



## EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS<sup>1</sup>

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### SUMMARY

The evaluation process of educational projects is an indispensable part of their completion and consolidation. Studies on the evolution of education over the last few decades have presented evaluation as a valuable instrument for implementing public policies that involve education and their validation in the school environment through educational projects. Having concluded the allegations about the importance of evaluation throughout the development process of the educational project, in a second instance, it is essential to reflect on the quality of the agents, instruments and evaluation strategies so that this is as unblemished as possible, preventing the emergence of blemishes in the process that compromise the seriousness and final results and advances that accompany it. It is important to highlight that the composition of the evaluators must be observed, and it is essential that the evaluation team shares common pedagogical, social, philosophical and even axiological conceptions, that is, assuming that the evaluator's perspective is also influenced by their experiences, this with the politeness of maintaining impartiality in the judging process. In view of the above, this article proposes, through a bibliographical review, to bring to light the issues alleged here and, from the perspective of valuing evaluation as a summative instrument in the implementation of the educational project.

**Key words:** educational project, evaluation, values, educational concepts, educational subjects, impartiality

### ABSTRACT

The evaluation process of the educational projects is an indispensable part of consummation and consolidation of the same. Studies on the evolution of education over the last decades have presented evaluation as a valuable instrument for the implementation of public policies that involve education and its validation in the school environment through educational projects. Once the allegations about the importance of evaluation throughout the development process of the educational project have been concluded, in a second instance, it is fundamental to reflect on the quality of the agents, the instruments and the evaluation strategies so that the evaluation is more cleared, in the process that compromises the seriousness and the final results and the advances that accompany it. It is important to emphasize that the composition of the evaluators should be observed, and it is essential that the evaluation team shares common pedagogical, social, philosophical and even axiological conceptions, that is, assuming that the evaluator's view is also influenced by his / her experiences, This with the politeness of maintaining impartiality in the judging process. In view of the above, this article proposes, through a bibliographical review, to bring to the fore the issues here alleged and, under the view of valorization of evaluation as a summative instrument in the implementation of the educational project.

**Keywords:** educational project, evaluation, values, educational conceptions, educational subjects, impartiality

### INTRODUCTION

The construction of this article was based on the relevance that evaluation presents in consolidating the school's educational project. Evaluating is part of the nature of today's educational processes, breaking the paradigms of education and favoring its evolution in the history of the school and its path in the search for excellence in the art of teaching and learning.

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In the process of preparing this study, readings and bibliographic reviews were carried out from influential authors in academia and scholars of evaluation as an instrument for qualifying educational projects.

The first part of this article is dedicated to conceptualizing the educational project, its function and importance in the sphere of the school institution. Notes were made regarding the importance of the educational project as an instrument for building the school's autonomy, since it presents the social, political and pedagogical strategies and concepts that the institution believes in and defends. It is also the school's educational project that helps in building its identity.

The following consideration refers to the educational project as an instrument for strengthening leadership and school management. Therefore, through a solid and well-developed educational project, it is possible for the school institution to be autonomous and consistent. To this end, it is essential that the evaluation of the educational project is carried out in partnership, in a democratic way and involving all participants in the school community.

Following the same line of reasoning, this article gives due emphasis to the educational project and other school management documents, presenting the difference and function of each of them. Actions such as the national curriculum, the annual or multi-annual plan and the self-evaluation report receive due notoriety when compared to each other.

In the second part of this study, special attention was devoted to evaluation, its conceptual, paradigmatic and pragmatic issues. Issues relating to evaluation processes are discussed as everyday practices in institutions that seek excellence in their processes. Furthermore, paradigmatic issues involving the new role of assessment were debated, which has evolved from a mere punitive instrument to an agent that transforms practices and reflections.

In pragmatic issues involving the evaluation of educational projects, the main point made was the importance of choosing evaluators, which, according to the studies in this article, must be done carefully, mainly because it is a process that involves judgment of values and subjectivity, which inevitably must be observed to maintain the impartiality and fairness of the evaluation process.

Finally, this study makes considerations about the methodology to be used in the evaluation process of an educational project.

## 2 THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT AS AN AGENT FOR CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOL AUTONOMY

The concept of an Educational Project has gradually been built on the basis that the purpose of a school, as a fundamental part of an education system, is to guarantee the consolidation of autonomy, management and administration aimed at the community. In the last two decades, when it comes to education, Educational Projects have emerged as a response to the proposal for decentralization of education and as a gateway to expanding knowledge and concepts of individuality within educational institutions. This means that, starting from this pedagogical instrument, democracy extends to the educational sphere, effectively reaching all its dimensions.

