

Environmental Education and sustainability: case study at Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School, Francisco Alves / PR

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ABSTRACT. The rural school can be one of the main spaces for human transformation, when historicity and local knowledge are taken into account. Therefore, it is essential to have an adequate structure and to recognize mechanisms for building the identity of the subject in the field. Thus, it fosters the development of a sense of belonging that can transform the location where the school is located. In this context, this work aimed to characterize the State School of Campo Padre Antônio Vieira - Elementary School, located in the district of Rio Bonito, municipality of Francisco Alves, Paraná (PR) regarding aspects of environmental education and sustainability. Thus this end, the qualitative aspects were mainly addressed, using documentary research methodologies, environmental perception and focus group analysis. The data obtained were categorized according to the content analysis methodology. From the information obtained, some sensitive points related to the sustainability tripod were observed, such as: In the environmental aspect, it was found the lack of actions aimed at environmental education and few correct environmental practices; In the social aspect, the absence of the feeling of belonging to the school community, devaluation of the teaching-learning process and abandoned garden; In the economic aspect, the families' financial difficulties were observed.

Keywords: elementary school, countryside school, environmental perception, sense of belonging.

Educação Ambiental e sustentabilidade: estudo de caso na Escola Estadual do Campo Padre Antônio Vieira – Ensino Fundamental, Francisco Alves/PR

RESUMO. A escola do campo pode ser um dos principais espaços da transformação humana, quando se leva em consideração a historicidade e os conhecimentos locais. Para tanto, torna-se fundamental a existência de estrutura adequada e o reconhecimento de mecanismos de construção da identidade do sujeito do campo. Assim, propicia-se o desenvolvimento do sentido de pertencimento que pode transformar a localidade onde a escola está inserida. Nesse contexto, este trabalho teve como objetivo caracterizar a Escola Estadual do Campo Padre Antônio Vieira – Ensino Fundamental, localizada no distrito de Rio Bonito, município de Francisco Alves, Paraná (PR), quanto aos aspectos da educação ambiental e sustentabilidade. Dessa forma, abordou-se principalmente os aspectos qualitativos, por meio das metodologias de pesquisa documental, percepção ambiental e análise de grupo focal. Os dados obtidos foram categorizados seguindo a metodologia da análise do conteúdo. A partir das informações obtidas, foram observados alguns pontos sensíveis ligados ao tripé da sustentabilidade, como: no aspecto ambiental verificou-se a carência de ações voltadas para educação ambiental e poucas práticas ambientais corretas; no aspecto social, a ausência do sentimento de pertencimento da comunidade escolar, a desvalorização do processo ensino aprendizagem e horta abandonada; no aspecto econômico observou-se a dificuldade financeira das famílias.

Palavras-chave: ensino fundamental, escola do campo, percepção ambiental, sentido de pertencimento.

Educación Ambiental y sostenibilidad: estudio de caso en la Escuela Estatal Campo Padre Antônio Vieira - Escuela primaria, Francisco Alves / PR

RESUMEN. La escuela rural puede ser uno de los principales espacios para la transformación humana, cuando se tiene en cuenta la historicidad y el conocimiento local. Por lo tanto, es esencial tener una estructura adecuada y reconocer mecanismos para construir la identidad del sujeto en el campo. Por lo tanto, fomenta el desarrollo de un sentido de pertenencia que puede transformar la ubicación donde se encuentra la escuela. En este contexto, este trabajo tuvo como objetivo caracterizar la Escuela Estatal de Campo Padre Antônio Vieira - Escuela Primaria, ubicado en el distrito de Rio Bonito, municipio de Francisco Alves, Paraná (PR) en relación con aspectos de educación ambiental y sostenibilidad. De esa forma, los aspectos cualitativos se abordaron principalmente, utilizando metodologías de investigación documental, percepción ambiental y análisis de grupos focales. Los datos obtenidos se clasificaron según la metodología de análisis de contenido, estudiada por Bardin (2016). A partir de la información obtenida, se observaron algunos puntos sensibles relacionados con el trípode de sostenibilidad, tales como: En el aspecto ambiental, fue encontrado la falta de acciones dirigidas a la educación ambiental y pocas prácticas ambientales correctas; En el aspecto social, la ausencia del sentimiento de pertenencia a la comunidad escolar, la devaluación del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje y el jardín abandonado; En el aspecto económico, se observaron las dificultades financieras de las familias.

