

“Good Work” and the training of pedagogues¹

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Abstract

The exploratory research aimed at analyzing how students of the Pedagogy Licenciature Course understand the Good Work concept, which is based on principles of excellence, ethics, and engagement. To that end, activities proposed by the GoodWork Toolkit were developed and contemplated the three dimensions of the concept. 18 licenciature degree students attending the final year of the Pedagogy program at a state university in Paraná took part in the investigation. The results indicate that issues related to excellence and, in a more restrict way, to ethics are strongly present in the participants' comprehensions, although they primarily focus on individual components and those of the activity's scope, to the detriment of aspects that are linked to the education field and the broader society. The engagement dimension – which focuses on personal satisfaction and accomplishment when performing professionally, as well as on the meaning that work acquires to the self – ends up in the background because of the necessity and survival aspects associated with work, and, also, to the emphasis given to the qualified practice of the functions. The analyses suggest the relevance in deepening, in the teacher training, subjects related to professional ethics, in addition to the commitment and responsibilities that embrace not just the individual scope but also the impacts of work on the society. It is also important to emphasize, in Pedagogy courses, the engagement dimension, which can even help to give a new meaning to teaching as a calling.

Keywords

Pedagogy – Good work – Licenciature degree – Ethics – Professional training.

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Our globalized society with focus on market logic is increasingly characterized by economic and cultural inequalities, as well as the damage to the environment, a reality that, particularly within the context of the recent covid-19 pandemic, has become increasingly fierce. Financial elites seek to perpetuate social structures that prioritize individualism and strains of knowledge that bring economic benefits more quickly (CASTELLS, 2018; SASTRE, 2018). Although more recently it is possible to identify a deglobalizing and de-westernizing movement, such dynamics come accompanied by interests that are in line with specific groups and with the intensification of intolerance and xenophobia feelings, often calling into question basic human rights (CUNHA, 2019; BITTAR, 2012). This scenario influences – and retro-feeds on – work relationships and professional performance in different areas, including education. Accordingly, to reflect on the pedagogical work and training – in which professionals deal with educational processes within different environments, particularly when teaching the first grades of Basic Education – becomes an urgent and essential task aimed at fomenting a performance toward social fairness and overcoming inequalities (ZEICHNER, 2008).

Understanding why and how some people do their job based on ethical principles, even within the context of such globalized and capitalist society, is precisely the question that guides the research of psychologists Howard Gardner, William Damon and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who propose the Good Work concept (GARDNER, 2010; GARDNER; CSIKSZENTMIHALYI; DAMON, 2004). Good work is defined as qualitatively excellent, developed ethically, personally engaging, and meaningful for the worker. Excellence refers to knowledge and techniques that must subsidize the qualified performance of functions, including the need for consistent training. Ethics comprises social responsibility and the impact on others, and attributes to work a moral sense and one of contribution to the world. Ultimately, “Good Work” must be engaging, bring enjoyment, interest, satisfaction, and passion to those who do it: that is the principle of engagement, related to emotional aspects and the personal meaning given to work (GARDNER, 2009). Thus, these three principles or dimensions should be the base for work tasks and decisions, as well as a guide for the training of professionals.

In their studies, researchers noticed that those who have the opportunity to openly discuss with other people about work-related moral dilemmas, decision making, choices, responsibilities, and values are more likely to engage in their work activities with quality, ethics, and personal satisfaction in the future (FISCHMAN; GARDNER, 2009; MUCINSKAS; GARDNER, 2013). Furthermore, Good Work performance depends on a series of issues that are intrinsic and extrinsic to the individual, given by the interaction among different forces: the personal standards (values, beliefs, motivations, self-image), the domain scope (cultural component referring to knowledge, values, practices and codes of the profession), the field forces (professional community or social components, including entities, organizations and experts that regulate and evaluate the sector), and the sphere of society as a whole, with its logic, values, interests, strengths, and contradictions that vary according to the historical and cultural context (GARDNER, 2009; NAKAMURA, 2010). The different spheres interact with and influence one-another, thus Good Work does not depend on individual action alone and is not just the result of outside forces: context influences the individual's

formative trajectory, and performance-related attitudes can influence, contribute to, and even transform the strengths and elements of the other spheres.

