

**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP PROFILE OVER TEACHING TEAMS:
FOCUSING ON PROCESSES OR RESULTS**

***PERFIL DE LIDERANÇA DA DIRETORA ESCOLAR SOBRE AS EQUIPES
DOCENTES: FOCALIZAÇÃO EM PROCESSOS OU EM RESULTADOS***

***PERFIL DE LIDERAZGO DEL DIRECTOR ESCOLAR SOBRE EQUIPOS DOCENTES:
ENFOQUE EN PROCESOS O RESULTADOS***



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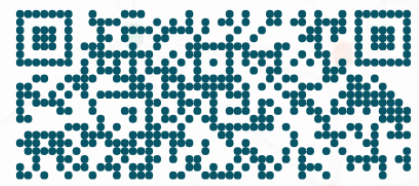
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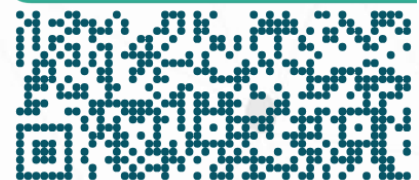
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ABSTRACT: This article discusses relationships between school principal leadership, teaching teams' qualifications, and student performance in 139 schools in Piauí and Espírito Santo states, Brazil. With a quantitative methodology, treating data from a survey applied by the research "Management Practices, Educational Leadership and Quality of Education in Secondary Education Institutions in Brazil," the leadership profile was developed, focusing on prioritizing school processes or student results, comparing them with the teaching teams, composing eight groups of schools. The analysis allowed us to observe that schools with more qualified teaching teams tend to present better performances in any administration focus group; schools with a focus on results tend to present better performance (with inequality, in some cases, between schools with more or less qualified teams.) In general terms, schools whose leadership focuses on school processes and student results (double focus) tend to have better and more balanced performances.

KEYWORDS: School principal. School leadership. Teaching team. Student performance.

RESUMO: Este artigo discute relações entre liderança da diretora escolar, qualificação das equipes docentes e desempenho estudantil, em 139 escolas dos estados do Piauí e do Espírito Santo. Utilizando metodologia quantitativa, tratando dados provenientes de um survey aplicado pela pesquisa "Práticas de Gestão, Liderança Educacional e Qualidade da Educação em Instituições de Ensino Médio no Brasil", desenvolveu-se o perfil de liderança, focalização priorizando processos escolares ou resultados estudantis, cotejando-os com os quadros das equipes docentes, compondo oito grupos de escolas. A análise permitiu observar que escolas com equipes docentes mais qualificadas tendem a apresentar melhores desempenhos, em qualquer grupo de focalização da gestão; escolas com gestão focalizada em resultados tendem a apresentar melhor desempenho (com desigualdade, em alguns casos, entre escolas com equipes mais ou menos qualificadas). Em termos gerais, escolas cujas lideranças focalizam tanto processos escolares quanto resultados estudantis (duplo foco), tendem a ter melhores e mais equilibrados desempenhos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Diretora escolar. Liderança escolar. Equipe docente. Desempenho estudantil.

RESUMEN: Este artículo analiza las relaciones entre el liderazgo del director escolar, la calificación de los equipos docentes y los niveles de desempeño de los estudiantes, en 139 escuelas de los estados de Piauí y Espírito Santo, Brasil. Utilizando metodología cuantitativa, tratando datos de una encuesta aplicada por la investigación "Prácticas de Gestión, Liderazgo Educativo y Calidad de la Educación en Instituciones de Educación Secundaria en Brasil", se desarrolló el perfil de liderazgo, priorizando los procesos escolares o resultados de los estudiantes, comparándolos con los equipos docentes, componiendo ocho grupos de escuelas. El análisis permitió observar que las escuelas con equipos docentes más calificados tienden a presentar mejores desempeños, en cualquier grupo focal de gestión; las escuelas con gestión enfocada en resultados tienden a presentar mejores desempeños (con desigualdad, en algunos casos, entre escuelas con equipos más o menos calificados). En términos generales, las escuelas cuyo liderazgo se centra tanto en los procesos escolares como en los resultados de los estudiantes (doble enfoque) tienden a tener actuaciones mejores y más equilibradas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Director de escuela. Liderazgo escolar. Equipo docente. Rendimiento estudantil.

Introduction

This article aims to investigate the relationship between school leadership, teacher qualifications, and school proficiency levels, focusing on leadership approaches directed towards school processes and student outcomes in high schools in the states of Piauí and Espírito Santo. The study is part of the research project titled "Management Practices, Educational Leadership, and Education Quality in High Schools in Brazil" (PGLEQE), the description and methodological details of which are found in the opening article of this dossier⁴.

The scope was to take various variables from the research questionnaires that would allow the development of indicators categorizing types of school leadership focused on School Processes and/or Student Results; and relate them to the conduct of pedagogical work, thus observing their action through school teams, which were also typified as "More Qualified Teams" (MQT) and "Less Qualified Teams" (LQT), referring to the profile of teachers in the sample schools. After defining the indicators, the collected data were analyzed to categorize a set of possibilities that related the focus of leadership to the profile of the teaching staff.

With the articulated composition of these two variables, the study compares the levels of student proficiency in each group of schools, seeking to observe the association between the focus of school management on leading the teaching staff, the qualification of this team, and what the school results allow to analyze. However, this was done without the pretense of finding a cause-effect relationship, since the objective of the study is to understand the relationships between these elements, discussing possibilities and limits of school leadership in conducting this political-pedagogical process, which is school management.

The study analyzed data from the mentioned research aiming to verify the following hypothesis: leadership focused on school processes can achieve more solid results from a less qualified team, although generally, leadership focused on results tends to present larger immediate results.

⁴ For more detailed information about the Research, see Oliveira et al. (2024) in the article "*Práticas de Gestão, Liderança Educativa e Qualidade da Educação em Escolas de Ensino Médio no Brasil*" published in this issue.

