

**REASONS TO LEAVE: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN JOB SATISFACTION,
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER MOBILITY**

***MOTIVOS PARA SAIR: RELAÇÕES ENTRE SATISFAÇÃO COM O TRABALHO,
LIDERANÇA DA GESTÃO E MOBILIDADE DOCENTE***

***MOTIVOS DE SALIDA: RELACIONES ENTRE SATISFACCIÓN LABORAL,
LIDERAZGO DE LA GESTIÓN Y MOVILIDAD DOCENTE***



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ABSTRACT: Teacher mobility has proven to be a problem in several parts of the world, including Brazil. Recent studies have observed that the school climate - greatly influenced by the work of school leadership, is one of the most critical factors in a teacher's decision to leave a school. Therefore, this work aims to verify, based on data from the Management Practices, Leadership, and Quality of Education in High Schools (PGLEQE) survey, whether there is a relationship between school leadership and teachers' job satisfaction and to identify the reasons that influence teachers' intention to leave the school. The results indicate that the perception of the school leadership practices and the school climate are related to teacher job satisfaction. On the other hand, this perception is not a consensus among all teachers at the school, only those who do not want to stay.

KEYWORDS: Teacher mobility. Teacher turnover. School climate. School leadership. Teacher working conditions.

RESUMO: *A mobilidade docente tem se mostrado um problema em várias partes do mundo, incluindo o Brasil. Estudos recentes têm observado que o clima escolar, muito influenciado pelo trabalho da gestão escolar, é um dos fatores mais importantes na decisão de um/uma docente sair de uma escola. Desta forma, este trabalho tem por objetivo verificar, a partir dos dados da pesquisa Práticas de Gestão, Liderança e Qualidade da Educação em Escolas de Ensino Médio (PGLEQE), se há relação entre a liderança da gestão e a satisfação no trabalho dos(as) professores(as), e identificar os motivos que influenciam a intenção docente de sair da escola. Os resultados indicam que a percepção do trabalho da direção e do clima escolar estão relacionados com a satisfação docente com o trabalho. Por outro lado, essa percepção não é consenso entre todos os professores da escola, apenas daqueles que não querem permanecer.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Mobilidade docente. Rotatividade docente. Clima escolar. Liderança da gestão. Condições de trabalho docente.*

RESUMEN: *La movilidad docente ha demostrado ser un problema en varias partes del mundo, incluido Brasil. Estudios recientes han observado que el clima escolar – muy influenciado por el trabajo de la gestión escolar – es uno de los factores más importantes en la decisión de un docente de abandonar la escuela. Por tanto, este trabajo pretende verificar, a partir de datos de la encuesta Prácticas de Gestión, Liderazgo y Calidad de la Educación en las Escuelas Secundarias (PGLEQE), si existe relación entre el liderazgo directivo y la satisfacción laboral de los docentes, e identificar los motivos que influyen en la intención de los docentes de abandonar la escuela. Los resultados indican que la percepción de las prácticas de liderazgo y el clima escolar están relacionados con la satisfacción laboral docente. Por otro lado, esta percepción no es un consenso entre todos los profesores de la escuela, sólo entre aquellos que no quieren quedarse.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Movilidad docente. Rotación de docentes. Clima escolar. Liderazgo de la gestión. Condiciones de trabajo docente.*

Introduction

Teacher turnover has been identified as a problem in various parts of the world. Studies conducted in the United States indicate an annual teacher turnover rate of approximately 16%, with half of this contingent consisting of teachers who changed schools and the other half who left the education system (Carver-Thomas; Darling-Hammond, 2019). In Brazil, Pereira Junior and Oliveira (2016, 2018) found that, from 2012 to 2013, Brazilian schools experienced an average change of 54% in their teaching staff, with rural and municipal schools showing higher turnover rates that year. Specifically, in municipal schools, between 2015 and 2016, the authors observed an average turnover rate of 12%, but with a wide variability in retention rates. This suggests that many schools may be losing teachers who are not adequately replaced, a situation that may be associated with the temporary nature of employment ties.

Research in Brazil and several other countries indicates that teachers, regardless of their experience and qualifications, seek to work in schools that serve students of a higher socioeconomic and educational level (Carrasqueira, 2018; Carrasqueira; Koslinski, 2019). At first, this leads us to believe that the most critical factors for a teacher to choose the school where they will teach are the student body's characteristics and the school's territorial context. However, more recent studies show that when aspects related to school climate and management (Ladd, 2011) are included, these become more important in the teacher's decision to leave or stay at a school than the profile of the students.

The aim of this paper is to: 1) confirm whether there is a relationship between teacher job satisfaction and their perception of management leadership practices; 2) identify the reasons that influence the teacher's intention to leave the school and their relations with intra-school factors; and 3) check whether the perception of leadership practices and working conditions of teachers who wish to leave the school is shared by their colleagues.

To conduct this study, we used teachers' responses to the questionnaire from the research "Practices of Management, Leadership and Quality of Education in High Schools (PGLEQE)" conducted in 2022 in the states of Espírito Santo and Piauí. This research selected a sample of 70 public high schools in each state², which resulted in responses from 682 teachers in Espírito Santo and 619 in Piauí (Oliveira *et al.*, 2024).

² One of the schools in Piauí withdrew, resulting in 70 schools in Espírito Santo and 69 in Piauí that participated in the research.

This article is divided into six parts beyond this introduction. First, we will present a literature review focused on situating this study in the literature. In the second, we explain the methodology applied in this study. The third, fourth, and fifth parts discuss the results and seek to answer the three objectives described above. In the last part, we bring the final considerations.

Theoretical Background

In Brazil, there are no studies that seek to investigate the relationship between working conditions, management, and satisfaction with teacher mobility, that is, with changing schools. Most studies focus on researching teacher attrition, which is very important, but is a different phenomenon from mobility. When searching for "teacher mobility" (exact) on the CAPES³ Periodicals Portal, we find 21 articles, 7 of which are repeated.

