

Management and the Promotion of Educational Quality During the Health Emergency

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Abstract

The sanitary emergency caused by COVID-19 determined the compulsory confinement; this confinement caused a change in the educational system, for example, leaving face-to-face education and moving to the virtual or remote way; it also meant that established concepts such as quality had a new connotation; consequently, principals, as managers and responsible for quality assurance in their institutions, faced a challenging situation at this juncture. The objective of this study was to explain the incidence of management to promote educational quality during the health emergency; a census sample of 84 principals belonging to private regular basic education institutions was used; two Likert-type questionnaires with 22 items were applied as an instrument, which were processed with the SPSS 24 program. In the explanatory and descriptive statistical processing of the study variables, the predominant level was acceptable. Therefore, it was concluded that management was adequate to promote educational quality in schools during the health emergency.

Key words: Quality, Education, Management and Pandemic.

1. Introduction

In 2020, the traditional educational system was affected due to the expansion of the pandemic caused by SARS-CoV-2, commonly known as COVID-19; this situation conditioned, in most

countries of the world, the establishment of the sanitary emergency, originating the mandatory confinement or quarantine; due to this situation, classes could not be developed in person; then it was determined that education was remote or at a distance.

These events were a challenging situation for the directors of regular basic education (EBR), who had to implement, in their schools, actions that would allow them to provide a quality service; therefore, it is necessary to explore which are the characteristics that this new scenario represented in education? How did the sanitary emergency develop? In what conditions were teachers, students and parents able to assume this context? Multiple questions arose; however, this research considered whether, in this context, quality education could be promoted from the management point of view.

2. The Health Emergency in Schools

At this juncture, a situation similar to that of Peru, was that of Chile and El Salvador, both countries also suspended classes, having to establish contingency plans implementing educational platforms for students to access remote education (Severino-González et al., 2020); in Peru, the educational platform "Aprendo en casa" was promoted, which was complemented with radio and television broadcasts. According to Hayes et al. (2021), there were problems such as access to technology; however, there were pronouncements against the need to close them, while Taiwan continued with open schools during the first wave (Esposito et al., 2021). In different ways, the countries established their contingency plans to continue with the educational service.

The health emergency also revealed deficiencies in education, mainly digital gaps, due to the limited access to technology that made it difficult to implement remote education (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2020); This was increased by the economic difficulties caused by the pandemic, in which, according to the Ministry of Education (Minedu), a dropout rate of more than 300,000 students was estimated (Gestión, 2020); by September 2020, in an X-ray of this situation prepared by León (2021), data showed that 470,000 students had not enrolled by the end of 2020. Undoubtedly, these are worrying figures; from the directive management, dispositions were given according to the School Management Commitments (CGE) to the principals to raise awareness in their schools about the reinsertion of students, recover them and mobilize their educational community to identify them and even carry out house to house campaigns, prepare a detailed record of their students with their real situation and submit it to the Ministry of Education, whether they are public or private schools.

On the other hand, there were limitations in teachers who did not have the digital skills to adapt to this new scenario or how to produce meaningful learning experiences and achieve the

expected results. It is important to indicate that this alert of the shortcomings in the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) had been exposed in previous studies such as those of Cózar-Gutiérrez et al. (2016), who argued the need for teachers to have skills in the use of technology; while for Villarreal-Villa et al. (2019), the appropriate use of ICT would allow the execution of more profitable learning experiences in the classroom, this implies that teachers had to keep up with the changes by training frequently to adapt to the new times (Pozos and Tejada, 2018); however, this difficulty of strengthening digital competencies was not exclusive to RBE, it was also observed in higher education, given that the authors Ocaña-Fernández et al. (2020) argued the benefits of the use of technology in the training of professionals, since efficient learning could be given.

In addition, other negative aspects that occurred in the context of health emergencies were the difficulties in communicating with families (Almodóvar-López et al., 2020) mainly harming preschool students. The closure of schools also caused stressful situations in students (Fendi et al., 2021); however, for Díaz-Barriga and Barrón-Tirado (2020), this juncture had positive aspects such as the inclusion of new educational environments and implementing innovations. In this regard, Nemeč et al. (2020) studied the attitude of students in the Czech Republic in this context; they were able to manage their time properly, which in the future could be taken to face-to-face classes; while for Manzano-Sánchez et al. (2021), in Spain, 70% of students expressed dissatisfaction with the new form of education, so that the adaptation to this system was not very enthusiastic; in addition, the use of digital resources should also be extended to families in order to help their children.

Due to the above, it is inevitable to deny the difficulties faced by education; for this reason, the directive management will have a leading role; it is important to expose some definitions for this study.