These assumptions were the basis for preparing the GoodWork Toolkit (FISCHMAN; BARENSEN, 2010, 2009), a material that gathered guidance, practical and reflexive activities organized based on the excellence, ethics, and engagement dimensions, in addition to narratives with actual dilemmas lived by professionals in a range of realms. The goal is to lead individuals, young or adult ones, students in different grades and teaching modalities, professionals of distinct areas and at different career stages – to ponder on criteria, choices, and planning in order to promote and develop Good Work performances.

Based on this discussion, this article analyzes how Pedagogy students understand “Good Work” construct in Education, given the excellence, ethics, and engagement dimensions. From the reflections arising from applying the GoodWork Toolkit activities with the participants, we seek to discuss the elements and criteria that they consider when characterizing the work of a “good teacher”.

Considering that Good Work is not made effective if it is detached from the professional field and the broader society, it is necessary to keep in mind, for our discussion, issues that permeate the training and performance of educators in Brazil. Ambiguities emerge from the Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais [*National Curriculum Guidelines for the Course of Pedagogy*] (BRASIL, 2006) and are present in Pedagogy courses, especially when it comes to the emphasis given to the dilemma between training for teaching in schools or broader educational environments. That uncertainty is reflected in Pedagogy programs, that do not have a dedicated moment for ethical training, and contributes to establishing an often fragmented, superficial, and generalizing course identity (PIMENTA *et al.*, 2017; MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017).

At the same time, in addition to the struggles for the professionalization and recognition of Pedagogy as a Science, it is worth noting the depreciation and low pay of the teaching profession, the political indifference toward education, and neglect of the education institutions. Those, combined, contribute to a low social prestige, low demand, idle spots, and high dropout rates in the licentiate degree, including in state universities (BRANDÃO; PARDO, 2016; OSTROVSKI; SOUSA; RAITZ, 2017). Furthermore, the profile of licentiate degree students, including Pedagogy, is characterized by the need for conciliating working and studying, since a significant percentage of them come from the public school system and from low-income families with low level of education (GATTI *et al.*, 2019; RISTOFF, 2013).

Finally, we highlight that, in Brazil, initial teaching training courses have been marked by precariousness, aggravated by the mercantile logic and the increasing number of private institutions that take on such demand (DINIZ-PEREIRA, 2019; MONFREDINI, 2013). Thus, those challenges and contradictions emerging from the training activities, the professional field, and the society should guide our focus when analyzing the data.

Methodology

The research is characterized as exploratory and of qualitative and quantitative nature (GUNTHER, 2006), and is an initial approach to the Good Work concept in

pedagogical training within the Brazilian context. Data was collected from 18 licentiate students in the 4th year of the Pedagogy program at a state university in Paraná, who agreed to voluntarily take part in the investigation, which followed the ethics guidelines for interviews. The group was selected because they were completing the final grade of the program, and had already completed most of the curriculum components, including internships. The students, all women, aged 20 - 52 years old, and 13 of them already had some work experience in education.

Throughout the second term of 2019, a series of training meetings with them were held, in which activities adjusted to the GoodWork Toolkit were developed. By observing the three Good Work dimensions, the objective was to allow the participants to express themselves, reflect, and debate about their understanding of what being a “good teacher” means. In this article, we discuss the results of five activities– performed both individually and collectively, in writing or verbal discussions lasting 50 minutes each, conducted by the researcher and adjusted to the Brazilian context and pedagogical field. Activities 1 and 2 prioritized the excellence aspects, Activity 3 was primarily ethics-oriented, and Activities 4 and 5 contemplated the engagement construct⁴. The resulting written production was delivered to the researcher, and the discussions were audio recorded and later transcribed.