Of the 14 unique articles: one is on electromechanics, one about mobile technologies for education, one is a review of postgraduate nursing, one on accessibility and inclusion in higher education, one on the process of expanding postgraduate studies in sociology, six on internationalization in higher education, one on internationalization in primary education, one is about the construction of teacher identity in light of mobilities imposed by the Ministry of Education of Portugal, and finally, one on factors associated with teacher mobility. However, this last article does not investigate intra-school factors, observing only the characteristics of the teachers and the context of the school.

When the search was for "teacher turnover" (exact), we found 17 articles, 4 of which were repeats. Of the 13 unique articles, three are off-topic (one on geography teaching, another on environmental education, and another on school organization in the 19th century), four aimed to measure the size of the phenomenon, one studied public policies for teacher retention, one studied the challenges of developing the PPP in a context of high teacher turnover, three address the issue of teacher identity and belonging, and only one investigates the relationship between the school context and professional characteristics in teacher turnover. Again, we did not find articles that study the effects of intra-school factors on turnover. Thus, we will delve into the international literature, which, although also scarce, already presents evidence of the impacts of management and working conditions on retention and/or teacher mobility.

³ Search carried out on November 14, 2023.

Ladd (2011) published an article aimed at filling two gaps in existing research. On one hand, studies on teacher mobility often focused on contextual characteristics of schools, such as location and socioeconomic level of students, in addition to attributes of teachers such as age, gender, education, and experience, but neglected working conditions in schools. On the other hand, qualitative studies sought to understand the relationship between working conditions and teacher mobility.

Using data from questionnaires answered by teachers in the state of North Carolina (USA), the author observed that among the school factors evaluated, management leadership, activities outside of the role, time for planning, time for collaboration with colleagues, professional development, and teacher evaluation, the leadership of management was the only factor consistently significant in all analyses. A positive review of management was associated with a lower probability of teachers wanting to leave the school. When specifying the destination of the exit (moving to another school, to another network, or leaving the profession), the quality of management mainly influenced those who wished to change schools or networks, without having a significant effect on those who intended to leave the profession.

This result aligns with the findings of Player *et al.* (2017), who investigated the effect of management leadership and the correspondence between the individual's profile and the job (person-job fit) on teacher mobility and attrition. In this case, they observed that leadership had an impact on changing schools, but not on leaving the profession. The correspondence between profiles, however, impacted both movements, indicating that to want to stay in a school, one must have a profile aligned with the organizational environment.

Burkhauser (2017), using data from the North Carolina Teacher Working Condition Survey (it is unclear whether this is the same instrument used by Ladd in 2011), sought to determine how much of the variation in working conditions in schools could be attributed to the actions of the administration, that is, the impact of management on teaching conditions. Four dimensions were analyzed: Use of Time (class size, workload, collaboration with colleagues), Physical Environment (availability of necessary resources), Empowerment (creating a supportive, motivating, and trusting environment), and Professional Development (sufficient time and resources for enhancement, appropriate training). According to the results, all dimensions were impacted by leadership efforts. This implies that effective leadership improves the working conditions for teachers and, consequently, reduces their intention to change schools.

It is important to note that studies on the effects of leadership, particularly transformational leadership, on student performance have already been shown to be mediated by school climate, teacher commitment, and job satisfaction (Leithwood; Jantzi, 2005). Transformational leadership, as described by Leithwood and Jantzi (1990), is capable of changing the culture of the school through motivation and collaboration, building shared goals and collective responsibility. Such a leader possesses a high capacity for listening and dialogue and is able to develop the team through relationships.

In this light, Thomas *et al.* (2020) sought to measure the effects of transformational leadership on job satisfaction. They found both direct and indirect effects. The indirect pathway is through the promotion of collaboration among teachers and by increasing teacher self-efficacy. A similar result was found by Damanik and Aldridge (2017) in their study of high schools in Indonesia, observing that the transformational leadership of the principal has an indirect effect on teacher self-efficacy through the creation of a collaborative environment and the establishment of agreed-upon goals.

This links to the study by Allensworth, Ponisciak, and Mazzeo (2009), which investigated factors related to mobility and attrition in Chicago public schools (USA). They found that teachers were more likely to remain in schools where they developed partnership relations with colleagues, shared a sense of responsibility, and had greater freedom to innovate. Although this study does not specifically address aspects of leadership, more recent research suggests that participative management often fosters this favorable work climate.

Methodological Aspects

The methodology here is limited to explaining what was done in this study with the secondary data provided. This research employed a mixed-methods quanti-quali strategy, moving from macro to micro analysis. The analyses were performed separately for each of the states studied, Espírito Santo and Piauí. The reason for this was to capture certain differences in perceptions of the teachers that might not be specifically about the schools, but about how the educational network is organized and the policies practiced in each state (Paes de Carvalho; Arai; Oliveira, forthcoming).

The methodology of this study followed three steps:

1st - Linear regression to identify correlations between perceptions of management leadership practices and job satisfaction, and to identify correlations between perceptions of one's own work and job satisfaction.

2nd - Observation of reasons indicated in open responses by teachers for wanting to stay or leave the school in the next year. Institutions where more than two teachers expressed a desire to change due to the school climate were selected.

3rd - Qualitative comparison between the perceptions of teachers who want to stay and those who want to leave the schools selected in the second step, in order to verify if there are differences between the two groups.

Table 1 – Indices Created and Their Cronbach's Alphas

Indices	ES	PI
IPL: Setting Goals and Objectives	0,860	0,850
IPL: Support and Attention to Teachers	0,914	0,910
IPL: Intellectual Attention and Stimulation	0,863	0,858
IPL: Organizational Structure	0,891	0,780
IPL: Managing Pedagogical Matters	0,850	0,876
IPL: Developing Relationships	0,924	0,908
Interpersonal Relations Index	0,733	0,707
Student Expectation Index	0,589	0,618
Job Satisfaction Index	0,731	0,780
Teacher Self-Efficacy Index	0,907	0,902
Work Stress Index	0,783	0,800
Workload Index	0,307	0,422

Source: Prepared by the author for this article with data from the PGLEQE survey (2023).

