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Psychological profiles in the vocational and technical education: formation and actions in federal institutes

Perfil de psicólogos na educação profissional e tecnológica: formação e atuação em institutos federais

Lúgia Rocha Cavalcante Feitosa¹ , Claisy Maria Marinho-Araujo² 

¹ Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Departamento de Psicologia, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Psicologia. Florianópolis, SC, Brasil.

² Universidade de Brasília, Instituto de Psicologia, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Psicologia. Brasília, DF, Brasil. Correspondence to: C. M. MARINHO-ARAÚJO. E-mail: <claisy@unb.br>.

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Abstract

Objective

This study aims to characterize the psychological profiles of Psychologists who are active in the Vocational and Technological Education in Brazil.

Method

A total of 93 psychologists from Federal Institutes participated in the study. The data were collected in a survey online about these professionals' education and practice.

Results

The results indicated the prevalence of psychologists active in the Northeast region, aged between 31 and 40 years, with education level up to specialization and having up to five years of work experience in their relevant institutions. With what concerns their activity, psychologists monitor students education trajectory and the education processes with the teachers. They also participate in initiatives to help the permanence and inclusion of the students in the academic setting.

Conclusion

The challenge facing these professionals is the construction of initiatives based on human development processes which, in a critical and broader way, comprehend and value the intersections between academic and professional development that are present in vocational education.

Keywords: Job description; Education, professional; School psychology.

Resumo

Objetivo

Este estudo teve por objetivo caracterizar o perfil de psicólogos que atuam na Educação Profissional e Tecnológica no Brasil.

Método

Participaram do estudo 93 psicólogos de Institutos Federais. Os dados foram coletados por meio de questionário online sobre a formação e prática desses profissionais.

Resultados

Os resultados apontam a prevalência de psicólogas da região Nordeste entre 31 e 40 anos, com formação em nível de especialização e até cinco anos de atuação nos seus respectivos campi. No âmbito da atuação, as psicólogas acompanham as trajetórias escolares de estudantes e os processos educacionais junto aos docentes, bem como na participação em ações em favor da permanência e inclusão dos estudantes no contexto acadêmico.

Conclusão

O desafio para a atuação dessas profissionais está em construir ações pautadas em referenciais de processos de desenvolvimento humano que, de forma crítica e ampliada, compreendam e valorizem as interseções entre a formação acadêmica e profissional presentes no ensino profissionalizante.

Palavras-chave: Perfil profissional; Educação profissionalizante; Psicologia escolar.

Psychologists training and performance in the educational framework are historically important subjects for the spreading of knowledge, research and practice in the area of School Psychology. For more than three decades, different associations, research groups and professional entities representing Psychology have advocated the presence of these professionals together with policies making access, permanence, inclusion and qualified and civic-minded training within the academic community more democratic (Marinho-Araujo, 2016).

In Brazil, in the framework of Vocational and Technological Education, the presence of psychologists has been recorded since the 1980s (Feitosa & Marinho-Araujo, 2016). More recently, empirical and theoretical research papers have addressed the context of vocational education considering it favorable to the intervention of a school psychologist (Feitosa, 2017; Feitosa & Marinho-Araujo, 2016; Prediger & Silva, 2014; Titon & Zanella, 2018). However, despite acknowledging the importance of this professional, discussions about the psychologist's profile in the professional educational framework is still incipient in local studies, especially with regard to the training and performance of psychologists in the Institutos Federais de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia (IFET, Federal Institutes of Education, Science and Technology). On the other hand, international studies on this topic have already been published, such as those of Feitosa et al. (2020), Jimerson et al. (2008), Mendes et al. (2015).

One of the first studies on the training and performance of Brazilian psychologists was carried out in the 1980s (Bastos & Gomide, 1989). National in scope and supported by the Federal Council of Psychology, the authors reviewed a sample of 2,448 professionals. The results showed that, among psychologists active in the job market, the majority (60.7%) worked in a clinical setting, practicing individual psychotherapy and using psychological tests; the presence of psychologists in the school area came third (16.5%) among the largest fields of professional activity. In that survey, it was also found that most professionals worked under psychoanalytic guidance in the most different practice fields (clinical, organizational, education).