School Leadership Focused on School Processes or Student Results and Teacher Qualifications

The concept of leadership has undergone a constant process of improvement over time, especially in education. In Brazil, although the expression is controversial, given the criticism that falls on its eventual use in educational policy or academic production, there is a growing concern among educational leaders, politicians working in education, and researchers in the field about its definition, since it is a phenomenon of reality, that is, there are leaderships in action in schools. These leaderships, due to the place of domination (Weber, 2004) they occupy, can interfere with the work of the teams they coordinate and, consequently, in the directions, destinies, and outcomes of the students in the schools.

The literature presents various analyses, conceptualizations, and typifications of the phenomenon (Leithwood, 2009; Nóvoa, 1995; Oliveira, 2015; Polon, 2009, among others). However, for the analyses developed in this study, we established the following conceptual parameters regarding school leadership: focused on processes or focused on results.

The first is leadership focused on school processes, which is characterized by an emphasis on coordinating, monitoring, and supervising school activities and addressing issues related to the school environment and pedagogical work. It involves prioritizing activities such as pedagogical meetings with teachers, supervision of school personnel, handling disciplinary situations, guiding the school management team, and engaging with families and guardians of students. Additionally, it emphatically concerns itself with absenteeism, student dropout rates, alcohol or drug use by students, school violence, difficulties in meeting the needs of culturally diverse students, emotional problems, social vulnerability in the school's surroundings, low participation of families in school activities, and resistance of teachers to changes.

On the other hand, leadership focused on student results, monitored students' academic performance, and implemented strategies to improve it. This demands prioritizing activities such as monitoring school results, participating in strategic planning meetings, engaging in discussions about student performance, monitoring external assessments, publicizing actions and results, holding individuals and groups accountable for performance, and providing assistance and supervision in classes. Additionally, it also emphasizes the implementation of the standard curriculum in classes and, even before that, continuous training of teachers for knowledge of the curriculum base.

These descriptors stem from the recognition that in the school context, the person in school management assumes the role of a leader. As emphasized by Paro (1995, p. 89), the

principal represents the "ultimate authority in the school and holds final responsibility for it." Thus, in managing the school, this professional engages in mobilization, motivation, and coordination activities, meaning they must possess leadership capacity. Therefore, the leadership profile of school management directly impacts the definition of the institution's objectives and the conduct of daily education. Hence, we can infer that the performance of the school principal⁵ potentially relates to the levels of student performance (Soares; Teixeira, 2006).

Leadership focused on school processes aligns with the understandings of Bolivar (2012), for whom the quality of leadership is intrinsically linked to the internal processes that structure the functioning of schools. These processes not only organize daily activities but also foster collaboration among teams and provide opportunities for personal growth. In this sense, we understand that this leadership style is primarily concerned with the educational process, characterized by attention to coordinating and supervising school activities, resolving issues related to the school environment and pedagogical work, and various other actions, as mentioned earlier. Schools led with a focus on processes demonstrate tendencies of greater cohesion and integration among the management, teaching staff, students, and families.

Leadership based on processes can be considered a reflection of the transformational leadership style. This style is characterized by its emphasis on emotions, values, and the ability of leaders and followers to establish a personal commitment to organizational goals (Leithwood; Jantzi, 2005). By adopting a transformational leadership approach focused on processes, leaders focus on procedural efficiency, value the importance of what is being done and how it is being done, and recognize the need to monitor processes to achieve desired outcomes.

Leadership focused on student results, on the other hand, aligns with "Management by Objectives (MBO)" or "Results-Based Management" (Chiavenato, 2004). This approach originates from neoclassical management theory based on the writings of Drucker (1992). This style is developed through the definition of specific goals, whereby responsibilities and expected results become performance indicators. The development matrix of this model is characterized by the integration of leaders and followers, aiming to achieve results, suggesting the idea that an organization, such as a school, has its primary objective in results, that is, the

⁵ In the data used to write this study, the majority of management functions were performed by female people, which is why the option here for gender flexion in feminine, in most of the text, even though the professional is always considered in that function, regardless of flexion.

pursuit of results primarily justifies its existence. In this model, based on goals, the leader must act by providing support, direction, and resources for the previously defined objectives to be achieved.

Periodically, leaders and followers gather for the monitoring and follow-up of actions taken. Chiavenato (2004) allows for a definition of results-focused leadership based on the following behaviors: constant interaction between principals and teachers; collective definition of common goals; predefined evaluation criteria; actions that prioritize the present and the future; primary emphasis on results and control over them. These leaders seek to achieve good results in external assessments. To achieve this, the school's management focuses on supervising and improving student performance, regardless of the processes or contextual conditions for such.

From another perspective, we could find situational leadership in school management, which constitutes an adaptive strategy in which leaders adjust their leadership styles according to the needs and situations of the school. Developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1986), this approach recognizes that there is no single effective leadership style. When related to school management, it allows principals to address a variety of challenges, from academic issues to the management of teacher and staff teams. Principals can establish a collaborative environment that promotes student learning and development by adapting their leadership style according to specific demands.

Nonetheless, the school principal's leadership operates within a diverse, contradictory, and even unequal set of people. Hence, the complexity of the school organization must be recognized as a multifaceted, political, and multi-discursive object (Estêvão, 2001; Lima, 1998). It is precisely because of this context that the leadership of the school leader plays a significant role. According to Nóvoa (1995), the principal should adopt an approach that involves the integration and articulation of elements of the organizational process. This encompasses implementing planning, organization, and evaluation strategies that contribute to the proper functioning of the school. Organizational leadership, as conceptualized by the author, is essential to make the school effective in pursuing positive educational outcomes.

The school, as a complex organization, is the result of formal commitments and informal interactions that occur daily. Nóvoa (1995) offers a comprehensive view of the organizational characteristics that define this institution, based on three fundamental dimensions. These dimensions include the physical structure of the school, which comprises aspects such as available material resources, the number of students, physical facilities, and space organization.

Furthermore, the administrative structure of the school is another critical dimension, encompassing management, direction, control, decision-making, and the role of teaching professionals. The third dimension, the social structure of the school, addresses the interpersonal relationships among students, teachers, and staff, as well as how responsibility is shared among these actors. These three dimensions intertwine and shape the functioning of the school as a whole.