Note: A table with the variables comprising each index is included in the appendix.

Discussion of Results

What factors are related to teachers' job satisfaction?

This section delves into the analysis carried out in the first step of the methodology, aiming to answer the above question. Initially, indices were created from the questionnaire responses provided by the teachers, employing the principal component extraction method in factor analysis without rotation.

Subsequently, two linear regressions were performed using the stepwise method, which eliminates statistically non-significant variables at each step until a model containing only variables with a p-value of 5% or less is achieved, with the Job Satisfaction Index (JSI) as the dependent variable. The first regression (Table 4 and Table 5) includes indices of leadership

practices for Espírito Santo and Piauí, respectively, and the second regression (Table 6, Table 7) includes indices of interpersonal relations and working conditions.

Table 2 – Descriptive Statistics of Variables from Linear Regressions for Espírito Santo

	N	Mín.	Max.
Leadership Practice Index: Setting Goals and Objectives	682	-5,47	0,71
Leadership Practice Index: Support and Attention to Teachers	682	-4,49	0,73
Leadership Practice Index: Intellectual Attention and Stimulation	682	-5,29	0,67
Leadership Practice Index: Organizational Structure	682	-5,49	0,61
Leadership Practice Index: Managing Pedagogical Matters	682	-5,33	0,63
Leadership Practice Index: Developing Relationships	682	-5,91	0,61
Interpersonal Relationships Index	668	-6,05	0,86
Student Expectations Index	682	-2,18	2,80
Job Satisfaction Index	682	-3,63	1,17
Teacher Self-Efficacy Index	682	-4,17	0,95
Work Stress Index	682	-1,87	2,80
Workload Index	682	-2,64	2,76

Source: Created by the author for this article with data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

Note: All variables are standardized factors with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1.

Table 3 – Descriptive Statistics of Variables from Linear Regressions for Piauí

	N	Min.	Max.
Leadership Practice Index: Setting Goals and Objectives	619	-5,29	,91
Leadership Practice Index: Support and Attention to Teachers	619	-4,81	,81
Leadership Practice Index: Intellectual Attention and Stimulation	619	-4,71	,79
Leadership Practice Index: Organizational Structure	619	-4,85	2,09
Leadership Practice Index: Managing Pedagogical Matters	619	-3,96	,89
Leadership Practice Index: Developing Relationships	619	-5,58	,72
Interpersonal Relationships Index	608	-7,23	1,01
Student Expectations Index	619	-2,58	2,85
Job Satisfaction Index	619	-5,57	1,11
Teacher Self-Efficacy Index	619	-4,80	1,09
Work Stress Index	619	-1,84	2,96
Workload Index	619	-4,40	3,51

Source: Created by the author for this article with data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

Note: All variables are standardized factors with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1.

Table 4 – Linear Regression Results of Leadership Practices with Job Satisfaction for Espírito Santo

	B	Standard Error	P-value
Leadership Practice Index: Setting Goals and Objectives	0,195	0,057	0,001
Leadership Practice Index: Support and Attention to Teachers	0,318	0,059	0,000
Leadership Practice Index: Developing Relationships	0,168	0,050	0,001

Source: Author's elaboration for this article using data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

Note: The dependent variable is the Job Satisfaction Index. Adjusted R² = 0.400.

Table 5 – Linear Regression Results of Leadership Practices with Job Satisfaction for Piauí

	B	Standard Error	P-value
Leadership Practice Index: Setting Goals and Objectives	0,252	0,054	0,000
Leadership Practice Index: Support and Attention to Teachers	0,239	0,057	0,000
Leadership Practice Index: Organizational Structure	0,077	0,034	0,025
Leadership Practice Index: Developing Relationships	0,199	0,052	0,000

Source: Author's elaboration for this article using data from the PGLEQE survey (2023).

Note: The dependent variable is the Job Satisfaction Index. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.460$.

Among the leadership practice indices incorporated into the initial model, only three proved significant for the sample of teachers in Espírito Santo, all more related to motivational aspects than management or direct pedagogical intervention. Although the "Setting Goals and Objectives" index has a more practical nature, it does not involve direct management action in how the teacher operates in the classroom. Instead, it is closely linked to the collective construction of goals and convincing of the importance of a common objective.

The "Support and Attention to Teachers" index also has a more focused nature on promoting an environment of trust and participation. Unlike the "Intellectual Stimulation" index, which includes questions about the principal proposing pedagogical actions or giving suggestions for the teacher to improve their practice in the classroom. Oliveira (2015) had already highlighted that schools, where there is frequent direct intervention of this type, might also experience an environment with more problems to be solved, impacting teacher satisfaction.

On the other hand, "Developing Relationships" is entirely anchored, as the name suggests, in how the principal relates to school stakeholders, based on relationships of respect, active listening, motivation, and security. These three dimensions of leadership practices can be associated with what Leithwood and Jantzi (2005) defined as transformational school leadership, as they focus on developing a positive school culture conducive to learning.

The results obtained in Piauí show great similarities to those of Espírito Santo, but with a significant distinction: for teachers in Piauí, management practices related to ensuring a good working structure, denominated IPL: Organizational Structure, were associated with job satisfaction. One possible explanation for this result could be the difference in school infrastructure between the two-state networks. If the resource conditions of schools in Piauí are inferior to those in Espírito Santo, this may have a more significant impact on teachers working in the Piauí network.

