

Dimensions for analysis of evaluation proposals of Early Childhood Education policies¹

Dimensões para análise de propostas de avaliação de políticas de Educação Infantil

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ABSTRACT

Evaluating education evaluation proposals is a relevant step to consider the potential of these initiatives in promoting quality with equity, to ensure the fulfillment of the State's duty in guaranteeing the right to education. With this assumption, the article presents aspects and dimensions for the analysis of evaluation proposals regarding the Early Childhood Education policy, within the scope of education systems and networks. The propositions result from the survey and interpretation of literature and are supported by legislation and norms in force in the country, in dialogue with the literature that deals with requirements for the preparation and implementation of evaluations. The results of the study confirm the existence of parameters to support the evaluation processes of the stage, which are directed to issues of access, inputs, processes, and results, highlighting the importance of considering the specificities of the stage, the purposes of the evaluation and consequence given to their results.

Keywords: Educational politics. Educational evaluation. Early Childhood Education. Right to education. Education system.

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RESUMO

Avaliar propostas de avaliação da educação é um passo relevante para apreciar o potencial dessas iniciativas em promover qualidade com equidade, tendo em vista garantir o cumprimento do dever do Estado na garantia do direito à educação. Com esse pressuposto, o artigo apresenta aspectos e dimensões para análise de propostas de avaliação de políticas de educação infantil no âmbito de sistemas e redes de ensino. As proposições resultam de levantamento e interpretação de literatura e se apoiam em legislação e normas vigentes no país, em diálogo com a literatura que trata de requisitos para a elaboração e implementação de avaliações. Os resultados do estudo ratificam a existência de parâmetros para subsidiar processos de avaliação da etapa, estando estes direcionados para as questões de acesso, insumos, processos e resultados, destacando-se a importância de considerar as especificidades da etapa, as finalidades da avaliação e a consequência dada aos seus resultados.

Palavras-chave: Política educacional. Avaliação educacional. Educação infantil. Direito à educação. Sistema de ensino.

Introduction

Early Childhood Education – nursery school and preschool –, K-12 education first stage, was addressed in the discussions concerning external and large-scale evaluation, under the leadership of the Ministério da Educação (MEC) [Ministry of Education] in the last two decades. In Brazil, this movement stimulated the diffusion of proposals aimed to answer to this demand, extrapolating the perspective of learning evaluation or educational institutions evaluation, which were evaluative aspects dominant until then in the official documents and in the academic production concerning the mentioned educational stage.

It is suitable to register that, in 2019, *Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira* [Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research] (INEP) undertook a pilot study aimed to evaluate Early Childhood Education, as foreseen in the Plano Nacional de Educação (PNE) [National Education Plan]. However, the results of this evaluation were not disseminated until now. In May 2020, MEC issued the Ordinance N. 458 (BRASIL, 2020), establishing complementary norms for the fulfilment of the National Policy of K-12 Education Evaluation, which claims that the Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Básica (SAEB) [National System of K-12 Education Evaluation] comprised the Early Childhood Education. It is not specified in the text how this evaluation will be made, even

though its contours are foreseen since the National Education Plan 2001-2011 (BRASIL, 2001), reiterated in NEP 2014-2024 (BRASIL, 2014), in its Goal 1, strategy 1.6 (SOUSA, 2014).

The country already has legislation and norms in force, as well as publications by MEC that subsidizes the outline of the notion of quality for this stage, comprising distinct dimensions, from those related to access to educational institutions, to requirements for implementation and functioning of the supply, including pedagogical and management aspects.

Moreover, there are inputs from academic studies and research, non-governmental organizations, private foundations/institutions, and social movements claiming access conditions, and supply of Early Childhood Education and move towards the proposal of evaluative outlines that express divergent views on how to examine the quality of young children's education (SOUSA, 2014, 2018; VIEIRA, 2014).

Also, there are studies that register the existence of distinct evaluation movements of Early Childhood Education in course in Brazilian cities (COSTA FILHO, 2014; HORTA NETO; SOUZA, 2016; PIMENTA, 2017; CANÇADO, 2017; BARROS, 2017), presenting diverse configurations. These proposals, as discussed in these studies, depending on their outline, can both contribute for the assurance of quality of education for all zero- to 5-year-old children and may nourish selection and classificatory processes in the school and the Brazilian society. With the anticipation of implementing evaluation of Early Childhood Education within SAEB's scope and the trend of expanding similar initiatives in Brazilian cities (BAUER; HORTA NETO; SOUSA, 2016; PIMENTA, 2017), it is appropriate to discuss results from studies that explore characteristics to be assumed in the evaluation of this educational stage, evidencing the commitment with the improvement of the supplied education, and translated in parameters for the analysis of evaluative proposals.