Therefore, school leadership coordinates and articulates the efforts of people, material, and infrastructural resources for developing and implementing a quality formative project. Thus, school management, under the leadership of the principal, acts through people and resources to achieve educational goals (Paro, 1995; Souza, 2007). Hence, school leadership does not correspond to the recognition of the principal's isolated authority, although it depends on it; rather, it materializes in the collective effort involving a team of education professionals, especially teachers. These professionals play a central role in promoting student learning.

Given the exogeneity with which school teams in public education networks in Brazil are usually constituted, i.e., the fact that school administrations have no control or influence over the selection or choice of professionals working at the school, the principal operates to a large extent through teams of teachers and other professionals whom they did not even know previously. Therefore, it is reasonable to suppose that a given leadership profile may encounter greater or lesser difficulty in developing school processes or achieving results, depending on the team they work with. Hence, this article juxtaposes those leadership profiles with an analysis of the composition of the teaching teams in the schools under study.

The school only functions because it brings together at least two groups of people, teachers and students. The fulfillment of the school's objectives means that the teacher has succeeded in leading their students to learning. All the other important schoolwork and the people there converge toward this goal. The learning here refers to a) acquiring and understanding scientific, aesthetic, and philosophical knowledge, b) social interaction, and c) citizenship. However, teaching, through professional practice, significantly enhances quality, and this experience proves decisive in the teacher's identity, knowledge, and outcomes achieved. Moreover, when the focus is on student outcomes, these learnings may be limited to certain scientific knowledge, within a restricted scope of assessments, and not to its diversity or the other aforementioned dimensions (social interaction and citizenship).

Thus, in this study, we take the idea of teaching experience as the best equation considering the (highest) level of education of the teacher and training in teaching and/or

pedagogical formation and bachelor's degree, together with the (longest) teaching time in the Education Network, the (longest) total teaching time in their professional experience, the (longest) time working at the current school, the (best) weekly workload at the school, the presence and functioning of administrative and pedagogical meetings, and the (stable) work regime at the school. That is, a more experienced teacher is one who demonstrates higher numbers in responses to questions about these issues or is closer to the desirable ones.

The aspect regarding administrative or pedagogical meetings unfolds into aspects of daily school life, from which the higher or lower qualification of the teaching team is evidenced, and which relate to conditions of quality in the work. We refer to the paid workload in meetings, the existence of a defined schedule for meetings, a common schedule with other teachers in the area/segment/school, the control and monitoring of the teacher's presence at the school, and the existence of regular pedagogical and administrative meetings.

Many other elements would tension us regarding the definition of what constitutes a more qualified team, as pointed out by Rothen (2002), Miranda, Casa Nova, and Cornacchione Jr. (2013), and Ferreira Filho, Abreu, and Pereira Neto (2020), but most of the central elements seem to be encompassed in the definition above and were present in the data that compose the PGLEQE, the research from which this study derives. We are interested in knowing whether and to what extent a team of teachers is more or less qualified because it is with them that school leadership will work towards higher-quality education.

The Study

This research comprised three variables: management focus, teacher team qualification, and student performance levels. However, the first two were used to analyze the initial composition of the groups in relation to student performance. The articulation between them generated a methodological design in the following typology:

Chart 1 - Typology Management Focus and Teacher Team Qualification

	More Qualified Team	Less Qualified Team
Management Focused on Student Results	A1	A2
Management Focused on School Processes	B1	B2
Dual-Focused Management	C1	C2

Management without Focus	D1	D2
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Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

In other words, the schools were organized into these eight groups: a) leadership focused on results coordinating a more qualified team; b) leadership focused on results coordinating a less qualified team; c) leadership focused on processes coordinating a more qualified team; d) leadership focused on processes coordinating a less qualified team; e) leadership focused on both results and processes coordinating a more qualified team; f) leadership focused on both results and processes coordinating a less qualified team; g) leadership without focus on both results and processes coordinating a more qualified team; h) leadership without focus on both results and processes coordinating a less qualified team.

The database, as mentioned, comes from a survey applied to public high schools in Piauí and Espírito Santo, with data collected from 69 schools in the former state and 70 in the latter. This means that we are dealing with state public schools that express, to some extent, elements of the state's educational policy, which differ when comparing the two federal states. Therefore, in this study, the groups of schools were analyzed separately by state, as will be seen later.

The development and definition of Management Focus (on processes or results) were carried out sometimes using the same variables, contrasting the responses to classify the respondent, or alternatively, using exclusive variables, i.e., those that would only fit for classifying the respondent into one of those groups.

Thus, separately, the affirmative responses for the variables and alternatives considered for each group were summed, obtaining minimum and maximum values of "score" for management focus. From the range of these values for each group (processes or results), the midpoint was taken as the cutoff point. Therefore, we found a group of principals with higher scores/responses for variables and alternatives considered to focus on student results (A) and another for school processes (B). Upon exploring the data, it was noticed that the group "scored," meaning they responded positively to both the variables considered for results and those for processes, being categorized as C - dual focus, as well as, on the other hand, a group that had low totals in both, categorized as "undetermined/undefined focus" (D).

The classification of school leadership into their respective groups observed the variables linked to the concepts presented earlier ⁶ and established a score for each respondent. However, the variables used to define management focus are different because the

⁶ The list of variables can be found in the appendix of this article.

questionnaire includes questions that are more aligned with one or the other type of focus, hence, may have negative or positive responses to both - which "creates" groups C and D. Additionally, some variables were used for classification in both groups, but in these cases, observing the variation of responses in the categories, as depending on the type of response, the subject was placed in a focus on processes, or with another type of response, was placed in a focus on results.

The identification of the principal with a focus on school processes or student results was defined when the score achieved by her exceeded the midpoint for that group, considering all 139 schools. Thus, a school whose principal scored above "11" on the variables focusing on results, which is the midpoint for this focus, was placed in this group ("A"). Another school whose professional scored above "18" on the variables focusing on processes, which is the midpoint for this focus, was placed in the other group ("B"). A school whose principal scored above "11" on the variables focusing on results and simultaneously above "18" on the variables focusing on processes, which are the midpoints for each of the focuses, was placed in the dual focus group ("C"). Finally, a school whose principal did not reach the average score for both focuses was placed in group "D," leadership without focus.

