PROPOSAL OF PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: Pedagogical leadership is a key tool that optimizes teaching performance, closely linked to the school program of continuous improvement, it provides the strategies required to face the “educational crisis” that challenges finding urgent answers to new problems. (Pedagogical leadership: thinking and building a better education / Andrés Felipe Acevedo Muriel1Research Center for Latin American Regional and Border Studies.) This research is based on strengthening teacher pedagogical leadership that impacts the learning of preschool students. With the methodology used, it is possible to investigate, compile and design strategies that allow pedagogical leadership to raise the quality and academic performance of students and at the same time disseminate it through educational articles, blogs, magazines, etc. Hence, the objective of the research is the application of pedagogical leadership strategies that strengthen the improvement in the academic performance of preschool students in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, during the 2022-2023 school year.

Keywords: Pedagogical leadership; Academic achievement; pedagogical strategies; teaching performance; preschool education.

INTRODUCTION

The level of academic performance of the students is a relevant aspect and reflects the appropriation of the learning that the student acquires in the course of their educational career and, therefore, the development of their life skills (knowing how to know, knowing how to do, knowing how to live together, knowing how to be), (Key learnings for comprehensive education, plan and study programs for basic education. Traits of the preschool education graduation profile, SEP, 2017., Page 64)

An assessment of the students’ knowledge was carried out, in which some qualitative and quantitative evaluation instruments were used, which made it possible to analyze the results and detect achievements and areas of opportunity. (Book 4 evaluation strategies. pdf. (s/f). Google.com. Retrieved on May 26, 2023, page 20)

Pedagogical leadership emphasizes a type of school leadership that has educational purposes such as establishing educational objectives, planning the curriculum, evaluating teachers, teaching, and promoting teacher professional development (Hallinger, 2005; Ord et al., 2013; Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009). Therefore, pedagogical leadership is, in effect, leadership for learning (Ord et al., 2013).

Pedagogical leadership develops a vision of learning that is promoted through all training actions in the school, a set of these tools make visible the academic, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills of the students that promote good teaching, feedback from the teaching, having the ability to make decisions based on information that has been produced rigorously, provide more effective responses to identified problems, timely adjust improvement actions, as well as recognize and celebrate progress and successes. (Good pedagogical leadership practices 10 tools to promote school improvement Editors: Carmen Montecinos, Marcela Dorén and Ana Maria Rosende)

Pedagogical leadership entails a “transformative” work, since it is not limited to working in the existing conditions and with the given goals, but rather it alters those conditions of the center and the classroom so that the education offered and the teaching practices in the classroom improve. (Murillo, 2006), current literature, derived from studies on school effectiveness and improvement, has highlighted the role that pedagogical leadership plays in organizing good educational practices in schools and in contributing to increasing learning results.
(How does distributed pedagogical leadership improve academic achievement? Research review and proposal. Bolivarbotia, Antonio)

Velázquez and Hernández (2019:14) “The strength and success of education comes from teachers, the leader who constantly encourages his followers and who offers them the didactic tools necessary to boost academic performance, directing them to the achievement of their goals.” projects, a democratic teacher will be capable of training autonomous professionals, committed to solving society’s problems with passion, ethics and justice.”

The teacher’s leadership is expressed in the pedagogical or focused on learning (Bernal & Ibarrola, 2015); This means that it is evidenced in the creation of pedagogical strategies that allow innovation and creativity, or when the teacher states that he continually improves his teaching practice, which evolves and transforms pedagogically, responding to the context and its evolution.

The teacher must appropriate the necessary pedagogical tools to put them into practice with the students and positively influence their academic achievement. Just as teachers seek to ensure that students manage to develop until they reach their graduation profile, professionally they must develop their potential, skills and abilities, both physical, cognitive and emotional.

Teachers must be fully committed to education, which is why it is necessary to update and prepare professionally, awaken interest in research, which allows them to find solutions to the situations or problems faced in daily teaching practice and keep in mind that the function It is making students learn, regardless of the circumstances that surround them, and being committed to their comprehensive development.

Teaching leadership includes actions that must be carried out with commitment and responsibility, to achieve changes in the educational context, mainly in relation to students, seeking the construction and transformation of those thinking beings with whom they work every day, with the aim that they achieve complete care with principles and values.

Students currently demand greater attention and professionalism from their teachers, for this reason, they must seek to exercise this teaching leadership with a vision of change, renewal and innovation, designing strategies that allow them to optimize didactic and pedagogical resources in favor of Mexican childhood and youth in accordance with the needs of girls, boys and adolescents (NNA)

**JUSTIFICATION**

The demands of today’s society require people who are better prepared in all aspects of their lives, including their academic preparation, hence the importance of seeking to obtain the best results in the academic achievement of children and adolescents every day, from the levels they They make up basic education to higher levels, unfortunately, this objective has been affected by various factors.

