

"I DON'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO EXIST": THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS¹

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Abstract

This paper research how teachers deal with difficulties encountered in the everyday workplace. A qualitative approach was used; interviews with professors, both full and part-time, and participant observation in public and private universities in Brazil and Colombia. Three aspects were proposed to understand how they deal with difficulties: efforts, relationships and perspectives. Efforts refer to the intensity of activities, the responsibilities they must assume and the changes they must face in their work. The relationships, which stand out, are with those who share their day-to-day life with others (children, partners, parents, friends or colleagues). Finally, the views of their own labours stand out, highlighting a strong affective engagement experienced by teachers as members of a community. The complexity of their activities, added to the intensity of their role, makes them permanently look for solutions to deal with difficulties, leading them to establish in their teaching duties as the core of their lives.

Keywords: Everyday Life; Work; Teachers; Universities.

"NÃO TENHO TEMPO NEM PARA EXISTIR": A VIDA COTIDIANA DOS PROFESSORES UNIVERSITÁRIOS

Resumo

Este artigo investigar como os professores enfrentam as dificuldades vivenciadas no cotidiano de seu ambiente de trabalho. Foi utilizada uma abordagem qualitativa; entrevistas com professores, tanto de tempo completo quanto de tempo parcial, e observação participante em universidades públicas e privadas no Brasil e na Colômbia. Foram propostos três aspectos para entender como eles enfrentam as dificuldades: esforços, relacionamentos e perspectivas. Os esforços referem-se à intensidade das atividades, às responsabilidades que devem assumir e às mudanças que devem enfrentar em seu trabalho. Os relacionamentos que se destacam são com aqueles que compartilham sua vida cotidiana com outras pessoas (filhos, parceiros, pais, amigos ou colegas). Por

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fim, destacam-se as visões de seu próprio trabalho, ressaltando um forte vínculo emocional vivenciado pelos professores como membros de uma comunidade. A complexidade de suas atividades, somada à intensidade de sua função, faz com que busquem permanentemente soluções para lidar com as dificuldades, levando-os a estabelecer o trabalho docente como o centro de suas vidas.

Palavras-chave: Vida Cotidiana; Trabalho; Professores; Universidades.

1. Introduction

Everyday life in education can be understood as the actions of people in their ordinary work duties (Jackson, 2010; Eisner, 1998). These are not exceptional rituals, formal ceremonies, or exceptional meetings, but rather the concrete, everyday activities carried out by teachers. Despite being carried out every day, the activities are complex (Cheng et al., 2023; Robayo, 2015), and at any time an event, an action or a situation can alter or modify them. Kyndt et al. (2016, p. 1112), argues that educational dynamics are highlighted by abrupt changes that affect those involved, emphasizing the relationship between work and life (Jauhiainen et al., 2009), where they must find options to continue their work (Cidlinska et al., 2023). A constant concern is how teachers seek alternative options (Proasi; Escujuri, 2016); modifying everyday life with new tools or actions (Mercado, 2007), looking for options to understand and contribute to their educational job (Dubet, 2010).

One possibility is to link past experiences and constructions, depending on available knowledge, to “explain or act in their present” (Mead, 2010, p. 37). In everyday life, where different dimensions intervene, it is the participants who modify their style and approaches, giving them their uniqueness. Occasionally, they may deem that no changes are necessary, choose to adjust to changes or eliminate those that do not work (Dubet, 2010). Everyday life in educational spaces, such as campuses, is not individualistic but rather built and shared as a community; even though the places, the institutions, the languages may be different, but the actions of the teachers tend to be close to each other (Lynch et al., 2024; Bose, 2023; De Grande, 2013). Of course, following Mead (2010), reality only exists in the present, where people play roles because when they find their place, they can perform in correspondence to what they identify with, what is expected of them or what can be useful (Proasi; Escujuri, 2016).

People are immersed in situations, contexts, problems or relationships that are beyond their capacity to control (Elias, 1990). They cannot fully control the situation, the conduct of their activities or relations with students, teachers, staff or community members. Although control over their work is difficult, they must generate adequate relationships for the execution of their activities and the accomplishment of their tasks (Cidlinska et al., 2023). Teachers are part of a shared reality, during the training they build logics, actions and relationships with the participants; to continue, to be part of a community, “...People must assume the established logics...” (Barragán, 2022, p. 362).

