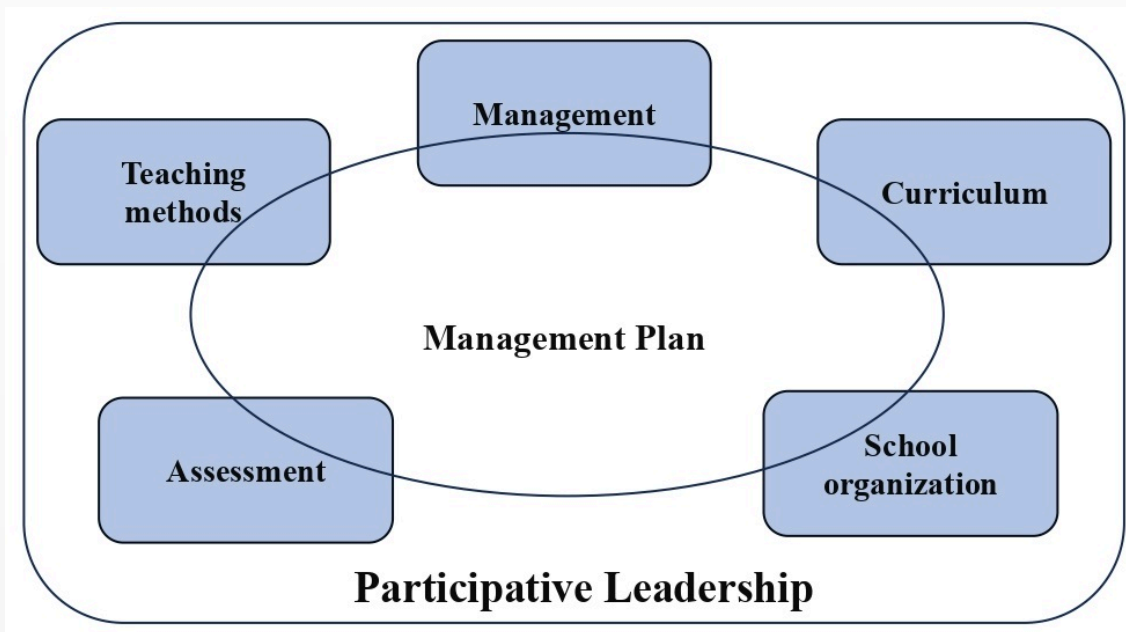
When leadership is democratic, it enables collective participation, which expresses and represents society within the school. In these circumstances, there is space and voice for representatives of students, teachers, families, administrative staff, operational, maintenance, cafeteria staff, and the community in which the school is located. It is the school administrator's responsibility to articulate all segments for the preparation, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of the management plan. The school team must be involved and committed in a movement of such magnitude that it fosters the improvement of educational quality. However, the team must still meet educational policies and broader guidelines, respecting legislation and the school network's orientations while maintaining individuality, autonomy, and an incessant search for improved student learning.

The school's intentionalities will be expressed in the management plan, developed to:

(...) ensure a minimum consensus between the school leadership and the teaching staff regarding the objectives to be achieved, teaching methods, evaluation systems, forms of student grouping, shared norms on teacher absences, compliance with schedules, and attitudes toward students and staff. (LIBÁNEO et al., 2007)

The management plan, therefore, is a management tool—that is, a leadership tool—that can be democratic and participatory in the school. It is one of the means to formalize the school's intentions and objectives, presupposing the curriculum, methodology, and evaluation, as well as management and school organization practices. With this instrument, the school team can think clearly about objectives, evaluate school practice, reflect upon it, and adjust what is necessary to correct course in a movement of action-reflection-action.

Based on a thematic analysis, one can understand the different aspects grouped by proximity, constituting the three major dimensions of the management plan: Administrative, Relational, and Pedagogical. These three dimensions are interconnected and have proportional weight and importance, composing a single school unit.



The administrative dimension covers the management of the physical school environment, teaching resources, materials, finances, different learning spaces (including extracurricular activities), student-to-classroom ratios, and the proportion of teachers and assistants per student group. It is also within the administrative dimension's competence to manage human resources (teachers, administrative, support, security, maintenance, cafeteria, cleaning, etc.) and establish the team for in-service training. Therefore, the management plan requires space and time for the description of the administrative sphere, including considerations on the structural, physical, and human diagnosis. This is followed by a guarantee of space for proposed improvement actions and resolution of needs. Specific studies should be ensured, such as cases of high absenteeism, which is a management problem of an administrative nature that impacts student learning.

In the pedagogical dimension, focused on the teaching and learning process, evaluation must be considered as a comprehensive and delicate process. A specific project is necessary, including diagnostic and internal school evaluations, performance results, and processual and formative monitoring. Evaluation includes monitoring indices that measure educational quality. Human factors such as indiscipline must be considered as they influence student development. It is vital to guarantee spaces for collective discussion with students and teachers, performance analysis, especially for learning difficulties, and the dissemination of successful practices.

Finally, the relational dimension is equally relevant. This scope includes student participation, family involvement, communication (internal and external), interpersonal relations, divergent ideas among staff, indiscipline, rights and duties, conflict resolution, dissemination of legislation protecting

minorities, inclusion of people with disabilities, absenteeism, and school dropout rates.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The management plan is a document that explicates and identifies the school, presenting a diagnosis based on its specific needs and characteristics. It must be proposed so that objectives are clear, indicating current status, goals, available resources, and necessary articulations. The best solutions will always be found within the limits of each school and with the conditions available, as represented in the plan.

A well-developed management plan that relies on collective participation— involving everyone in the school and its surroundings—leads to greater adherence by the school community, reflecting in the results achieved. In these cases, goals are reached and held accountable by all. It is in the collectivity that team members feel represented, heard, and responsible.

When the management plan contemplates the three dimensions—administrative, pedagogical, and relational—results tend to be monitored with greater clarity and agility, as they are described through specific objectives and actions. It is a way to ensure nothing is left in the background. Thus, the management plan identifies responsibilities, schedules, and monitoring indices, providing a tool that concentrates efforts to guarantee meaningful learning opportunities for students.

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