In Mexico, preschool enrollment among 4-year-old children increased to 89% in 2015, similar to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 87%, although enrollment rates for children 2 and 3 years old continue to lag behind most OECD countries. (OECD 2017)

The management function is carried out mostly by women and the directors have an average age of 44 years (although in both cases there would be wide dispersion in these variables, with countries such as Uruguay or Argentina with more than 85% of women directors compared to Mexico or Ecuador in which they constitute less than half, as well as average ages that range from 53 years in Chile to 39 years in Guatemala or Nicaragua).
The vast majority of principals, especially those who work in urban schools, have university degrees and there is a relevant group (20%) that additionally has postgraduate studies (the variability in this case would range from Colombia with more than 50% of directors with postgraduate degrees, to several countries that have less than 10% in that situation, such as Paraguay, Argentina, El Salvador or Uruguay). (UNESCO 2014).

The evaluations carried out on a national and international scale (PLANEA 2015 and 2017, PISA 2015) warn us that the commitment has not been fulfilled and that the challenge remains great, from preschool to secondary school, since they reflect that basic education students finish their studies without a minimally sufficient mastery in reading and cannot solve simple arithmetic problems, which reflects fundamental deficiencies that make autonomous learning difficult.

In the 2012-2018 six-year period, the Mexican government proposed – as one of its main objectives – to build a “Mexico with Quality Education”, since today it is considered one of the developing countries that has the lowest achievement rates. school at all educational levels, mainly in basic education (Secretary of Public Education, 2015).

It is important to have clear indicators that allow the task to be organized and the results measured with certainty; review them periodically to know the progress of the students; timely identify and follow up on those students who are at risk of not achieving the expected learning; assess the effectiveness of the pedagogical intervention to make pertinent decisions, and the involvement of supervisors and directors when visiting classrooms to advise and accompany those aspects that require improvement of educational practice. (OECD Work, June 2023).

The Teaching and Learning International Study (TALIS) analyzes the work and attitudes of teachers, the learning environment and the role of school leaders. TALIS also analyzes the initial training of teachers in the countries.

This educational research focuses on the study of the function of teaching leadership, as an agent of transformation and on the search for tools, strategies or methodologies related to education that allow it to provide a solution to the problem of academic performance, with the aim of achieving optimal levels of student performance. For this reason, it is essential to reflect on teaching work, how pedagogical practice is being carried out and how we can contribute to the improvement of education from the classrooms and consolidate the bases of an education of excellence, equity, equality and inclusion, to current generations and at the same time prepare them to obtain better life opportunities in the future. (Rodríguez-Molina, 2023).

**CHARACTERIZATION OF THE PRESCHOOL CONTEXT IN SABINAS HIDALGO**

At the beginning of the school year, different instruments were applied to obtain information related to students, such as; surveys, interviews, socioeconomic and socioemotional studies, which made it possible to detail the panorama of the context.

The preschool educational institution in Sabinas Hidalgo Nuevo León, object of study of the research, has a total population of 92 students distributed in 5 groups, of which 52 are girls and 40 are boys, the age varies from 3 to 5 years.

The majority of parents live in their own home (59%), are legally married (59%), have jobs as workers or drivers (76%) and have completed a high school or high school education.
The majority work as employees in factories receiving low salaries that vary from $1,500 mxn to $2,000 mxn. It should be noted that the area in which the town is located has a high socioeconomic level, which means that students have little access to expanding their culture. The homes where they live have basic services of electricity, water, drainage and are made of common materials such as block or brick, the majority have their own house and a minority pay rent. The only entertainment they provide at home is open television, few have pay television and internet service.

In terms of infrastructure, the school has 5 teaching classrooms, toilets for students and teachers, drinking fountains, electrical installation, hydraulic installation, and the delimitation of the school is with a cyclonic mesh.

The preschool is made up of the following staff: 6 group teachers and a certified director, 2 teachers have an incomplete doctorate academic profile, the director and 1 teacher have a complete master's degree, 2 have a bachelor's degree and 1 teacher complete the bachelor's level.

**DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION IN KEY LEARNING FOR PRESCHOOL**

To justify the need for the implementation of teaching leadership and its influence on the academic performance of second-grade preschool students in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, during the 2022-2023 school year, a diagnosis of reality was carried out, through of the application of the following instruments: Surveys of teachers on pedagogical leadership in the educational aspect; interview the parents referring to the student's personal data, family and socioeconomic situation, educational level of the parents, health and physical development of the child; socioeconomic diagnosis; qualitative diagnostic evaluation.