It may be considered premature to address the criteria to evaluate evaluation, that is, a meta evaluation², given the scarcity of experiences in the country aimed at Early Childhood Education. However, "[...] evaluation and criticism of the evaluation (meta evaluation) must coexist in a well-structured educational project" (VIANNA, 2003, p. 27, our translation). It is with this

² The notion of meta evaluation was introduced by Scriven (1969), being later approached by several authors from the education field. According to Elliot (2011, p. 943, our translation), it refers to the "verification of quality of evaluation itself". Usually, this concept is used in the literature to refer to the evaluation that is conducted at the end of an evaluation. However, as indicated by Stufflebean (2001), the meta evaluation can be formative when conducted along the evaluation process. Inputs on meta evaluation from several authors are explored by Elliot (2011).

understanding that we consider relevant the discussion of parameters for analysis of evaluative outlines, as they bring with them a certain view of quality that guides Early Childhood Education policies.

In this sense, evaluating education evaluation proposals is a relevant step to examine its potential to promote quality with equity, as well as to contribute to assure rights, also considering specificities concerning each educational stage.

The purposes of this paper are to indicate aspects and dimensions to consider evaluation proposals of Early Childhood Education policies, elaborated within the municipal or state scope – in case these to assume with the cities the responsibility for the supply in this stage –, and to provide elements for analysis of the outline that may be assumed by the Federal Government, when giving consequence to what is foreseen in Ordinance N. 458/2020 (BRASIL, 2020).

In the next section, it will be presented the methodological procedures adopted in this study, followed by the mention to the legislation and the discussion of papers, dissertations and theses disseminated from 2012 to 2019 that address the requirements to be fulfilled in evaluation proposals of policies and projects, aimed to Early Childhood Education, and that indicate dimensions for the analysis of evaluations within the scope of public policies.

Methodological notes

There is no neutrality in evaluative outlines. Therefore, dealing with the analysis of evaluation proposals aimed at Early Childhood Education imposes the explicitness of the notion of quality that will mark out the judgment of its merit, focusing, as Marcus Figueiredo and Angelina Figueiredo (1986) warn, on the judgment of the assumptions and values that inform the policies. Here, the purpose is not to evaluate processes, results, effects and/or impacts of policies, programs, and projects, but rather to contribute with indications that subsidize the analysis of decisions made in relation to the goals, procedures and instruments, uses of the results of evaluations intended to implement in a certain area and context.

The indications addressed in this article result from studies conducted by Sousa (2011) intended to subsidize the formulation of evaluations of Early Childhood Education supply to support the monitoring (SOUSA, 2011) and, also, to introduce criteria and indicators for analysis of evaluative proposals in force in Brazilian cities (PIMENTA, 2017; FLORES, 2018).

The references here brought are: i) the dialogue with the literature that deals with requirements for the elaboration and implementation of evaluations and that supports the analysis of proposals aimed to evaluate educational policies; II) the systematization of national legal and normative determination concerning the criteria for evaluation of Early Childhood Education policies within the scope of education systems and networks; and, III) the consideration of the literature related to evaluation proposals of Early Childhood Education policies, disseminated by means of scientific productions available in national databases, comprising the period from 2012 to 2019.

The period comprised for identification of academic productions on evaluation of Early Childhood Education policies, with potential to illuminate the definition of aspects and dimensions to evaluate the stage, took into account the year of publication of the document *Educação Infantil: subsídios para a construção de uma sistemática de avaliação* [Early Childhood Education: subsidies for the construction of an evaluation systematics] (BRASIL, 2012). It gathers and analyzes academic productions and legal framework concerning the different dimensions of this educational stage; it also proposes guidelines, methodological foundations, dimensions, indicators, and criteria/standards for the evaluation of policies aimed at the evaluation of this stage.

The bases searched for the collection of theses and dissertations (including Professional MSc and PhD) were the Banco de Teses e Dissertações da Capes [CAPES Theses and Dissertations Database] (BTDC) and the Biblioteca Digital de Teses e Dissertações [Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations] (BDTD), with the use of accurate describers. For the papers, Banco de Periódicos da Capes [Capes Journals Database], the *Scientific Electronic Library Online* (SciELO) and Portal Educ@ were searched with the use of exact describers and matching among themselves.