Table 6 – Linear Regression Results of Interpersonal Relations and Working Conditions with Job Satisfaction for Espírito Santo

	B	Standard Error	P-value
Perception Index on Interpersonal Relations	0,246	0,033	0,000
Student Expectation Index	0,146	0,031	0,000
Teacher Self-Efficacy Index	0,164	0,034	0,000
Work Stress Index	-0,306	0,034	0,000
Workload Index	-0,142	0,033	0,000

Source: Author's elaboration for this article using data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

Note: The dependent variable is the Job Satisfaction Index. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.365$.

Table 7 – Linear Regression Results of Interpersonal Relations and Working Conditions with Job Satisfaction for Piauí

	B	Standard Error	P-value
Perception Index on Interpersonal Relations	0,329	0,035	0,000
Student Expectation Index	0,125	0,034	0,000
Teacher Self-Efficacy Index	0,162	0,034	0,000
Work Stress Index	-0,240	0,035	0,000
Workload Index	-0,117	0,034	0,001

Source: Author's elaboration for this article using data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

Note: The dependent variable is the Job Satisfaction Index. Adjusted $R^2 = 0.355$.

Considering factors related to interpersonal relations and working conditions, all were statistically significant in both samples, indicating a relationship with job satisfaction. It is noteworthy that the stress index was the most important for teachers in Espírito Santo and the second most significant for those in Piauí, intuitively suggesting that higher stress leads to lower job satisfaction.

Perception of relationships also proved critical (first factor in Piauí and second in Espírito Santo), indicating that good relationships with colleagues and students are relevant factors for satisfaction in the workplace. Student expectations, as shown by Xavier and Oliveira (2020), are built by the context and influenced by the conditions the teacher encounters in the classroom. Similarly, working conditions will influence self-efficacy (Iaochite; Azzi, 2012), including transformational leadership practices and collaboration among teachers.

Why Leave the School?

In this section, we move to the second step, analyzing the responses of teachers from both states who indicated not wanting to remain in the school. Then, we selected schools where teachers cited reasons related to the school for their intention to leave, comparing them with the reasons of their colleagues who wished to continue in those units.

Teachers from Espírito Santo

In Espírito Santo, out of 628 responding teachers, thirty-three marked the option indicating they wanted to leave the school the following year. Among the reasons listed, ten said the school was far from their residence, with one of them also citing the volume of demands; two pointed out the school's structure as a reason; four did not give a defined reason ("no", "don't want to", "can't say", "other plans"); one explicitly mentioned disagreement with the education department ("I like being a teacher, but I disagree with the approval policy demanded by higher authorities. Due to this disagreement, I intend to leave basic education" (P1, 2022); three teachers said their departure from the school was not their choice, reporting having a temporary contract, it being a decision of the school's management, and it being a norm of the State Education Department that imposed a return to the previous school.

We also had four others who gave various reasons: such as family, fatigue, abandoning teaching in the public school system, transfer to another position; and one person who wrote, "The school environment is very favorable," which may indicate they marked the question about wanting to stay in school incorrectly or forgot to write a word. Finally, eight teachers indicated school factors, including lack of management support, excessive demands, and poor relationships with colleagues, among others.

Although 33 teachers expressed the desire to leave, they are distributed across 24 different schools, with eight of these schools having more than one teacher who does not wish to remain. In four of these schools, the reasons for leaving included distance, reasons unrelated to the school, or unspecified reasons. In the other four schools, at least one teacher wanted to leave due to issues related to internal school relations. Specifically, three teachers did not want to stay in one of these schools: two due to lack of management support and one due to the school's inadequate physical structure. Subsequent analyses will focus on these last four schools, which will be referred to as the yellow, blue, green, and red.

In the yellow school, one of the teachers wanted to leave due to a lack of efficient pedagogical management, the second due to insecurity caused by the management's inertia in resolving conflicts with students, and the third due to a desire to transfer to a school with better infrastructure. Of the nine teachers who indicated they wanted to continue in this school, eight mentioned generic reasons, such as a good relationship with the community, passion for teaching, and commitment to education; one expressed satisfaction in working there without specifying if their motivation was related to the community or the school itself, and another mentioned proximity to residence. Only one teacher highlighted factors directly related to the school, contradicting the colleagues who wished to leave, and stated receiving considerable support and encouragement from the pedagogical coordination.

In the blue school, one teacher did not want to continue teaching in public education, which seems to be a matter with the education system rather than the school, and another mentioned seeking "an environment with people of expanded mindset, where pedagogical thinking is debated in a versatile way, and the process of applying these ideas is dynamic" (P2, 2022). Among the 8 teachers who wanted to stay, one mentioned that the school was organized, another said it was close to home, two said they liked the school, one said they loved the school, another mentioned their success being in that place, another said the environment is great with "everyone engaged for the overall performance of the school" (P3, 2022), and finally, one teacher wrote a lengthy text about the physical changes and team development in recent times.

In the green school, the two teachers who wanted to leave converged on their reasons, one claiming that the teachers were not welcoming and the other stating that they did not feel comfortable with certain internal factors. Among the 8 who wanted to remain, one only responded "learning times," and it is unclear what he meant by that. The school's physical structure was praised by 4 teachers, two of whom also praised the peer relationships. Others mentioned "liking it," "feeling good," and "wonderful school," which in the latter may be associated with both the structure and the relationships; it's not clear.

In the last school, the red one, one teacher simply said they did not want to stay "because I don't want to" (P4, 2022), and the other mentioned the deterioration of the friendship environment and the low sense of appreciation. However, of the 8 who indicated they wanted to stay, four mentioned the team, expanding in some cases to the students, the school was also mentioned as a motivating environment with opportunities to work with different methodologies. Although opinions in all four schools are quite different, in the red school, most teachers cited the environment and relationships as reasons to stay.

