

Performance of Social Educators in the institutional Reception of Children and Adolescents

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Abstract— *The present work is part of the results obtained and presented in the conclusion work of the Social Work course, whose general objective sought to analyze the performance of social educators who work in institutional care for children and adolescents. The study consisted of two stages, the first being a bibliographic survey on the subject, and the second stage launched a field research at a host institution in Petrolina-PE to analyze the formative aspects that permeate the practice of social educators who work in the institution. We identified that there is a need for better qualification of social educators, due to the lack of public policies aimed at this field.*

Keywords— *Institutional Reception. Children and Adolescents. Social educator.*

I. INTRODUCTION

This research paper discusses the institutional reception service for children and adolescents together with the work of social educators. Thus, we analyze the historical process and the characteristics that each period has on the host institutions, since they have undergone different transformations over time. In this way, we focus on the challenges and achievements that children and adolescents obtained from the relationship between the State, society and the family, resulting in the conquest of rights for children and youth.

It was based on articles and bibliographies by different researchers, such as Mariana Ferreira Garcia (2009), Vinicius Furlan and Telma Regina de Paula Souza (2013), Maria Luiza Marcilio (2016), Nilma Soares Barros and Luciene Alves Miguez Naiff (2015) at area of History, Psychology and Social Work, which we base this research on, which was part of an internship project initiated at a host institution, an entity aimed at welcoming children and adolescents in the São Francisco Valley, in the city of Petrolina / PE.

The time frame of the work crosses the 16th to the 21st century briefly, as we elaborate a succinct historical retrospective started in the colonial period on the first forms of child and youth reception. We look a little at the present time, to follow the changes that the institutional reception policies have undergone, since to understand this entity and its different facets it is necessary to pay attention to the peculiarities that each period had, so that today we have the that we know by institutional reception policies.

The spatial feature is Brazil, since it is part of our social reality, and also due to the social issues that exist in the country, which make it difficult for the rights of children and young people to be correctly and necessarily guaranteed. It is in this sense, that we realize the need to study the theme and produce works that add the issue of institutional reception.

It is necessary to discuss social problems and, through this study on institutional care, we are able to deal with a major social problem, which is the abandonment of children and young people, adding to the social fragility

that families experience and the lack effecting public policies. Policies that exist, but that are not intended and applied correctly to families that do not have the necessary and fundamental resources for the human development of their dependents.

Based on these assumptions, the present work is structured in five chapters, in which the introduction already constitutes the first chapter, as we present its basic structure and discuss the objectives and perspectives of the work; the second chapter, entitled the historical process in the construction of the statute of children and adolescents, addresses the historical contextualization of the first institutions aimed at child and youth care, in which we seek to explain the changes undergone in such institutions and thus show some public policies for that group.

The third chapter was intended to sample data from the methodologies used for research and construction of the work, explaining in detail each step; the fourth chapter addresses the role of social educators, based on a dialogue on the training of educators and an analysis of the various aspects of this professional at the institutional level; and lastly we have final considerations.

In addition, the purpose of the work was to explain about the role of the social educator in the host institutions and about the various activities performed by them for the human development of children and adolescents. For this reason, we conducted an information survey with these professionals, to understand the social reality of educators, as well as those welcomed. In this way, a questionnaire was carried out so that social educators could contribute to the survey of the care legislation and the relationship of those welcomed with the professionals.

II. THE HISTORICAL PROCESS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE STATUTE OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Initially, welcoming abandoned children was directly related to religious institutions, predominantly the Catholic Church, which provided assistance through charity. In this sense, the Roda dos Expostos, remembers its origin to the medieval period in Europe, precisely in Italy, being later propagated to other countries and even other continents (Marcílio, 1988, p.1-2). According to Marcílio (1988, p.58) "the tradition for Brazil occurred in the 17th century when the first Roda dos Expostos was established by the Crown in the city of Salvador, Bahia".

In this way, the "Roda dos Expostos" in Brazil consisted of an institution providing assistance to abandoned children, which started in the colonial period,

and lasted during the Empire and the Republic. It was a way to prevent children from being abandoned in the most different places, without any basic social support, in addition to providing the anonymity of the person who abandoned them, so that there would be no subsequent link between the child and his / her affiliation, having also as a consequence the incentive to abandon. (MARCÍLIO, 1988).