The *exact describers* were inserted in the databases between quotations marks and with different prepositions, both for the object of evaluation (*da, de, das, dos* [of]) and their relationship with Early Childhood Education (*da, de* [of], *na* [in], *em* [in]). They are: *avaliação da educação infantil* [evaluation of the Early Childhood Education]; *avaliação da qualidade da/na/em educação infantil* [evaluation of the quality of/of the/in/in the Early Childhood Education]; *avaliação de/das políticas da/de/na/em educação infantil* [evaluation of/of the policies of/of the/in/in the Early Childhood Education]; *avaliação de/dos programas da/de/na/em educação infantil* [evaluation of/of the programs of/of the/in/in the Early Childhood Education]; *avaliação e/da gestão da/na/em educação infantil* [evaluation and/of the management of the/in/in the Early Childhood Education]; *monitoramento da/na/em educação infantil* [monitoring of the/in/in the Early Childhood Education]; *autoavaliação*

da/na/em educação infantil [self-evaluation **of the/in/in the** Early Childhood Education]; *heteroavaliação da/na/em educação infantil* [hetero-evaluation **of the/in/in the** Early Childhood Education]; *instrumentos de avaliação da/na/em educação infantil* [evaluation tool **of the/in/in the** Early Childhood Education.

In the *matched descriptors*, besides the term Early Childhood Education, it was included the terms nursery school and preschool: evaluation **and** quality / policies / programs / management **and** Early Childhood Education / nursery school / preschool; monitoring /self-evaluation / hetero-evaluation /evaluation instruments **and** Early Childhood Education / nursery school / preschool.

A total of 68 headings were collected: seven PhD dissertations, 20 MSc theses, and 41 scientific papers. These productions were read in full to refine which one addressed evaluation of Early Childhood Education policies within the scope of educational systems, with potential to subsidize the construction of evaluation proposals aimed to the stage. This refinement resulted in 21 works analyzed: three dissertations, four theses and 14 papers.

It should be highlighted that, among the production gathered, three works (GLAP, 2013; MORO; SOUZA, 2014; LOUVEIRA, 2015) had mapped productions about evaluation in the Early Childhood Education field. The authors evidenced an increasing publication movement in which the topic is analyzed and problematized by means of theoretical and/or empirical studies. In accordance with the researchers, these studies deal with the evaluation of distinct objects, among them Early Childhood Education policies and programs. It is also appropriate to mention the research of Soares (2020), which analyzes the epistemic basis of studies related to the childhood and Early Childhood Education that, in a predominant way, has been supporting the production of Brazilian researchers between 2006 and 2016.

Furthermore, it was not considered the studies referring to the institutional self-evaluation of educational establishments, although the indications presented in them have been comprised in the formulation of aspects and dimensions to be considered when initiatives of Early Childhood Education evaluation are analyzed. This is because it is desirable that the institutional self-evaluation perspective integrates the evaluation process and indicates questions and situations to be addressed within the scope of the policies, despite not evaluating them directly.

In relation to the inputs from the evaluation field, within the limits of this text, it is mentioned as references the guidance disseminated by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (c2015) in the 1970's, being its last version disseminated in 2010. It has subsidized studies and proposals

developed in Brazil, suggesting that it should be considered five standards to evaluate the evaluation: utility, feasibility, accuracy, propriety, and transparency.

It is also worth mentioning, given the attention received in the educational field, the proposal *Guidelines for Evaluation for Latin America and the Caribbean*, launched in 2016, prepared by the *Rede de Monitoramento, Avaliação e Sistematização da América Latina e do Caribe* [Monitoring, Evaluation and Systematization Network of Latin America and the Caribbean] (ReLAC), Evaluation Capacity Development in Latin America (FOCEVAL), the Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy of Costa Rica (MIDEPLAN), and the German Institute of Evaluation of Cooperation for the Development (DEval)³. Drawing on the inputs from the *Joint Committee* and works developed by regional and national evaluation associations and networks, the document specifies five dimensions to be considered in the evaluations: 1) Rigorous evaluation; 2) Appropriate evaluability; 3) Evaluation conducted according to ethical and legal principles; 4) Appropriate cultural understanding; 5) Relevance and utility.

Based on this production, the paper aims to indicate a possible way for analysis and evaluation of evaluation proposals for Early Childhood Education policies. The choice of aspects pertinent to the evaluation process assumed that the proposals are potentially able to contribute for the guarantee of the right to education and in the fulfilment of this duty by the State, aiming at reducing social inequalities.

Normative legislation and guidelines: a brief recapitulation

It is here stressed parameters brought by the Brazilian legislation, which are references for the formulation and implementation of Early Childhood Education policies with potential to mark out the evaluation of the stage in different dimensions. In order to summarize what is indicated in normative and legal documents, we assume as a reference Pimenta's production (2017), which systematized indications referring to children's rights and access conditions, service, and supply with quality for Early Childhood Education (Picture 1).