Later, using a similar approach, Bastos and Gondim (2010) conducted a study on the outlook of psychologists' work in Brazil. The results also revealed a predominance of professional activity in the clinical area. The authors concluded that the set of activities performed by psychologists still maintains similarities with the practices of this category developed between the 1980s and 2000s. This finding indicates that, in the training of psychologists, there are still outstanding areas to the detriment of others in the undergraduate curriculum. This can contribute in making the clinical focus so predominant in the Brazilian educational institutions.

Still from this perspective of mapping Brazilian psychology, Borges-Andrade et al. (2015) discussed the development of the professional field and training of psychologists at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The results show the growth of Psychology's areas of activity, which, despite the weaknesses imposed by the precariousness of the job market, has gained new services and benefited the population. Even with the growth in the number of professionals, some "bottlenecks" were identified in the training and professional insertion domains namely: (a) basic training with the adoption of multiple references that do not interact in their curricula and weaken the work of psychologists; (b) growth in the postgraduate offer that does not keep up with the reality of undergraduate courses and the job market; and (c) loss of space for initiatives in the field of education.

More specifically about the training of school psychologists in Brazil, the bibliographical review by Santos and Toassa (2015) revealed that, in studies on the topic conducted in the last 20 years, school psychology was not a priority in the initial training of psychologists. Therefore, professional performance may have been built exclusively based on the hegemonic model of individualized intervention, being guided by the diagnosis of students' school complaints. This model was disseminated when Psychology was still positioned in this country as a science and profession and remained in the psychological practices in the educational context.

Santos and Toassa (2015) also highlighted the need to investigate and discuss the curricula and methodology adopted in the teaching of School Psychology and in the supervision of student practices in connection with the educational setting. The authors argue that discussing training and performance is an important topic for rethinking the conception of psychology, as well as the way in which School Psychology is advertised as a knowledge area.

Although the studies presented so far anticipate challenging realities in the psychologists' training and professional performance in the educational framework, the scientific literature issued between the years 2008 and 2014 has pointed out that, within the scope of Vocational and Technological Education, the number of psychologists has been progressively increasing (Feitosa, 2017). In this connection, it appears that the performance of these professionals can, in addition to providing a critical reflection between Psychology and the educational process, help discuss the contribution to the development of citizenship and students' vocational training in the school community.

In this connection, the challenge for an expanded role of the psychologist is both to consider the academic journey offered to students to be shared between teaching, research and extension at different levels of education and areas of training, and to recognize the heterogeneity of students' profile and the potential of the articulation between academic training and vocational training. Given these particularities, psychological intervention can be planned based on the proposal of actions with educational players, in accordance with the assumptions set forth in Critical Psychology (Martín-Baró, 1997; Parker, 2014) and the commitment to social and institutional demands (Guzzo, 2003; Marinho-Araujo, 2010, 2014).

In the reality of vocational education and higher education at the Federal Institutes, psychologists have traditionally worked in the Academic Support and Student Assistance departments (Feitosa, 2017). In these areas, the work of these professionals is focused on actions involving teaching and learning, as well as aspects of student well-being and inclusive education throughout the academic and vocational training.

To this end, according to Marinho-Araujo (2014), critical School Psychology advocates the need to expand the roles, responsibilities and skills of the specific professionals. According to this

perspective, the intervention is constituted in and by the promotion of the human development of the academic community; therefore, it is necessary that professional performance be a factor in the intentional mobilization of different cognitive, technical, ethical and aesthetic resources among educational players. Based on this mobilization, the expanded intervention will allow the construction and reconstruction of theoretical-methodological skills which are required for the planning and design of academic activities (Marinho-Araujo, 2014).

Considering the framework of Vocational and Technological Education, it is believed that the expanded and institutional intervention of School Psychology can build mediation processes – together with educational players – that result in the articulation between academic training and training for students' work. By proposing activities that involve educational players, the school psychologist can trigger processes of individual awareness and mobilization in the face of situations that make up students' academic daily lives. In order for the activities developed to be permeated by intentions and to involve the largest number of people who make up this institutional collective, such activities must be distanced from the conceptions of individualizing practices that can, on the one hand, pay attention only to issues of the students' academic performance and, on the other hand, be restricted to promoting the students' professional career.