It was carried out with the intention of observing how each girl or boy performs in relation to the expected learning, their personal characteristics and traits, physical health conditions and some aspects of their family environment, tastes, preferences, fears, among others. (Page 6 of the text Diagnostic Evaluation in Key Learning for Preschool); figures of results of the diagnostic evaluation; learning results of Language and Mathematical Thinking; Continuous Improvement School Program.

The educational lag evidenced in the analysis of the instruments shown showed low mastery in the fields of language and communication and mathematical thinking. Therefore, teachers must attend to the following aspects:

- Make pedagogical practices flexible, consistent with the family context and apply strategies according to the diversified needs of the students.
- Campus personnel are required to stay updated and take the courses and workshops offered by the SEP and other agencies in a timely manner.
- It is necessary to know, analyze and train on the management and application of the current Preschool Education Program.
- The lack of economic and technological resources, the internet, health problems.
- Parents participate and support the school according to their possibilities.

Therefore, it is clear that the instruments used allowed us to identify that one of the teachers’ tasks is to know their students, their characteristics and their development conditions, how the teaching and learning process is carried out in the educational institution, in the family and in the immediate context.
Know and identify the strengths and areas of improvement of the students and the factors that intervene in the process to enhance them in the case of strengths and in the case of areas of improvement to gradually overcome them, so it is important to consider the following teaching and directive practices that favor working with students.

**PROBLEMS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PRESCHOOL**

One of the common problems of teachers is academic lag, reflected by the poor academic performance of students. The results of the INNE, through the PLANEA test, support this problem at the different levels that make up basic education, mainly in subjects such as reading and mathematics, where the basic levels of knowledge and skills have not been achieved, however, it cannot be generalize the performance of all students.

This problem is also detected at the preschool level according to diagnostic evaluations applied to second-grade preschool students at the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year, the results showed that the expected basic learning was not achieved regarding language, thinking, mathematics, motor skills, social skills, knowledge of their natural and social environment; Even as preschool students, their development reflects a certain lack of knowledge, attitudes, skills and abilities. This reason motivates us to investigate the way in which pedagogical leadership is essential to mobilize learning in the classroom and therefore raise academic performance. Considering the figures reflected in this regard, it is urgent to amend this situation, to avoid future consequences that will impact the productive life of new generations and the development of the country.

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

What are the pedagogical leadership strategies that favor improvement in the academic performance of second-grade preschool students in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, during the 2022-2023 school year?

**GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

Provide pedagogical leadership strategies that promote improvement in the academic performance of second-grade preschool students in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, during the 2022-2023 school year.

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- Study the different approaches/theories at the international and national level on pedagogical leadership.
- Carry out the diagnosis of teachers who serve second grade preschool students, in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, to assess their characteristics as educational leaders.
- Apply pedagogical leadership surveys in the professional field to preschool teachers and managers in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León.
- Develop strategies for their application in the classroom setting with second-grade preschool students in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, during the 2022-2023 school year.
- Monitor the application of pedagogical leadership strategies for the analysis of the results obtained.
METHODOLOGY

The present research has a mixed approach with a descriptive scope and a non-experimental cross-sectional design, in which a sample of 17 students between 3 and 4 years of age participated.

To plan and develop this intervention proposal, 3 phases of action were considered, which correspond to its planning, development and evaluation.

PHASE 1: PLANNING

This phase is based on a study of the current context of an educational establishment carried out through a diagnosis from which the problem mentioned in the title of this research arises, continuing with theories and approaches that support a proposal for the development of didactic strategies to be implemented to improve the student performance, in order to reflect on how pedagogical leadership influences the academic performance of students, investigating alternative solutions for an excellent education.

The sources that are intended to be used in this first phase of the research are studies, reports and/or analysis of specialists on education, some articles or essays on projects related to pedagogical leadership.

PHASE 2: DEVELOPMENT

Below are the actions to be carried out to implement the proposed educational project:

- Development of pedagogical leadership strategies.
- Implementation of the strategies designed by teachers in the classrooms.
- Monitoring the development of proposals.
- Preparation of a schedule for the development of actions or tasks.
- Consideration and registration of the budget required to develop the research.

Phase 3: Assessment

During this phase, the results obtained when applying the teaching leadership strategies were analyzed, through an assessment plan of the proposed objectives, a qualitative report and reflection on the research carried out, as well as the validation of the instruments used to obtain the required information, in order to detect the possible problems and benefits that the application of this research can bring to education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the academic field, the academic performance of preschool students was evaluated as a result of pedagogical leadership.

Socially, the training of responsible citizens, with civic awareness and better prepared to participate effectively in society, was promoted.

Environmentally, awareness was created so that the educational community feels part of a global environment in which they must make friendly decisions and behaviors.

