



Initial and continuing training for School Counseling in the State Technical Schools of São Paulo, Brazil

Formação inicial e continuada para a orientação educacional nas Escolas Técnicas Estaduais de São Paulo

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Abstract:

The article discusses the initial and continuing education of professionals who carry out school counseling in the State Technical Schools of São Paulo, Brazil [Etecs], considering data highlighted by 169 individuals consulted in the year 2020, analyzing the scenario of the school units linked to the Paula Souza State Center for Technological Education. Based on survey-type field research combined with official documents, the data obtained is relevant for an examination of the insertion and training for school counseling in basic and technical vocational education at the secondary level, identifying gaps, persistency, correspondences with specialized literature, providing relevant considerations for reflection on practices, policies, and the management of vocational education.

Keywords: school counseling; initial and continuing training; Vocational and Higher Technological Education; CEETEPS.

Resumo

O artigo debate a formação inicial e continuada dos profissionais que desenvolvem a orientação educacional nas Escolas Técnicas Estaduais de São Paulo [Etecs], considerando suas atribuições funcionais e os dados destacados por 169 indivíduos consultados no ano de 2020, analisando o cenário das unidades escolares ligadas ao Centro Estadual de Educação Tecnológica Paula Souza, instituição que articula a educação profissional pública paulista. Baseados em uma pesquisa de campo do tipo *survey* aliada aos documentos oficiais, os dados obtidos são relevantes para um exame da inserção e formação para a orientação educacional na educação básica e profissional técnica de nível médio, identificando lacunas, persistências, correspondências com a literatura especializada, além de retratar as condições de trabalho verificadas no âmbito de um sistema público educacional, propiciando considerações relevantes para uma reflexão sobre as práticas, políticas e a gestão da educação profissional e tecnológica.

Palavras-chave: orientação educacional; formação inicial e continuada; Educação Profissional e Tecnológica; CEETEPS.

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1 Introduction

School counseling is one of the links that connect educational institutions to their immediate public, in proximity with students, parents, and guardians, acting in the dimension of the individuals' integral formation and not just dealing with vocational aspects or relationships with the world of work. This importance is upsized when one considers its presence in vocational education, where the mediations between education and work are pressing. In this sense, various studies have been developed, in the form of compendiums (Giacaglia; Penteado, 2011; Porto, 2009; Sanchez, 1999; Grinspun, 1994) and articles or separate publications (Reese, 2021; CEDEFOP, 2021; Monteiro *et al.*, 2021; Almeida, 2019a; Almeida, 2019b; O'Connor, 2018; Pascoal; Honorato; Albuquerque, 2008; Pascoal, 2006) addressing legal foundations, historical trajectory, training, and action.

The expansion of student time within the public schools of the state network of São Paulo – notably through the Novotec Programs and the Integral Education Program [PEI] – implied an extended presence of youth in these institutions – state technical schools [Etec] and state schools [EE] – granting the units the task of dealing with vectors of general formation that would, in other times, be linked to the immediate presence of the family and legal guardians, understanding them as the primary educational instance (Savater, 2012).

Even recognizing that it is not a teaching function, but rather a technical-pedagogical one (Giacaglia; Penteado, 2011), school counseling was forcibly involved in issues such as student permanence and engagement, from the perspective of avoiding school dropout and improving learning outcomes; in situations of socioemotional development of young people; in the resolution of intra and extra-school conflicts (O'Connor, 2018; Giacaglia; Penteado, 2011) and, more recently, in promoting equity and inclusion of students (Reese, 2021) or lifelong learning (Barnes; Bimrose; Brown; Kettunen, 2020).

For these expectations of performance deposited by the school and the community in the action of school counseling, would correspond the needs for initial and continuing training of professionals. To meet such demands, the mastery of theoretical foundations and practices of guidance, as pointed out by Giacaglia and Penteado (2011), would be indispensable in this direction.

As a contribution to the field of studies, the article intends to discuss the initial and continuing training for school counseling in the State Technical Schools of São Paulo, by exploring aspects related to the trajectory and qualification of these actors

within the scope of a public system of vocational education, administered by the Paula Souza State Center for Technological Education [CEETEPS or Centro Paula Souza].

Under different denominations and in various conditions, the functions and activities of school counseling have been developed in Brazil at different times and locations (Giacaglia; Penteado, 2011), despite being prestigious in legal texts since the first half of the 20th century (Almeida, 2019a). As Miriam Pascoal (2006) pointed out in previous research, while in some states this figure of the counselor would be readily recognized, as in “Brasília, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, Amapá” (Pascoal, 2006, p.115), in others, such a professional would not exist at the moment or had been extinct for a long time.

Regarding the insertion of these professionals into public education, we admit two situations in São Paulo’s context. In the state schools [EE] of basic education, maintained by the Department of Education, there was an activity of counselors recognized in older legal prescriptions (Almeida, 2019a) that would be ended in the middle of the 2010s. In the State Technical Schools [Etec] – subjected to the Department of Economic Development and administered by Centro Paula Souza, this activity and the location of guidance in official documents, as well as the extension of its offer to the entire system, would be more recent – from the year of 2014. Before this, there were specific admissions at the beginning of the same decade, primarily in the agricultural Etecs, with the creation of positions for these units.