It is worth highlighting that the expanded role of the school psychologist, based on critical School Psychology, can in fact be put into practice as long as the professional in the area has resources capable of breaking with "crystallizing" conceptions about development and learning, changing the focus of school failure towards a culture of success, from the replacement of the disease paradigm to that of psychological health, in the construction of intervention strategies" (Marinho-Araujo, 2005, p. 97). In this connection, the present study recognizes that, to ensure the success of this theoretical-methodological proposal in the framework of Vocational and Technological Education, it is necessary, initially, to characterize the profile of the psychologists who work in the Federal Institutes in Brazil, within the scope of their training and practice. Next, the methodological path and the main results yielded by the survey of the school psychologists' sociodemographic and professional characteristics in such educational spaces should be discussed.

Method

A total of ninety-three school psychologists from the Federal Institutes participated in this study; there was at least one professional from each Brazilian state and the Federal District. For the data collection process, the instrument used was an electronic questionnaire, stored on a website designed exclusively for sharing the experience between psychologists from the Federal Institutes. The research was accepted by the Ethics Committee, opinion number 24717514.2.0000.5540, whose assessment guided the signing of the Free and Informed Consent Form (FICF) by the participants of this study. The questionnaire consisted of 6 multiple-choice questions to characterize the participants regarding age, gender, level of training, place and work, time working as a school psychologist at the Federal Institute, and the department where the participant was assigned.

Data were collected electronically via a form, and the filling out of the questionnaire took around 5 minutes. The form remained open for completion between April and July 2016. The data were reviewed using descriptive analyses (percentage analysis, mean and standard deviation) and discussed based on studies on the professional profile of psychologists and the basics of School Psychology.

Results

In this study, we can highlight the insertion of psychologists from each Brazilian state and region and, also, the rate considering the total number of school psychologists in the country. For the purpose of contextualizing the sample, regions with the highest and lowest number of these professionals were highlighted.

Regarding the distribution of school psychologists in the IFET by region, the results indicate that the Northeast region has the highest concentration of these professionals – around 171 psychologists, which represent 37.75% of the total. In this region, Bahia is the state with the highest number of psychologists working in Federal Institutes, accounting for 30 (6.62%) school psychologists. The state of Ceará appeared as the second largest in number of professionals, with 26 (5.74%) school psychologists.

The North region had the lowest number of school psychologists among the states in the same territorial zone and the state of Amazonas had the highest number of professionals in the region, with 16 (3.53%) psychologists in the Federal Institutes. In turn, the states of Amapá and Roraima had the lowest representation of School Psychology in vocational education in the region, with only 3 (0.66%) professionals in the area.

Out of this number of registered professionals, 93 psychologists accepted the invitation to participate in the survey of the work profile in the IFETs. With the help of the sociodemographic and professional questionnaire, we were able to characterize in advance the profile of school psychologists. The dimensions considered were gender, age group, level of training, IFET where the professional works, time working at IFET, and department where active.

Regarding the distribution of the survey subjects in the sample by gender, Table 1 summarizes the prevalence of female participants represented by 80 professionals (86%) and male, 13 (14%) school psychologists.

Table 1

Number of Brazilian of Federal Institutes of Education, Science and Technology school psychologists by gender (n = 93)

Gender	Frequency	%
Female	80	86.00
Male	13	14.00

Regarding the age group, Table 2 presents the distribution by age, mean and standard deviation of the aforementioned professionals. The average age of school psychologists was 34.4 years old, with a standard deviation of 7.8. Based on the standard deviation, it is evident that there is a considerable variation in age in the sample.

Table 2

Age range, mean age and standard deviation of Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology school psychologists in Brazil (n = 93)

Age group	Frequency	%	M (age)	SD
Up to 30 years	36	38.7	34.4 years old	7.8 years old
Between 31 and 40 years old	39	42.0		
Over 40 years old	17	18.3		
Not informed	1	1.0		

As to the time working in the IFET, Table 3 shows the intervals corresponding to the working time of school psychologists in these educational spaces. We can see that the average time of work of these participants is 4.7 years, varying between 1 incomplete year and a little over 9 years in service.