In this way, it was seen the importance that the Roda dos Exostos and the places of reception had to "solve" the problem of abandonment. However, it is worth mentioning that this reception did not meet all the social needs that a child needed, due to a series of consequences arising from this type of reception. Among them, the lack of resources, which even today is one of the factors that hinder the guarantee of children's social rights. In addition, the infant mortality rate in these shelters and the use of the sheltered child as free labor that made it impossible for the necessary assistance that a child should have.

In this perspective, the history of the formation of the Statute for Children and Adolescents was directly linked to the organization of civil society and the formation of the great social movements that fought for the defense of the rights of "Abandoned Minors" who were in an irregular situation, and who in fact, they lacked due judicial and political support. (ABREU, 2004, p.107-115). Thus, the State began to have a duty to provide assistance to children and adolescents who were in a situation of vulnerability, but these actions were not aimed at the welfare of citizens, but rather a form of exclusion and internment. (MARCÍLIO, 1988, p.70).

Therefore, in order to validate the role of the State, the Code of Minors was created, the first in 1927, which aimed at repression and internment in case of physical and moral abandonment of children, which the power of decision was found in the figure of the Minor Judge. (SILVA; SILVA, 2016, p.6). In addition to this code that provided for a certain repression of children and adolescents, there were other bodies that had the same claims.

In this perspective, based on a brief historical analysis of the first institutions and social bodies for the care of children and adolescents, it is noticeable that, despite the objective being assistance and the provision of the basic and necessary resources for a person's life condition, these bodies were also susceptible to corruption and failures in their protection policies.

III. THE HOST CONTEXT IN THE RECENT SCENARIO

As a result of the political changes that occur throughout the historical process, there were a series of changes in social policies, including the approval of the 1988 Federal Constitution, called the Citizen Constitution, which provided basic rights to the population, such as education, health, work, social security and other rights, which symbolized a political-social achievement for society, according to article 6 of the Federal Constitution.

And for formal regulation of the 1988 Constitution, on July 13, 1990, the Child and Adolescent Statute (ECA) was created, which established the fundamental rights of children and adolescents. According to article 1 "this law provides for the full protection of children and adolescents". According to Article 3 ECA:

Children and adolescents enjoy all the fundamental rights inherent to the human person, without prejudice to the full protection covered by this law, ensuring that, by law or by other means, all opportunities and facilities are available, in order to provide them with physical, mental, living, spiritual and social development, in conditions of freedom and dignity. (ECA, 1990, p.10).

In this way, ECA ensured the fundamental rights that the State must offer to children and adolescents. However, it is necessary to emphasize that, together with the State, the family has the role and the obligation, as well as the competent bodies, to ensure the rights and duties for children and adolescents, as determined by article 227 of the Constitution and the Article 4 of the ECA:

It is the duty of the family, the community, society in general and the government to ensure, with absolute priority, the realization of the rights relating to life, health, food, education, sports, leisure, professionalization, culture, dignity, respect, freedom and family and community coexistence (ECA, 1990, p.10).

Consequently, ECA marked the break with the irregular tradition of welcoming children and adolescents and, thus, "the child is no longer an object of interest and concern in the private sphere of the family and the Church, to become a matter of social nature, which is the administrative competence of the State". (RIZZINI, 1997, p.24-25, apud Perez; Passone, 2010, p. 654).

IV. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Methodologically speaking, this work is configured as a research with a qualitative approach, carried out under the focus of two data collection procedures, namely: participant observation, which took place in a host institution in Petrolina / PE; and bibliographic research, as well as a questionnaire with eight questions in a semi-structured way.

The performance of the work followed the following steps: 1) Reading and filling out the bibliographies on the topic; 2) Analysis of the historical context in which the Host Institutions emerged; 3) Analysis of the institutions, bodies, laws and constitutions that are related to the host entity; 4) Analysis of the professional role of the social educator.

In this way, the data collection technique was anchored in observation, for which we list the logbook as a collection instrument, which was of great relevance to collect information and contribute to the construction and analysis of data.