Teachers from Piauí

Out of the 619 responding teachers in Piauí, only 23 indicated they did not wish to remain at the school the following year. Upon analyzing the reasons provided, the majority (11 teachers) cited the distance between the school and their residence as a determining factor, with some teachers residing in other cities and seeking transfer to closer schools; seven teachers mentioned the intention to change professions, including a nurse planning to return to her original area, two intending to dedicate themselves exclusively to stricto sensu postgraduate programs, and others considering retirement, transition to administrative roles, or exclusive dedication to a single school; two teachers mentioned low salary as a reason to leave the school, and possibly the system; and three teachers reported internal school factors as reasons for departure, describing the environment as unpleasant, the principal as unsociable, and lack of support for teaching work, with a preference for certain teachers.

Among the twenty schools from which teachers wished to leave, three were repeatedly mentioned. In one of these schools, both teachers cited distance as the reason. Therefore, the focus shifts to the other two schools, referred to as the Lilac School and the Orange School. Both had two teachers indicating the desire not to remain: in the lilac school, one teacher mentioned dissatisfaction with the school environment, and the other cited distance as a factor; in the orange school, reasons included the unsociable principal and low salary. Considering the smaller number of teachers compared to Espírito Santo, it was decided to also include the school of a third teacher who wanted to leave due to intra-school reasons, which will be referred to as the white school.

In the Lilac school, among the teachers who responded that they wanted to stay, four mentioned that the school has good infrastructure; two teachers spoke about the school's location is excellent or close to their residence. Two teachers also cited the good behavior of the students. Another two mentioned their mission in student formation, without directly relating it to the school. One teacher also spoke about identification and professional fulfillment at the school, and another mentioned the pedagogical support provided by the management team. The total is not nine because some cited more than one reason.

In the orange school, the reasons of the teachers who wanted to remain were much more tied to interpersonal relationships, such as "good coexistence with the entire school body, students, and staff in general", "affinity with classroom groups, and the school's management, coordination, and staff" and satisfaction with the "school environment and didactic resources offered by the school, as well as the relationship with the administrative part and with the other

teachers." There were also three who simply said: "I really like it", "it's the best choice for working" and "I feel very motivated in this School." Only one professed justified their choice for professional satisfaction that was not directly related to the specific school.

The teacher who wanted to leave the white school cited "little support for the teacher's work" as the reason. Among the teachers who wanted to remain, one spoke about the proximity of their residence, another about satisfaction with their work, and another said they felt important to the school. The reasons related to the school included satisfaction with the work method adopted by the management, four indicated good relationships with colleagues and the school environment, and two spoke of commitment, one to the organization and the other to student learning, although in the latter case, it is not clear if it is about their commitment or that of the school.

Just as in Espírito Santo, in Piauí, perceptions about the school seem quite subjective, since teachers who wish to stay generally have more positive or contradictory views than those who want to leave. An example is the "unsociable principal," who does not seem to negatively affect the other teachers at the Orange school, who expressed satisfaction with the school environment. The differences in teachers' perceptions become even more evident when comparing the averages of the leadership, work relations, and personal relations indices of teachers who want to leave and those who want to stay in the schools.

Who wants to stay and Perceive the school differently?

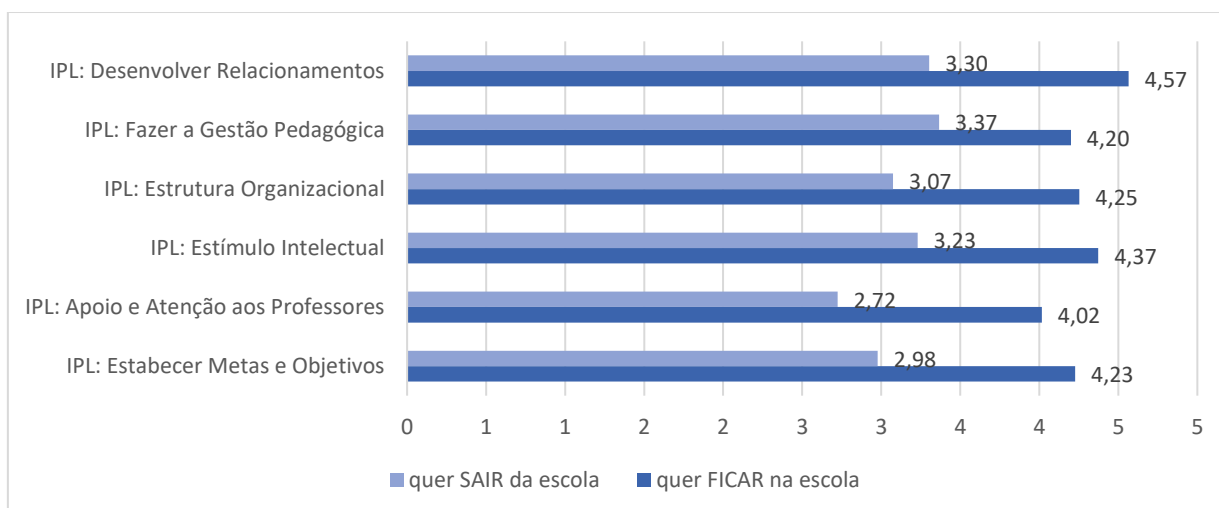
Both in Espírito Santo and in Piauí, it is notable that teachers' perceptions of the school depend on very personal factors. The hypothesis that teachers who want to remain in schools have a more positive view of them is confirmed in all aspects for both networks. In the graphs below, we show comparisons between the average perceptions of teachers who want to leave and those who want to stay in the selected schools from each state. For easier visualization, the indices were transformed to a scale from 0 to 5. It is important to note that due to the number of responses, the analyses are descriptive, and inferential analyses are not appropriate.

In Espírito Santo, four schools were analyzed, with 33 teachers wishing to stay and 9 indicating the intention to leave. In Piauí, three schools were analyzed, with 24 teachers wishing to continue and 5 expressing the desire to leave.

In graphs 1 and 2, it can be observed that, both in Espírito Santo and in Piauí, teachers who wish to remain in schools generally have a more positive perception of management.