Table 3

Working time, average time and standard deviation of school psychologists in Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology (n = 93)

Working time	Frequency	%	M (time)	SD
Less than 1 year	5	5.4	4.7 years old	4.7 years old
Between 1 and 5 years	64	68.8		
Between 6 and 10 years old	16	17.2		
More than 10 years	8	8.6		

Regarding the level of training of the school psychologists who made up the research sample, Table 4 presents the data obtained in relation to the participants' education. According to these data, it was verified that the majority of the professionals had a Specialization title (32.3%).

Table 4

Level of training of Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology school psychologists in Brazil (n = 93)

Education	Frequency	%
Graduation	6	6.5
Specialization	30	32.3
Master's degree	24	25.8
Incomplete master's degree	19	20.4
Doctorate degree	5	5.4
Incomplete doctorate	8	8.6
Not informed	1	1.1

In addition to professional and training characteristics, the most representative areas of school psychologists' work in Brazilian IFETs were identified. In this study, 39 (41.9%) school psychologists indicated that they work in Academic Support for Students on campus. In these spaces, school psychologists work directly with the different demands of students in Basic Technical Education, Youth and Adult Education and Higher Education.

In the area of Student Assistance, the study recorded the presence of 49 (52.7%) school psychologists. In this sector, these professionals work to implement policies to promote access, permanence and development of students in situations of economic vulnerability, with disabilities, and also in curricular adaptation considering an inclusive education (Feitosa, 2017). The focus also remains aligned with the perspective of academic performance, inclusion and student well-being in the school environment.

It is worth highlighting that, in this study, in addition to academic support and student assistance, there was also a record of professionals who work, concomitantly, in the Human Resources (1) and Health (2) sectors of the IFETs. These assignments were for the professional to carry out at his/her place of work psychological practices under the non-exclusive focus of School Psychology.

Considering the academic papers referring to the characteristics of the training and performance of psychologists in Brazil and of the critical School Psychology, the main analyses of

the professional profile of school psychologists working for the Federal Institutes of Education, Science and Technology are discussed. The information obtained through this survey allowed us to glimpse the potential of these professionals' performance in connection with the Vocational and Technological Education.

Discussion

The survey on the profile of school psychologists in the Vocational and Technological Education Institutions allowed us to systematize and review the main characteristics relating to gender, age group, level of training, time working and departments of activity that appear as constituent elements of the profile of these professionals in the IFETs. Even though these data are restricted to a period and to a portion of the reality of psychologists' work in the country, the potential outlook of School Psychology's work in IFET can be characterized.

For this study, the professional profile concept adopted is based on the historical-cultural perspective (Marinho-Araujo, 2007; Nunes, 2016). In this connection, the profile includes a range of knowledge, skills, abilities, personal elements, values and subjective constructions that, when developed over historical and cultural milestones, are combined with the particularities of the school psychologist's practice (Marinho-Araujo, 2007).

For Marinho-Araujo (2007), in the relationship built between the professional and the educational context, this profile can be improved in a dynamic and aggregating way. Thus, through different relationships and historical contexts, psychologists' training and practice are made up of objective and culturally shared elements throughout their professional activities. Based on this perspective, data on the sociodemographic and professional aspects of IFET's psychologists dialogue with the contributions of the critical studies in School Psychology.

Regarding the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants in this study, in terms of gender, it was identified that the prevalence of female psychologists working in Federal Institutes is similar to studies on the professional profile of the respective area in Brazil (Bastos & Gondim, 2010; Departamento Intersindical de Estatística e Estudos Socioeconômicos [DIEESE], 2016). According to Bastos and Gondim (2010), in the first decade of the years 2000s, more than 80% of psychology professionals were female. Confirming this prevalence, the report requested by the Federal Council of Psychology on the insertion of psychologists in the Brazilian job market showed that women are the majority among psychologists, representing 90% (132,000) of the total number of psychologists active in the country (DIEESE, 2016).