3 Available at: <https://st2.ning.com/topology/rest/1.0/file/get/2805319507?profile=original>.

PICTURE 1 – CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND QUALITY ASPECTS INCLUDED IN THE BRAZILIAN LEGAL FRAMEWORK CONCERNING Early Childhood Education

CHILDREN’S RIGHTS	QUALITY ASPECTS
<p>Access to nursery school for 0- to 3-year-old children by family request;</p> <p>Places in preschool, guaranteed by legislation that establishes the universal service to 4- and 5-year-old children;</p> <p>Developing in a comprehensive way in their physical, psychological, intellectual, and social aspects;</p> <p>Learning by means of games and plays;</p> <p>Having their social and cultural context respected;</p> <p>Interacting with other children, adults, and the environment;</p> <p>Engaging, with their family, in decision making concerning their development and learning process;</p> <p>Having their development registered and documented by the Early Childhood Education institution throughout the time;</p> <p>Being cared;</p> <p>Being fed.</p>	<p>Existence of appropriate physical environment, with well-equipped indoor and outdoor spaces;</p> <p>Guarantee of collaboration between the federate entities;</p> <p>Guarantee of specific training and appropriate working conditions for education professionals;</p> <p>Availability of amount and quality of material resources;</p> <p>Improvement of institutional management and pedagogical processes;</p> <p>Preparation of a curriculum that excels for the comprehensive development of children;</p> <p>Development of pedagogical practices that consider the child as a subject and that take in account the existing guidelines for Early Childhood Education;</p> <p>Encouragement to the listening of voices and experiences brought by the children;</p> <p>Guarantee of an appropriate children/teacher ratio;</p> <p>Encouragement to the families engagement in the institution life;</p> <p>Accomplishment of participatory evaluation and self-evaluation processes;</p> <p>Attention to the notions of educational quality of the institutions’ professionals;</p> <p>Attention to the children’s learning and development processes, so that they are formative;</p> <p>Integration of educating and caring;</p> <p>Adequacy of Early Childhood Education funding;</p> <p>Investment, by the public power in the expansion of the educational institutions from the direct network;</p> <p>Fulfillment of covenant criteria, indicated by the legislation;</p> <p>Guarantee of physical and material accessibility conditions for handicapped children and professionals;</p> <p>Guarantee of school meals for all children;</p> <p>Elaboration and monitoring of school planning in a reflexive and systematic way;</p> <p>Accomplishment of evaluation and self-evaluation processes of intermediary and central agencies of the educational policy.</p>

SOURCE: Pimenta (2017, p. 609-611, our translation).

The concepts of right and quality are understood by us in a symbiotic way, as warranting the right of children to Early Childhood Education assumes warranting the quality. For example, the investment of the public power in the expansion of the direct network is a necessary action to guarantee the right to access and service of the demand expressed – for nursery schools – and the universal service – for preschool, as well as to provide quality in the conditions of supply, given the direct public network has a greater potential to fulfill this issue (CAMPOS; FÜLLGRAF; WIGGERS, 2006; CAMPOS *et al.*, 2010; PACÍFICO, 2010; SUSIN, 2009; CORREIA, 2013). However, the “fulfillment of criteria of covenant with private institutions, indicated by the legislation”, is another item to be evaluated and that is directly imbricated with the guarantee of the right, as a considerable part of the municipal education networks uses this procedure (TRIPODI, 2016).

Productions on Early Childhood Education evaluation

The literature analyzed was subgrouped from the inputs provided to the focus of this work: (I) pertinent principles and issues to propose or analyze an Early Childhood Education evaluation policy; (II) dimensions and indicators relevant for the proposal of a monitoring system of Early Childhood Education policies and/or an Early Childhood Education evaluation policy. Some works contribute for both groupings, being here evidenced, in a summarized way, that contribution understood as the most relevant for the purpose of this study.

Pertinent principles and issues to propose or analyze an Early Childhood Education evaluation policy

Rosemberg (2013, p. 52, our translation) highlights that the conception of evaluation must be mediated by values and is attentive to the child in an “[...] ethical and illuminating way for a socially fair and democratic decision making”. She claims that the starting point of a proposal of an evaluation research for Early Childhood Education should consider two questions: “[...] why and for what (whom) does the evaluative research of/in Early Childhood Education work? What is the reason for being of the Early Childhood Education policy?” (ROSEMBERG, 2013, p. 52, our translation). In this perspective, the author

emphasizes that the results of the evaluation must be used in a positive way in the definition of new public policies, in curricula implementation and modification processes, in continued training programs of teachers and, in a decisive way, in the definition of elements for a decision making aimed to have an impact, that is, changes in thinking and acting of the participants of the system, being indispensable to foresee the devolution of information aiming at the improvement of the quality of the investigated institutions.