In the current context of the Etecs, the function of school counseling is exercised by two types of professionals: tenured middle and technical school teachers, who are removed from their classes and are assigned paid activity hours in one of the school units; or by individuals with a degree in pedagogy or psychology who entered a technical position through public competition.

To investigate these issues of insertion and professional training, a descriptive and also exploratory survey-type field research was carried out, using online forms collected in 2020, with a public of 169 counselors, originating from a total of 223 Etecs in eleven different Administrative Regional Centers [NRA] of the State of São Paulo. To this approach, we consolidated documentary research on various sources, open and closed to public consultation, with a textual analysis of the contents.

Finally, this text is part of a broader research, named "Actors of Vocational and Technological Education" which has been analyzing educational and managerial aspects of pedagogical teams – school directors, pedagogical coordinators, course coordinators, teaching assistants; among other professionals. The article is based on

a theoretical framework that involves concepts and definitions related to School counseling, its training and inclusion into the public educational system of the State of São Paulo. Next, the research methods and the characterization of the scenario will be outlined, followed by results and main conclusions.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 About the historical perspective of school counseling and its relationships with vocational education

The research foundations were established on literature related to school counseling, vocational education, and the initial and continuing training for counselors.

From a historical perspective, school counseling is closely related to vocational education in the scenario of Brazil and the State of São Paulo. Laurinda Almeida rescued the professional memory of School Counselings in São Paulo (Almeida, 2019a; 2019b), locating in 1924 the foundation of a Professional Selection and Guidance Service at the 'Liceu de Artes e Ofícios of São Paulo' (Almeida, 2019a). In 1931, through Lourenço Filho, then Director of the Department of Education of São Paulo, a Service of Educational and School Counseling would be created (Almeida, 2019a). However, as early as 1932, the service would suffer the first of its interruptions, which would be common during the 20th century. Nationally, school counseling would also be introduced in the Brazilian school through the slant of vocational education, by the medium-level schools that made up the Industrial Education network (Almeida, 2019a). The intermittencies of this offer were also be noted at the federal level.

The currently in force Law of Guidelines and Bases of Brazilian Education [LDB] of 1996 (Brasil, 1996), once again recognized the figure of the School Counseling among the professionals who would act in basic education, citing him and reinforcing his prestige in a supplementary writing of 2009 (Brasil, 2009):

Art. 61. The following are considered professionals of basic school education those who, being in effective exercise and having been trained in recognized courses, are: [Wording given by Law No. 12.014, of 2009] II – education workers with a degree in pedagogy, with qualification in administration, planning, supervision, inspection, and school counseling, as well as with master's or doctorate degrees in the same areas; (Wording given by Law No. 12.014, of 2009) Art. 64. The training of education professionals for administration, planning, inspection, supervision, and school counseling for basic education, will be made in undergraduate courses in pedagogy or at the postgraduate level, at the discretion of the educational institution, ensuring, in this training, the common national base (Brasil, 1996, electronic document).

In contextualizing the function, we seek in this work to reposition the activity of school counseling towards a renewed approach (Grinspun, 1994; Sanches, 1999; Pascoal, 2006; Giacaglia; Pentenado, 2011; Almeida, 2019a), in which it acts as a mediator "between the student, the didactic-pedagogical situations, and the socio-cultural situations" (Pascoal, 2006, p.115); not only dedicated to the school counseling of young people of school age, but also available for advising and training adults throughout life (CEDEFOP, 2021); and open to sharing, exchanging information with other actors (CEDEFOP, 2021) of vocational and higher technological education and with internal and external bodies that promote the quality of learning and opportunities for students to join and remain in school.

In the scenario we address, of vocational education and training in Brazil and specifically in the State of São Paulo (Brasil, 1996; Brasil, 2021, CEE, 2022), it is an educational modality developed at the basic and higher levels (Brasil, 1996), and according to the National Curricular Guidelines, "integrated with other modalities of education and the dimensions of work, science, culture, and technology" (Brasil, 2021, p.01), through courses and programs of:

- I - Professional Basic Qualification, including the Initial and Continuing Training of workers, freely offered by Educational Institutions;
- II - Vocational education at the Secondary Level, including intermediate exits of Technical Qualifications;
- III - Technical Vocational Post-Degree;
- IV - Higher Technological education at the Undergraduate and Graduate levels, including intermediate exits of Technological Qualification, Post-Degrees and Professional Masters and Doctorates.
- V - Updating, Improvement, and Extension for the graduates of the courses listed in the previous items. (CEE, 2022, p.02)

Specifically in the State of São Paulo, the public school counseling service is available only in the State Technical Schools, preferably to students of Vocational education at the Secondary Level, in technical courses developed concurrently, subsequently, or integrated with secondary education (CEE, 2022).