V. ARTICULATION BETWEEN SOCIAL EDUCATORS AND TECHNICAL TEAM

Often, those who received training for the profession of educator perceive specialization as a need to update their area. In this case, although there is often a disregard for policies that should provide training for these professionals, it can be seen that educators recognize the need for specialization for their role, which is a good sign, since some seek knowledge in the area in a particular way. However, although there is no initial preparation for the position, the institution annually offers lectures aimed at improving these professionals. According to technical guidelines:

The educator must have the capacity to perform his / her role with autonomy and be recognized as an authority figure for children and adolescents, also having the support of the service's technical team, who can share among themselves experiences and anxieties arising from the performance, seeking the collective construction of strategies for facing the challenge (ORIENTAÇÕES TÉCNICAS, 2009, p.53).

In this sense, it is also noticeable the dissatisfaction of educators in relation to the bodies responsible for the host institution, in which they should provide resources for their training as an educator, since what is theoretically established is not seen in practice.

Thus, when questioning social educators about the choice to be an educator, a majority said they had chosen

the profession due to family influence, others due to previous work with children and only one reported that due to lack of options, they decided to work in the area, , who over time ended up identifying himself as an educator. With that, we can see that the profession of social educator is still very trivialized and placed on the margins of society, since it arouses little interest in people, due to the lack of appreciation in the professional area.

An interesting question that we were able to perceive when carrying out the research was how the professionals perceive the work they develop as a social educator. The response was unanimous, since everyone recognized that their role as an educator is developed from an affective relationship with the sheltered, due to their daily contact with them. Affirming that an affective relationship is necessary to obtain respect and trust from children and adolescents, calling themselves "parents", protectors of these children.

Recalling that this is how educators see themselves performing their activities, but there is a separation between the personal and professional relationship, since the reception should not replace the family home. Therefore, educators must be very careful between this fine line of personal and professional, without neglecting affection and compassion for those welcomed.

Then, we set out to know the challenges faced by these professionals, since in every institution there are problems regarding the success of the network of services they work on, especially when dealing with the issue of reception, which are responsible for the lives of children and adolescents in a situation of social vulnerability.

According to the educators, the problems in the service network in the researched institution consist of the lack of support from higher bodies to provide support due to the institution, so that there is a good performance of the proposed activities. And also, there are some problems directed to the personality and divergence of characteristics of the sheltered individuals, which requires particular care for different situations.

Regarding the relationship between the educator and the host, all said they had a healthy relationship with the children and adolescents of the institution. Regarding the perception of social educators about institutional reception policies, it is common to note the flaws of the institution, which, according to one of the educators, for the organ to provide a good reception must undergo considerable changes in search of improvement, being commonplace in such situations. Institutions that requires public as well as private investment.

Regarding the articulation of the educators' work with the other professionals of the institution, the interviewees stated that there is this dynamic of articulation with other employees, such as social workers, psychologists, directors and other professionals who participate daily in the lives of children and adolescents.

However, social educators on the night shift, unlike morning educators, have little articulation with other professionals, due to the time when the number of workers in the institution is reduced.

Thus, from the description anchored here of the educators' perceptions of their performance, we can point out necessary changes in the institutional care system from its primary structure, which is the proposal of public policies aimed at selection, up to the training of educators who will act in the care of children and adolescents. In this way, they will be able to ensure that legally ethical, philosophically humanitarian and socially fair work is carried out.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Although there is a qualification problem, we could see that the exchange of knowledge and experiences between educators provides a good performance of their work. Furthermore, we realize that the greatest difficulty for educators concerns the devaluation of these professionals.

Thus, we saw that the proposal of our work on the role of social educators in the institutional care of children and adolescents, is a theme that can raise several debates about professional assistance within these institutions. In this sense, we consider the need for greater socio-political visibility of educators who play an indispensable role in the functioning of host institutions, which are still reasonably invisible by training public policies.

As a conclusion, we point out the need for further research that takes a look at the host institutions, their practices, policies, limits and potentialities in the social role they develop and their ethical commitment to guarantee human rights.

We also recommend reflecting on some questions that can be raised to guide new research, asking about: what training policies have already been thought for social educators in host institutions at regional and local level that still need to be applied? What do the hostages indicate about the role of social educators? How effectively is the practice of the technical team articulated with the work of social educators in educational promotion and in the psychosocial context of those welcomed?

Anyway, we realized that during the realization of this work some questions emerged, but due to the time to deepen our readings and to the production of this, we ventilate questions to other people who are interested on this theme or, even, for us in another investigative opportunity.

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