Campos (2013, p. 41, our translation) claims that “[...] children have the right to a service that respects their needs and their protagonism [...]”. Based on evaluative research of national scope, the author underlines that the biggest problems identified in relation to the quality of supply were concentrated in the following dimensions: training of professionals; pedagogical proposals and curriculum; conditions of functioning and educative practices in the daily life; and relations with the families. Drawing upon Helen Penn, Campos indicates that a service with quality for the young children requires a wide, complex and intersectoral system that should be “[...] submitted to a continued monitoring and review that counts on enough financing for its goals” (PENN, 2011, *apud* CAMPOS, 2013, p. 30, our translation).

When mapping proposals of Early Childhood Education evaluation in debate in Brazil, Sousa (2014, 2018) stresses that, beyond a technical discussion, there are impasses concerning the political dimension of evaluation. Also, depending on the result of the dispute around the object of evaluation, there might be repercussions for the organization of SAEB, to which the Early Childhood Education was recently integrated. Like Rosemberg (2013) and Campos (2013), the author underlines the role of the State for the guarantee of the right to education of quality for all children, what assumes an evaluation process that has consequences and commitment with the continued improvement of the educational quality.

Coutinho and Moro (2017) analyze the changes in the proposals of the Early Childhood Education public policy, especially policies related to evaluation, in result of the parliamentary coup in 2016 in Brazil. They also highlight that there was a rupture with the democratic perspective, until then placed in the process of formulation of a national policy of evaluation of the quality.

Nagase (2018), based on Roger Dale’s studies, underlines the influence of a Globally Structured Agenda in Education, which comes to be accomplished in an articulated way with local contexts, as it is the case of the entailing of this agenda to the processes of restructuring of the Brazilian State, to the educational reforms and the emergence of the evaluative State, based on the New Public Management. The study registers that, both in the national and in the global scenario, it has been established a trend for the proposal of an Early

Childhood Education evaluation with an emphasis on the results, in detriment of the processes.

Barros (2017) investigated the articulations between national education evaluation policies and those implemented in the Early Childhood Education Reference Centers in the city of João Pessoa/PB. Considering the hypothesis that the integration of Early Childhood Education institutions with education systems has opened a way for the implementation of external and large-scale evaluations, aimed at this stage, the author presents the case study in which the evaluations were crossed by ideological biases with an emphasis on neoliberal and managerial conceptions, opposing legal documents in force.

Moro (2017) reflects on evaluation and the national educational policy, aimed at Early Childhood Education in Brazil, discussing the proposal of a national policy of evaluation of the stage and indicating advances and retrocessions in the recent trajectory of this debate. The author indicates the challenge of monitoring and evaluating the supply, including its protagonists, in an evaluation process that is participatory, dialogic, democratic, and formative, contributing for the expansion of professionalism and quality of services.

Relevant dimensions and indicators for the proposal of a monitoring system of Early Childhood Education policies and/or an Early Childhood Education evaluation policy

Bhering and Abuchaim (2014) defend an evaluation assumed to go beyond a mere diagnosis of a network or a unit, contributing with subsidies for a possible way of improvement of the work in the networks and institutions. As aspects that could guarantee advances in the quality of the education provided to the children, the authors stress: buildings and spaces; strategies of professional development and working and career conditions; strategies for parents engagement; organization of the pedagogical work; oral and written language and activities.

Approaching the Early Childhood Education monitoring system in Rio de Janeiro, Fernandes (2014) underlines that an educational service of quality must include good coverage, enough and appropriate resources, good infrastructure, trained professionals, and pedagogical practices and projects coherent with the curricular guidance of the city for nursery schools and preschools.

With special emphasis to the age group of nursery schools and based on legislation and MEC documents, Dal Coletto (2014, p. 103, our translation) highlights the following aspects as priority for evaluation:

[...] the number of adults per children, interpersonal relationships, hygiene and care issues, group size, teacher or educator training, continued training, physical environment, equipment, materials, plans and the curriculum [...].

Based on the legal order in force, on documents inducing policies produced by MEC, and on results of research supported by it, in academic production related with the discussion of the quality of/in Early Childhood Education and on foreign proposals of Early Childhood Education evaluation, Pimenta (2017) proposes that evaluation initiatives of this stage must consider, at least, the following characteristics: being *comprehensive*, comprising distinct focuses and instances to be evaluated and distinct instruments/evaluative procedures; being *democratic*, counting on distinct subjects in its elaboration, implementation and as source of information; being *transparent*, in order to be established on legal norms, allowing the public access to the registers of the evaluative process and disseminating its results and actions triggered by the different instances; being *consequent*, so that to address, analyze, and use the results in the formulation of action and the rendering of accounts.