Alongside everyday complexity, explanations of the present (Mead, 2010) are constructed from those who participate and are involved in educational activities (Eisner, 1998; Crow ; Heath, 2002). Participating implies that, faced with an event or situation, they must look for options within their role as a teacher and as a representative of a community (Pawłowska, 2020, p. 41). During their normal working day, they must participate in events that constitute a series of actions that are part of a reality; teachers may single out certain actions, for whatever reason, recognize them as transcendent for their labour, link them to their actions and they may be shared by members of the community. Bayeck (2023) and Grinberg (2019) argue, with empirical work in different countries, that dimensions of teacher's lives are mixed and there are no boundaries; highlighting that this rich educational world envelops the participants in its complete complexity (Bose, 2023; Proasi; Escujuri, 2016). There are even interpretations of the teacher's job where it is difficult to establish a line that separates their intellectual conditions, their beliefs and the approaches of academic duties from one another (Mayya et al., 2021; Jauhiainen et al., 2009).

Everyday encounters in educational spaces appear as '...invisible threads that bind and untie individuals to each other' (Simmel, 2003, p. 16); participants obtain tools for their performances, evaluate which ones work for them and from their relationships take what they need (Earl, 2020). In some educational environments the links to power stand out, some groups have it and are institutional representatives, some are depositaries of reduced portions and others do not have any (Greive, 2019; Elias, 1982). Power differentials generate conflicts between participants; these are tensions or problems that can arise in everyday life (Barragán et al., 2023). Relationships between participants, directly or indirectly, influence approaches by generating problems, affecting common projects and including the primary teaching locations, highlighting the classroom and where people come together to share (Fernández, 2016). People immersed in different concepts encountering others who perform similar functions or roles, their performances are evaluated or observed in correspondence to those who represent or are safeguards of the community's ideology. They must act in correspondence to the framework established by the communities that represent them (Elias, 1982); being linked to these concepts at the university guarantees them participation, being part of something, representing a group or a community; their participation is directly linked to their formal link as teachers, otherwise, at the end of their contract, these links finish (Barragán et al., 2023).

Highlighting that for teachers to be part of communities, they must be active, they must propose alternatives (De Grande, 2013); to play their role they must be innovative, as well as immersed in complex relationships. Actors pick up signals from their environment. Here they are receiving, analyzing, rationally or not, and emitting signals during their work. They are not static, despite sometimes seeing a stagnant structure (Jackson, 2010), adapting and transforming the situation in which they find themselves. Within this context, actors must observe what is happening and take their place there (Goffman,

1991). Teachers are the main actors and to understand them they must be approached (Simmel, 2003); it is through observation of how teachers interact with people, in the context where they carry out their activities that we get a clearer understanding (Lynch et al., 2024).

They are involved (Cheng et al., 2023) and they must get around the situation, overcoming the complex moments or difficulties they encounter in everyday educational life (Earl, 2020, p. 308). Teachers are immersed with their daily activities, in challenging and difficult situations; these are experienced in different places and times, those that are important or outstanding are incorporated according to their usefulness; teachers incorporate them into their experiences (Mead, 2010). By incorporating them, they cease to be changes or adjustments and become permanent, they become inputs for their actions; or the opposite may happen, for various factors, including specific moments or events, they may be marginalized or suppressed, depending on the teacher's weighting (Pawłowska, 2020; Murphy, 2010, p. 8). The approaches that teachers must assume are characterized by the linking of emerging situations (Mead, 2010); change, continuity or disappearance can occur in everyday educational life; but participants must identify the transformations, they must give meaning to their actions, they must modify or adjust their involvement (Gómez et al., 2015).