However, the differences in perception are significantly greater in Piauí than in Espírito Santo. This is particularly interesting considering that teachers in Espírito Santo seemed more critical of the school environment in their reasons for wanting to leave compared to their counterparts in Piauí.

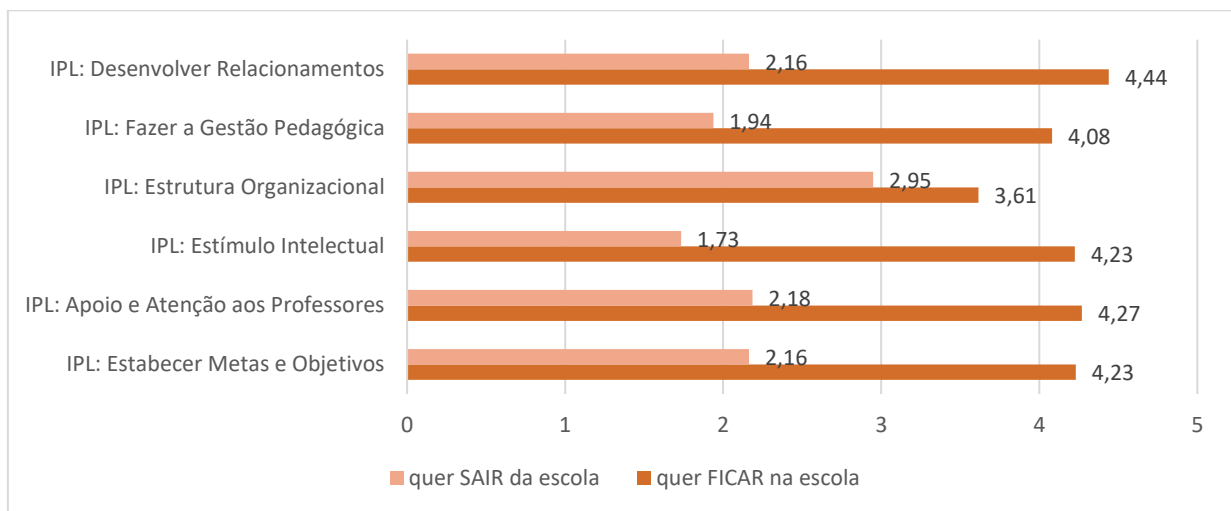
Graph 1 – Comparison of perception of leadership practices between teachers who want to leave and stay in schools in the Espírito Santo subsample⁴



Source: Developed by the author for this article using data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

⁴ Translation from top to bottom; IPL: Developing Relationships; IPL: Pedagogical Management; IPL: Organizational Structure; IPL: Intellectual Stimulation; IPL: Support and Attention to Teachers; IPL: Setting Goals and Objectives. Light blue: wants to leave school; dark blue: wants to stay in school.

Graph 2 - Comparison of perception of leadership practices between teachers who want to leave and stay in schools in the Piauí subsample⁵



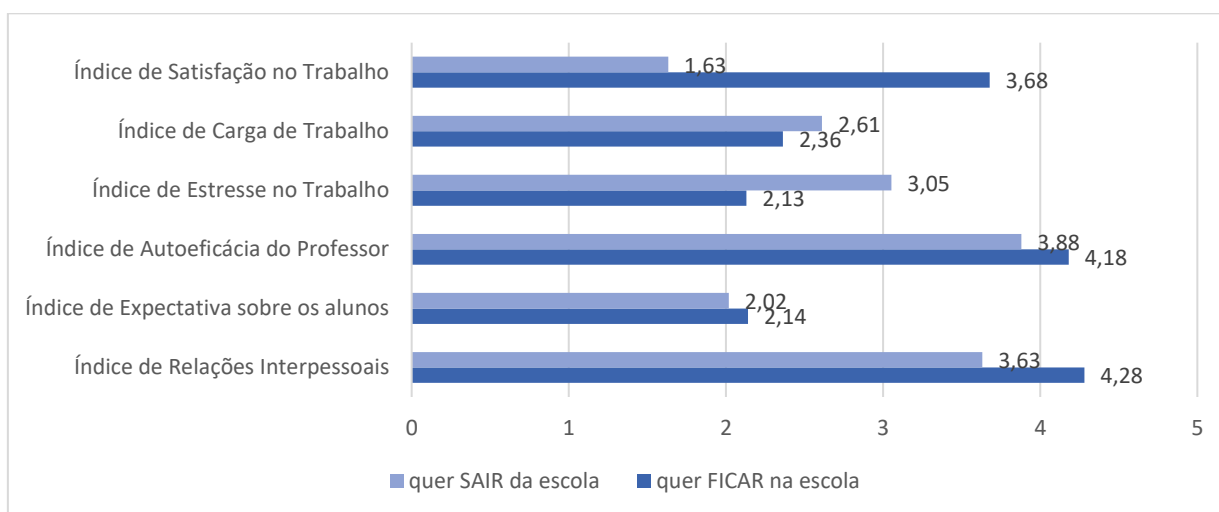
Source: Developed by the author for this article using data from the PGLEQE survey (2023).

The conditions of the school structure (IPL - Organizational Structure) present an interesting result. Teachers who wish to leave the school, in both states, have, on average, a similar perception of the structural conditions of their schools. On the other hand, teachers who wish to remain in schools in Piauí have, on average, a less favorable perception of the structure of their schools compared to teachers who wish to remain in schools in Espírito Santo.

In the analysis of work relations (graphs 3 and 4), it is observed that teachers who wish to leave the school in the Espírito Santo network report, on average, higher levels of work stress and greater workload than those who wish to remain. However, the perception of workload is relatively similar between the two groups. In Piauí, an unexpected result emerges: teachers who want to leave present, on average, a perception of a lower workload compared to those who want to stay. This may be explained by the fact that, of the five teachers intending to leave the school in this subsample, three had a workload of less than 20 hours per week. Of the 24 teachers who wanted to remain, only one had such a reduced workload.