3. Directive Management

It is the work performed by the director of an educational institution as a manager; according to the Directive Management Manual (UNESCO, 2012), it must fulfill four aspects: 1) institutional involves the representativeness of the institution; 2) pedagogical through accompaniment and monitoring, will contribute to the development of better learning experiences; 3) administrative, includes the functional development of the institution and 4) the community where strategic alliances are materialized and the support of parents is requested (Gonzales-Sánchez et al., 2021); the main

objective of the directive management will be to provide a good educational service with adequate infrastructure, as well as to promote the development of good pedagogical practices.

The principal will be responsible for managing a quality education that favors the entire educational community, implementing projects or improvement plans that allow him/her to set goals and contribute to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of his/her school. It is also responsible for the professional development of teachers, for example, in Turkey, principals are mediators between the implementation of public policies in their schools and teachers; therefore, by promoting professional development, it will improve their performance in the classroom (Karacabey, 2020). In Peru, the "Marco del buen desempeño directivo" (Minedu, 2014) points out in the domain, competency 3, that he/she must ensure quality learning; to this end, he/she must adequately manage human, material and financial resources.

In addition, he/she must be a good time manager, having to avoid postponing the development of activities, which may seem tedious for his/her teachers (Debeş, 2021); it is important to specify that, in his/her work, he/she must show assertive behavior because it will contribute to the good climate of the school; likewise, he/she must be aware that his/her management style will contribute to his/her school to achieve common goals (Ucar and Dalgic, 2021).

Thus, the work of the principal was fundamental in the context of the health emergency; it is inherent to his function to comply with the Management Commitments (CGE) issued by the Ministry of Education, which are grouped into those of operation, which are commitment 3 (compliance with scheduling and programming), commitment 4 (pedagogical support and monitoring) and commitment 5 (school coexistence); those of results are commitment 1 (promotion of learning) and commitment 2 (retention of students).

In directive management, the first two were of greater concern, due to the need to prioritize the development of learning experiences in the year 2020, in addition to the limitations of teachers in the use of ICT. Fendi et al. (2021) pointed out that, in Indonesia, faced with this difficulty of teachers, principals had to assume a supervisory position to be vigilant of teachers' work and access to technological resources. Despite the multiple problems, the school had to remain in operation; the abandonment of the school further complicated the momentum of actions in its educational community.

4. Boosting the Quality of Education

Education has not evidenced major changes in recent decades; rather, it has remained stagnant (Fullan, 2020); because of the pandemic, education is on the way or in transition of a change and it can become an agent of development.

Quality is reflected in multiple indicators (Madani, 2019); Unesco, in education for all, promoted the basis for quality training in which learning achievements are achieved (Vaillant and Rodriguez, 2018); in addition to adequate conditions being available and inclusive; for Russell and Bray (2013), quality can enable regulations and certifications; on the other hand, Dorozhkin et al. (2019) and Cheng (2011) contemplate the human resource as the training of teachers; quality offers satisfaction and the indicator will be in the service. On the other hand, according to Romero (2015), quality indicators are found in the academic performance of students.

In Peru, according to the General Education Law, Article 13 emphasizes the formation of students and learning; therefore, a quality education is one that achieves in students the expected achievements in their learning experiences; principals must promote Knowledge Management (KM) to evidence whether the school is complying in imparting the expected learning; therefore, Standardized Censal Evaluations (ECE) are applied which are supervised by the Office for the Measurement of the Quality of Learning (UMC).

The success of students, frequently, is evaluated in academic performance; however, it should be more comprehensive as the school contributes to the formation of good citizens (Quaresma, 2019). Precisely, in the promotion of educational quality from the management, other aspects should have been addressed, although the most transcendental indicator is the achievement indicators in the ECE test, these were not carried out, in addition for the authorities of the Minedu, the years 2020 and 2021 are atypical school periods due to multiple difficulties such as connectivity, dropout and lack of digital competencies; it was decided that students who did not reach the desired competencies would pass with a system they called "guided promotion", in which the student will have several opportunities to achieve the competencies.

These actions, driven by a series of regulations of the Minedu, demanded that the directors, according to the GCs, provide the necessary guidelines to the members of the educational community in the context of the health emergency; for example, an extraordinary infrastructure is no longer considered; but the ways of connectivity to reach the approach with the students in both public and private schools.

For the development of this study, the recommendations of the National System of Evaluation, Accreditation and Certification of Educational Quality (Sineace) were taken; this institution suggests the use of the PDCA model, by Deming, in such a way that, when performing a self-evaluation of the institution, it allows implementing continuous improvement plans; during the sanitary emergency, schools had to adapt to the new requirements; then it was necessary to implement improvement plans, in addition, from the Minedu, regulations were given as the execution of plans for adaptation to the new academic context.