2.2 About initial and continuing training and school counseling

To examine initial and continuing training in School counseling, we will understand initial training as that which qualifies for the exercise of a certain jobs or activity, usually obtained in undergraduate courses (Rehem, 2009), being a first stage among others necessary. For the case of technical vocational education at the secondary level, the National Curricular Guidelines for Vocational Education and

Training [VET] (Brasil, 2021) presents a chapter dedicated to training for the exercise of teaching, but do not provide indications for related education professionals, such as counselors.

Continuing in-service training will be understood in our research as a set of formative practices "that begin to occur juxtaposed to the experience of the craft and, more recently, in the workplace itself" (Aquino; Mussi, 2001, p.216). Article 53 of the National Guidelines (Brasil, 2021) indicates a relevant role for systems, institutions, and educational networks of vocational education in "organizing and facilitating actions aimed at the continuing training of vocational education teachers" (Brasil, 2021, p.37), which we could extend to School Counselings and other VET professionals.

The founding axes of initial and continuing teacher training in the context of technical vocational education would be, by approximation, extended to School Counselings, involving the specific disciplinary knowledge of their area, the knowledge from professional experience (Rehem, 2009), and pedagogical knowledge (Azevedo, 2018); to which relational knowledge and others inherent to the guidance service could be added. Authors such as Giacaglia and Penteado (2011), Hibarino and Nodari (2018), O'Connor (2018), Reese (2021), or the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training – CEDEFOP (2021) also suggested that the multiple facets of students' development in terms of their personality, performance, and professional and personal skills should be covered by school counseling in their training and action, so that it would not be possible to 'disintegrate' their work, except for pedagogical purposes during the training of counselors. Mastery of guidance actions, mastery of technologies, and professional ethics are other aspects to be addressed in initial and continuing training.

In the European context, national systems have been concerned with outlining fundamental competencies for professional counselors, even pointing out the main gaps in the training of these individuals, such as improving their digital competencies (CEDEFOP, 2021), comprehensive and up-to-date knowledge of the area, mastery of the latest guidance, screening, and assessment techniques, written and oral communication skills, the ability to work strategically with other actors and services, as well as a high level of socio-emotional competencies (CEDEFOP, 2021). There are no cross-sectional studies of this magnitude and scale in the Brazilian scenario.

3 Methodology and characterization of the research

The profile of the investigation was derived from studies conducted in the sphere of the Research Group 'Management, Evaluation and Organization of Vocational education', aligned with the project "Actors of Vocational and Higher Education", which addresses educational and managerial aspects of individuals and teams present in technical schools and public technology colleges, in institutions of VET. School principals, pedagogical coordinators, course coordinators, supervisors, School Counselings and teaching assistants are among the prestigious participants.

The present study has a qualitative approach. As for its objectives, it was shaped as a descriptive research (Gil, 2008), as it sought "the description of the characteristics of a certain population or phenomenon" (Gil, 2008, p.28), presenting itself at the threshold of exploratory objectives, as it intends to deepen and offer a new vision (Gil, 2008) about school counseling in vocational education.

To situate the research location, we inform that in 2020 the 223 Etecs were managed by CEETEPS, a government autarchy linked to the Secretary of Economic Development. Present in all regions of the State of São Paulo^d, these schools served more than 224,000 students for free, only in secondary and vocational education, besides offering initial formation and basic qualification. Higher education at the undergraduate level was developed in the 73 Faculties of Technology [Fatecs], in addition to postgraduate studies offered at the Post-Graduate, Extension and Research Unit (CEETEPS, 2020). In the institutional framework of CEETEPS, the activities of school counseling were foreseen only for Etecs.

The methodology involved a survey-type field research, of qualitative appreciation, with the 169 professionals [among the 218 contacted], representing 77.5% of those who worked in school counseling in schools in 2020, through an online form composed of closed and open items. Participation was provided between June and August 2020 and was voluntary, with the signing of the informed consent form.

Participation was proportional and balanced in the 11 administrative and supervisory regions where the research was applied, with no trends or highlights to be made by location. The triangulation of data made possible by the use of

^d In 2020, the Etecs and Fatecs were subdivided among 12 Regional Administration Nuclei [NRA], covering the entire territory of São Paulo, namely: Bauru and Araçatuba [13 Etecs and 4 Fatecs], Campinas Norte [16 - 3], Campinas Sul [16 - 8], Grande São Paulo Leste [25 - 6], Grande São Paulo Noroeste [30 - 7], Grande São Paulo Sul and Baixada Santista [25 - 10], Itapeva and Registro [9 - 0], Marília and Presidente Prudente [22 - 7], Ribeirão Preto [19 - 5], São José do Rio Preto [16 - 8], Sorocaba [18 - 7], Vale do Paraíba and Litoral [14 - 8]. In the year of 2024, the number of Etecs jumped to 224 and Fatecs to 77, with the number of students in technical and technological courses exceeding 321,000 students (CEETEPS, 2024).

institutional and legal documents, specialized literature, and the results of the field research contributed to the validation of the results and analyses.

The content of the online form started from documentary research that combined previous studies with the consulted literature (OECD, 2019; Almeida, 2019a; Giacaglia; Penteado, 2011; O'Connor, 2018). Once the data was extracted, it received a simplified statistical treatment, with the help of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and Google Forms. After this arrangement, the intention was to project the sampling of counselors over the entire number existing at the Paula Souza Center, namely, the counselors who worked in the Etecs of the State of São Paulo in 2020.