Palabras clave: escuela primaria, escola do campo, percepción ambiental, sentido de pertenencia.

Introdução

The school can be a fundamental part in the critical and constructive shaping of the human being when it allows the development of the sense of belonging in the school community. However, Brazilian society undergoes constant changes in the educational process. Rural education is among the teaching modalities in Brazil, which is practiced in spaces characterized as rural schools (EC). Its focus on the teaching-learning process is aimed at a population linked to the knowledge of the land.

According to Federal Decree No. 7352 of November 4, 2010, the EC is the one located in a rural area, or in an urban area as long as it predominantly serves the rural population (Brazil, 2010). However, they go far beyond geographical spatial location, since they are instruments of social mobilization, articulating a political and economic project for local and sustainable development. This occurs from the valorization of the knowledge produced over time, characterized by the relationship with nature, family production for sustenance, work on the land, neighborhood relations and appreciation of the local culture. Therefore, rural schools must strive for an education that empowers students as subjects capable of

understanding their realities for an active insertion in the world, which is capable of causing positive social and environmental transformations (Alves, Melo & Santos, 2017).

This school has a fundamental role in the social transformation of the place where it is inserted, since it works directly with the social worker. The educator Paulo Freire sees that the peasantry cannot be a neutral subject in the world, social impositions, dehumanization or humanization, in the face of the statics of what no longer represents the ways of the human or the change of these paths, but rather a human being able to change its history through systematized knowledge (Freire, 2014).

It is worth mentioning that environmental changes are detected in all media and inevitably in the countryside. In view of this reality, the ECs play a fundamental role in the training of students in relation to Environmental Education (EA) for a healthy and dignified life. In addition, with social evolution rural people need constant updating to break the geographical barriers that often create the stigma of inferiority in relation to the people of the city.

Other than the legal requirement, rural education should have a look at its geographical location, since “... the people have the right to be educated in the place where they live; the people have the right to an education thought from their place and with their participation, linked to their culture and their human and social needs” (Caldart, 2002, p. 26). It is worth mentioning that EC is not a different type of school, it is just an educational institution that helps to strengthen the peasantry as a social subject. It is an important space for the construction of knowledge, social emancipation and transformation of people.

Therefore, this institution may be a place for the appropriation of scientific knowledge historically constructed by humanity. Besides, it may be a place for the production of knowledge, through the relationships that take place between the world of science and everyday life. In this way, aspects of reality can be the starting point of the pedagogical process, but never the point of arrival (Paraná, 2010). Thereby, it is necessary to understand that rural education needs a contextualized look so that teaching practices are meaningful for the person in education.

The development of the rural student has to run through the knowledge set in didactic materials, so that he becomes a

critical subject from his historical context. This idea is reinforced by Paulo Freire when stating that one of the most important tasks of critical educational practice is to provide conditions, so that the subjects of EC can go through the profound experience of coming out in their relations with others and with educators (Freire, 2000). This thought corroborates for the individual to assume himself as a social and historical being a thinking, communicative, transformative, creative and dream-fulfilling human being, that is, able to exercise their social rights and obligations.

In this sense, one of the greatest challenges for rural schools is to contribute to re-establishing the sense of belonging of the people, so that they recognize themselves as members of a locality and reconstruct their identity with the place where they live (Silva, 2015). It is believed that when the feeling of belonging arises, the community recognizes itself and starts to understand the socio-environmental reality, respecting its potential and limits. For this, in their pedagogical practices, the ECs must prioritize actions that prepare students for insertion in the real world full of conflicts and social issues to be considered. The subject must be prepared for adaptations that make him capable of deeply understanding his reality, according

to article 2 of Resolution No. 01/2002, of the National Education Council/CNE - Basic Education Chamber, which provides:

The identity of the rural school is defined by its connection to the issues inherent to its reality, anchored in the students' temporality and knowledge, in the collective memory that signals future, in the network of science and technology available in society and in the social movements in defense of projects that associate the solutions required by these issues to the social quality of collective life in the country (Brazil, 2002).

Therefore, knowledge must be available to rural school students in a meaningful way, so that they can materialize what science has produced from their basic knowledge of the world. In this sense, EA in the countryside gives teaching a permanent character, which humanizes and qualifies man and his relations with the environment (Alves et al., 2017).

Thereby, professionals working in rural schools must be continuously trained to apply methodologies aimed at more meaningful EA. Education that transforms the student, builds a conception of sustainable life and, consequently, emancipate him for critical discussions aiming at a better quality of life. This permanent training is fundamental for the training of people for life in society.