For the analysis, we aimed at identifying the content and meanings emerging from the participants’ understanding that were expressed in the activities and debates held, with the intent of analyzing how such elements connect to the Good Work dimensions: excellence, ethics, and engagement (GARDNER, 2010).

Formative meetings: data presentation

Activity 1 proposed a discussion on excellence criteria. For the participants, a well-done job is that which effectively reaches its objectives, which, in this case, refers to the development and learning ability of students. Also, they think excellence should be constantly assessed by the educator him/herself, who needs to have a critical view, be humble and flexible for changing his/her practice when needed, and by other agents as well, such as coworkers, pedagogical team, other school employees, family, especially students. Although they recognize that an excellent work depends on several factors, the teacher commitment – expressed in the concern about the learning process, action planning, and believing in education – is mentioned as relevant. The value of commitment seems to be so intense that it is mentioned as a factor that would allow education gaps to be filled, since “if there is commitment, there is search for knowledge [...] and the pursuit of excellence” (Walquíria⁵).

4- GoodWork Toolkit proposes activities organized in four chapters, where three of them refer to the axis of the concept and one that includes the activities approaching “good work.” Although the activities selected for the research are indicated in the material in a certain chapter/ axis, we understand that they allow thoughts that lead to simultaneous discussions on excellence, ethics, and engagement in pedagogical work, as it can be seen in the data analysis.

5- The names are fictional.

In Activity 2, the participants split into small groups, analyzed a narrative that highlighted the challenges and conflicts of an educator at work⁶, and were questioned about principles, responsibilities, obstacles, and ways to cope with situations. When thinking about beliefs, values, and responsibilities implied in the narrative, they identified aspects of the character’s individual performance (methodology, commitment...). However, when thinking about the obstacles and challenges, they indicated aspects that go beyond the individual scope, and acknowledged factors that affect the work of a teacher, such as school management, government education offices, the (non) participation of parents in the learning process of their children, and the students’ social context. Finally, when thinking about coping strategies, two of the six groups kept their focus on individual action, and claimed that more focus is needed on the teaching and learning process or changes in methodology, while the other groups identified strategies that involved the participation of other agents, both inside and outside the school.

In Activity 3, also conducted in small groups, the participants pondered on the responsibilities included in the work and had to initially identify for whom and for what they felt they had to be responsible (Table 1).

Table 1- Elements for which an educator should feel responsible

Element highlighted	Number of groups
Students	6
Teaching process (methodologies, planning, goals)	5
Learning process (education process, development)	3
Relationships of coexistence (in the classroom, among peers)	3
School community (managers, school, families)	2
Education and society	2
Ethics	1

Source: Research data.

All groups indicated that the teacher should feel responsible for the students, and teaching process, regarding methodologies, planning, class objectives, among others, was the second most often mentioned element. Furthermore, the responsibility for the school community, including the surrounding community and students’ families, and for education/ the society, in a broader way, are aspects that extrapolate the scope of the classroom

6- In the text – translated and adapted from the “Lookin’ Good” narrative (FISCHMAN; BARENSEN, 2010, p. 52) – a teacher was torn between believing that her students – from low-income families with low level of education, and difficulties in keeping up with their children’s studies – should receive quality education that would allow them to get into college, by using distinct methodologies and requiring maximum learning capability, with strict assessments, which, sometimes, included grade failure; and was pressured by coworkers, the school management, government education offices to reduce the rate of grade failures – which included to go easy on assessments, reducing the level of requirements and depth of content –, so that the school would receive a better evaluation and more government funds.

and were mentioned by two groups only. The responsibility for performing ethically was mentioned by one of the groups only. Thus, when thinking about responsibilities in education, the participants primordially recalled performance in class, which includes the teacher's routine tasks, teaching and learning processes, and relationship with students, and the aspects that go beyond the school were only mentioned on few occasions.