This paper reaches how teachers deal with dimensions encountered in the everyday workplace. Despite the variety, the first one that stands out is effort. It is illustrated by the fact that teachers' jobs, even their lives, are determined by the timetables they must keep, with different employees working from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. each day, from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. or from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. (Barragán et al. 2023; Souza et al. 2018). Not to mention those who work on Saturdays and Sundays who have 6 or 7 working days in a week. This adherence to the timetable has a direct impact on their lives, moreover the wear and tear on teachers (Pawłowska, 2020). There are few motivations in university systems for teachers, most of the emotions are negative, including being at the institution on a daily basis; Cidlinska (et al., 2023) mentions how the intensity of the effort makes them think about or decide to leave the teaching profession (Burton; Bowman, 2022). The second activity is to establish and maintain relationships with people close to them, personal or family ties (Gómez et al., 2015). According to these possibilities this can vary in intensity and depth; the performance of their work affects the lives of teachers (De Grande, 2013). The third activity is the construction of perspectives from their experiences of everyday university life, being immersed in the activity generates pride in carrying out educational work (Belay et al., 2022; Mayya et al., 2021); it is an impulse, it is an emotional charge that helps them to face difficulties (Donker et al., 2021; Grinberg, 2019). The perspectives are constructed based on self-recognition, the teacher's commitment to himself/herself and his/her interactions with the people close to him/her in his/her educational activities.

2. Methodology

A qualitative approach was used to understand how teachers deal with the difficulties they encounter in everyday workplace (Bjøndal, 2020; Grinberg, 2019; Proasi; Escujuri, 2016; Eisner, 1998). Differences are obvious when studying teachers at different institutions, from different fields and from different countries; but, leaving aside particular characteristics (Lynch et al., 2024; Bose, 2023; Fernández, 2016), the focus was on highlighting shared features (Manning et al., 2023). The methodological proposal is based on micro-sociology (Maiwald; Suerig, 2020) where the interactions of people involved in an everyday labour are analyzed (Goffman, 1991); in this case, university teachers (Robayo, 2015) where studies in their activities and experiences (Grinberg, 2019; Bayeck, 2023; Rockwell, 2015; Dubet, 2010). Through observation, dialogue and interaction with participants, the research got closer to their world (Barragán 2022).

The analysis of interactions (Maiwald; Suerig, 2020) is based on testimonies and observations of teachers in their day-to-day activities, involves close engagement with participants, semi-structured interviews (Cheng et al., 2023) and participant observation (Rockwell, 2015; Duschatzky, 2015). The interviews were conducted at two different times with teachers from different fields and different communities. The interview followed a thematic structure encompassing academic experiences, intergroup relations, employment, conflicts and private life. Questions were taken from the interviews that related to situations and behaviors that were significant in their daily lives. In the field diary (Bayeck, 2023), meetings with teachers and visits to universities in Dourados, Brazil, and Bogotá, Colombia, were recorded. The field diary has a significant number of records, highlighting what teachers recognized as momentous experiences in their work, what affected them or forced them to reflect and how they incorporated them into their practice (Pawłowska, 2020). Interviews and field diary entries were processed using Atlas.ti (version 8) software.

The first interviews were conducted in Bogotá, during November and December 2019 and January 2020, in university classrooms or cafeterias, and were audio recorded. The second interviews were with teachers from Dourados which were conducted virtually in March 2021, the interviewees were at home and were video recorded. Participant observation in Bogotá was conducted during specific periods in 2019 and 2020, prior to the pandemic. Observation at Dourados was carried out during February and March 2020, physically before the pandemic; field diary recording was interrupted in March 2020 and then continued again in 2021. The observations were complex as it approached people working in different institutions and contexts, highlighting the changes implied by the appearance of Covid-19, the measures to deal with it in the educational field and the transformations to the lives of the participants.

When conducting the interviews, the decision was made to approach teachers who had different employment relationships in public (PU) and private (PRU) universities, the basic relationships being temporary or permanent (Proasi; Escujuri, 2016; Robayo, 2015). Temporary contracts were those who

were hired for months at a time and had to apply for a new contract every academic period; permanent contracts were those who had won a competition at a public university and had a permanent contract. Three interviews were carried out in Brazil and four in Colombia, and four women and three men, all holding doctoral degrees. Their names were changed to maintain confidentiality, their areas of expertise remained the same, they are: Luque in Electronic Engineering and Bioengineering (EEB-PRU), Antonia in Clinical Psychology (CP-PRU), Camila in Economics and Demography (ED-PU), Fernan in Accounting and Education (AE-PRU), Veronica in Physical Education (PE-PRU), Aurora in Portuguese Letters (LP-PU) and Martín in Production Engineering (IP-PU). By getting closer to the participants, it is clear that the labour linkage influences their everyday life (Barragán et al., 2023).