So to speak, it is no surprise that the school positions itself as an effectively participatory subject in the political, social and technological transformations that we are experiencing today. This living organism presents itself as a space for youth protagonism, students emerge as active and increasingly demanding and questioning subjects regarding the quality of teaching and the social, political and pedagogical concepts they are experiencing.

What remains clear to us is that the Educational Project is an important instrument of this change in defending innovation and breaking the education paradigm. It is intrinsically related to the ideals of decentralization of education systems, plurality of knowledge, collective construction and autonomy from school.

Santos Filho (2009, p.02), brilliantly describes the function of the Educational Project:

Through the educational project, the school seeks to achieve its educational mission, without neglecting to also carry out the educational mission established for the school by the national society represented by the country's educational laws and determinations. Thus, the school's mission is realized through the educational project (collective priorities) and through the sectoral operations that may be or be part of it.

With the clear intention of presenting important concepts linked to the conception of educational projects, This article aims to explore aspects such as the foundation of the educational project, the elements that constitute it and its operational dimensions and consolidation.

In Brazil, the first normative references that mention the educational project appeared in the 1980s, with the publication of Decree-Law 553/80, in article 33, 1, which establishes that private schools could have their own educational project, as long as at each of the education levels, global training was implemented, equivalent to the training offered at the same levels by the State.

Starting from this initial milestone, among the new educational proposals that were established over the following two decades, the educational project was consolidated as a space of freedom for schools to build their identities, based on the needs and characteristics of their community, forming a set of internal rules and regulations, such as the educational project itself, internal school regulations, annual curriculum plan, plans, among others. All of these regulatory actions highlight the school's autonomy and the importance of personalized “doing” for each target audience, considering the local community in which the school operates.

Decree-law nº 43/89, of February 3rd, reinforces the school's autonomy by defining that

(...) the autonomy of the school is materialized in the elaboration of its own educational project, constituted and executed in a participatory manner, within the principles of accountability of the various participants in school life and adaptation to the characteristics and resources of the school and to the requests and support from the community in which it operates.

Article 2 of this same Decree defines school autonomy as the “capacity to prepare and carry out an educational project for the benefit of students and with the participation of all those involved in the educational process”

## 2.1 THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT AS A FACTOR FOR ENABLING SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The implementation and effectiveness of the educational project in an educational institution of any level of education is not effective in a hostile environment. It is extremely important to outline common objectives for developing work within the school. Having a collective vision, which contemplates, as far as possible, the different needs of each of the segments that make up the institution as a body is a condition *sine qua non* for the existence and effectiveness of an educational project.

There is no longer any doubt that the school is an organism that has a life of its own, considering its peculiarities, personal and local needs. The context that we identify as the school's identity is constructed and based on the individual and collective experiences that each one has, observing its actors and allowing their stories to be traced. In this context, leadership is the driving force that directs, leads the way, outlining goals and plans that, in the future, will have an impact on the development of the institution.

In this sense, Azevedo (2011, p.15), states that

Leadership is the dynamic element of a group or an organization to generate its own growth based on a shared mission or project, in this case the educational project of a school or group of schools, certainly to improve the school organization, the quality of the teaching and services provided to the community.

This same author also emphasizes that for the successful implementation of an educational project to be achieved, it is important to guarantee a set of actions that are not limited to school leadership alone. These factors permeate what he calls “intermediate leadership”, which appear as essential elements in the planning, implementation, implementation and evaluation of educational projects.

The process of implementation and success of the educational project is complex from an organizational point of view, since it presents a leadership that cannot be centralized, but shared with other actors in the expectation of mutual collaboration, based on consensus and collective responsibility.

## 2.2 THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT AND OTHER MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENTS

There are many management instruments that are associated with the educational project and guarantee its success. Among the most common and frequently used instruments in schools, Azevedo (2011) highlights the educational project, curriculum project, internal regulations, activity plan and annual report.

Management instruments can be classified into two groups: those that belong to documents of a programmatic and institutional nature, which have the function of guaranteeing, in the medium and short term, stability for the school and which, in essence, form the solid foundation of educational actions, namely, the educational project, annual curricular project and the institution's internal regulations.

The second group comprises documents of an operational and instrumental nature, which, when articulated, have the function of consolidating the educational action defined in the documents of the previous group. These are the activity plan, annual activity report and evaluation report.

In this sense, the educational project is, generically, the school's strategic planning instrument, "where the mission, vision and general objectives of the school that guide educational action within the scope of its activities are clearly addressed, among others. autonomy." (Azevedo, 2011, p16). The educational project is the "backbone" that will be consolidated supported by the curricular project and the school's action plan.