On a second stage of Activity 3, the groups were supposed to indicate situations in which responsibility conflicts were involved, and to suggest solutions. Two groups mentioned the conflict between school and families, two other groups mentioned teaching difficulties with special education needs, one group brought up indiscipline issues, and the last group indicated the conflicts in the relationship with different people in the work environment. Apart from one group, all others recommended the dialogue between teacher and parents/guardians as part of the solutions, and, in some cases, external factors, such as lack of school conditions, need for support from the management, crowded classes, and flaws in the education system were addressed, followed by suggestions that the conflicts mentioned go beyond the responsibilities and possibilities of in-class teaching professionals.

For Activity 4, the participants were to position themselves regarding the influence (or lack thereof) enjoyment in teaching can have in the quality of pedagogical work. Most of them expressed that, in order to obtain excellence, enjoyment is not needed, particularly because the job does not meet a desire or a search for satisfaction, but a necessity: "You may be a professional, you don't have to like it, it's your profession" (Úrsula); "The need for survival makes you do any job well, because you need to work, so, its your responsibility" (Samantha). Later, the group pointed out that enjoyment can emerge even as you work as a consequence of a good performance, good results, in the case of the students' learning process, but not as a prior and necessary condition, as exemplified next: "Work is not something you enjoy [...] I can start an activity I don't like, but my commitment leads me to perform it with excellence, and I may end up enjoying what I did" (Walquíria). Thus, for the participants, the work of a "good teacher" is detached from the engagement dimension, since excellence and, in a way, ethics as well, would mainly depend on professionalism, commitment, and responsibility.

Finally, Activity 5 requested that the participants individually wrote a letter to an inspirational person, either close to or far from them in their relationship circle, who has had an influence in their choice of becoming an educator. Seven participants (39 percent of them) wrote letters to family members, such as spouse, mother, father, thanking them for the support and encouragement given during the training process, with few allusions to work. However, most of them identified professionals who were important in their trajectories, such as Basic Education or University teachers, educators with whom they have worked, and highlighted their admiration for them and for aspects of those people's work that motivated them and gave meaning to their careers. By thinking about inspirational people, they were able to ponder on the positive values, actions, and feelings associated with the profession, related to concerns about the students, social issues, ethical, affective, and respectful coexistence, or even changing the life conditions of people and the society. Thus, the letters highlighted memories, experiences, and meaningful relationships that were indicated as inspiring for choosing the area of Pedagogy and the work they wish to carry out.

Analysis and discussion

By pondering on Good Work in Pedagogy, by means of activities based on the GoodWork Toolkit, the participants were able to think about their own training process, as well as their (future) performance in education. Based on that, it was possible to verify that, for the most part, the understanding about work done by a “good teacher” is grounded on aspects linked to excellence, which, in the framework adopted here, is understood as the knowledge and techniques necessary for performing the craft, which encompasses consistent training so that the work objectives are attained with quality (GARDNER, 2010). Thus, they highlight the acquisition (initial and continued) of theoretical and methodological knowledge that is necessary for developing education processes and routine pedagogical practices specifically related to teaching and learning.

The strong emphasis put on excellence, with special relevance to knowledge, on which performing the functions is based, may partially be explained by the struggles faced in the search for the scientific recognition of the Pedagogy field, so that it is acknowledged as an Education Science, as teaching fundament (LIBÁNEO, 2005). Another aspect to be considered has its historical roots in the social structure of the teaching activity, particularly within the Brazilian context, where it was marked by the idea of calling, mission or charge, feminization, and consequent devaluation (BARRETTO, 2010; BUENO; CATANI; SOUZA, 2003; CAMPOS; SILVA, 2002; LOPES, 2012; NÓVOA, 1991). This is even stronger when considering the Early years and Primary Education, on which the degree in Pedagogy mostly focus, that still struggles to demarcate its identity and defend a sound formation of specific types of knowledge on the professional’s part. Thus, Pedagogy is marked by a process of strengthening its scientific aspects and struggle for the professionalization and appreciation of the teaching profession, which is pervaded by a series of obstacles and difficulties (CUNHA, 1999; OLIVEIRA, 2008; WEBER, 2003), discussions that have certainly been present in the participants’ training process.