The qualitative approach allows us to listen to the participants through interviews, to have close contact with those who are dealing with the reality of education (Duschatky, 2015). Observation of the participants in different contexts and institutions makes it possible to see the evidential differences between countries, and by going a little deeper, it becomes possible to identify shared experiences across contexts. The methodological alternative takes a group of teachers with conditions and then, by going a little deeper, finds shared behavior to overcome obstacles in their everyday life (Cidlinska et al., 2023; Jauhainen ; Laiho, 2009; Eisner, 1998).

3. Efforts in the job

When talking about teachers' efforts it is necessary to clarify. Here its meaning is taken as the energetic use of physical strength or emotional stimulus to overcome difficulties; doing so is a way to deal with situations or to perform complex activities. Hypothetically, the effort should be used sporadically as it involves physical and emotional demands that affect people. Unfortunately, the effort in the daily life of teachers is constant, not sporadic.

On the intensity of effort, illustrations were found of those working in private universities, Verónica (PE-PRU), (worked) "10 hours a day...six days a week, Monday to Saturday" and additionally has a dance studio. Luque (EEB-PRU) states: "...I leave the house around 7 a.m....and I am arriving around 10:30p.m. Monday to Friday ...and on Saturdays from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m....". Antonia (CP-PRU) says: "... on average there are about 15 working hours in a day... it's a lot of work... it's so much that sometimes you have to sacrifice Saturdays and Sundays". Fernan (AE-PRU), illustrates what he has to do: "...40 hours a week... from Monday to Friday, in 8-hour days... Our professorships with postgraduate courses are other contracts... generally there are 3 sessions a month of 8 hours on Saturdays". Those who work at private universities must get additional jobs, they must do so to achieve sufficient income and, for the additional job, the combined daily workings range from 12 to 15 hours per day, six days a week.

Now in public universities, Aurora (PL-PU) states "...I work from Sunday to Sunday, every day... 6 hours a day from Monday to Friday and 3 hours on



Saturdays and Sundays". Aurora (PL-PU) is close to Camila (ED-PU), who says: "...let's say it's 10 hours a day and on weekends I work...only at night for 2 hours"; they are mothers, they have children: "at night after my children go to sleep...I continue working...another two hours" (Camila, ED-PU), and on weekends they continue when their children sleep, do various activities or share with others". Camila (ED-PU) highlights the unforeseen events: "...some problem in the garden, something happened to the babysitter, she can't come, she got sick or whatever; then, I have to go and look after them... or I bring them to the job". Aurora (PL-PU) says: "...my daughters always went to class with me, I have never had a babysitter, when I needed one, I paid for a student...". Martín (PE-PU) describes his situation: "I think, I work about 60 hours a week...even on weekends, sometimes I do it on Sunday to prepare for a class on Monday...". Teachers in public institutions do not set boundaries, their life revolves around their university activities; they are responsible for medium- and long-term orientations and processes. Regardless of the type of contract or university, teachers must work intensively, committing 12 to 15 hours a daily and from Monday to Saturday, in some cases on Sundays as well (Barragán et al., 2023).

Another component of the effort is to assume bureaucratic procedures as one's own responsibility (Weber, 2000, p. 11-12). Martín (PE-PU), illustrates this:

So, it's bad that you spend a lot of time stuck in things that are bureaucratic, that there should be a technician for, but it's placed on the teacher's responsibility... I think he has three herniated discs and tendonitis in his arm from a lot of time at the computer... And the psychological pressure because of the problems, the political disputes.

Procedures condition the daily behavior of teachers and the responsibilities they have to assume.

Antonia (CP-PRU) has bureaucratic functions: "...updating practice guidelines, intervention processes... It depends on the contract... you must run... strengthen teaching experience and management tasks". Luque (EEB-PRU), states that bureaucratic procedures are part of the responsibilities of teachers: "...it is not that the university tells me... they give you a period of time and you have to deliver something, it is natural... it is a commitment that you have to have with yourself...". Martín, Antonia and Luque advise of the obligatory nature of complying with bureaucratic procedures established by the university or by control organizations, some of which are not logical or have reduced contributions to their jobs; the argument is: they must be complied with because they are commitments adhered to by teachers.