As an instrument to complement the educational project, the school's internal regulations emerge. It appears as a regulatory mechanism for the functioning of the school, which sets the standards of good coexistence and tolerance among the participants of that local group, composing the organizational structure of the school community.

Also performing the function of complementing the educational project, the curriculum project plays the role of articulating the proposal of the national curriculum with the proposal of the educational project. The principle that must be defended in the curriculum is to relate curricular contents to students' cultural experiences and the concrete world (Lima, 2008, p 25).

Continuing in the same line of reasoning, it is important to consider the annual or multi-annual activity plan, highlighting its function as an element for implementing educational action. This document will translate the practical strategies of the educational project. It records the most specific objectives, practical actions, dates, deadlines and programs. Furthermore, the annual or multi-annual plan seeks to diagnose the conditions for starting work early on. He is the one who presents the planning and outlines the first strategies that will consolidate the educational project.

In the case of an annual activity and self-evaluation report, it is worth highlighting that they form the institution's preliminary evaluation instruments. In this way, it is through the annual report that the first impressions and conclusions about school practice are highlighted, as it makes references to the activities actually carried out in daily school life, guaranteeing the necessary investments for the educational project to achieve excellence.

Finally, the self-evaluation report is the instrument that will indicate school results. It is through this that it will be possible to identify the rate of achievement of the goals established in the educational project.

Thus, concluding the ideas that surround the constitution of an educational project, there is no doubt that, to become an effective organization in meeting its goals and objectives, the school needs to invest in the participation of all members of the school community, with the aim of ensuring the coherent functioning and training of teachers throughout their school career. It is essential that, individually and considering their peculiarities, each school builds its educational project in a collective and democratic way.

This project must be understood as a process that encompasses the stipulation of goals and means, seeking to value the subjects who are part of that school niche, valuing the routines and experiences of pedagogical work and making each member of the community co-responsible.

### 3 EVALUATION AS A TOOL FOR CONSOLIDATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

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Evaluating is a capacity that all of us who live in society exercise daily, often unconsciously. In all social organizations, in any context of relationships, evaluating allows us to choose, selecting what best suits our well-being, which is why we are so naturalized with this fact.

In a large part of the European public system and other South American countries, whether in areas such as education, health or public security, evaluating has become something commonplace, something inherent to the practice of a public career. It is impossible to ignore that any evaluation process seeks in its essence transformation, change, improvement, improvement of actions. Currently, evaluation is no longer seen as a means of punishment but rather as a process of seeking excellence.

In order to achieve their goals and proposals, institutions must find in the processes evaluations of your educational projects an anchor capable of generating firmness and accuracy in the data. In this way, through *feedback* the evolution of the proposed work becomes completely viable, considering its final result as positive.

The function of the evaluation is to highlight the investments necessary to achieve the proposed goals. Thus, evaluation as a positive object in the process involving the educational project, must present us with alternatives for solving problems through the diagnosis highlighted by it, in addition to directing decision-making, guiding the development of political measures and pointing out practices that are effective. to resolve the difficulties encountered

Fernandes (2013, p. 03), states that the nature of the evaluation of educational projects has the advantage of making information and evidence accessible to citizens and the entire school community that, in his words, contribute to:

“a) Make its operation more transparent; b) Respond to a variety of questions relating to existing or emerging problems; c) Check whether an educational program or project still makes sense; d) Help improve an educational program or project and the policy measures that may be associated with it; e) Monitor the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of the educational program or project, identifying problems related to its implementation and results; and f) Guide any need to develop new educational programs or projects.”(Fernandes, 2013, p. 190)

Luckesi corroborates this thought when he states that

The act of evaluating learning implies permanent monitoring and reorientation of learning. It is carried out through a rigorous act of diagnosis and reorientation of learning with a view to obtaining the best possible results, given the objectives at hand. And, therefore, evaluation requires a ritual of procedures, which includes everything from establishing moments in time, construction, application and contestation of the results expressed in the instruments; return and reorientation of learning that has not yet been completed. (Luckesi, 2004, p. 4)

Considering the statements made so far, it is essential to discuss the evaluation in its entirety and scope. To this end, expanding the dialogue on the conceptual and pragmatic issues of this instrument as a partner for the success of the educational project is a strategic move of utmost relevance.

### 3.1 CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS

When inquiring about issues involving the evaluation of educational projects, or any other situation in which evaluation is present in the area of education, one can clearly see a multiplicity of theories and currents that seek to tune the processes that lead to the function of evaluation. in line with the proposal to which it is subject. In other words, in the words of Fernandes (2013, p 04), 20 years ago it was already considered that the bases for the development of a theory of evaluation of school programs and educational projects were relatively well laid out. Despite the fact that, nowadays, many authors oppose this certainty, guaranteeing that there are still many discussions to be had on the topic, which does not make it exhaustive in a solid and clarifying way.