Furthermore, the results suggest that, for the participants, excellence at work is only effective when connected to the ethical dimension, at least with regard to the attention that should be given to the students’ learning process, since our data show a constant concern about responsibilities and commitments in the teaching and learning processes. Research on “good work” consider that the professional identity of educators cannot be dissociated from the benefits they provide to other people, so that the work is not limited to the prescribed tasks but, instead, guided by the responsibility they feel toward their students, an element placed in the foreground by these individuals (BARENSEN, 2009; GARDNER, 2009). Those considerations seem to justify the importance given to such ethics-linked aspect, as the participants understand it, and they think that the teaching activity should materialize in the student’s learning process, meaning that it implies a responsibility toward the student, and going beyond simply fulfilling or performing the activities is defined as typical to the teaching professional.

Indeed, the detachment between Pedagogy and ethics is highlighted by several authors, with historical approach between both since the Greek Paideia (ARROYO, 2007; FREIRE, 1996; CAETANO, 2017; MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017, 2020). Considering that the

principle of ethics in Good Work includes a glance at the impact on other people (GARDNER, 2009), we understand that the attention to the student's well-being that is present in the participants' understanding somehow expresses teaching ethical responsibilities, which is in line with what Freire *et al.* (2012) and Macedo e Caetano (2017) point out. However, we believe that the debates on ethics in the teaching profession should go beyond that, since it is about thinking the same way about responsibility and contribution to the world (GARDNER, 2009), social changes desired, and the political function of education (FREIRE, 1996; CAETANO, 2017; MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017; SASTRE, 2018), which, ultimately, can feed the personal meaning given to the teaching practice, as well as the search for excellence, as we take on the responsibility for teaching better classes, in addition to better planning lessons and curriculum (MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017).

Despite the indispensability of the ethics dimension for the educational work, several authors have indicated that ethics formation, teachers and students alike in performing their functions, is usually scarce, implied, or silenced (ARAÚJO, 2003; ESTRELA; CAETANO, 2012; MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017). This could explain the fact that only one group in our research directly mentions ethics as part of teaching responsibilities (Activity 3), for instance. Still in this regard, Gatti *et al.* (2019) verified a demand, in the training of teachers, for expanding a conscious, reflexive practice of the political commitment imbricated in the pedagogical practice. Thus, the intention is to connect theory and practice, not under an individualist view, but one that is wide, collective, and understands the social and changing nature of education.

The Good Work construct consists of the forces and relationships of different spheres in a relationship of reciprocity, in which possibilities, restrictions, and changes are defined both by the context and by the action of individuals (GARDNER, 2010, 2009; NAKAMURA, 2010). In that regard, we point out that, when expressing elements linked to work excellence and ethics, the participants' understanding tends to focus on aspects of routine pedagogical practices, that is, within the scope of the individual and that of the activity *per se*, with few allusions to the wider sphere of education or the society. For instance, few were the mentions to the work's possible contributions to and influences on social issues or those that can promote changes in the community, in the education field, or in the society. Such aspect referring to the social and political commitment of Pedagogy (FREIRE, 1996; CAETANO, 2017; GATTI *et al.*, 2019; ZEICHNER, 2008) seem to have been rarely mentioned in discussions, despite being part of the participants' understanding and professional identity. Simultaneously, personal commitment and effort are seen as essential and, in some cases, even as factors that make it possible to overcome obstacles arising from the broader context, within a logic in which training and qualification run the risk of being left to the individual (SEIDMANN, 2015).