In this sense, the educator is a fundamental part in the construction of

knowledge, since he is a direct influencer in passing on the scientific knowledge accumulated throughout history, as well as the examples of daily practice. In this context, Rambo (2018) reports that, in Paulo Freire's view, the educator is involved in the training process for the autonomy of people. In other words, the educator who is effectively involved in the construction of the autonomy of people positively recognizes the absence of conservative educational practices (aimed exclusively at adapting to production) and thus promotes social evolution.

It is noted, therefore, that EC and EA are supported by public policy instruments that expand the possibilities of implementing effective actions to strengthen them. This makes the transdisciplinary integration between the methodologies of these educational modalities possible. The merger of EC and EA can contribute to the critical formation of the subject, making him a political citizen, aware of his social and environmental role. Thereby, this work aimed to characterize the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School, regarding the aspects of environmental education and sustainability.

Development

It is essential to obtain specific knowledge about the school community and the structure that makes up the educational institution to plan educational actions. Therefore, this work, carried out at the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School, district of Rio Bonito, municipality of Francisco Alves - PR, presents the following sequence of subjects: physical and historical characterization of the study area; document analysis of the profile of the students; environmental perception and local diagnosis of social, economic and environmental aspects.

Methodology

Characterization of the Study Area

This study was carried out at the Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School (Figure 1), which works in the afternoon in its own building, along with the Glória Xavier de Mendonça Municipal School - Elementary School, for 1st grade to 5th grade students in the morning period. The space has five classrooms, a secretariat room, a boardroom, a warehouse room, a teachers' room, four bathrooms, a multipurpose room (computer lab and classroom time for teachers), a court sports facility, a kitchen and a cafeteria.

Figure 1 – Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School – Elementary School.



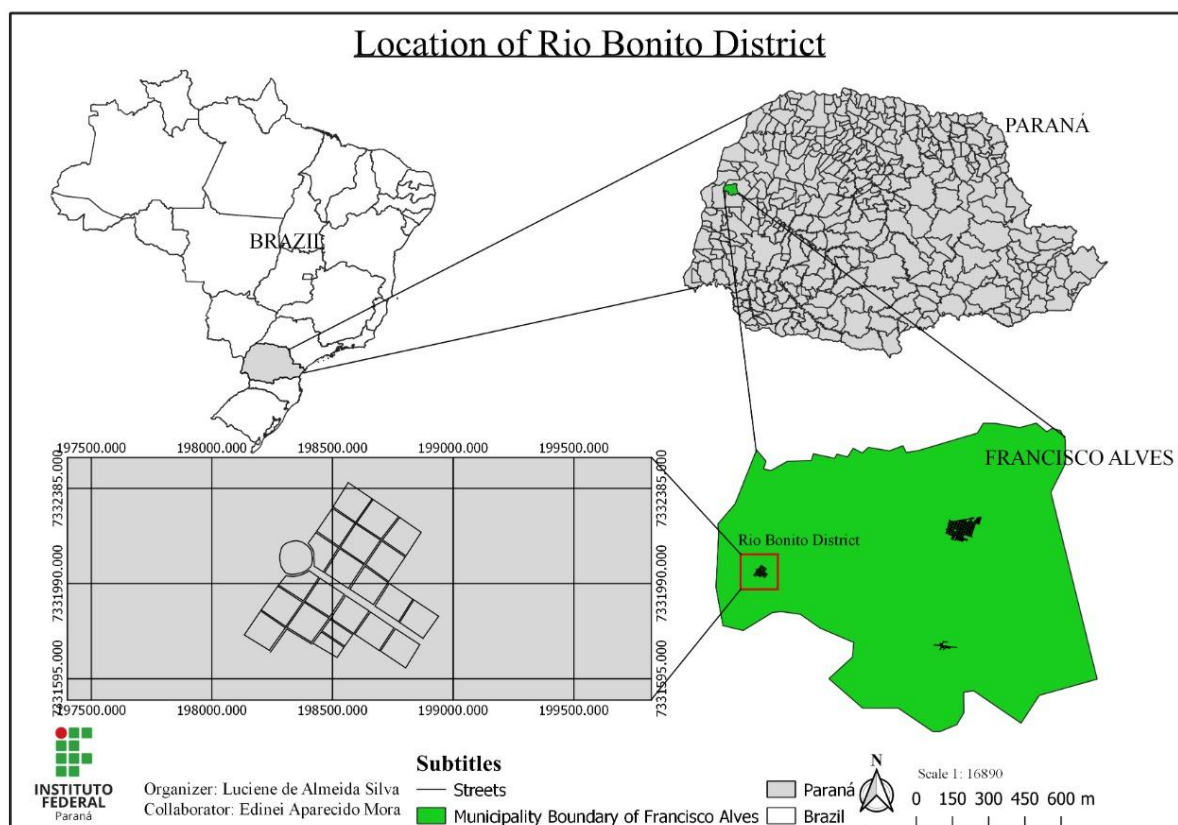
Source: Edinei Aparecido Mora (2019).