Likewise, it is necessary to emphasize that the relationships established between theory and practice, with regard to assessment, need to be revisited with a certain frequency to ensure a better understanding. of the subject.

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Costa (1991, p 26), states that an educational project is distinguished from other practices and strategies school organizations due to the striking characteristic of having what he classifies as a limited time horizon. This means that educational projects are subject to temporality and easily adapt to the functioning of the administration to which they are linked, whether in the public education network or in the private network. This does not confuse it, for example, with the concept of educational program, which more broadly encompasses a range of educational activities that are accessed on a continuous basis.



From this perspective, the evaluation process consists of a deliberate and orderly action of analyzing procedures and advances that broadly involve the set of norms and rules that aim to contribute to improving the same educational project that made the implementation of the evaluation viable. In this conception, there is clear evidence of the conceptualization of evaluation as a process that envisages the formulation of a judgment about the value and merit of a given object.

It is undeniable to say, therefore, that the evaluation practices of the educational project may vary considering the different contexts, objects of evaluation and the evaluators involved in the process. This variation occurs depending on the value system that considered the evaluation criteria and standards for that particular educational project.

Luckesi (2004, p.04) opines in a similar way, when attesting that the moment reserved for the evaluation of projects that are experienced at school must be subjected to objective instruments, but that subjective instruments must not be neglected

To this end, we can use all the technical instruments available today, as long as the reading and interpretation of the data is done from the perspective of evaluation, which is diagnostic and not classification. What, in fact, distinguishes the act of examining and the act of evaluating are not the instruments used to collect data, but rather the way one looks at the data obtained: the examination classifies and selects, the assessment diagnoses and includes. (Luckesi, 2004 p.04)

In all this dynamics, what must be considered fundamental for the effectiveness of the evaluation is the consensus regarding the principles and values that involve not only the educational project, but also the conception of education, learning, and the function of the school. globally, highlighting its presence and representation in the community in which the school is located. This focuses on the importance of selecting the pillars that underpin our educational values, our political and social visions, when we determine, through an assessment, the objectives and goals we wish to achieve when proposing an educational project.

### 3.2 PRACTICAL DIMENSIONS INVOLVING THE EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Aspects involving issues relating to evaluation practices such as the evaluation instrument, the role of the evaluator, the intention of the evaluation, the involvement of subjects in the evaluation process, among other aspects, are the reason for huge discussions in the educational project. There are many speeches, theories and advances regarding assessment.

Considering all these debates and the educational innovations of recent decades, it is important to highlight the broken paradigm on assessment that brought a new perspective, a new consideration on assessment as an instrument to promote the growth of the educational project. This is the paradigm that evaluation was an instrument of punishment, of punishment, of pointing out errors. In this way, fulfilling the role of empty evaluation, without defined purposes.

With the rupture of this paradigm, what emerges in the educational and pedagogical movement is evaluation as an instrument of positive reinforcement and pointing out investments necessary for the improvement and evolution of processes and projects that occur within institutions and which, coordinated in a guided manner, result in favorable effects on the performance of the school community in general.

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When the school dares to break with the paradigm of evaluation as an instrument of punishment, new opportunities open up, new ways of conceiving everyday life, new practices and new theoretical constructions, demanding new reflections and new positions from members participating in educational projects.

For Fernandes (2013, p. 09), the assessment appreciated from the perspective of breaking paradigms, has its golden moment after the 80s, which according to him, was a troubled period of the paradigmatic debate on the subject. It was at this time that many authors focused on articulating rules, perspectives,



research procedures and methodologies on the evaluation of educational projects. For this author “it was about the possibility of understanding the object of the evaluation in more depth and detail.”

Once the issue involving the paradigmatic aspect of assessment is understood, reflecting on the pragmatic aspect is extremely necessary to continue studies on this instrument. Thus, considering Moreira's questions (2008, p. 42), below, we will focus on some fundamentals, which in our conception as active members of the school community we consider when analyzing an evaluation process in an educational project.

Initially, to achieve success in developing an educational project, it is necessary for evaluators to know the project in detail. In this part of the evaluation process, there is no room for surprises or surprises. All subjects involved in evaluating the educational project must know its dynamics, its objective, its proposal and goals that were set to achieve the success of the proposal. Lack of knowledge of the project can lead to error when evaluating.