As for the type of contract of these individuals responsible for school counseling^{e2} identified in the field, 90% are teachers who are fully or partially removed from their functions, with remuneration for activity hours [aka. 'HAE']. Only 10% are hired in the technical schools for the specific function of guidance, in a public contest held in the early 2010s. Among these 169 consulted, 53% are teachers originating from the disciplines of the professional part, taught in technical education; and 37% come from the disciplines of secondary education, corresponding to the general formation covered by the National Common Curricular Base.

We verified that 74% of these counselors are women, which is close to the profile observed in a broader national framework, as stated in the National School Census 2019 (INEP, 2020a), where 81.5% of the management functions of basic education in schools were also occupied by women. In technical vocational education at the secondary level, according to the same Census, the proportion of teachers was balanced between men [49.93%] and women [50.07% of the 127,714 teachers], with no consolidated data on the managers (INEP, 2020b).

It is also an activity carried out by experienced professionals, which could have a positive impact on the approach to educational work with students, based on the premise that more experienced teachers would be more apt to deal with complex situations in schools (OECD, 2019). Of the total, 66.7% of the counselors are over 41 years old, 24.4% declaring to be 51 years or older. 49.4% have been working for 11 years or more at CEETEPS. There were no professionals under 26 years old working in

^e Until the year 2012, only the 34 agricultural schools of CEETEPS had an Educational Technical Analyst admitted through a public contest – the name given to the School Counseling since the end of the 2000s, with assignments established in the CEETEPS Deliberation No. 006/2009 (CEETEPS, 2009) which would serve as a reference for the establishment of the guidance service throughout the state network in the following years. With the significant expansion of the number of school units and the absence of public contests, the guidance function would be extended, from the year 2014, through tenured teachers who worked in secondary and technical education, to whom hours of activities in school counseling projects would be assigned.

the Etecs in the year 2020. Only 11.2% [19] mentioned school counseling as their first career choice. Here 'career' is understood as a remunerated employment that one considers capable of becoming one's main job for a period of one's life (OECD, 2019). The fragmentation of this career option is not surprising: its intermittent existence in the educational system could help to explain its low choice and adherence in the first moments after initial training. Having presented these characterizing data, we proceed to the results and analyses of the initial and continuing training of School Counselings at the Etecs.

4 Analyses and results

We highlight below the main results obtained. For a documentary analysis of the duties of School Counselings at the Etecs, the content of CEETEPS Deliberation No. 18/2015 (CEETEPS, 2015)³ was addressed. The analysis of the Deliberation related to the Educational Technical Analysts (CEETEPS, 2009) of the agricultural schools was dispensed with for the following reasons: 1) 89% of the School Counselings active in the 223 Etecs are admitted under the terms of CEETEPS Deliberation No. 18/2015; 2) CEETEPS Deliberation No. 18/2015 was conceived from its predecessor (CEETEPS, 2009), incorporating a significant part of its essential elements, described in the following table of assignments:

Table 1 - Duties of the Project Coordinator Teacher responsible for Guidance and Educational Support at the Etecs and the identified axes of action

Identified Axes of Action	Main Duties of the Project Coordinator Teacher Responsible for Guidance and Educational Support at the CEETEPS State Technical Schools
Management of information and school settlements	VI - collaborate with the Teaching Unit in order to guarantee information about the students' school life, forwarding doubts and questions to the competent bodies and servers; IX - organize, together with the Directorate of Services - Academic Area, statistical data related to the attendance and performance of students;
Participation in meetings and school events	I - participate in pedagogical meetings, course meetings, and management team meetings, as well as other school events; VII - meet with parents and guardians;
Participation in the pedagogical project and	XI - collaborate in the elaboration and execution of the proposal of the Political Pedagogical Project and the Multiannual Management Plan;

^fThe CEETEPS Deliberation No. 18/2015 (CEETEPS, 2015) and the CETEC Instruction No. 04/2018 (CEETEPS, 2018) are currently in force regarding the regulation of the insertion and action of professionals in school counseling at the Etecs.

Identified Axes of Action	Main Duties of the Project Coordinator Teacher Responsible for Guidance and Educational Support at the CEETEPS State Technical Schools
management plan	
Mediation of interpersonal relationships	IV - mediate interpersonal relationships between students and the school;
Relations with the Guardianship Council	III - follow up on cases referred by the management to the Guardianship Council;
Interactions with the teaching staff	VIII - interact with the Project Coordinator Responsible for Pedagogical Coordination and with the Course Coordinator, assisting them in the task of making the teaching staff understand the behavior of students and classes;
Action with the student body	XV - collaborate with other demands that contribute to the full formation of the students' competencies, skills, attitudes, and values in the courses. X - seek the cooperation of the students, guiding them regarding their choices, relationships with colleagues and teachers, and family experiences; II - collaborate with the permanent formation of the student body, with respect to values and attitudes, promoting activities that lead the student to develop an understanding of the rights and duties of the human person, the citizen, the State, the family, and the other groups that make up the community, through student participation in collegiate bodies, such as Class and School Councils, Student Union, Cooperatives, class representation, and commissions; XII - favor the articulation between the student's experience in their community and the topics addressed in the classroom, contextualizing learning;
Learning recovery	V - assist students who present difficulties in adjusting to school, problems with school performance and/or other school difficulties, especially in recovery and in cases of partial progression, through management and coordination of activities related to the teaching-learning process; XIII - develop study habits and organization in students, planning educational activities in an integrated way, with the purpose of improving school performance; XIV - plan and implement actions related to the inclusion of students with disabilities, with the support of other departments of the central administration;
Inclusion of students with disabilities	XIV - plan and implement actions related to the inclusion of students with disabilities, with support from other departments of the central administration.