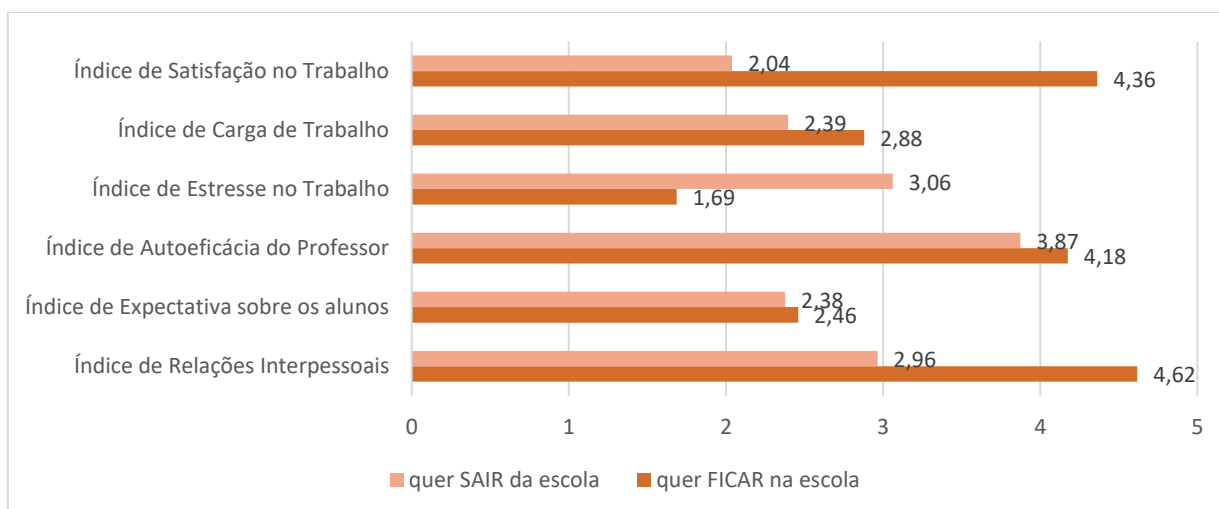
⁵ Translation from top to bottom; IPL: Developing Relationships; IPL: Pedagogical Management; IPL: Organizational Structure; IPL: Intellectual Stimulation; IPL: Support and Attention to Teachers; IPL: Setting Goals and Objectives. Light red: wants to leave school; dark red: wants to stay in school.

Graph 3 - Comparison of perception about working conditions between teachers who want to leave and stay in schools from the Espírito Santo subsample⁶



Source: Compiled by the author for this article using data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

Graph 4 - Compares the perceptions about working conditions of teachers who want to leave and stay in schools from the Piauí subsample⁷



Source: Compiled by the author for this article using data from the PGLQE survey (2023).

In terms of stress, teachers who want to leave reported significantly higher levels. This may indicate that the decision to change schools may not necessarily be associated with the

⁶ Translation from top to bottom: Job satisfaction index; Workload index; Job stress index; Teacher self-efficacy index; Student expectations index; Interpersonal relations index. Light blue: wants to leave school; dark blue: wants to stay in school.

⁷ Translation from top to bottom: Job satisfaction index; Workload index; Job stress index; Teacher self-efficacy index; Student expectations index; Interpersonal relations index. Light red: wants to leave school; dark red: wants to stay in school.

workload, which could be similar in another institution. It is possible that the workload has a greater impact on those who want to leave the profession, although this aspect was not the focus of this study.

Regarding self-efficacy perception and expectations regarding students, although higher in teachers who want to stay, they are not much higher than in both states' perceptions of teachers who want to leave. Interpersonal relationships with colleagues and students are also perceived more positively by those who want to stay, which is aligned with the reasons often reported by many teachers who choose to remain.

Regarding job satisfaction, it is noteworthy that teachers who want to leave have a significantly lower perception than those who want to stay in school. Dissatisfaction with the school was the criterion for selecting schools for this part of the analysis. The question was whether this dissatisfaction was shared with other colleagues, which apparently does not occur. Satisfaction, although the environment may influence it, and more in-depth studies with larger samples should be conducted to investigate the impact of leadership practices on teacher satisfaction and intention to leave, it can also be shaped by sociodemographic issues, other professional experiences, and expectations. Thus, even in a context where many consider the school environment pleasant and management effective, some individuals may feel out of place, and this can intensify their dissatisfaction and, consequently, their desire to leave that school.

Final considerations

This study aimed to examine the relationships between teacher job satisfaction, leadership practices of school management, working conditions, and the intention to leave the school, not necessarily the profession. Using data from the PGLEQE survey conducted in state high schools in the states of Espírito Santo and Piauí, we conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses to answer three questions: 1) whether there was a statistical correlation between job satisfaction and leadership practices and working conditions; 2) whether factors related to school management and interpersonal relationships were among the reasons reported by teachers for intending to leave the school; 3) whether the perception of working conditions and management practices of teachers who wanted to leave were different from the perceptions of their school colleagues.

For all three questions, the answer was yes, but with some caveats. The leadership practices that showed a correlation with teacher satisfaction were those most related to

relational and motivational factors, which is corroborated by international literature that identifies transformational leadership as the main driver of teacher satisfaction, through the creation of a more collaborative work environment and increased teacher self-efficacy (Damanik; Aldridge, 2017; Thomas *et al.*, 2020). difference between the two states is that in Piauí, leadership practices aimed at providing a better work structure were statistically significant, which may indicate that school resources may pose a greater challenge for teachers in Piauí.

In both states, the majority of reasons for leaving were distance from home or the intention to move to another city, which may mask factors related to the territory where the school is located, but this cannot be verified by the data studied. However, some teachers reported relationships with management and other teachers as the reason for not wanting to stay in school, just as many others justified their intention to stay based on interpersonal relationships.