Contrasting effort and bureaucracy with well-being options, we can delve deeper. Supposedly, a job allows for a quality life where one finds well-being, which can be understood as the set of objects, circumstances and activities that allow teachers to live a dignified life. Jobs are done to ensure well-being, and the universities must guarantee it; Fernan (AE-PRU), states: "... it all depends on how... you live the demands... and how you live day to day... in my

institution... they put pressure... you end up sacrificing your free time... you have less possibility of... sharing with others". Even Luque (EEB-PRU), speaking of activities that contribute to the well-being offered by the institution, raises a worrying point,

[...] At the university ... there are cultural groups ... chess, gymnastics, dance, guitar ... the teachers can participate. Now, the question is time... when... you must look at the timetable with the 13 hours a day... the fact that you must dedicate yourself exclusively to work many times in different places and that takes time away from the other thing, which is the quality of life.

The intensity of the job and the responsibilities teachers must take on marginalizes them, despite having options to access well-being support activities.

4. Relationships with close people

Continuing with this theme, relationships are understood as emotional connections with people who are part of their lives, who participate in their everyday lives and who influence their teaching work. Jauhainen (et al., 2009) reflected on the boundaries between personal life and responsibilities, usually presented as individual situations but shared as members of a teaching community (Mayya et al., 2021). The performance of work, as mentioned in the intensity of time, influences life and the relationships with people close to them.

The first relationships mentioned are with the children; of course, no limits are set. Camila (ED-PU), shares an experience:

When I had my first daughter, I also had a project that was externally financed, the level of demand was very high... the contract ran until... December and Sofia was born in..., August... and my co-investigator was my husband. So, we were both going through a terrible crisis...I was in the motherhood thing, and he was asking me...I need you to work on the final report for the project...the situation was very difficult...I got postpartum depression...it really felt hard...I felt like my life changed. For example, I have classes from 6 pm to 10 pm and it's hard to balance it with taking care of my children... that's when they go to bed.

The intensity of relationships severely affects teachers' home lives. Camila (ED-PU) testimony illustrates how the birth of a child changes everyday life (Mayya et al., 2021).

Veronica (FE-PRU) highlights the intensity of her job with the difficulties in relating to her boyfriend or family:

Yes, I've had problems in my love relationships because of this workload... there's almost no end to family problems and leisure time. Sometimes I stop to watch a film on Sunday, which I've said

I have minimal rest on Sunday, but it's very little. I want to sleep more than spend my leisure hours tired.

Obligations and the intensity of commitments are a constraint; Veronica (PE-PRU) informs how her relationship with her boyfriend and her family are difficult, as she must respond to multiple teaching activities.

Relationships between the participants and their family aren't as strong and cemented as non-teaching professionals. The testimonies of Aurora (PL-PU), Fernan (AE-PRU) and Martín (PE-PU), establish links with their family background (Belay et al., 2022; Bourdieu, 2010) and the daily intensity of their jobs. Martín (PE-PU), describes their relationship:

My father was a laborer, so when my father came back, he didn't have any work to do because he didn't have anything to do, and now I had to vent and vent to my spouse by saying: I don't know what I'm going to do, how am I going to resolve this, so you bring it into the relationship. You bring it into your relationship with your children and even your relationship with animals... Certainly moments of stress when you answer someone more harshly than you would. But then these moments of stress affect the intimate relationship too, of course.

Fernan (AE-UPV) also notes that:

In fact the more deteriorated they are (relationships with others), the more they will influence, because the fundamental factor has to do with time... when they are deteriorated you have no free time... if... one day, you do not manage to sleep well because you have a lot of worries about the work space, to that you add that you have little time with your relatives, that time you are going to be with your relatives you are not going to be in optimal conditions.

There is little contact with people who are close to them, as they move away to focus on their daily obligations. Veronica's (PE-PRU) narration shows multiple daily aspects, her life, her relationships are complex, she will always have a job to do and meetings with people close to her tend to get postponed. Generally, people close to teachers understand the activities they are involved in, mitigating the difficulties somewhat, but when people are far from the educational sphere, relationships can become difficult.