With a focus on the management of the Early Childhood Education municipal policy, Pinho (2014) indicates as major problems that compromise the quality of supply the context of covenant nursery schools and the reduction of the daily working hours with the children.

Costa Filho (2014) analyzed the evaluation process of the educational management carried through by the Audit Court of the State of Paraíba, evidencing that this Court manages two indicators concerning Early Childhood Education and 1st to 9th grades: the percentage of the taxes received plus the transfers, invested in the maintenance and development of education and the percentage of resources from the und for Fundo de Manutenção e Desenvolvimento da Educação Básica e de Valorização dos Profissionais da Educação [Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and Valorization of Education Professionals] (Fundeb), invested in teacher remuneration. Evidencing the insufficiency of these two indicators for an adequate view of the results of the educational system, the author proposes that it should also be considered the following dimensions: school infrastructure, teachers, income, school quality, enrollment, and access to education.

Emphasizing the importance of the appropriate funding, Klemann (2016) introduces a research instrument that makes it possible the elaboration of a diagnosis of the quality of Early Childhood Education management, indicating the Student Quality Cost (CAQ) as a reference for a quality parameter including all children.

Taylor (2014) discusses the Australian document, National Standard Quality for Early Childhood Education, which considers changes in the management of the three dimensions of Early Childhood Education services: structural, procedural and contextual. She registers that the evaluation of services in Australia comprises seven areas: “[...] educational program and practice; children’s health and safety; physical environment; personnel; relationship with the children; collaborative partnerships with families and communities; and leadership and services management” (TAYLER, 2014, p. 138, our translation). The author puts in evidence indications from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) relative to Early Childhood Education policies, among which we highlight for the Brazilian context: integrated approaches that assure the cohesion of care, education, health, and support to the families; clear lines of responsibility and collaboration between federal, state and/or local government bodies; universal access to “preschool”; continued monitoring and evaluations of impact and redefinition of the targeting. Strengthening aspects of the experience of the Australian Early Childhood Education evaluation, Pimenta (2018, p. 111, our translation) underlines inputs for the analysis of similar initiatives in Brazil: “[...] the importance of articulation and contribution among federated entities for the implementation of policies aimed to the Early Childhood Education [...]”, placing the “[...] Early Childhood Education evaluation as integral to a national policy aimed at early childhood [...]”.

Sousa and Pimenta (2016) present a characterization of foreign initiatives of evaluation and accreditation of Early Childhood Education institutions. The authors underline aspects in most of the initiatives: supplies (material, physical infrastructure) and processes (management, interpersonal relations with students and families, curriculum, among others) of the educational institutions. Based on the analysis of studies addressing municipal evaluations, Sousa and Pimenta (2018) observe that they tend to be restricted to the children’s learning, choosing this indicator as an expression of the quality of Early Childhood Education, even though there are registers of cities that comprise in their proposals other aspects, like physical infrastructure, human and material resources, and others.

Garcia, Garrido and Marconi (2017) analyzed the infrastructure of Early Childhood Education schools and concluded that this dimension is accountable for the legitimation of social inequalities. In the same line, Coutinho and Alves (2019) stress that the inadequacy of essential aspects generates inequalities in the access to Early Childhood Education with quality. As indicators for analysis of access, the authors indicate: physical structures, professionals’ appreciation, an appropriate adult-child ratio to make it possible a mediation that favors the development of the children, curricula and evaluation processes in line with the

definitions in Law 9394/1996 (BRASIL, 1996) and the Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Educação Infantil [National Curricular Guidelines for Early Childhood Education] (BRASIL, 2009).

In summary, the productions analyzed here indicate the need for evaluation to consider the peculiarities of the stage, the specificities related to the nursery school age group, and a diagnosis of the context, having to develop itself with wide participation, in accord with the constitutional principle of the democratic management, including the feedback of results to the stakeholders and the due consequence in their use.

Aspects and dimensions for analysis of municipal evaluation proposals

When outlining elements to support the analysis of Early Childhood Education policies evaluation proposals, having as references the social right to education, as established in the legal and normative system in Brazil, indications present in studies and research of the field and inputs from the evaluation field, we do not intend to comprise the range of dimensions with potential to mark out such analysis, either due to the extension of aspects that can be considered, or in result of the necessary relation between the evaluative proposal and the guidelines and actions that ground Early Childhood Education policies in each context, besides the very conception of evaluation assumed by the appraisers.