Table 1 – Average points for each focus group

Average Points	PI	ES	Overall
Focus on Results	9,54	11,86	10,71
Focus on Processes	18,51	17,99	18,24

Source: Compiled by the authors (2023).

Thus, based on the identification of school units/principals according to focus and the summation of points per school for each index, Table 2 characterizes the groups by state. It shows the percentages of schools whose focus was identified as either results or processes, based on the aforementioned average points and means. There is a higher concentration of schools in Espírito Santo with a focus on results and processes, with over 60%. In the case of Piauí, schools have a predominance of below-average focus on results and the highest percentage of schools with a focus on processes.

Table 2 – Proportional quantity of schools per focus group in management, by state

Category	PI	ES	Overall
Schools below the "Focus on Results" average	63,8%	32,9%	48,2%
Schools at or above the "Focus on Results" average	36,2%	67,1%	51,8%
Schools below the "Focus on Processes" average	31,9%	40,0%	36,0%
Schools at or above the "Focus on Processes" average	68,1%	60,0%	64,0%

Source: Compiled by the authors (2023).

With the groups defined, we cross-referenced the leadership index data with the team qualification indicator (Table 3) to have the composition of the 8 groups.

Table 3 – Quantity and percentage of schools per focus group by state

Group	Focus	Team	Piauí		Espírito Santo		Overall	
			n	%	n	%	n	%
A1	School Results	E+Q	6	8,7%	12	17,1%	18	13,0%
A2	School Results	E-Q	4	5,8%	10	14,3%	14	10,1%
B1	Educational Processes	E+Q	16	23,2%	9	12,9%	25	18,0%
B2	Educational Processes	E-Q	16	23,2%	8	11,4%	24	17,3%
C1	Dual Focus	E+Q	9	13,0%	9	12,9%	18	13,0%
C2	Dual Focus	E-Q	6	8,7%	16	22,9%	22	15,8%
D1	Undetermined Focus	E+Q	4	5,8%	4	5,7%	8	5,8%
D2	Undetermined Focus	E-Q	8	11,6%	2	2,9%	10	7,2%

Source: Compiled by the authors (2023).

Leadership focused on student results arises, to a large extent, from movements and actions in educational policy, which have been inducing and demanding attitudes from school principals to generate higher levels of student performance in external assessments (Afonso, 2018; Hypolito, 2011; Parente, 2017). Leadership focused on school processes has a more complex and ancient origin, probably stemming from the profile of initial training (and even continued in some cases), and from the school tradition, which has (almost) always prioritized school management focused on daily routines, dealing with pedagogical conflicts, and other issues.

The existence of leadership with a dual focus seems, at the same time, a response to educational policies aimed at student performance and behavior toward the standard of school

management in the country. However, it is strange that we have found a set of schools whose leaderships do not present a focus, either on school processes or on student results, which may be related to the level (and type) of initial training, the absence of continued training of principals, and even the type of (non) professional commitment of the principal.

Although we do not take the profile of the professionals as central here, but rather the focus of management, we understand that it may help in understanding the reasons that lead to the very way of conducting teams, sometimes guided by tradition and linked to their initial and continued training, which tends to look at school processes as fundamental, sometimes linked to current public policies, responding to demands for better student results, for example.

However, it is necessary to deepen such analyses with other vertical and qualitative studies to understand what leads to the focus on processes or results and, on the other hand, what would lead principals not to have a defined focus (group "D"). One hypothesis arises from the educational tradition's contradiction in looking more at processes versus public policies aimed at results, disorienting action.

In the table below, we see that the majority of school leadership is represented by women (64.7%), with an average age between 44 and 48 years. Regarding color/race, we have two distinct scenarios: while in PI, 71% of principals are Black (Black and Brown), in ES, almost 63% of principals are White. As for time, they have an average of 5 to 6 years working as school principals (in the state of Piauí, this time is slightly higher than the overall average, as well as the age of the principals is slightly higher). However, 12.94% have more than ten years in the principal role, while 27.3% have up to two years.

Table 4 – Profile of school principals in the sample

UF	Group	Female ⁷ (%)	Self-declaration Color/Race ⁸ (%)			Age			Length of time at this school (years)		
			White	Brown	Black	Average	% < 30	% > 50	Average	% < 3	% > 10
Piauí - PI	A1	5,8%	1,5%	5,8%	1,5%	48	0,0%	4,4%	4,17	1,5%	0,0%
	A2	2,9%	1,5%	4,4%	0,0%	51	0,0%	4,4%	3,25	2,9%	0,0%
	B1	15,9%	2,9%	17,4%	0,0%	49	0,0%	10,1%	5,69	1,5%	1,5%
	B2	17,4%	7,3%	11,6%	2,9%	49	0,0%	11,6%	7,69	2,9%	7,3%
	C1	5,8%	1,5%	5,8%	4,4%	46	0,0%	4,4%	6,22	2,9%	2,9%
	C2	7,3%	0,0%	5,8%	2,9%	52	0,0%	5,8%	6,83	2,9%	2,9%
	D1	4,4%	2,9%	2,9%	0,0%	45	0,0%	2,9%	8	0,0%	1,5%

⁷ Too many answers for males; Categories "Gender-fluid/non-binary" or "I prefer not to answer this question from these categories" had no responses.

⁸ Too many percentages, very low, for yellow, indigenous, and I don't want to declare, only in the State of Piauí.