One relationship worth mentioning is between teachers. Performing similar tasks and sharing spaces lend themselves to conflicts, Aurora (PL-PU) recounts two:

He shouted at me... because he had less class, and I always had more class... I had panic syndrome, I had difficulty going back to work; but I am grateful for it, because I came out strong... Another time with a boss... I had to vote in the faculty council... the boss put me in her office and asked me: ¿Hey, are you going to vote with

me?... I said no: I'm going to vote for me, because ... I want to know; I want to think ... he removed me and put someone else in my place without any problem.

These are strong encounters between colleagues in everyday spaces. Fernan (AE-PRU), mentions that in addition to the conflict:

There is still that supportive colleague, he has not disappeared, he is there... of course there are difficulties, and we all face more difficulties, it is more and more complicated... those are the indicators that things have not been done badly, that you are lucky... you still care about your colleague.

Of course, in the relationships between colleagues there are those with whom conflicts arise and those with whom solidarity is built. In these instances, it is possible to share intense moments with others that build connections allowing teachers to continue their work and to build stable environments, physical or symbolic, to plan their activities.

Relationships are with people who are close to them, who have emotional ties; they are children, partners, parents, family or colleagues who influence daily life. Martín (PE-PU), mentions how these relationships cannot establish limits in the lives of teachers:

.You interfered in private life and dissipated it even more. At the peak of administrative duties, along with the fact that you can't give up research, you can't give up extension and you can't give up having fewer students to advise, along with course coordination and everything else. So, working longer hours and being stressed out affected my relationship with my wife, for example.

There are multiple relationships that are experienced daily which affect aspects of their lives; teachers deal with the problems they encounter with the support of these people.

5. Perspectives on the work

Finally, there are the perspectives on the work that are reflections based on experiences, constructed by teachers on their everyday educational life; these are images that they formulate with strong emotional charges (Donker et al., 2021). The views, although constructed by individuals, coincide with those shared within communities; in this case belonging to different universities, countries and languages. Antonia (CP-PRU) supports:

Working as a teacher, building my career... I can't complain... I'm not greedy for money... because a person who... I tell you; I earn so much; they will say to me: poor woman... I think that for me other things make sense than money, but I'm not complaining because I feel that I earned well... to be at peace.

Teachers' reflections help shape their perspectives highlighting the importance of their work to them; of course, multiple problems are presented, but their commitments are emphasized. Camila (ED-PU), making a comparison: '... in my work here with teaching I have many satisfactions, and I am happy ... to be able to transmit learning and to learn as well ...'. Martín (PE-PU) also reflects on his work:

Yes, because my expectations have never been of a financial nature. I don't think success is necessarily related to you because I don't have great material aspirations because what we value in our universe is the intellectual field. For me it's fun to do a project; I really enjoy it, and it feels like I'm in a playground when I'm doing a project, I like... So, I feel fulfilled as a teacher and because my goal was to pay my bills, and I managed to have a bit of fun.

The alternatives are presented as teachers' achievements, they are part of their lives. These are incorporated into their daily lives, working with students who want to build projects and want to, as mentioned by (Martín, PE-PU), be linked to an intellectual field, to provide the different options available to young people and to teachers, in order to deal with daily difficulties and to future scenarios.

In their views, teachers emphasized social mobility in Latin America. It is one of the most unequal regions in the world, as is evident daily (Barragán et al., 2023). Martín (PE-PU), argues:

But as incredible as it may seem, it must be like this in Colombia, and it must be like this in Brazil too. Most people don't know how they're going to pay their bills at the end of the month. So that's all there is to a Latin America as unequal as ours. I already think it's a plus that I'd like everyone to be able to at least pay their bills.

He continues, highlighting teachers and the jobs they do: "... So being a teacher fulfills me because of these aspects together with stability and autonomy in what I'm going to do in terms of projects and classes, it's an income that allows me not to be in debt at the end of the month". Within these social contexts, being a teacher makes it possible to have a dignified life and to face the difficulties experienced by most of the population.

Veronica (PE-PRU), argues:

Anyone who thinks I'm here because I love teaching can face all the difficulties of the profession. Even so, as I continue to fulfill myself with each student and with each challenge that day with a different subject to study; perhaps the student's own satisfaction as she years after graduating meets me in the street... It's all very well remembering that you still have this affection and professionals who are working in the area and have become references in what they do, who were my students, so this gives me a sense of satisfaction

and at least on a day-to-day basis being able to share something that I know and that I know I can teach something to my students.