The school has no physical space for a science laboratory and library, and books are accumulated in the multipurpose room. The total area of the land is 9,236.25 m², with a built-up area of 600.12 m², a 364.00 m² indoor court, a caretaker's house with 60.16 m² and a reserved space of 45 m² for a school garden.

Located approximately 14 kilometers away from its host city (Francisco Alves)

and 635 kilometers from Curitiba, capital of the state, the district of Rio Bonito (Figure 2), in the northwest of Paraná, has about 960 inhabitants. There are about 670 residents of the urban area and 290 residents of the rural area among them (City Hall of Francisco Alves, 2019).

Figure 2 – Localization of Rio Bonito District from the territorial maps of Brazil, Paraná and the municipality of Francisco Alves.



Source: Mora, Gomes and Barbado (2020).

In the 1950s the first colonizers opened a small trail in the forest and started a village when passing through the dirt road that connected the cities of Maringá to Guaíra. At the time, there was a

grocery store and a sawmill that was responsible for the production of the wood used in the manufacture of houses. The surplus was transported by the Piquiri

River, which is approximately three kilometers from the village.

On April 22, 1968, the Padre Antônio Vieira School Group was created, the object of study of this research. At the beginning of the 1982 academic year, this institution changed its name to Padre Antônio Vieira State School – Primary Education. In 2010, through Opinion No. 1,011/2010 CEE /CEB and State Resolution No. 4,783/2010, meeting the criteria required by Federal Decree No. 7,352/2010, it was renamed the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School (Pedagogical Political Project of the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School, 2016).

Methodological procedures

For this study, the focus group consisted of forty-six students duly enrolled in the 2019 academic year (named from A1 to A46, 2019 - the letter A mentions the term student). These

belonged to the age group of 11 to 15 years, distributed in four classes of elementary school: 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade. The methodology used for the development of this research was the case study, due to its exploratory and descriptive character (Chart 1). Qualitative data were collected from real events in order to explain, explore or describe current situations within the context of the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School. This research strategy is based on clarifying a decision or a set of decisions, as well as why they were made, how they were conducted and what results were obtained within a specific situation (Yin, 2005). For that, the technical procedures adopted for the qualitative analysis were document analysis, environmental perception and content analysis (Chart 1).

Chart 1 - Methodology used to characterize the Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School.

Methodology	Technical Procedures	Description
Case Study	Documentary Research*	Data Collection: Pedagogical Political Project; Curricular Pedagogical Proposals; Reports issued by the School Registration System (SERE); Floor plans and records in minutes.
	Environmental Perception**	Pre analysis: Work organization observing the dialogues between the students who made up the focus group during regular educational activities, without any form of interference.
		Material Exploration: Categorization according to the sustainability tripod (social, environmental and economic aspects).

	Content Analysis***	Treatment of Results: Interpretation of the data obtained in order to verify the sense of belonging of the students in the diagnosis and prognosis.
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Source: Own authorship, based on studies by *Kripka, Scheller e Bonotto (2015), **Arruda (2018) and *** Bardin (2016).

Documentary research (Chart 1) is defended by Kripka, Scheller and Bonotto (2015) as a challenge to the ability to select, treat and interpret information of the researcher, seeking to understand the interaction with the source of the information. When this happens, details are added to the research and the data collected becomes more significant.

From the environmental perception (Chart 1) it was possible to analyze the different conceptions of the environment. This made it possible to carry out a diagnosis and prognosis of the view of the sustainability tripod of the students. Corroborating this perspective, Arruda (2018) states that this method is related to the way people experience their daily life, with an emphasis on the physical, cultural, social and historical dimensions. Thereby, the environmental perception is based on the understanding that the human daily life and its interactions with the environment where it lives are fundamental to its social, environmental and economic relations.