	D2	7,3%	5,8%	5,8%	0,0%	45	1,5%	2,9%	4	4,4%	0,0%
	Total PI	66,7%	23,2%	59,4%	11,6%	48	1,5%	46,4%	5,99	18,8%	15,9%
Espírito Santo - ES	A1	11,4%	12,9%	2,9%	1,4%	44	0,0%	5,7%	3,83	7,1%	0,0%
	A2	10,0%	11,4%	2,9%	0,0%	46	0,0%	5,7%	8,2	4,3%	4,3%
	B1	7,1%	5,7%	2,9%	4,3%	45	0,0%	1,4%	5	4,3%	0,0%
	B2	5,7%	4,3%	5,7%	1,4%	41	2,9%	2,9%	2,5	7,1%	0,0%
	C1	7,1%	5,7%	5,7%	1,4%	44	0,0%	2,9%	4,56	5,7%	1,4%
	C2	15,7%	18,6%	4,3%	0,0%	47	0,0%	8,6%	7,06	4,3%	4,3%
	D1	2,9%	1,4%	4,3%	0,0%	46	0,0%	1,4%	2,75	2,9%	0,0%
	D2	2,9%	2,9%	0,0%	0,0%	51	0,0%	1,4%	7	0,0%	0,0%
		Total ES	62,9%	62,9%	28,6%	8,6%	45	2,9%	30,0%	5,31	35,7%

Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

Regarding the evaluation of the qualifications of the teaching staff, we developed an indicator, Indicator of Teaching Staff Qualification (ITSQ), which is a metric that was developed to assess the quality conditions and qualifications of teaching staff in educational institutions. For the elaboration of this indicator, we used the responses collected through a questionnaire, with the participation of 619 teachers (PI) and 682 (ES), whose variables have already been mentioned in the concept of team qualification. These variables all had the same weight because we did not find any other study in the literature that precisely pointed out another alternative.

Table 5 – Weighted Value of ITSQ

INDICATOR OF TEACHING STAFF QUALIFICATION - ITSQ	WEIGHTED VALUE
Level of Education	1
Teaching Certificate vs Bachelor's Degree	1
Years of Teaching in the Network	1
Total Years of Teaching	1
Years in the School	1
Weekly Hours at School	1
<i>Remunerated Meeting Hours</i>	0,125
<i>Defined Meeting Schedule</i>	0,125
<i>Common Schedule with Other Area Teachers</i>	0,125
<i>Common Schedule with Segment Set</i>	0,125
<i>Common Schedule with School Set</i>	0,125
<i>Controlled Presence 0.125 Who Proposes Meeting</i>	0,125
<i>Who Organizes Meeting</i>	0,125
<i>Work Regime at the School</i>	0,125
Remunerated Meeting Hours	1

Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

Some of the questions taken for the ITSQ (level of education, years in the network/as a teacher/in the school, weekly working hours) had the alternatives weighted on a scale according to the teachers' responses; others were only transformed into variables to be summed for the index. Table 5 below expresses the percentage distribution of respondents in the variables and categories, demonstrating the panorama of teaching teams in these important aspects in defining their qualifications.

Table 6 – ITSQ: Variables and Categories, by State

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>ES</i>	<i>PI</i>	<i>Total</i>
Maior nível de formação	Highest Level of Education High School	0,2%	0,3%	0,2%
	Higher Normal Course	2,9%	5,8%	4,3%
	Higher Education - Teaching Degree (including Pedagogy)	10,1%	19,2%	14,5%
	Higher Education - Bachelor's Degree or Technologist	1,3%	3,4%	2,3%
	Specialization (postgraduate - over 360 hours)	68,5%	64,8%	66,7%
	Professional Master's Degree	6,5%	2,4%	4,5%
	Academic Master's Degree	7,6%	3,6%	5,7%
Higher Education Background	Doctorate	2,9%	0,5%	1,8%
	Education - Pedagogy	12,8%	9,3%	11,2%
	Teaching Degree	71,1%	76,4%	73,5%
	Bachelor's Degree	13,8%	10,5%	12,3%
Years in the Education System	Other Education	2,4%	3,8%	3,0%
	Up to 2 years	14,2%	14,9%	14,5%
	2 to 5 years	18,0%	14,2%	16,2%
	5 to 10 years	19,7%	22,6%	21,1%
	10 to 20 years	31,1%	26,8%	29,1%
	20 to 30 years	13,9%	20,4%	17,0%
Time as a Teacher	More than 30 years	3,1%	1,1%	2,2%
	Up to 2 years	5,6%	3,6%	4,6%
	2 to 5 years	12,3%	7,3%	9,9%
	5 to 10 years	18,2%	20,2%	19,1%
	10 to 20 years	37,5%	31,0%	34,4%
	20 to 30 years	21,1%	33,1%	26,8%
Time at School	More than 30 years	5,3%	4,9%	5,1%
	Up to 2 years	29,2%	24,4%	26,9%
	2 to 5 years	27,1%	21,5%	24,4%
	5 to 10 years	20,8%	24,4%	22,5%
	10 to 20 years	15,8%	22,8%	19,1%
	20 to 30 years	6,3%	6,6%	6,5%
CH at School	More than 30 years	0,7%	0,3%	0,5%
	Up to 4 hours (inclusive 4)	0,6%	1,5%	1,0%
	From 4 to 8 hours (including 8am)	1,9%	3,9%	2,8%
	From 8 to 12 hours (including 12pm)	2,5%	4,0%	3,2%
	From 12 to 4 pm (including 4 pm)	2,2%	9,2%	5,5%
	From 4 pm to 8 pm (including 8 pm)	3,1%	46,4%	23,7%
Work regime	From 20 to 30 hours (including 30h)	24,9%	3,7%	14,8%
	More than 30 hours	64,8%	31,3%	48,9%
	Certified/tenured professor	31,2%	53,3%	41,7%
Sum of variables "Meeting"	Temporary or other contract	68,8%	46,7%	58,3%
	0	0,4%	1,8%	1,1%
	0,25	5,1%	8,7%	6,8%
	0,5	21,0%	13,4%	17,4%

0,75	62,5%	61,2%	61,9%
1	11,0%	14,9%	12,8%

Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

By summing up the weighted variables for the ITSQ, as listed above, scores were obtained per teacher and an index per school, noting that the maximum score for each variable is "1". When verifying the averages for each variable, by state, a slightly larger distinction can be observed for teaching hours in the same school (teams from Espírito Santo, in general, fulfill a higher workload at the school, which may result in greater involvement with that community) and work regime (in this case, teams from the state of Piauí have a higher average, meaning there are more permanent teachers than temporary contracts in this state among the respondents).