Furthermore, aspects that go beyond the scope of the classroom and that of the school, when pointed out, are mostly meant as obstacles and difficulties (Activities 2 and 3), with the mention of flaws in the educational system and instances (school management and education offices), the precarious conditions the schools, the social context of teachers, and, mostly, the conflicts between school and family. Investigations on the emotional dimension in teaching conducted in Brazil and Portugal suggest that the relationship with

out-of-class instances, such as family, school management, or education policies, are indeed aspects that trigger negative emotions and feelings (MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017; BAHIA *et al.*, 2013). The trend identified in our data may mean a dynamic of culpability of other instances and of transference of responsibility in the face of difficulties, particularly when it comes to the relationship with students’ families. Barendsen (2009) highlights that, in general, education professionals understand that they take on demands that are neglected by students’ families and other institutions, and that they go beyond the teacher’s responsibilities. Furthermore, research indicates the conflicts existing in the school/ family relationship with a tendency to blame parents, who are seen as responsible for learning and behavior difficulties their children show (OLIVEIRA; MARINHO-ARAÚJO, 2010; RIBEIRO; ANDRADE, 2006; SILVEIRA; WAGNER, 2009).

In turn, the results may suggest a misalignment of interests, priorities, and values that permeate each one of the spheres on which “good work” depends, thus bringing not just obstacles to its effectiveness, but also hindering the identification of the excellence, ethics, and engagement criteria in the professional activity (GARDNER, 2010, 2009). As mentioned earlier, the contemporary context and the Education field itself have been marked by inequalities and by an individualistic logic that arises from capital and market forces, whose contradictions and difficulties are reflected on pedagogical training, as well as on the effectiveness of an education based on ethical principles and oriented to social fairness (CASTELLS, 2018; DINIZ-PEREIRA, 2019; MONFREDINI, 2013; SASTRE, 2018; ZEICHNER, 2008).

Thus, the engagement dimension is the third component of Good Work, seemingly the least mentioned dimension, and that was denied sometimes (Activity 4). We understand that such comprehension mostly arises from the participants’ socioeconomic reality to whom work is much more of a necessity than a choice – and even less of a reason for enjoyment. It is worth pointing out that the profile of the public served by the university in which this research was conducted, as well as that of the Pedagogy students across the country, is marked by socioeconomic conditions and cultural background restricted to family members and the students themselves, who often need do balance work and school (GATTI *et al.*, 2019; RISTOFF, 2013). Surveys conducted with young Brazilians indicate that, in general, focus on work does not necessarily come from ethical meaning or personal achievement, but from a sense of urgency and necessity, including to guarantee their survival (CORROCHANO, 2018; GUIMARÃES, 2005). Also, in the US, Easley (2014) acknowledges the difficulty in addressing work satisfaction among the young population from popular social classes, given the need that is associated with working.

As pointed out earlier, we should also consider that the pedagogical field, based on the increased recognition and professionalization, seeks to overcome the representations of teaching as a calling and mission, that is, a result of the inclinations and charges inherent to the individual (mostly women), in which the world of affection stands out, since, in these cases, love, dedication, and commitment end up being seen as components that guarantee the performance of the functions (BARRETTO, 2010; GATTI *et al.*, 2019; LOPES, 2012; NÓVOA, 1991; SEIDMANN, 2015). Furthermore, in a culture that values rationality and technique, the emotional and affective dimension of teaching has been left in the background, even if teachers themselves acknowledge the presence and importance

of emotions in the relationships established. Only in the past few decades did the research on the challenges faced by novice teachers, career stages, and professional (dis)satisfaction started to emphasize emotions and feelings involved in teaching (FREIRE *et al.*, 2013; BAHIA *et al.*, 2013).

Our data reveals some aspects of engagement, particularly in the reflections in Activity 5, which was oriented to that dimension, when thinking about an exemplary model (BARENSEN, 2009; FISCHMAN *et al.*, 2005; FISCHMAN; BARENSEN, 2009), that is, someone whose work has inspired the involvement in Pedagogy, the participants evoked positive memories, experiences, and relationships that were seen as the inspiration and reason for engaging in education, reflecting on the personal meaning of work, and the satisfaction that permeates the performance of the profession.