Finally, García et al. (2018) indicate that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) supports quality education through the use of competencies that will be evidenced in the expected learning achievements.

This study was considered innovative, because it invites the academic community to reflect on the issue of quality; it is crucial, from education, to establish guidelines with international criteria that are adapted to the reality of each country, having to consider the new scenario that demands the health emergency, in which the quality in the educational service, in our opinion, will be in the issue of connectivity, of being adequate communication with students; in synchronous or asynchronous classes, the expected learning achievements can be achieved. It is left open to the academic community to continue exploring how intuitive the platforms have been or how favorable was the implementation of remote education by the Peruvian government with the programming of "I learn at home"; in addition to establishing comparisons with the experiences of other countries.

Strength of this study is that it was conducted on a sample of 84 principals; that is, it was applied to 84 schools belonging to private schools, which, in Peru, were quite affected during this period, a topic that deserves future study.

According to the exploration of the academic information on the subjects of study, the objective was to explain the incidence of management and the promotion of educational quality during the health emergency.

5. Methodology

This research used the quantitative, non-experimental approach of causal relationship between two variables, with descriptive design. The study population consisted of 84 principals, with the inclusion criterion being that they belong to private RBE schools located in Metropolitan Lima. For the collection of information on the management variable, which has four dimensions: institutional management, pedagogical management, administrative management and community management, a

Likert scale questionnaire was constructed with 22 items, which was validated by expert judgment; in the same way, a Likert scale questionnaire with 22 items was constructed for the educational quality variable, which took the dimensions according to the Deming Cycle: plan, do, verify and act, in which a Likert scale questionnaire with 22 items was also elaborated.

Due to the situation, the instrument was distributed by means of a Google form; likewise, the necessary information was provided to allow the application of this study.

6. Results

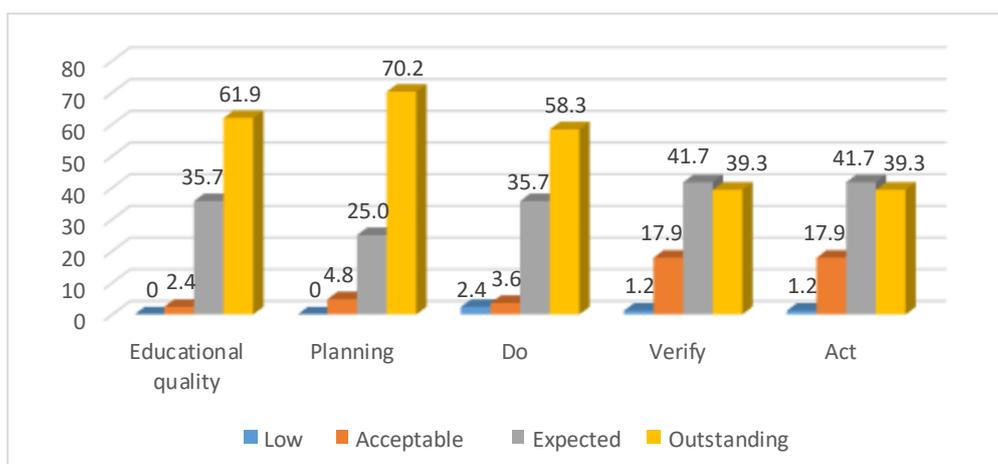
According to the statistical processing of the information collected, the data obtained for the educational quality variable in the dimensions planning, doing, verifying and acting.

Table 1- Comparison of the Percentages of the Dimensions of Educational Quality

	Educational quality	Planning	Do	Verify	Act
Low	0	0	2.4	1.2	1.2
Acceptable	2.4	4.8	3.6	17.9	17.9
Expected	35.7	25.0	35.7	41.7	41.7
Outstanding	61.9	70.2	58.3	39.3	39.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

According to the information in table 1, the dimensions that obtained the highest percentages, from the managers' perception, were planning with 70.2 % and doing with 58.3 %. Both are located in the outstanding level.

Figure 1 - Comparison of the Percentages of the Dimension Educational Quality



The information in the graph allowed inferring, with greater accuracy, that the perception of the managers is at an outstanding and acceptable level.