Table 7 – Weighted Overall Averages for the ITSQ

Overall weighted averages (0 to 1) for ITSQ (by respondent/teacher)	ES	PI	Overall Average
Training level	0,604	0,543	0,575
Training linked to education	0,962	0,956	0,959
Time in the education system	0,443	0,453	0,448
Time as a teacher	0,544	0,594	0,568
Time at school	0,290	0,333	0,316
Teaching workload at school	0,899	0,719	0,813
“Meetings”	0,761	0,761	0,761
Work regime	0,312	0,533	0,417

Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

The IQED averages show an overall performance of 5.330 points for schools with E+Q and 4.403 for those with E-Q. This score is derived from the sum of the averages above. The variation is greater among schools in Espírito Santo, where the averages differ by almost 1.1 points between schools with E+Q and those with E-Q, while in schools in Piauí, this variation is 0.8 points. In the general picture, such variation is 0.9 points.

Table 8 – Mean School Averages

	ES	PI	Overall Average
E+Q	5,240	5,417	5,330
E-Q	4,419	4,385	4,403
Overall Average	4,818	4,908	4,863

Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

Finally, the third element analyzed was the average proficiency of high school students in the surveyed schools. It is necessary to inform, first of all, that this data comes from a source external to the research, collected from the Educational Assessment Systems of the sampled states, namely the Basic Education Assessment Program of Espírito Santo - PAEBES and the Educational Assessment System of Piauí - SAEPI, both applied in the year 2022. The specific systems were used due to the lack of data from the SAEB for the year of data collection of the PGLQE (2022), at the time of the development of this research. Therefore, the evaluative parameter may have distortions, in the sense that what is estimated as desired performance in one network may not perfectly coincide with what is estimated in another. The use of performance levels serves to assist the evaluation of the other two variables, but proficiency results from a single test, without longitudinal measures, and without the inclusion of other important aspects of the pedagogical process, may not allow for deeper conclusions about the relationships between the variables of this study.

Another essential aspect to highlight is that this work did not conduct any analysis considering the socioeconomic level (SES) of the students, and it is well-known that this variable correlates with student performance in knowledge or learning assessments. However, the focus of the analysis falls on the leadership profile and the qualification of the team, and as far as the database allows, there is no significant variation in SES levels in relation to these variables, although it is noted that numerically, schools with less qualified teams (E-Q) tend to have lower socioeconomic levels of students than others. What we find is a significant imbalance in the percentage of schools in the lower levels of the INEP⁹, SES scale in groups A1 and A2 and C1 and C2 in the state of Piauí. In the others, there is great balance between the groups. Future analyses, internally within the groups of this study, may deepen the relationships established here and, eventually, find a better explanation for the variation in the data.

Proficiency data was calculated by averaging the students' performances in the aforementioned systems, analyzing their performance in the subjects of Portuguese Language and Mathematics of the third year of high school, common to both assessments. From this, it was observed in which category of student performance the student was, considering these four groups: Below Basic; Basic; Adequate; Advanced. Then, the percentage of students in each

⁹ The socioeconomic level indicator - INSE is calculated by INEP for each school participating in the *Prova Brasil*/SAEB, based on the statistical aggregation of information captured in student questionnaires (for more information, access the INEP Technical Note that presents the calculation of the indicator and the variables considered: INEP. Microdata from *Prova Brasil* 2015. Technical Note. Socioeconomic Level Indicator of Basic Education Schools. Available in: <http://portal.inep.gov.br/web/guest/indicadores-educacionais>).

category was analyzed, comparing it to the focus of management and the qualification of the teaching staff.

Leadership + Team = Performance?

We present and discuss, subsequently, the results of the analyses of the elements listed previously: management focus, teacher team qualification, and student performance level.

As can be observed in Tables 9 and 10, schools with more qualified teams (E+Q) have a higher percentage of students in the adequate and advanced levels in both states and in almost all management focus groups. The exception lies in group D1 in Piauí, where there are fewer students in the two highest levels than in group D2, meaning that when school leadership does not have a defined focus, in this state, team qualification does not seem to positively alter student performance results.

Conversely, schools with less qualified teams (E-Q) have the highest percentage of students at the below-basic level in both states and also in almost all focus groups. Once again, the exception lies with groups D1 and D2 in PI, where there is a reversal compared to the others. In D1 (without management focus and with E+Q), almost 60% of students are below basic, compared to 51% in schools with E-Q.

Further observing the percentage of students below the basic level in assessment results, it is interesting to note that schools with a dual focus tend to have fewer students in this critical group, especially when considering schools with E-Q, suggesting that simultaneous concerns with school processes and student outcomes may represent a balance and greater achievement of the broad school objectives mentioned earlier, even when the teaching staff is not as qualified. On the other hand, these schools, with a dual focus on management, also have the highest combined percentage of students in the two higher performance levels, more markedly in ES. Interestingly, in PI, schools with a dual focus and E-Q have a larger contingent of students at the advanced level than schools in the same dual focus group but with E+Q.

As expected, in both states (PI and ES), the quantity of students with performance in the two highest levels exceeds 32% when the school focuses on results and has an E+Q. If leadership focus is on student outcomes, then the percentages of students in the highest proficiency levels would be expected. This precisely invites some criticism of this type of leadership and formative project, which is predominantly focused on "teaching to the test" (Lucchesi; Conti, 2023; Moraes, 2011;).

Looking solely at the advanced level, it's important to highlight that in PI, schools with E-Q and the lowest number of students at this level belong to group A2, i.e., those focusing on results, allowing us to infer that a focus on results, with E-Q, may prove insufficient to achieve the highest levels. On the other hand, still in PI, group B2 (process focus with E-Q) shows the best performance for less qualified teams and the smallest distance from the E+Q group in the same management focus, suggesting that such a focus may minimize differences for the most advanced levels of student performance.