Surveys have highlighted that the coexistence and emotional ties with exemplary models and people may contribute to the engagement in actions and activities of moral and ethical nature, including Good Work (DAMON, 1995, 2009; FISCHMAN *et al.*, 2005; FISCHMAN; BARENSEN, 2009; PARRA, 2018). Furthermore, pondering on the emotional aspects involved in education work, as well as the positive feelings that emerge from the relationship with the students, can help to give new meanings to some of the attributes associated with the idea of calling, such as intuition and creativity, thus reinforcing the importance of personal satisfaction, commitment, and dedication, which are so relevant within a context of disrepute in the field, in addition to restricting excessive regulation and the technicality of the profession (BARRETTO, 2010; GATTI *et al.*, 2019; MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017, 2020). Finally, under a bolder view, it is worth questioning whether the debates on engagement within the Good Work context would be able to contribute to giving a new meaning to the vocation speech, if they are seen as detached from the principles of ethics and excellence. In other words, considering the knowledge, theoretical and methodological training, ethical, social, and political commitment needed for performing the pedagogical work, the satisfaction and the meaning of work can stimulate greater engagement from individuals in their functions, and develop a sense of direction and responsibility, in order to use their knowledge when fulfilling a mission that connects personal projects and social and collective interests (DAMON, 2009; DAMON *et al.*, 2005; GARDNER, 2010).

Final considerations

In this article, we sought to identify how the dimensions of ethics, excellence, and engagement are present in the understanding of students of the Pedagogy licentiate course, based on the GoodWork Toolkit activities. The results indicate that issues related to excellence and ethics, the latter in a somewhat restricted bias, are recurrently activated, despite being primordially centered in individual components and the scope of the classroom and the school. Thus, theoretical and methodological knowledge, constant training, personal commitment, and concern with students' learning abilities are frequently mentioned elements. In turn, when understanding the performance of the "good teacher", aspects related to social function, political commitment nested in the education practice,

and possible contributions of the professional’s performance to changing the society emerge less often, thus highlighting a limited notion of professional ethics. When the elements that transcend the activity’s scope, that is, beyond the classroom and the school, are mentioned, they are seen as obstacles to the action, in a dynamic that suggest not just the misalignment of objectives, principles, and values prioritized by the different spheres involved in the work, but that can also be understood as a tendency to transfer responsibility and culpability to other instances.

In turn, the engagement dimension, which is related to enjoyment, satisfaction, and meaning attributed to the profession, emerges as the weakest link of “good work”, as the participants understand it. Whether due to a culture that prioritizes reason over emotion or by the very historical constitution of Pedagogy, which fights for the appreciation of specific knowledge in order to overcome representations that emphasize the idea of mission and charge, or even by socioeconomic conditions that mark the students’ trajectory, to whom work is more of a necessity and of a source of sustenance than a path to personal accomplishment, the engagement dimension seems to stay in the background. Thus, a contraposition seems to exist between excellence, professionalization, and knowledge on the one hand, and emotional aspects, which bring satisfaction and attribute meaning to work on the other hand. At any rate, the participants acknowledge the positive feelings and motivations for their involvement in Pedagogy in the performance of exemplary people that inspire them.

In Brazil, research based on the “good work” concept are still at an early stage, and no systematized experiences were identified in the use of the GoodWork Toolkit⁷. Thus, we are aware of this study’s limitations, based on its exploratory nature and context specificities in which it was produced, and the importance of new investigations conducted with young people in training and professionals from distinct fields of knowledge, in order to highlight the contributions the notion of “good work” can bring to human and professional development in our country, the need for adapting and problematize the principles that fundament this concept, and the GoodWork Toolkit activities, in addition to the coherence and relevance of such theoretical and methodological bases for the Brazilian context. Still, based on our analyses, we can come to some considerations about pedagogical training.