The results were analyzed according to the Content Analysis methodology (Bardin, 2016). It is a set of communication analysis techniques that make it possible to obtain, by systematic

and objective mechanisms for describing the content of messages, indicators (quantitative or not) that allow the inference of knowledge related to the conditions of production / perception, that is, variables inferred from the data obtained.

Discussion and analysis

In 2016, the Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School, received the amount of R\$ 8,000.00 from the Direct Money in School Program - Sustainable Schools (PDDE). This amount, fixed for small educational institutions, was destined to Brazilian rural schools that needed attention regarding the promotion of a sustainable space, as well as pedagogical practices focused on this theme. The selection of institutions was carried out by the Ministry of Culture and Education (MEC), which took into account the prospect of improvements in the quality of life of the school community. The federal resource was destined to building adaptations and/or training of professionals who worked directly in the school community developing actions to promote sustainability.

At the time, a cistern was installed to collect and store rainwater (Figure 3), garbage bins for selective collection, in

addition to making adjustments in gardening.

Figure 3 - Cistern of the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School.



Source: Edinei Aparecido Mora (2019).

According to the School Registration System (SERE), in 2019 the institution served forty-six students enrolled in the four classes of elementary school (6th, 7th, 8th and 9th grade), a general director, a pedagogue, an educational agent I, with the task of cleaning the school space and preparing food, an educational agent II, responsible for the secretariat and legal documentation, and thirteen teachers from different areas of knowledge (SERE, unpublished data). It is worth mentioning that of all the human resources of the educational institution, only the principal resides in the district of Rio Bonito. All

teachers, educators and educational agents move from other nearby cities to work. According to the Political Pedagogical Project (PPP), most students live in families composed of father and mother, and a minority with their grandparents. Their families have a low level of education: approximately 7% of the population is illiterate, 67% have completed elementary school, 25% have completed high school and only 1% have completed higher education (PPP, unpublished data).

Between the years 2014 and 2018, the number of students varied

considerably, considering the reflection in 2012 when the school underwent adjustments in the age range (minimum age for enrollment in the 6th grade of elementary school) and did not have

enrollments for the 6th grade. This adequacy was reflected in the subsequent four years, as well as in the number of approvals and failures (Chart 2).

Chart 2 – Number of enrolled approved and failed students, disregarding transfers during the academic years.

Year	Number of enrollments	Number of approved students	Number of failed students
2014	43	40	01
2015	41	32	01
2016	47	33	00
2017	63	55	02
2018	57	45	00

Source: SERE – School Records System. Unpublished data.

The data in Chart 2 show that the educational institution presents an expressive number of transfers to the headquarters school of Francisco Alves, or even to other municipalities, during the school year. In addition, the failure rate was significant in 2017, when the number of students in the school is taken into account in relation to the structure provided by the State.

This institution participates only in some external evaluation processes, due to its small size (school with a small number of students). As an example, there is the Paraná Mais Test, an external evaluation process by the Paraná State Department of Education and Sport. This test takes into

account the proficiency of the students in the Portuguese language and mathematics subjects. It is used as a tool of statistical and comparative character, in order to subsidize decisions of public educational policies or within the scope of school management, aiming to improve the parameters of quality and equity of education (Paraná, 2019).

In 2019, students from the 9th grade of elementary school were evaluated, which achieved the results shown in Chart 3.

Chart 3 - Comparison between the averages of the Paraná Mais Test from the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School (Escola do Campo), Umuarama Regional Education Center (NRE) and Paraná State Department of Education and Sport (SEED).

Assessed factors	Escola do Campo	NRE	SEED
Portuguese language	234,9	247,7	246,9
Mathematics	282,1	256,6	255,9
Proficiency indicator	Basic or elementary level	Basic or elementary level	Basic or elementary level

Source: Own authorship, based on unpublished data from the external evaluation sector of the State Department of Education and Sport of Paraná.

The school obtained averages in Portuguese and mathematics that indicate a standard of average performance. When compared to data from the Regional Education Center of Umuarama, it is noted that the averages were in the same classification range. This range belongs to level 02, also called basic or elementary level, which indicates that the school needs improvements in the basic contents for the subjects of the grade of leaving elementary school (9th grade).