In this article, the focus is to express, in a brief way, elements that we consider that should be the object of analysis in an outline of evaluation intended to promote quality with equity, from suggestions of aspects and dimensions aimed to support, especially, the analysis of the municipal Early Childhood Education evaluation initiatives. For such, we consider appropriate the organization adopted by Ivanete Boschetti (2009) when addressing the evaluation of policies, programs, and social projects, considering three aspects: the configuration and comprehensiveness of rights and benefits; the configuration of funding and expenditures; and the configuration of management processes and participation. With the due adaptation, given the specificity of this paper's intent, we understand that these aspects raised by us refer to structuring elements of the public policy, that unfold in proper dimensions, with the purpose of elucidating some of their main components. Thus, in Picture 2, we have listed aspects and dimensions related to Early Childhood Education evaluation, unfolded in questions pertinent to the conception of education for this stage and evaluation of policies assumed by us.

PICTURE 2 – ASPECTS AND DIMENSIONS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF PROPOSALS OF Early Childhood Education EVALUATION

ASPECTS	DIMENSIONS
<p>Configuration and comprehensiveness of rights and benefits Here the goal is to address the evaluation dimensions that express service to the right to Early Childhood Education with quality and equity. For such, we have tried “to make explicit elements that may explain their nature, function, comprehensiveness, criteria of access and permanence, and ways of articulation with the other social and economic policies” (BOSCHETTI, 2009, p. 11, our translation).</p>	<p>The evaluation proposal is intended to evaluate its technical and political nature, by means of questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for its outline, does it assume as a reference, in a consensus manner, Early Childhood Education purposes and characteristics dominant in this field of studies? - does it comprise the evaluation of aspects recognized in the legislation as rights of young children and their parents or guardians? - is it comprehensive, establishing indicators for evaluation of supplies, processes, and results? - is it comprehensive in the perspective of producing information able to mark out initiatives from the various instances of the education network or system and the several governmental sectors involved in education, care, and assistance? - does it foresee that the evaluation is undertaken by/in the several instances of the network, including central and intermediary agencies and schools? - does it articulate movements of internal and external evaluations and proposes of hetero- and self-evaluation procedures? - does it foresee dynamics and procedures that promote a participatory and democratic process, able to make possible the formative dimension of evaluation? - does it establish the responsible instances for the implementation of the evaluation, in its several stages, including the consolidation and diffusion of its results and proposals resulting from them? <p>The evaluation proposal foresees evaluating supply and service in/of Early Childhood Education, considering questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - does it analyze the sufficiency and/or expansion of places in nursery schools and preschools, aiming at equity? - does it calculate and analyze the rates of service for zero- to five-year-old children, considering the place of living, race/color and family income? - does it monitor the spatial distribution of supply, aiming to guarantee places in schools close to the children’s houses? - does it monitor the gradual expansion of service for 0- to 5-year-old children in full time? - does it examine the education professionals/children ratio? - does it examine the conditions for universal accessibility in the establishments?

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ASPECTS	DIMENSIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - does it analyze the existence and effectiveness of strategies to guarantee conditions of service for children, the target public of special education? - does it judge types, sufficiency, and conditions of indoor and outdoor spaces of the school buildings? - does it examine the availability, the diversity, the accessibility, and the safety of the material resources of schools and classrooms? - does it examine the quality and diversity of the meals provided to the children? - does it analyze the effectiveness of the procedures and processes of supervision, follow up and pedagogical support to the schools? - does it evaluate sufficiency, pertinence, and effectiveness of the actions related to the appreciation of Early Childhood Education professionals – career, remuneration, and work conditions –, considering ways of entrance and capacity; conformity between the educational level of the professionals and the current legislation; adequacy of the working hours and remuneration to the legislation in force; adequacy of the size of the staff to the needs; dynamics adopted for continued training; work conditions that promote collaboration and joint actions among the professionals? - does it analyze occurrence, articulation, and complementariness of intersectoral actions of instances of education, health, assistance, among others, responsible for the welcoming of the children? - does it examine the adequacy of the measures aimed to guarantee the children’s appropriate pedagogical transition from Early Childhood Education to 1st to 9th grade?
<p>Configuration of the financing and expenditure Here the goal is to address evaluation dimensions that lead to the analysis of funding and expenditure aimed at Early Childhood Education within the scope of educational/social policies. “This aspect includes the analysis and evaluation of the sources of resources, as well as the sum of expenditures in the evaluated policy and/or program, in order to verify if it has a regressive or progressive character and which are the implications in the comprehensiveness and conception of the rights” (BOSCHETTI, 2009, p. 13, our translation).</p>	<p>The evaluation proposal foresees evaluating the budget aimed to Early Childhood Education, considering questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - does it verify the expansion of the access to nursery schools (0 to 3years old and 11 months of age), discriminating the service – direct network and covenant institutions –, considering the places demanded by the population? - does it verify the fulfilment of universal access in preschools (4 to 5 years old and 11 months of age), discriminating the service forms – direct network and covenant institutions? - does it consider whether the investment prioritizes expansion of the proper network? - does it consider the value of resources aimed at the staff payment, respecting, at least, the wage floor?