Regarding the age range, school psychologists from the Federal Institutes participating in this research have an average age similar to the majority of psychologists in Brazil. According to the Inter-Union Department of Statistics and Socioeconomic Studies (DIEESE, 2016), 84.6% (124,114) of these professionals are 30 years old or over. In relation to the Federal Institutes, the sample of participants in the present study consisted, in its majority (80.7%), of school psychologists aged between 30 and 40 years. In line with the survey presented by DIEESE (2016), in the context of Vocational and Technological Education, there is still a technical body of young professionals working in the field of Psychology. It is important to highlight that the expansion of the Federal Institutes may also have contributed to the significant increase in vacancies for these professionals and that, in a way, it served as an opportunity for many recently graduated psychologists to enter the job market. This analysis corresponds to the survey on the insertion of psychologists in the Brazilian job market reported by DIEESE (2016).

Regarding the length of time school psychologists have worked at IFET, the results of this study showed that the average length of time these professionals have actually worked on different Brazilian campuses was concentrated at the 5-year mark. Although these data can be interpreted as a relatively recent performance in Vocational and Technological Education in this country, the presence of psychologists among the technical staff of Technical Schools and Federal Centers, which are currently known as Federal Institutes in most Brazilian regions, has already been recorded since the end of the 1980s.

What can also justify the significant number of newly arrived psychologists at the Federal Institutes is the restructuring of the career of the “area psychologist” (Ministério da Educação [MEC], 2005) and the large-scale expansion of the Federal Institutes, between 2008 and 2012, which may have contributed significantly to the increase in the number of positions available, public competitions and, consequently, the appointments of school psychologists in this context (Feitosa & Marinho-Araujo, 2016). In this connection, it was observed that the majority of participants who took part in this research started working at a Federal Institute in mid-2010.

Although it may represent a reasonable period of adaptation for the professional in the work context, the school psychologist may still have come across scenarios of campuses under construction, institutional political changes and strengthening of the composition of the workforce in an IFET. In this sense, it was considered that most of these professionals, in addition to having a mostly young professional profile, are also newly inserted professionally in the context of Vocational and Technological Education.

The results regarding the level of training of school psychologists of the Federal Institutes reveal a growing movement of these professionals seeking to improve their technical and practical skills. Continuing training has been a relevant topic for all Vocational and Technological Education professionals.

In terms of positions and careers for administrative technicians in education (MEC, 2005), which includes psychologists from the Federal Institutes, there is a policy of encouraging professional qualification, especially in postgraduate studies and continuing education. In our study, we verified that the subjects investigated had a postgraduate degree (63.5%); therefore, it is believed that this institutional policy effectively contributes to these professionals seeking opportunities for improvement while they are working at the Federal Institutes.

Data on the training of school psychologists at the Federal Institutes also match the results of the study on the development of Brazilian psychology conducted by Borges-Andrade et al. (2015). According to the authors, the majority of psychologists who work in the educational interface already have postgraduate degrees (specialization), differentiating themselves from professionals who work in the clinical, organizational and work areas.

Still on the results brought by the study of Borges-Andrade et al. (2015), less than 10% of the professionals interviewed have a master’s or doctorate degree. These data, in turn, differ from what was identified in the reality of the Federal Institutes. According to Table 4, there is a significant number of post-graduate school psychologists 24 of which (25.8%) have completed and 19 (20.2%) are about to complete the requirements for their Master’s degree.

Given the description of aspects relating to the presence and performance of school psychologists in Federal Institutes, we can highlight an administrative structure in the process of solidification and institutional policies sensitive to the contributions of School Psychology. According to the job description “Area Psychologist” of the Federal Educational Institutions, which includes the IFET school psychologists, the professional is in charge of developing actions of a generalist

nature that involve the emotional and social monitoring of individuals and groups that constitute educational organizations and also monitoring teaching, research and extension activities (MEC, 2005).

The aforementioned job description involves the most different areas of Psychology. In these technical guidelines, specificities of the work of clinical, education and organizational psychologists are identified simultaneously. Although this content generates a series of questions about what actually makes up the psychologist's work in an educational context, it is still the main legal framework that has subsidized numerous public competition notices and even proposals for work in School Psychology in the context of Vocational and Technological Education.

In view of the above, it is acknowledged that it is necessary to update the aforementioned legal provision, considering the potential of psychologists in promoting the development and learning of the school community, an aspect that is not highlighted in the description of this federal job position. In this study, the elements identified to contextualize the professional profile of psychologists within the scope of their training and work at the Federal Institutes also require transversalization and reconfiguration based on what the production of knowledge, research and practice of School Psychology have announced for more than three decades.