Despite being part of the same classificatory range, it was noted that in the Portuguese language discipline the average of students at the school is approximately 5% lower than the averages of the Regional Education Center of Umuarama and the State of Paraná. On the other hand, in mathematics, the average of the students in question is about 10% higher than the others.

These results indicate that the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School is in the same classification ranges as the Regional Nucleus of Umuarama and the State of

Paraná, which means that it also needs more attention to the teaching-learning process of elementary school students.

It is worth mentioning that this school directs its actions on the principles of democratic management, contemplated by the presence of collegiate bodies, with institutionalized mechanisms for the participation of the entire school community: Association of Parents, Teachers and Employees (APMF), Class Council and School Council. However, the absence of a Student Union was noted, which would actively represent students in administrative and pedagogical discussions.

Environmental perception and local diagnosis Social aspects

The locality of Rio Bonito, where the State of Campo Padre Antônio Vieira - Elementary School is inserted, offers few conditions for a healthy social life as observed in the statements of some students: “People here drink at night and at the weekend because there's nothing to

do and no money to go out, to go for a walk” (A7, 2019). Another point highlighted by the focus group was the family social composition, which presents a considerable number of children living in different family compositions. In the eyes of this community, this generates certain social difficulties explicit in the speech of the interviewee A11 (2019) “I only live with my father and my sisters. My father works all day and only arrives at night, on the weekend we are alone and have to clean the house. Has nothing to do. I only play ball with friends”. Another student (A37, 2019) reports: “I live with my grandpa and grandma who are retired, and it is very difficult because everything is very expensive here. They are sick and cannot even buy the medicines”.

A relevant factor for the lack of a sense of belonging is the absence of teachers residing in the district of Rio Bonito, since only the principal lives in the locality, which impedes the empathy of educators towards students and hinders the development of this perception. These social demands demonstrate the need for investments by the government in the district. In this way, the people who live there would be encouraged to remain there, which, consequently, would facilitate the development of the sense of belonging, as a way of reconstructing history for a

transformation of reality. According to Santos and Sousa (2018), the bond of belonging to the place where the subject lives, needs to be reconstructed so that the awareness of the socio-environmental reality is strengthened, recognizing its potentialities and limits.

Still in the social aspect, it is noticeable the lack of appreciation of the school community towards the school space, as evidenced in the statements of the students: “My mother thinks that the school charges a lot and gives her a lot of work because she keeps calling when I don't I do chores” (A12, 2019); “The school is good, but my mother said that soon I will have to stop studying and work to help around the house” (A23, 2019). Therefore, the need to promote concrete actions that take the school community into its physical space is evident. In this way, it would be possible to develop the shared responsibility of the educational process, guaranteeing the democratic management that in the eyes of Dalbério (2008) is only real and effective when it can count on the participation of the whole community, participating, reflecting and interfering as an active subject.

Economic aspects

In general, the school community of the Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State

School - Elementary School demonstrates the presence of economic problems that affect family and school life. They are heterogeneous problems with different origins, among them the geographic location, lack of jobs, monoculture, low education level of the population and scarcity of opportunities.

The students verbalized these problems when they mentioned: *“My father works on the farm and earns little, he has no money for anything, nor does he buy clothes for us. We get a lot from people here”* (A28, 2019). Another relevant factor highlighted is the difficulty of access to food products with prices that are adequate to the consumer market, as mentioned by the interviewee A41 (2019): *“Everything here is very expensive, there are only a few markets that sell everything more expensive. People here do not earn well because they lack jobs”; “I eat well at school because at home there is almost no mix and the principal helps me a lot by giving the clothes she collects at school”; “The school helps us a lot, even with food sometimes. They collect clothes and distribute it to the people who need it”; “People here earn little. It is very difficult to pay rent and eat. We went through difficulties at home”*.

Regarding this, the students demonstrate a perception of the local

economic reality, which is the typical Brazilian reality, since the population is salaried and works in clothing factories for children, in agriculture and as professional fishermen earning a low salary that according to reports from deponent A4 (2019) *“you can barely survive”*. This finding by the students is in line with the Brazilian social inequality process, which is reflected in the educational process. Thereby, the more accentuated the poverty of a region, the lower the educational effectiveness of the subjects that compose it. In consonance with this fact, studies by Helene and Mariano (2020) conclude that, as a rule, in each Brazilian region the educational development indicators grow according to the increase in the average household income per capita of the municipalities and decrease with the increase in inequality, accentuating social sores.