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ASPECTS	DIMENSIONS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - does it inquire the sufficiency of resources aimed at building, remodeling, and maintaining indoor and outdoor spaces of the educational institutions? - does it inquire the sufficiency of resources aimed at the acquisition, replacement, and maintenance of furniture, pedagogical equipment, and materials? - does it inquire the sufficiency of resources aimed to make possible the food safety and nutritional health of the children? - does it verify the existence and sufficiency of resources for the maintenance of a specific sector of Early Childhood Education in the Department of Education or of a responsible for the stage? - does it analyze the functionality of the informational system comprising data related to Early Childhood Education? <p>The evaluation proposal foresees evaluating the use of resources received by the city and of the proper resources, considering questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is it the use of the expenses of public resources aimed to the institutions of direct network appropriate and, if it is the case, to the covenant institutions? - is it efficient the process of supervision and analysis of the application of the public resources, aimed to the covenant institutions? <p>The evaluation proposal foresees evaluating the rendering of accounts, considering questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is the rendering of accounts made in compliance with the laws and norms of the competent administrative authorities? - is information referring to the different sources of financing of Early Childhood Education presented in a discriminated way? - are the mechanisms of diffusion and transparency of the financing of Early Childhood Education appropriate and efficient?
<p>Configuration of management and participation processes Here the goal is to indicate evaluation dimensions that comprise the organization and management of the Early Childhood Education policy, “having as a parameter the contemporary principles of federate management established in the Federal Constitution and how the participation and popular control happen” (BOSCHETTI, 2009, p. 15, our translation).</p>	<p>The evaluation proposal foresees evaluating the management of Early Childhood Education, considering questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - does it verify the existence of a specific sector of Early Childhood Education or a responsible one for the stage, in the Department of Education? - does it analyze if the actions of the sector or the responsible for the Early Childhood Education, in the Department of Education, are appropriate and fulfill the specificities of the stage, in its distinct dimensions?

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(conclusion)

ASPECTS	DIMENSIONS
	<p>- is it judged whether the processes of continued training promoted by the Department of Education have been supplied continuously, preceded by a diagnosis of needs and interest of the professionals, and articulate their demands with municipal policies guidelines?</p> <p>- does it examine if the Department of Education adopts mechanisms that guarantee transparency in the relation with the covenant institutions to the public power as well as its effectiveness?</p> <p>-does it analyze if the city education council has been fulfilling the criteria of accreditation of the covenant institutions to the public power and of the private institutions of Early Childhood Education?</p> <p>The evaluation proposal foresees evaluating the practice of democratic social control, considering questions like:</p> <p>- does it examine whether communication channels and articulation with the school community exist and are effective?</p> <p>- does it examine whether mechanisms of participation of different segments exist and are effective in the processes of implementation and evaluation of Early Childhood Education policies?</p> <p>- does it examine whether mechanisms of dissemination of the purposes, the implementation, and the results of the actions directed toward Early Childhood Education exist and are effective?</p>

SOURCE: Elaborated by the authors.

Final remarks

Implementing the evaluation of Early Childhood Education within the scope of public policies assumes the construction of an evaluative outline able to contribute with robust information on the access and the conditions provided by the State for its supply. It focuses on the dynamics adopted by the public entity in the achievement of the goals of the education plan, committed with the promotion of the development and learning of all children.

This article aimed to systematize aspects and dimensions to be considered in the analysis of evaluative proposals led, mainly, by Brazilian cities. Having as a goal the indications of the legal framework that support the supply of Early Childhood Education, the results of research and studies on educational

evaluation of this stage and inputs of the field of evaluation, we have presented a set of elements that enclose the several facets that shape the right to Early Childhood Education: access, conditions of supply and management, funding, transparency, and social control.

It is acknowledged in the literature the potential of induction of evaluative processes; hence the relevance of translating the right to education of quality for all children up to six years of age in proposals that can inform the commitment of the public administration to make it a reality. Moreover, it is expected that the proposals presented here can collaborate with researchers, professionals, and activists of the field in the dispute for the outlining of the evaluation of Early Childhood Education to be defined by MEC, within the scope of SAEB.

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