Within unequal social contexts, teachers argue that they have a dignified job, which provides them with different guarantees compared to most of the population; their employment is presented as a tool to face their present. Additionally, within the multiple tasks, the basic relationship, highlighted by Veronica (PE-PRU), is the contribution it makes to young people, knowing that the contributions of teachers, from their classroom teaching to the additional roles, allows them to present alternatives to the students in their intellectual field; these are the meetings where they build and share with other people, it is in everyday life where alternatives are presented.

From the teachers' perspectives, the importance of the strengths of relationships with people is highlighted, highlighting the future benefits; students with whom they can meet later in the street, or in any other environment, and recognize the teachers' contribution to their lives. Contributing to transforming people, being valued by them and proposing alternatives in social contexts with deep conflicts is a source of motivation for teachers.

6. Discussion and final considerations

The everyday life of education is constituted, in part, by the behavior of teachers supported by their activities and their work (Cheng et al., 2023; Robayo, 2015). A key observation is that at any time activities can be modified (Lynch et al., 2024; Kyndt et al., 2016), they can undergo abrupt changes and those involved must find alternatives to carry out their work (Jauhiainen; Laiho, 2009); in particular, they seek tools to understand them and continue (Mercado, 2007). In this respect different dimensions are involved in the changes, teachers take on board the measures taken by others in relation to their actions (Dubet, 2010). They are the product of interactions in community and are not just isolated cases, teachers can adjust themselves to these instances. As well as the personalized teaching style, countries or institutions teachers tend to come closer together (Cidlinska et al., 2023; De Grande, 2013).

People are immersed in situations, problems or relationships that they can't control (Elias, 1990). Teachers participate in activities with students, colleagues or members of communities (Eisner, 1998; Crow; Heath, 2002); at some points difficulties may arise that they must deal with; the tools they use are the concepts delivery style and relationships that are built with those who share their work environment, and to achieve this they must adopt the approaches established in the communities (Pawłowska, 2020). Of course, there are other communities to which they belong and from which they can take elements; but, in this context, the important people are those who are directly related to their educational activities and from whom they take what they consider useful.

The dimensions of existence are combined (Burton; Bowman, 2022), highlighting that teachers take educational activities as the core of their lives



and, from there, navigate the complexities of everyday life (Earl, 2020). The educational everyday life, in various places (Bayeck, 2023; Belay et al., 2022; Grinberg, 2019; Rockwell, 2015), shows that there are no boundaries with work, the educational world enters every aspect of the participants lives, they can't switch off (Mayya et al., 2021; Proasi ; Escujuri, 2016) and highlights that their work generates emotional burdens (Donker et al., 2021). These are the behaviors or activities that must be carried out in the present (Mead, 2010), they can't be postponed and, from there, teachers assume the efforts, establishment of relationships with colleagues close to them and building perspectives encumbers their daily lives.

As mentioned, efforts are energetic uses of physical or emotional strength to overcome difficulties and should be made sporadically. Making permanent efforts implies wear and tear, and in the case of teachers, these efforts are part of their daily lives, part of their basic activities (Lynch et al., 2024). As time goes by, the efforts become the new normalized, turning into additional burdens that are incorporated into their job, affecting teachers' bodies as well as other areas of their lives.

Among the efforts, additional work stands out, at the beginning of the academic periods, teachers have work plans, but as they go about their day-to-day work, commitments arise that they must take on and add to the activities they already have: the additional work is never-ending. Now, as additional commitments arise, the intensity of activities and responsibilities increases, and the labour that is intensified is evident in timetables; as time goes by, so does teacher attrition (Burton; Bowman, 2022). Another important element is bureaucracy (Weber, 2000): paperwork, procedures, meetings, commitments that tend to intensify during the semester. As mentioned by Martín (PE-PU), they can be carried out by a technician but are assigned to teachers. In addition, the daily job is intense, teaching can be 12 hours plus, and the rest is left for other activities. Most teachers report working six days a week and, some of them even on Sundays. Finally, the wellbeing offered to teachers by the universities is highlighted; options that they can take are mentioned, but the problem is that they do not have time to participate in the wellbeing activities or programs.