The reported reasons are in line with studies that point to collaboration among teachers, an innovative environment, and management support as factors that decrease the likelihood of teachers leaving a school (Allensworth; Ponisciak; Mazzeo, 2009). Students or their guardians were not directly cited as reasons for leaving. The only time student disrespect is mentioned, dissatisfaction falls on management's lack of action regarding the issue.

Perceptions of management practices and working conditions are not shared among all teachers in the schools studied. In both states, teachers who want to leave the schools have significantly poorer perceptions compared to their colleagues who wish to stay. Thus, we can consider that, as observed by Player *et al.* (2017), in addition to aspects related to the school, there needs to be a fit between the individual's profile and the school and the profession's profile.

Finally, we recommend conducting more in-depth quantitative and qualitative studies on the school-related reasons that make teachers want to stay or leave a school, considering that, unlike external factors, these can be changed by the school through changes in organizational and management practices. Thus, if it is possible to create more attractive environments that retain more teachers, especially in schools serving a more socially vulnerable and academically underperforming population, we can reduce educational inequalities exacerbated by teacher absenteeism and turnover.

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Conflicts of interest: There are no conflicts of interest to declare.

Ethical approval: All participants in the research signed informed consent forms. The research entry into the education departments of the states of Espírito Santo and Piauí was facilitated through cooperation mediated by *Instituto Unibanco*.

Data and material availability: The original datasets of the PGLEQE research are not available due to confidentiality and compliance with the general data protection law.

Author's contributions: The author conducted all parts of this work, except for data collection, which was carried out by *Instituto Unibanco*.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Proofreading, formatting, normalization and translation.



Attachment 1
Table of variables that make up the indices

Leadership Practice Index: Establishing Direction
Communicates the purpose and objectives of the institution to the school community.
Explains the reasons for introducing changes to the school's functioning. Works with teachers to define concrete goals for implementing the educational project.
Proposes strategies for all teachers to have common hours to meet, study, and plan.
Incorporates the interests and ideas of teachers into the educational project of the institution.
Proposes goals and priorities that are consistent with educational policies.
Communicates the purpose and objectives of the institution to the school community.
Leadership Practice Index: Support and Attention to Teachers
Promotes an environment of mutual trust among members of the school community.
Promotes a caring environment among members of the school community.
Supports all teachers, especially those facing more problems with teaching their subject.
Promotes participatory management through teacher-representative action when necessary.
When needed, the principal listens to and takes care of you.
When you have improved your work, the principal acknowledges your effort.
Leadership Practice Index: Attention and Intellectual Stimulation
Proposes strategies for teachers in this school to work considering the specific characteristics and needs of students at each stage of education.
Helps teachers learn from their mistakes.
Encourages teachers to do their best.
Engages in the adaptation of new teachers to the institution.
Signals to teachers, in meetings and individual guidance, the importance of study and adherence to the curriculum of the educational network.
Leadership Practice Index: Structuring an Organization that Facilitates Work
Uses strategies to keep the organization united to facilitate teachers' work.
Ensures teacher participation in decisions affecting the quality of teaching.
Defines and reinforces clearly the duties and responsibilities of all professionals in the unit.
Organizes infrastructure actions to improve the conditions of the school building.
Develops actions to acquire or organize complementary educational materials needed for teaching, within the limits of school autonomy.
Develops actions to acquire or organize equipment to improve the comfort and quality of spaces. Ensures that each teacher in this institution works to achieve specific goals regarding student learning.
It is concerned with coordinating work among teachers from different areas and/or levels of education.
Uses strategies to keep the organization united to facilitate teachers' work.
Leadership Practice Index: Pedagogical Management
Promotes the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to improve learning.
Uses the results of external assessments as input for discussion with the teaching staff about pedagogical work at the school.
Draws the attention of the school team to reflect on the specific characteristics of youth and the embrace of these characteristics in the school.
Discuss classroom management strategies (discipline, conflicts, pedagogical management) with teachers.
Signals to teachers, in meetings and individual guidance, the importance of study and adherence to the curriculum of the educational network.
Leadership Practice Index: Developing Relationships
Does good work in this school.
Has an encouraging and supportive attitude towards teachers.
Values and reinforces the work done by teachers.
Interacts respectfully with students. Is always available to assist those who seek him/her. Shows openness and interest in listening to teachers.
Can articulate the different ideas and opinions of the group of teachers.
Does good work in this school.
Has an encouraging and supportive attitude towards teachers.
Interpersonal Relations Perception Index
Other teachers.

The principal.
The pedagogical coordinator.
Your students.
Student Expectations Index
Completing high school.
Entering Public Higher Education.
Entering Private Higher Education.
Entering technical courses before completing high school.
Job Satisfaction Index
We work as a team so that the school's work is recognized.
I am satisfied with the size of the class(es) assigned to me.
I feel satisfied working at this school.
I feel fulfilled with the work I do at this school.
The organization of the school favors my work.
There is a sense of collaboration among all who work at this school.
Teacher Self-Efficacy Index
Perform teaching activities using the skills you learned in your academic training.
Perform teaching activities with the skills you have developed in your professional trajectory.
Perform teaching work according to your values.
Seek additional professional training to improve your work as a teacher.
Help your students learn the content in a way that they can achieve good results in assessments.
Plan your classes creatively.
Plan your classes effectively.
Handle discipline problems in your classes.
Deal with learning problems in your classes.
Meet the needs of students with incredible difficulty so they can learn the content of your subject.
Design and carry out good learning assessment procedures for your students.
Work Stress Index
Your stress level regarding the social environment in which the school is inserted.
Your stress level regarding infrastructure and work materials.
Your stress level regarding the sufficiency of the support staff.
Workload Index
Your workload.
Number of students per class.

Source: Developed by the author for this article with data from the PGLQE survey (2023).