In ES, process focus does not seem to be important for student performance, either in overall performance or in the difference between teacher team profiles, as apart from schools with no defined focus (groups D1 and D2), the percentages of students at the most advanced levels are lower precisely in schools focusing on process, whether with E+Q or E-Q. Once again, we caution that only in research with historical series is it possible to perceive the nuances of these processes since a focus on results may seem to provide more immediate responses, whereas a focus on processes does not, resulting in longer-term "responses".

Still, in ES, it is noteworthy that schools with a dual focus and E+Q (group C1) have a low percentage of students at the lower level (below basic), not reaching 30%, which is significantly lower than all other groups in, both states. Indeed, this seems to be the most suitable design for developing a good formative project: a leadership that focuses on school processes but does not overlook student outcomes and has the opportunity to conduct educational work with a more qualified team of teachers.

Table 9 – Management focus, teacher team qualification, and student performance level, Piauí

Piauí						
	Focus management	Teaching team	Below Basic	Basic	Adequate	Advanced
A1	School results	More qualified	37,4%	30,3%	22,7%	9,6%
A2	School results	Less qualified	56,2%	29,6%	11,9%	2,3%
B1	Educational processes	More qualified	45,7%	29,4%	19,4%	5,5%
B2	Educational processes	Less qualified	47,6%	30,8%	17,1%	4,5%
C1	Double focus	More qualified	42,5%	31,0%	19,8%	6,7%
C2	Double focus	Less qualified	47,8%	31,8%	13,0%	7,4%
D1	No defined focus	More qualified	59,9%	25,3%	12,2%	2,6%
D2	No defined focus	Less qualified	51,3%	29,8%	16,2%	2,8%

Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

Table 10 - Management Focus, Teacher Team Qualification, and Student Performance Level, Espírito Santo

Espírito Santo						
	Focus management	Teaching team	Below Basic	Basic	Adequate	Advanced
A1	School results	More qualified	35,9%	31,5%	26,0%	6,5%
A2	School results	Less qualified	42,2%	32,4%	21,9%	3,4%
B1	Educational processes	More qualified	34,7%	34,8%	25,7%	4,9%
B2	Educational processes	Less qualified	45,1%	35,1%	17,1%	2,7%
C1	Double focus	More qualified	28,7%	34,5%	28,7%	8,1%
C2	Double focus	Less qualified	40,0%	31,3%	25,3%	3,5%
D1	No defined focus	More qualified	50,7%	31,3%	16,7%	1,3%
D2	No defined focus	Less qualified	58,0%	24,4%	16,0%	1,5%

Source: Developed by the authors (2023).

Final considerations

The data highlight positive trends in team qualification regarding the academic performance quality of schools. This allows inferring that teacher qualification is a central element in academic outcomes, albeit mediated by leadership and its focus. From the perspective of educational research, it can be assumed that the variables for defining these more or less qualified teams were positive, and it would be interesting to conduct further studies in the same direction for more testing of this model.

Groups with leadership linked to results, especially when accompanied by E+Q, tend to demonstrate better performance, with a higher percentage of students in the higher levels. However, the schools with a dual focus, meaning those that concern themselves with both processes and results, have shown better performance in the higher levels and a lower percentage of students in the lower levels. This might suggest that situational leadership can promote a more collaborative environment (Hersey; Blanchard, 1986).

On the other hand, groups with leadership linked to processes and E-Q tend to show lower performance in the higher levels, with a smaller proportion of students at these levels. It is also emblematic that schools whose directors do not have a defined focus lead the schools with the lowest performance. Perhaps it is in these schools, and the adequate training of these professionals and teams, that public policies should focus attention, as well as research efforts, since understanding the existing correlations and the limits for students' academic performance and other objectives of the school institution are fundamental for quality improvement.

Returning to the study's objective and comparing it with the data collected and analyzed in this work, it is not possible to assert that leadership focused on school processes achieves better or more solid results when leading a less qualified team. This is either because the weight of team qualification is greater on the variation of student performance than management focus, or because when the focus predominantly falls on procedural elements, the capture of results is not immediately measurable by student performance levels. It's worth noting that when the leadership focuses on school processes, other aspects not captured in this study may have changed positively, but go unnoticed in this type of analysis.

Regarding the initial hypothesis and the findings of these analyses, regarding leadership focused on processes, longitudinal studies, as highlighted, are necessary, as focusing on school processes may, in addition to resulting in these outcomes not measurable by academic performance, refer to a longer-term conduct under a broader and more contextual scope, in the perspective of education for all, democratic, and equitable.

On the other hand, it remains evident that focusing on student outcomes yields results. That is, directing actions toward student performance does indeed lead to better levels of achievement. However, in this case, focusing on outcomes may not fully compensate for the qualification of the teaching staff, which is the variable that carries the most weight in student performance. It is also important to note that such "improved" performance is likely to be confined to the framework of large-scale assessments and may constitute instrumental rather than in-depth knowledge. In other words, outcome-focused leadership may generate impacts on the formation of individuals less capable of critically engaging with the world, citizens, as it shapes individuals trained for specific responses. These aspects require further investigation and qualitative verification, as educational policies have strongly emphasized outcomes.

Therefore, vertical studies involving immersion in schools and direct observation of reality can achieve a more nuanced understanding of these conclusions. These studies investigate the ramifications, nuances, consequences, and longer-term impacts of defined focus.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Variables Used for Management Focus Calculation

Process Focus

- 2.5/3.5 Supervising the work of school staff.
- 2.6/3.6 Controlling and addressing situations related to student discipline.
- 2.7/3.7 Controlling and addressing situations related to student discipline.
- 2.8/3.8 Conducting meetings and guiding the work of the school management team (pedagogical coordinator, vice principal, etc.)
- 2.9/3.9 Holding meetings, appointments, and other activities with families and/or guardians of students.
- 2.11/3.11 Monitoring and supervising the work of teachers in the classroom.
- 2.13/3.13 Coordinating meetings with teachers for pedagogical planning and evaluation.
- MAIN CONCERNS:
 - 4.3. Student absenteeism/excessive absences.
 - 4.4. Student dropout.
 - 4.5. Use of alcohol or drugs by students.
 - 4.6. School violence, bullying, or other school coexistence problems.
 - 4. 7. Difficulty in meeting the needs of culturally diverse students.
 - 4. 8. Increase in the number of students with emotional problems.
 - 4. 9. Social vulnerability of the school's surroundings.
 - 4.10. Low parental participation in school activities (meetings, etc.) for which they are invited.
 - 4.11. Lack of motivation and commitment from teachers.
 - 4.12. Difficulty in ensuring that students learn the content.
 - 4.13. Resistance from teachers to adopting suggestions for changes in their pedagogical practices.
 - 4.14. Resistance from teachers to discussing their pedagogical practices with colleagues or management.
 - 4.24. Lack of interest and demobilization of students regarding their studies.
- CONCERNS - PANDEMIC EFFECTS
 - 5.4. Increase in the number of students with emotional problems