Source: (CEETEPS, 2015, p.41).

If Almeida (2019b) stated that the School Counseling had not been properly inserted into the teams of the state schools of São Paulo in previous decades, in the case of the Etecs, there was a concern pointed out in the Deliberation (CEETEPS, 2015) in order to promote this insertion, as in the participation of the counselor in the

pedagogical project and in the multiannual management plan of the technical schools [see item XI], in the interactions with the teaching staff [VIII], in the participation in meetings and school events [I, VII], in the management and proper circulation of information about the students, collaborating in the decisions of the management team and the teachers [VI, IX]. Initial training related to education is a highlight in the field research: 54.7% of the counselors have a degree in various areas or Pedagogy and 52.5% have undergone some type of formal pedagogical complementation to their initial training, as they are bachelors or technologists, as can be seen in the following table:

Table 2 - Initial graduation area of the consulted counselors

Percentage	Areas of Graduation
15%	Literature
14%	Pedagogy
11%	Administration
	Psychology
4%	Law
	Art/Art Education
	Accounting Sciences
	Physical Education
3%	Chemistry
	Nutrition
	History
	Biology / Biological Sciences
	Social Sciences
2%	Systems Analysis
	Geography
	Computer Science
	Mathematics
1%	Social Communication / Marketing
	Data Processing
	Logistics
	Human Resources
	Physics
	Drawing
	Philosophy
	Environmental Management
	Information Technology for Business Management
	Tourism
	Internet Systems
	Mechanical Production Engineering
	Environmental Engineering
	Electrical Engineering
	Nursing
	Economics
	Not identified or not declared

Source: Own elaboration, based on research data

Among the professionals, 64% are graduates of their first degree between the years 2000-2013, noting a predominance of the first decade of the 21st century. Only 4 professionals graduated for the first time in the 1970s [or 2.3%]. 69 professionals [41% among 169] have a teaching degree as a second or third higher education qualification. 33 [19.5%] do not have any second degree. The Pedagogy course represents 51% of those with a second degree, being the most common in the results. Five [3%] have technology courses as a second degree and bachelor's degrees are identified among 27 [16%] of those questioned.

The specification of teaching degrees and pedagogy for the occupied function meets the observations of Azevedo (2018) in reaffirming that the work of the School Counseling is essentially pedagogical and, therefore, “[...] needs to be covered by ethical, aesthetic, political, and technical behavior, which requires specific training with reference to pedagogical work [...]” (2018, p. 96).

Also, regarding the theme, it is important to note that in the initial training, there was a lack of contact with the foundations of the professional activity of guidance. 63.1% of the respondents revealed that they had not established any contact with school counseling in their graduation, which presents itself as an opportunity [and perhaps, necessity] for short and long-term continuing education. Simultaneously, there is a growing expansion of subsequent training to graduation, evidenced by the fact that 93.5% of those consulted have postgraduate degrees, with the predominance of masters [80.9%] and doctoral degrees [19.1%], with the majority being masters [17.3%] among the latter and 1.8% doctors.

In addition, especially from 2017 onwards, Guidance professionals have participated in meetings and training sessions that brought together directors of ETECs, pedagogical coordinators, course coordinators, the management team of the educational supervisions by region, among other actors from the schools. However, it was pointed out that the continuing education aimed at professionals has been limited in the last ten years, which would reduce the gaps pointed out by Monteiro and others, regarding the lack of specificity in the training of these professionals, with legislation allowing counselors at the undergraduate or postgraduate level” (2021, p. 13). Table 03 presents the actions of continuing education especially aimed at guidance, promoted by the CEETEPS institution in its training center:

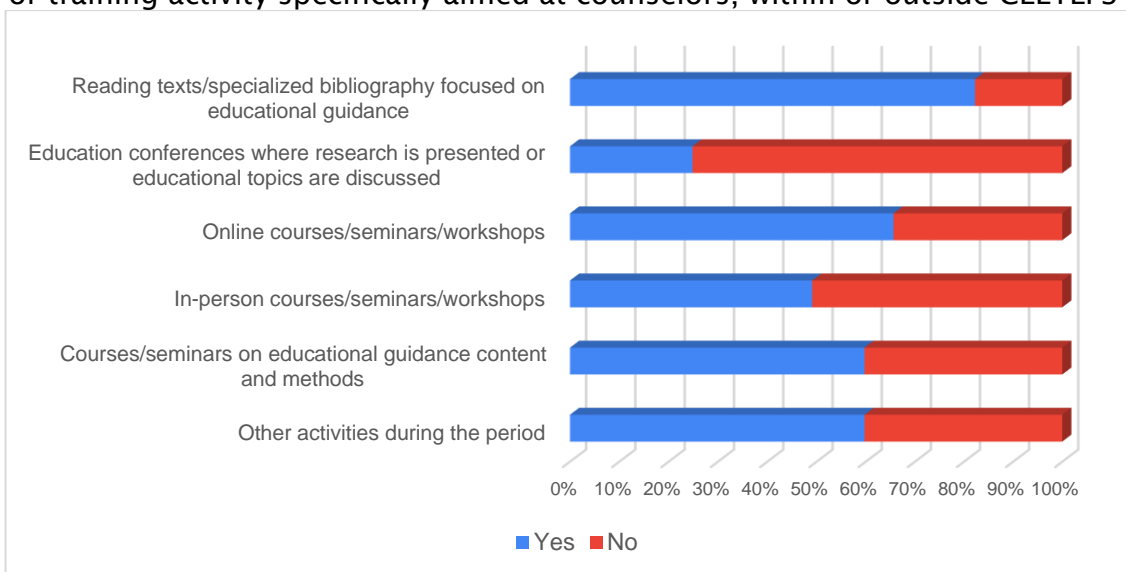
Table 3 - Continuing education identified at CEETEPS in the training department [CETECCAP], by workload and year offered

Title of the training/courses	Hours/ in- person	Hours/ Distance	Year
I Meeting of Educational Technical Analysts and Teachers Responsible for Coexistence in Agricultural Schools	8	0	2011
Anthropoetics and the Work of the School Counseling	8	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Bauru	6	4	2014
School Counseling Region - Sorocaba and Registro	8	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Campinas Norte	6	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Campinas Sul	6	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Grande São Paulo Leste	6	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Grande São Paulo Noroeste	8	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Grande São Paulo Sul and Baixada Santista	6	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Marília	6	10	2014
School Counseling Region - Ribeirão Preto	8	0	2014
School Counseling Region - São José do Rio Preto	8	0	2014
School Counseling Region - Vale do Paraíba and North Coast	6	4	2014
The Role of the School Counseling in Facing the Difficulties of Students in Their School Environment	6	0	2018
School Counselings: Tools and Instructions - Class 4	6	14	2019
School Counselings: Tools and Instructions - Class 3	6	14	2019
School Counselings: Tools and Instructions - Class 2	6	14	2019
School Counselings: Tools and Instructions - Class 1	6	14	2019

Source: Own elaboration, based on research data

The majority of those surveyed, 73.8%, participated in training for counselors provided by CEETEPS in the last 10 years, between 2 and 6 times. 33.3% consider the continuing education provided to School Counseling as insufficient in terms of the frequency with which it occurs in the institution. Nearly half of the respondents [54%] frequently come into contact with continuing education for counselors outside of CEETEPS. Specifically, 38.7% are interested in a completely online *lato sensu* postgraduate degree focused on school counseling and 39.3% are interested in a master's degree in education, provided that it includes, in at least one discipline, issues related to guidance. In general, the School Counselings under study recognize the need for specialized, continuing training for their performance. It is a way to "rework practices and concepts", in the words of Monteiro et al. (2021), but also to enhance forms of professional development, in professional competencies and skills (Rehem, 2009). For these reasons, they showed adherence to specific training activities:

Graph 1 - Participation, in the last 12 months, in some professional development or training activity specifically aimed at counselors, within or outside CEETEPS