In this connection, it is necessary to highlight the contributions of School Psychology to the construction of comprehensive activities at the different levels of education that constitute Vocational and Technological Education. Thus, the bibliographic review conducted by Santos and Toassa (2015) on the topic of school psychologist training pointed out studies that advocate the importance of discussing training beyond a set of practices. According to the authors, initial training needs to develop a psychological perspective and listening in relation to the school so that it can help to improve the educational processes. To this end, the authors discuss the training of school psychologists aimed at enhancing human development processes within the scope of education and learning processes. In this connection, it is necessary to break with the purely clinical ideology of Psychology so that it can dialogue with the psychosocial dimensions that constitute everyday school life.

In the case of Vocational and Technological Education, the expanded role of the school psychologist permeates the most different levels of education. As previously shown, the guidelines regarding this action focus on a set of generalist regulations that reveal little about the institutional understanding of what is up for the professional in this school space and what he/she can do, together with the most different educational players. Given this context, psychologists who work in the IFETs may be directed, albeit indirectly, not to specialize according to the references that ensure integrated training, in order to leverage Basic Education (providing opportunities for many people) and that they foster a paradigm shift in vocational education, strengthening the *praxis* spaces (Feitosa & Marinho-Araujo, 2016).

To avoid such difficulties in the continued improvement of these professionals, we must acknowledge that rethinking the continued training of school psychologists also implies a direct reflection on their professional identity (Marinho-Araujo, 2014). For the development of their activities, with an expanded intervention at school as an alternative, it is up to these professionals to mobilize "knowledge and know-how, from science and experience, in processes of skills construction and reconstruction, aiming to equip themselves for an expanded performance at a professional collective and a complex scenario" (Marinho-Araujo, 2014, p. 173).

In the context of Vocational and Technological Education, in which the provision of basic, technical and higher education occurs concomitantly, it is believed that institutional interventions in

School Psychology can be a promising work proposal for psychologists. In this connection, assuming an expanded and institutional role can provide the psychologist with the development of professional skills aligned with the articulation between academic training and the training that occurs by working in the school community. Such skills will be forged by the dimensions of the psychologist's work within the scope of institutional mapping, psychological listening, collective work advice and monitoring of the teaching and learning process (Marinho-Araujo, 2016).

The initial and continuing training of school psychologists also anticipates the focus and capacity of their work at the Federal Institutes. In Vocational and Technological Education, the existence of a number of institutional departments and different teaching modalities reveals a robust organizational structure capable of receiving the most diverse contributions from School Psychology. In this study, the practice of school psychologists was concentrated in the Departments of Academic Support to Student (41.9%) and Student Assistance (52.7%). This information also reveals that the activity of school psychologists in the Federal Institutes has been aimed, for the most part, at the student support sectors.

It is important to highlight that the almost homogeneous distribution in these areas also anticipates the fruitful and powerful space for the contributions of School Psychology in Vocational and Technological Education. National academic productions related to the work of school psychologists present a number of practices reports that materialize interventions and mediations with students throughout their school and professional trajectories in vocational education (Titon & Zanella, 2018).

In their study about professional opportunities for School Psychology at the Federal Institutes, Feitosa and Marinho-Araujo (2016) point out that, traditionally, professional activity has been maintained in the sector focused on academic support. In this connection, the psychologist develops his/her activities aimed at monitoring students and teachers regarding academic issues. According to the authors, this monitoring consists of offering spaces for psychological listening, professional guidance, welcoming new students to the institution, giving lectures and organize conferences involving themes about human development and professional expectations.

Still on the role of school psychologists in IFETs, in a study conducted by Feitosa (2017), it was found that, in the area focused on the academic advisory function, these professionals also promote collective activities with the multidisciplinary team composed of administrative technicians in education, such as pedagogues, social workers and other technicians. Through this team, psychologists promote interventions with students, parents/guardians of students and assist teachers and course coordinators in the teaching and learning processes through participation in discussions involving curricular demands and the preparation of the Pedagogical Political Project. Regarding psychological intervention in relation to school issues, there are also records of this professional's work in helping to set up democratic spaces for communication, with a view to promoting debates about school routines, academic difficulties and community expectations in training among student representations (class representatives or student groups), teachers or course coordinators.