First, we point out as relevant the stronger emphasis put on collective aspects and impacts on education processes in communities and in the society by an approach that allows the participants to reflect beyond individual and in-class activities. This process should involve both the clarification of personal values, beliefs, and objectives, and the awareness of the forces, power relations and structures that permeate society and education. In this movement, individualist perspectives focused on personal struggles and meritocracy should be problematized toward the understandings and practices that are based on collectivity, social fairness, acknowledgement of diversity, and on overcoming inequalities (ARROYO, 2007; GATTI *et al.*, 2019; SASTRE, 2018; CAETANO,

7- Even within the North American context, although different practices and investigations are being conducted to point out the GoodWork Toolkit’s limits and possibilities (PETERSON; MUCINSKAS; GARDNER, 2016; FISCHMAN; BARENDSEN, 2009, 2010; FISCHMAN; GARDNER, 2009), Mucinskas and Gardner (2013) acknowledge the difficulty in measuring the results of such initiatives in the short run.

2017; SEIDMANN, 2015; ZEICHNER, 2008). Although such discussions have already been present in academic debates, in schools, and in the training of teachers, we cannot dismiss the strength with which the speeches of the capitalist society influence the development of individuals and professional identity, thus justifying the effort toward educators being able to overcome the limitations and challenges imposed while aware of their responsibilities and the impacts of their work on the society and on other spheres that involve the education processes.

In this regard, we highlight the importance of ethical teacher training processes that start from the problems of the teachers themselves, considering that such initiatives, based on dialogue, multi-reference of theoretical sources, connection between theory and practice, and among rational and emotional/intuitive fundamentals, have promoted more open, flexible, and questioning attitudes on the teachers' part, favoring a collective dimension and a commitment to ethics-oriented actions (CAETANO, 2017; ESTRELA; CAETANO, 2012). At this point, we highlight that the discussions on ethics and professional competence within the context of pedagogical training (MACEDO; CAETANO, 2017, 2020) can function as an interesting landmark in the construction of dialogues, approaches, and inquiries regarding the concept of "good work".

Second, we argue that, in the formative trajectory, future educators can dive deeper into engagement-related debates, in order to foment aspects, such as personal achievement and meaning of work, particularly within a context in which it is urgent to value the teaching profession and the prestige of teaching careers. It is not about emphasizing commitment, dedication, and feelings, such as love and passion for the work, to the detriment of professionalization and ethics needed to Pedagogy, but, rather, giving new meanings to concepts, such as affectivity, creativity, and intuition, which may actually help build new practices to overcome inequalities, injustices, and contradictions of the contemporary context (BARRETTO, 2010; CASTELLS, 2018; SASTRE, 2018; ZEICHNER, 2008). Furthermore, a glance at the engagement dimension allows us to contemplate not just personal motivation and meaning, but also the sense of direction and responsibility that should guide involvement with work, thus favoring a performance that connects personal and collective projects that transcend more immediate individual interests (DAMON, 2009; DAMON *et al.*, 2005).

Accordingly, and by referring to the GoodWork Toolkit proposition, we believe that activities, such as (auto)biographies and trajectories of reference professionals, memories, and schooling experiences, real moral dilemmas of professional practice, in addition to reflecting on feelings, emotions and conflicts experienced in internships or work in the area, can constitute important training instruments, which even allow the mobilization of concepts, theoretical knowledge, values and other types of content (BUENO; CATANI; SOUZA, 2003; GATTI *et al.*, 2019; FISCHMAN; BARENDSEN, 2009; PARRA, 2018; SASTRE, 2018; FREIRE *et al.*, 2012). It is certain that Pedagogy and education appreciation is not done without effective government policies, without objective conditions that include good training, proper pay, infrastructure, among others, which can actually be achieved by the professional class itself. But the initiatives of reflexive nature suggested here, which are oriented to the meaning of work and to building professional identity and

ethics, profession-related self-image, values, and beliefs may contribute to making more proficient, qualified, ethical, and solidary education practices effective.

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