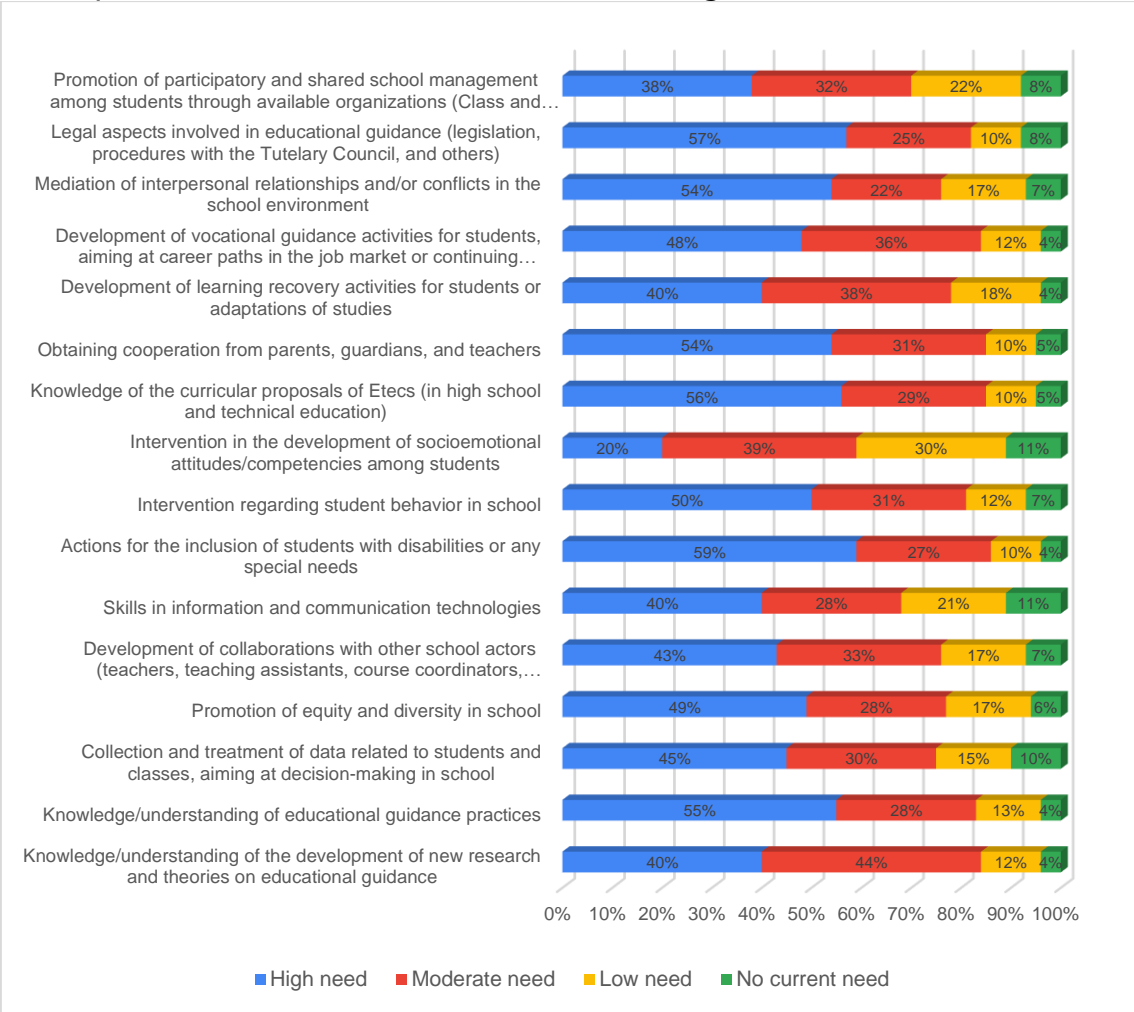


Source: Own elaboration, based on research data.

In the training activities related to guidance, self-training through the reading of specialized bibliography stood out, followed by training in online courses and workshops. It is possible that participation in online training courses has expanded after two years of impact from the Covid-19 pandemic, which was still ongoing during the year 2020, the time when the field data collection was conducted.

Participation in training activities not directed at school counseling was higher in all items checked, in relation to specific continuing education in guidance; this may indicate a trend towards more generalized training on educational themes but could also represent a gap in opportunities for events, conferences, lectures dedicated to counselors, when we compare the two elements (Hibarino; Nodari, 2018):

Graph 2 - Areas in which they present needs for training and professional development for the exercise of school counseling



Source: Own elaboration, based on research data

It is useful to realize that the training needs which more than 50% of respondents show 'great necessity' for can be organized into two main groups. The first refers to working with students, namely, inclusion activities [59%], the development of socio-emotional attitudes [56%], issues related to student behavior [50%], and the mediation of interpersonal relationships and/or conflicts [54%]. The second group pertains to formal and legal aspects [57%] and other specific aspects of school counseling practices [55%]. We can understand that such references demonstrate the observed needs by the respondents regarding the deepening of the educator role of the educational guide, as pointed out by Azevedo (2018).

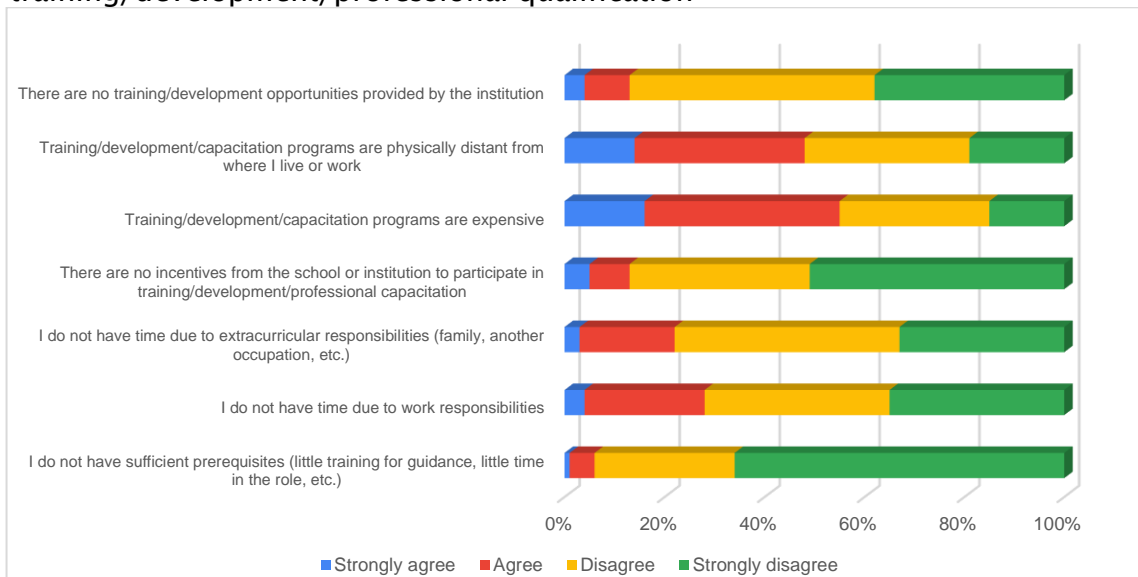
The aspects that prominently fall within the category of "Moderate need" include: engagement in the development of socio-emotional competencies, familiarity with the curricular proposals of Etecs, proficiency in information and communication technologies, promotion of equity and diversity in schools, and the development of