Another relevant point is the unity of thoughts and conceptions regarding the political, philosophical, educational and social vision of the evaluators. We saw that the evaluation can be influenced by the evaluator's conceptions, which are formed by the judgment of values based on their conceptions and experiences of each individual. To this end, it is a matter of order to discuss and unify ideas, outlining a univocal line of thought.

Finally, the role played by the evaluator and the way in which this is presented to the school community deserves special attention and emphasis.

What the practice of high-performance educational projects shows us is that, integrating evaluators into the daily life of the school, making them effective members of school activities, of the school's daily practices, enhances the appropriation of knowledge of the educational project by these evaluators. . This practice helps evaluators at the time of evaluation, ensuring broad security and more accurate action on the proposal, since knowledge of the school environment goes beyond theory.

It is worth noting that approaching evaluators must not compromise their impartiality and must ensure familiarity with the project, not underestimating it or evaluating it based only on its potential. In short, the choice of evaluators must take into account the interests of the different subjects who will be subjected to the evaluation process, that is, it must seek to guarantee democracy in the processes that carry out the educational project.

#### 4 METHODOLOGY

When referring to the evaluation methodology of the educational process, the relationship established between the objectives of the evaluation and the context in which it takes place is irrefutable. Fernandes (2013, p. 19), observes that the methodological options are closely linked to the paradigmatic conceptions of the evaluators or those requesting the evaluation. Still defending this line of thought, the same author explains that

(...) evaluation based on the perspectives of experimental and quasi-experimental research in which the control of variables, the establishment of cause-effect relationships and generalization are primary aspects. In this case, we are faced with a conception of evaluation as a science and, therefore, the search for standards and generalizations that can generate more universal laws, objectivity and neutrality are at the heart of evaluators' concerns. (Fernandes, 2013, p. 19)

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Given this, an evaluation of an educational project must rely on evaluators who seek a multiplicity of opinions and who seek the active participation of other educational subjects, that is, the involvement of the school community in the educational process.

Vasconcellos (2000) shares this same opinion when he states that

To express what the group thinks and wants, we use methodological resources from the

questioning, problematization, summarized in questions. Why do you ask? cause an imbalance in the subject, to establish a challenge that leads to reflection and production. (Vasconcellos, 2000, p.177)

The active participation of other subjects who are part of the school universe that will be evaluated, combined with the evaluators' experience with the reality of the school, encourages the conscious and qualitative use of the results captured in the evaluation and contributes to the creation of the school climate, which in turn, cooperates in a fundamental way for the evaluation process and this for excellence in the application and achievement of the objectives of an educational project with quality and effectiveness.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Every educational project must bring in its essence explicit and implicit assumptions that are committed to the definition of this project, its pedagogical, philosophical, social and political conceptions. In this way, the educational project becomes a tool that positively boosts the school, since, when well planned, executed and evaluated, it fulfills the mission of cooperating with the school's autonomy and its global development.

Considering the arguments presented, it is up to management to play the role of mediator between the educational project and the other subjects of the school, be they students, parents, teachers and staff. School leadership is achieved to the extent that management is able to carry out this mediation in an effective and cooperative manner.

In the scenario of consolidation of educational project proposals, there is a need to evaluate the application strategies and impacts of the project on the school, on the subjects and on the school community as a whole.

As expected, the act of evaluating, given the history that evaluation instruments have, brings with it the need to re-observe the role that this practice plays in today's education. It arises amidst the various reflections on the subject and inevitably breaks with the paradigm of assessment as a punitive rather than reflective instrument.

Having broken the evaluation paradigm, it has become, in recent decades, a reference instrument in the development of educational projects. In other words, evaluating whether it becomes necessary to achieve the goals and proposals listed in the project planning.

So to speak, the eyes of researchers, pedagogues and educational scholars turn to the details of evaluation in educational processes. When it comes to educational projects, the reality is no different. Considering the quality of the evaluation is essential to ensure that it performs its role effectively.

In addition to the quality of the assessment instrument, two other factors are important in consolidating this process at school through the educational project. The first of these is the involvement of the school community in the planning and development of the educational project. By perceiving themselves included and participating in the project, giving their opinion, experiencing and making suggestions, school subjects demonstrate that they enable management leadership and, consequently, the school's autonomy.

8 The other factor that plays a fundamental role in the effectiveness of the educational project is the choice of evaluators. Evaluators who demonstrate affinity with the school's philosophy and who actively participate in the daily processes of developing educational project proposals have greater confidence in carrying out evaluations and providing feedback in a more assertive manner.

Finally, understanding the relationships between the educational project and evaluation is rooted in the conceptions of evaluation and education of managers, the school community and evaluators. Therefore, to guarantee the effectiveness of the educational project, these three elements must be in line and follow the same line of thought.



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