- 5.5. Increase in the number of students balancing study and work
- FREQUENCY OF:
 - 6.1 Attending classes (semesterly or not applicable - response 4 or 5)
 - 6.2. (Response 1-2-3) Participating in teachers' pedagogical planning meetings.
 - 6.4. (Response 1-2-3-4) Conversing with teachers about problems that arise in their classes.
 - 6.5. (Response 1-2-3-4) Informing teachers about possible ways to expand their training for work at the school.
 - 6.9. (Response 1-2-3-4) Providing suggestions to teachers regarding the care of students with disabilities or special needs.
- PRIORITY WITH LEARNING PROBLEM (Q8) / DISCIPLINE (Q9) / SUSPECTED DISABILITY (Q10)
 - 8.4. Proposing a meeting with the management team
 - 8.5. Proposing scheduling a meeting with the family.
 - 8.6. Bringing up the issue at the collective teacher meeting.
 - 8.7. Proposing a meeting with other teachers in the same area.
 - Repeat for 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7 and for 10.4, 10.5....
- More than 40% of Teachers meet the conditions (responses 3-4-5):
 - 12.8. Demonstrate careful preparation of their teaching activities, class by class?
 - 12.11. Seek materials and resources to stay updated and improve their teaching?
 - 12.12 Are you capable of dealing with heterogeneous classes, ensuring the learning of all students regardless of their starting point?
- Annual frequency (response 1) of:
 - 17.1. Discuss with teachers about their students' performance in internal school assessments.
- Annual/semesterly/bimestrial/monthly frequency (responses 1-2-3-4)
 - 17.2. Discuss with teachers about their students' preparedness for external assessments.
 - 17.3. Requesting coordination to monitor students' internal results.
 - 17.4. Requesting coordination to monitor students' results in external assessments.
 - 17.5. Meeting with teachers to plan specific actions for improving student performance.

- 17.6. Researching and studying the performance data of students at my school in external assessments.
- Annual/semesterly/bimestrial frequency (responses 1-2-3)
 - 18.1. Studying the curriculum proposal of the network and identifying and prioritizing learning objectives and teaching content in each area/discipline.
 - 18.2. Planning didactic strategies and pedagogical projects aimed at improving student performance at the school.
- 20.5. Taking into account the comments made by students.
- 20.9. Self-assessment of the teacher.

Results Focus

- 2.10. (most time-consuming activity) - Monitoring the development and learning of students at the school through the monitoring of school results.
- 3.10. deemed most important activity) - Monitoring the development and learning of students at the school through the monitoring of school results.
- 4.1. (school's main concerns) - Academic results of my school (*Prova Brasil* or others).
- 6.1. (1-2-3) (Frequency of activities) - attending classes weekly/fortnightly/Monthly.
- 6.2. (4-5) – participating in teacher planning meetings only semi-annually or not applicable.
- (response 5 for the following items - when responded not applicable - does not discuss/inform/participate/suggest)
 - 6.4. Discuss problems that arise in their classes with teachers.
 - 6.5. Informing teachers about possible ways to expand their training for work at the school.
 - 6.9. Providing suggestions to teachers regarding the care of students with disabilities or special needs.
- 6.8. (1-2-3) Discussing with teachers about their students' performance in assessments. (weekly/fortnightly/monthly)
- 12.1 / 12.3 / 12.4 / 12.5 (resp. 3-4-5) - Teachers meeting (more than 40%) of the following conditions:
 - 12.1. Are you sufficiently familiar with the new BNCC for High School?

- 12.3. Consider the new BNCC an important advancement in improving the High School curriculum?
- 12.4. Are you sufficiently familiar with the new state High School curriculum proposal, adjusted to the BNCC?
- 12.5. Implement the new state curriculum proposal?
- 12.8. and 12.11. (resp. 1-2) - Teachers meeting less than 40%:
 - 12.8. Demonstrate careful preparation of their teaching activities, class by class?
 - 12.11. Seek materials and resources to stay updated and improve their teaching?
- Results Monitoring - (response 2-3-4-5 - semi-annually, quarterly, monthly, or fortnightly)
 - 17.1. Discuss with teachers about their students' performance in internal school assessments.
- Results Monitoring - (response 5 - fortnightly)
 - 17.2. Discussing with teachers about preparing their students for external assessments.
 - 17.3. Requesting coordination to monitor students' internal results.
 - 17.4. Requesting coordination to monitor students' results in external assessments.
 - 17.5. Meeting with teachers to plan specific actions for improving student performance.
 - 17.6. Researching and studying the performance data of students at my school in external assessments.
- 18.1 and 18.2 response 4, monthly.
 - 18.1. Studying the curriculum proposal of the network and identifying and prioritizing learning objectives and teaching content in each area/discipline.
 - 18.2. Planning didactic strategies and pedagogical projects aimed at improving student performance at the school.
- Evaluation of teachers' work from
 - 20.2. Analyzing student results.
 - 20.7. Considering the considerations made by higher management bodies.
- Level of agreement within the school management. Leadership is considered results-oriented if it completely disagrees with (response 1):
 - 27.6. There is little that I, as the principal, can do to improve students' academic performance.

School principal's leadership profile over teaching teams: Focusing on processes or results

- Policies that have contributed significantly (response 4) to the quality of education
 - 30.1. Common National Curricular Base
 - 30.2. High School Reform