collaborations with other educational stakeholders. Although these are not identified as the most critical demands, they indicate a need for professionals to adapt to the evolving educational landscape. The increasing emphasis on socio-emotional education and the integration of digital technologies into teaching reflect a shift aligned with pedagogical approaches that, while not entirely recent, have been present in the field for at least two decades.

Within the categories of "Low need" and "No current need," the following stand out: data collection and processing for decision-making, comprehension of educational guidance practices, and understanding of the development of new research and theories. These findings suggest that professionals may possess a more substantial theoretical grasp of educational guidance, while practical application still presents significant challenges. Furthermore, the lower perceived necessity for data collection might be linked to the absence of a well-established culture of evidence-based decision-making within schools.

Subsequently, the main problems or barriers identified by educational guides for the development of their continuous training were examined:

Graph 3 - Degree of agreement with statements that represent a barrier to training/development/professional qualification



Source: Own elaboration, based on research data.

The predominance of the categories "Agree" and "Strongly Agree" in items such as the lack of institutional incentives for participation in training/capacitation, lack of time due to work responsibilities, and lack of time due to extracurricular responsibilities (family, other occupations, etc.), indicates that the challenges are not

limited to the absence of training opportunities but also involve structural factors such as the overload of responsibilities and the absence of institutional support, resulting in a gap between the need for professional updating and the actual ability to access these resources.

Furthermore, time constraints highlight a recurring issue in the professional training of school counselors: the difficulty of balancing personal and professional demands with academic development.

Other obstacles include the high cost of training and development programs and the physical distance between one's residence/workplace and training locations. These elements suggest that financial and logistical aspects remain determining factors in continuing professional education. The distance barrier may be partially mitigated by the advancement of digital technologies and distance education.

It should be noted that the main barriers identified by respondents are the distance from work and/or residence locations and the associated costs [which can also include commuting]. This aspect is consistent with the choice for self-training or online training activities, as previously referred to in Graph 1. Training in context combined with *online* training has been identified as effective in various studies (cf. Vieira; Henriques; Romera, 2019) and could be useful for a network of extension and capillarity like that of CEETEPS.

5 Final remarks

This article intended to explore issues related to the initial and continuing education of educational guides within the public vocational education system in the State of São Paulo. From an institutional perspective, demands were identified specifically related to a) the need to expand the continuing education of these professionals; b) the creation of a short and medium-term agenda for this in-service training, encompassing the aspects raised in the research and in the literature (for example, CEDEFOP, 2021); c) incentives for them to assume the role with some guarantee of permanence, which would help the institution itself by reducing turnover in schools [16% of guides began in the role less than a year ago] and by expanding the expected educational outcomes from their continuing education.

Among the suggestions presented for the improvement of training in school counseling from this initial exploration are: a) the expansion of short-term continuing education programs in service, specifically aimed at educational guides in the field; b) the creation of *lato sensu* and *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs that meet the

particularities and help to resolve potential gaps in the training of practicing professionals; c) the creation of introductory continuing education courses for teachers or others who wish to enter into school counseling, compensating for the imbalance in initial training provided by the Pedagogy courses and degrees in the country; d) financial and logistical support for the training of guides, not only with funding but also by facilitating conditions for leave of absence from work and travel [Etecs in the interior are up to 670 km away from the capital of the state, headquarters of the Central Management of CEETEPS], as well as the promotion of hybrid in-person and online activities; e) attention by those responsible for continuing education to the most demanded topics by the consulted guides, namely, the inclusion and promotion of students with disabilities or other learning needs, up-to-date theories and practices of school counseling, action on the socioemotional development of students and skills for conflict resolution and coexistence.

The aspects related to the insertion and training for school counseling in Etecs are not exhausted here. The research continued by examining the trajectories, selection modes, qualifications, and functional duties of the guides, unfolding into notes on their performance, public policies, possibilities for revising legislation and career paths, and ultimately exploring this field related to vocational education, with repercussions in the broader educational environment and the presentation of a challenge. For this challenge, this study intends an initial contribution, positing the possibility of future research involving other public systems and different scenarios, both independently and comparatively.

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