Feitosa (2017) also characterized the work of school psychologists in the area of IFET student assistance in Brazil. In her study, the author mapped the participation of school psychologists in the selection, monitoring and granting of benefits to students, in accordance with the guidelines of the National Student Assistance Program. In this connection, these professionals could work together with social workers (on some campuses this joint action takes place in partnership with nutritionists, doctors and pedagogues) in carrying out support activities for students in situations of

socioeconomic vulnerability. Furthermore, despite still being a relatively meager School Psychology production, there are records of psychologists participating in the construction of instruments for collecting information about the psychosocial and pedagogical aspects of students, in order to suggest improvements in school performance, ensure permanence and improve the student's educational trajectory.

As an integral part of student assistance at Federal Institutes, the Centers for Assistance to People with Specific Needs (NAPNE) are also spaces for school psychologists to work (Feitosa & Marinho-Araujo, 2016). According to Feitosa (2017), at NAPNE, these professionals also participate in the development of actions in favor of the inclusion of students in the academic setting. Through the support of pedagogical coordination and academic matters, the school psychologist is in charge of assisting in the process of curricular adaptations for students with disabilities, monitoring cases of high abilities, global developmental disorders or some other students' educational needs. Acting in this framework, therefore, allows the alignment of course offerings with the culture of inclusive and diverse education, as well as promoting education awareness actions for everyone in these training spaces.

In addition to this characterization of School Psychology in the framework of Vocational and Technological Education, we ought to recognize that the work of school psychologists cannot be limited solely to student issues in the Federal Institutes. For Marinho-Araujo (2014), the process of raising awareness among the educational players occurs through the transformations and relationships built in and through the school space. Therefore, an intervention model is required as part of a theoretical, critical and political choice of the psychologist's performance, that privileges the collective and promotes the overcoming of adaptationist or psychologizing views of the psychologist's praxis and, furthermore, strengthens the educational processes and the pedagogical practices.

It is also understood that the work of psychologists in the Federal Institutes, despite taking place within institutional sectors, can be better used as a continuum for interventions with dynamic, structured and participatory characteristics required by the area of School Psychology and which, therefore, can dialogue with the scope of academic and professional training. It is up to the psychologist, through expanded and institutional action, to contribute to practices that identify and consider the dialogues between the educational players, the spaces and time of exchanges with the school, the processes and regulations that guide their professional practices and their activity in the Federal Institutes.

With the analyses developed through the characterization of the profile of psychologists who work in the IFETs in Brazil, aspects of the training and performance of school psychologists in the framework of Vocational and Technological Education can be presented. The results show the prevalence of psychologists from the Northeast region, aged between 31 and 40 years, with specialized training and up to five years experience on their campuses and inserted in the area of Student Assistance. Regarding the performance characteristics of these professionals, their practices are anchored in monitoring the school trajectories of students and educational processes with teachers, as well as participating in actions in favor of the permanence and inclusion of students in the academic setting.

One of the limitations identified in this study is the fact that the online questionnaire was made available in a short period of time to collect information for a national sample; besides it did not cover specific questions about the professional reality of the Federal Institutes campuses. Another limitation was the scope of the sample: even though the survey was widely publicized on a specific

website for IFET psychologists, the number of respondents was only 93 professionals. On the other hand, although this sample does not represent a significant percentage in relation to the total of 453 school psychologists working in Brazilian Federal Institutes, in this study, the representation of at least one professional from each State and the Federal District was obtained.

Even though it is recognized that this study can contribute to the characterization and construction of the psychologist's professional profile in the context of Vocational and Technological Education, the challenge that still remains for future research agendas is how to make the specificities of the work of school psychologists in the Federal Institutes evident and systematized. It is necessary, in future research, to address the elements of analysis related to the diversity of the training and professional trajectories of these psychologists, the local demands of each academic community and the critical understanding of the human development processes associated with work activities.

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Contributors

Conceptualization: L. R. C. FEITOSA and C. M. MARINHO-ARAUJO. Methodology: L. R. C. FEITOSA. Writing-original draft: L. R. C. FEITOSA. Writing-review and editing: L. R. C. FEITOSA and C. M. MARINHO-ARAUJO.