In family relationships, teachers have strong bonds with people close to them (Simmel, 2003); teachers obtain tools for their actions, evaluate which ones serve them and take the ones they need (Earl, 2020). In everyday life, teacher relationships that stand out are with those with whom they have emotional connections and are part of their daily lives. These people, in some way, influence their labour (Mayya et al., 2021; Jauhiainen ; Laiho, 2009). The idiosyncrasies of their work mean that these influence teachers live, highlighting that the time available for family interaction is severely limited. The relevant relationships are with children, partners, parents, family or colleagues (Gómez et al., 2015); they are the ones who are involved in the teacher's day-to-day lives; the relationships with each group have their own individualities.

The most important links are with the children; schedules, commitments and the intensity of work mean that time for with them is extremely scarce. Those who can share with their children have strong bonds. Whereas those who do not have the time, or whose occupations make it difficult for them to do so, delegate the care of their children to others; emotional bonds and relationships vary. In respect of partners, this is something that stands out in their personal lives; they are the ones with whom they spend the most time and they are the ones who understand the profession and the intensities of their obligations. Due to the nature of their jobs, teacher relationships with partners are conflictive; they are somewhat attuned with their teacher partners. They understand their pressure, responsibilities and the difficulties this entails. Moreover, when people are distant from the educational field, conflicts can increase. Relationships with parents or family tend to be affected by work, and as time goes by, teachers can become distant from family groups due to time constraints or symbolic and/or physical distances.

Relationships between colleagues stand out; these relationships, in some cases, may last. Working at an institution results with bonds that are forged over a long period of time. Within these relationships, conflictive and solidarity relationships stand out. Conflicts are generated in institutions where struggles for institutional power or relational barriers that emerge for a variety of reasons between people who must meet every day (Barragán et al., 2023). As time goes by, conflicts can be forgotten, ignored or intensify, turning educational spaces into scenarios of confrontation in these cases. In state universities there are conflicts between teachers, but at private universities, conflicts regarding the competition between teachers for continual employment stand out. The effort is oriented towards maintaining a good relationship with the power groups. From the other perspective there are relationships based on solidarity, on the participation of teachers in processes as members of communities where they contribute, participate and together build possibilities for those at the university. Solidarity links have an emotional component that becomes a support to face daily difficulties and participate in long-term processes (Donker et al., 2021). Solidarity links between teachers are multiple, accentuated in countries such as Brazil and Colombia, which constantly have social conflicts, political or economic crises (Lynch et al., 2024; Bose, 2023); where much of the population does not have alternatives for a dignified life.

Also, in everyday life, teachers construct perspectives, points of view from their actions, the performances of others or their reflections on situations or facts (Lynch et al., 2024). Views are emotionally charged and condition their performances (Donker et al., 2021). Notably, these perspectives may be constructed by an individual, but they are taken up or adapted by communities; they may even be shared by teachers who work in different fields of knowledge, live in different countries and speak different languages (Mayya et al., 2021). The most prominent perspective are those that place educational labour at the core of their lives, their job occupies everything. The links they develop and make are from their role as a teacher and their participation within these communities.

Most of the teachers are aware that their labour will not bring them much money (they do not have financial desires). Their salaries are enough to live within their means and have a decent quality of life. In some cases, they live in different conditions, even better, than their families or groups of origin (Antonia CP-PRU, Fernan AE-PRU, Aurora PL-PU, Martín PE-PU). A constituent element of the perspective is to incorporate their achievements into everyday life (Belay et al., 2022); having academic degrees, contributing to subject development, theory and/or research, having academic production, training people, participating in networks, being part of an institution, and having a quality life; imply materializing longings, sometimes considered as distant. These are achievements that will be incorporated into the daily life actions of teachers; in places such as Latin America, few people have achievements or decent living standards (Bose, 2023; Cheng et al., 2023; Burton; Bowman, 2022; Holmqvist, 2020).

Finally, the expression of Camila (ED-PU): “I don't even have time to exist”; illustrates the daily life of teachers in institutional and social environments where conflicts are evident. The complexity of their activities and their intensity make teachers permanently look for alternatives to deal with difficulties. This leads them to establish their teaching work as the core of their lives and, from there, to assume their efforts, establish relationships with people close to them and build perspectives on their labour. Of course, the theoretical and methodological approaches of the study establish concerning limitations, and to try to mitigate them it is necessary to continue expanding the fieldwork in different countries, where the approach to teachers continues.

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