Environmental aspects

As a reflection of the previous aspects, environmental issues are also perceived with a negative critical eye by the focus group, which recognizes the sensitive points of the community in relation to environmental issues. This was observed in the reports of the deponents A14, A9 and A21 (2019), respectively: *“Here in this place nobody cares where the*

garbage is thrown and we don't even know where the sewer goes”; “At school there are colored bins, but I don't know how to use it or where this garbage goes”; “The garbage business here in Rio Bonito is difficult, some throw it in an empty lot and others put it in the truck that they pick up every now and then”.

Based on the Maslow Pyramid, in which, according to Massena and Marinho (2011), the human being needs to meet his basic physiological needs (basis of the pyramid) to later conquer the needs of security, love, esteem and personal fulfillment (top of the pyramid). There is a certain difficulty for the student to develop an environmental awareness if there are still basic needs to be achieved. The statements demonstrate difficulties related to the formal and non-formal EA processes, which are reflected in the community's routine. For Reis, Semedo and Gomes (2012), actions are needed that go beyond school walls and reach peasant families as a way of raising awareness in the surrounding communities, or even other communities where school students reside. Therefore, it is possible to promote a closer relationship between intra and out of school with the aim of improving quality of life.

The school contemplates formal EA in its official documents and the teachers

claim to work on the theme. However, the reflection of this work has not yet reached the relatives of students, as reported by deponent A30 (2019): *“The school principal, teachers and secretary talked about environmental education, but I don't know how it is. They never talk about it at home”.* In this context, the integration between formal and non-formal EA is essential for the development of a critical awareness of the entire school community. This change in attitudes of people occurs through the transmission of information and political and socio-cultural training according to Silva and Pontes (2015). According to the authors, this occurs with the purpose of expanding knowledge about the world in which the subject is inserted and its social relations, based on the principles of social justice and equality.

Thereby, it is noted that the EA worked in this school space is being insufficient as a tool for social changes and improvement in the quality of life. This finding was also presented in the work of Rosa (2015), carried out in 24 municipalities in the metropolitan region of Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil. The author did not identify the presence of EA practices related to the context of reality and environmental problems in which the analyzed schools are inserted. Therefore, he concluded that there is a need for a

review of the pedagogical mechanisms applied and the actions of non-formal EA.

From this analysis in the environmental aspect, it was realized that issues related to solid waste, correct use of water and basic sanitation are not considered important for the local population. The school community does not appropriate the knowledge of EA, creating the need for actions that promote a change in local behavior.

In terms of aspects related to the sustainability tripod, the focus group reported weaknesses in the three segments. The school is not seen as an integrating space and capable of promoting social changes, thus requiring concrete actions that promote its approach to the community. All the weak points listed converge with the need for educational training that includes the contents of formal EA associated with field education methodologies. To this finality, it is essential to maintain the continuous investment in the training of teachers and the management team in order to strengthen actions that directly reflect on the teaching-learning process.

In this way, it would be possible to go beyond the school walls and carry out non-formal EA actions, with the purpose of developing the sense of belonging of the local population. Only then, would

improvements in the quality of life of the school community be made possible.

Final considerations

The Campo Padre Antônio Vieira State School - Elementary School is attended by subjects from the countryside who need a special look at the teaching-learning process, especially in the perspective that takes into account the appreciation of local history, related to environmental education issues.

Through this study, it was found that this school community has some weaknesses regarding aspects of the sustainability tripod, such as: in the environmental aspect, the lack of actions aimed at environmental education and few correct environmental practices; in the social aspect, the absence of the feeling of belonging, devaluation of the teaching-learning process and abandoned garden; in the economic factor, the financial difficulty of the families was noted, therefore requiring concrete actions of environmental education, associated with the methodologies of rural education, so that the students recognize themselves as an integral part of the struggle for a more just society.

The fact that a large number of professionals who work at the school do not reside in the district affects the

effectiveness of the school space as an instance of development of the sense of belonging. In order to soften the weaknesses pointed out, it is suggested the constitution of the representativeness of the students through the student union, a collegiate body of participation in educational decisions. In addition, it is essential that there is continued training for all professionals working in the school space, in order to develop the integration between the contents of EA and the methodologies of EC, promoting a more meaningful teaching to the countryside person.

Given the above, it can be inferred that a rural community that is imbued with the feeling of local and social belonging, gains strength to fight for its ideals and to break the barriers imposed by the capitalist means of production, which also does not take into account environmental issues.

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