According to the inferential statistics using logistic regression, the information obtained was:

Table 2 - Index of Management and Educational Quality Parameters

		Estimation	Error deviation	Wald	gl	Sig.	95% confidence interval	
							Lower Límit	Upper Límit
Umbral	Quality Ed. acceptable	-5.783	1.091	28.113	1	0.000	-7.921	-3.646
	Calid. Ed. Esperado	-1.289	0.314	16.897	1	0.000	-1.904	-0.674
Ubication	Manag. Acceptable Dir.	-5.151	1.577	10.665	1	0.001	-8.243	-2.060
	Manag. Dir. expected	-2.503	0.599	17.436	1	0.000	-3.678	-1.328
Cox and Snell: 0.474			Nagelkerke: 0.622			McFadden: 0.447		

With regard to the directive management variable, the linear logistic regression has an acceptable perception, according to the Wald coefficient that exceeds 4.00 and is 15.154 %, being significant because it obtained the value of 0.00 in which p value < 0.05 and a lower limit of -3.675. The educational quality variable remained at the acceptable level according to the Wald coefficient 28.113 %, a p value of 0.00 and a lower limit of -7.921.

These results show that the managers adequately developed their function during the health emergency, in which they had to execute concrete actions implemented in their schools; according to their perception, they are located at an acceptable level; if the ranges used were low, expected, acceptable and outstanding, they show that they are above the average required in their management.

7. Discussion

The findings found could be confronted with information from other research.

Díez et al. (2018) studied fourteen Spanish schools that had implemented some QA model, the EFQM Excellence Model and the Integrated Quality Project Model (IQP); a sample of 42 principals and 272 teachers was used, this study agrees with the need, from the managers, to implement continuous quality improvement plans, which are accompanied with a recognition or certification; However, the authors, as a reflection, point out that the good school performance of students should be evidenced, so they agree with the findings of this study that the implementation of improvement plans shows that there is interest in providing quality education.

For Stray and Wood (2020), who conducted a comparative study of public policies on education according to OECD recommendations and the Pisa tests in New Zealand and Norway, they put forward the idea of a cosmopolitan capital, which is on a par with globalization; Therefore, these standardized evaluations serve to measure and increase competitiveness, the study to analyze the issue of public policies had as participants five officials who implement these provisions, this research is relevant to this study because, in Peru, educational quality is measured according to the results of these evaluations, which are not very favorable for our country in recent years.

The study by Gallegos Ruiz and Tinajero (2021) has several similarities with the research developed; the authors conducted a case study with an assistant principal in Veracruz (Mexico), responsible for implementing a results management workshop in her institution; she faced multiple difficulties in implementing this improvement plan in the context of the pandemic; she proved to be resilient and fulfilled the function entrusted to her. As well as the managers in this research who demonstrated this attitude and promoted in their schools the provisions of the Ministry of Education to provide quality learning experiences.

On the other hand, Sotelo and Figueroa (2017) investigated the educational service taking as a study sample 28 teachers and 24 pedagogical administrators from Durango (Mexico); they concluded that the better the institutional climate, the better the educational service was provided; although this study is not located in the context of emergency, it coincides in the importance of human resources for the implementation of improvements, a function of the manager from its management.

In the study by Hernández-Ortega and Álvarez-Herrero (2021), which was a mixed research, with the participation of 3764 Spanish teachers, who expressed their perception regarding educational issues with respect to the pandemic and the accompaniment of their administrators, the findings coincide very much with those described in this study, mainly, the issue of gaps, the authors call them sociocultural gaps; They found a 60% acceptance of cooperative work with the directors; it coincides with our study on the issue of implementing actions in the context of the pandemic with teachers, in addition to carrying out pedagogical workshops.

8. Conclusion

The health emergency caused by COVID-19 has determined significant changes in education worldwide; the school moved from the physical environment to virtual environments; the directors as managers to ensure educational quality; according to Peruvian regulations, they had to demonstrate learning achievements that would be measured in the results of the ECE tests; However, the

pandemic has prevented these evaluations from taking place, in addition to the transfer of students from private to public schools and the increase of school dropouts have not allowed to establish if the learning achievements of 2020 have been achieved, so that the Minedu established the guided promotion, benefiting those students who had difficulties in the development of the school period during the health emergency, so that in 2021 they can overcome the academic deficiencies and reach the required competencies in their study cycle.

According to this new scenario, it is complicated to measure the quality of learning achievements; another indicator is the infrastructure; but the physical environments are not being used; therefore, the management commitments had to implement improvement projects; this study contemplated that the directors, from their management, sought connectivity with the students and trained their teachers in digital tools that would allow them to develop meaningful learning experiences in distance education.

Finally, according to the statistical processing, the results showed that the expected performance of the managers was acceptable, quite favorable to determine that they are performing an adequate function.

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