And in the cultural field, we sought to impact the respect and value of different cultures, taking into account gender equality, critical thinking and critical interculturality.

In order to have an impact on the school context at the local, state and national level.

ILLUSTRATIONS, TABLES, FIGURES

A survey was carried out on 10 teachers on pedagogical leadership. It should be noted that when applying the survey, they were given the indication or clarification that they take into account the leadership practices that they observe in their educational institution with respect to the leadership of the different members of the teaching group so that their responses contain a high degree of reliability,
obtaining the following results:

Among the functions performed by those surveyed are: teachers, directors and group directors, while the professions that appear are Professor, Engineer and Teacher in teaching; with an experience of between 18 to 30 years.

The respondents express, regarding the pedagogical leadership of teachers and the participation of students in the programming of learning activities, that 2 out of 10 only sometimes consider it important, 3 out of 10 almost always consider it important and for 5 out of 10 is always important. Regarding pedagogical leadership to make the achievement of objectives more dynamic, 7 out of 10 always take it into account, 2 out of 10 almost always and only 1 out of 10 respondents affirm that it is sometimes considered important. Therefore, the teacher is identified as a leader capable of inspiring confidence and optimism, with which 6 out of 10 respondents agree that they always have confidence and optimism in teacher leadership, while there is an agreement that 2 affirm that almost always and 2 sometimes. Also considering the importance of using the resources (pedagogical, materials, humans such as ATP, advisors, etc.) that the area has to be able to develop educational resources that support teaching work, 50% affirm that almost always, 30% almost always and 2% sometimes.

Below are the results obtained from the interview carried out with the parents of the institution under study.

Figure 1: Socioeconomic diagnosis of the second grade preschool group (Type of housing)

59% live in their own home, 23% in a borrowed home and 18% in a rental home.

Figure 2: Socioeconomic diagnosis of the second grade preschool group (Schooling level)

30% of parents have completed secondary school, 30% have completed high school and 40% have higher education.

Figure 3: Socioeconomic diagnosis of the second grade preschool group (Legal status of the parents)

A total of 53% of parents are legally married, 23% live in a common law union, 17% are divorced and 12% are single mothers.

Figure 4: Socioeconomic diagnosis of the second grade preschool group (Type of employment of parents)

A total of 76% of parents have jobs as workers, employees or drivers and the remaining 24% are professionals.
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<tr>
<th>TRAINING FIELD</th>
<th>LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>MATHEMATICAL THINKING</th>
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<td>EXPECTED LEARNING EVALUATED</td>
<td>Research subjects</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Effectively expresses ideas on various topics and pays attention to what is said in interactions with other people</td>
<td>Writes his name for various purposes and identifies him and some companions.</td>
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Students by performance level

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Figure 5: Results of the diagnostic evaluation of the second grade preschool group, in the academic training fields: Language and communication and Mathematical thinking.

Figure 6: Results of the diagnostic evaluation of the second grade preschool group, when assessing the fields of academic training: Language and communication and Mathematical thinking.
In this field, the learning in which the students had difficulty was: Write their name for various purposes and identify that of some classmates, since they still have difficulty gripping the pencil well and lack fine motor coordination.

Regarding the field of Mathematical Thinking, the difficulty was mainly concentrated in learning: Communicate orally and in writing the numbers from 1 to 10, since some students cannot orally count the numerical series in the appropriate order, they pass numbers or go back when counting and they also have difficulty recognizing numbers by their writing or name.

The results obtained in the field of Language and communication were the following:

Oral language: 35% of the students manage to express themselves autonomously and spontaneously, maintaining an open conversation with the teacher and showing confidence. 35% are in the process of developing this learning, since their conversations are guided by direct questions and although their answers focus on the topic addressed, they show some insecurity and seek the approval of whoever accompanies them in the activities.

And the remaining 30% require support to start a conversation, because even when questioned they show shyness and insecurity to express themselves.

Written language: 17% of the group managed to represent their name with conventional spellings and without graphic support, the other 18% are in the process of doing so since they only represent some graphics and 65% only use personal strokes such as lines or sticks.

The results obtained in the field of mathematical thinking were the following:

Number: 57% of the students are in the process of adequately carrying out oral counting of the numerical series, of recognizing numbers in writing or by name, when they are presented randomly. And to establish correspondence between quantities and numbers. 21% of children require support when it comes to oral counting, as they skip numbers when counting or count the same number twice. They cannot identify any number and therefore this makes it difficult for them to establish correspondences and solve numerical problems, since the basic thing is counting. 22% manage to count by correctly following the numerical sequence, identify the numbers, even if they are presented randomly and therefore manage to establish correspondence between quantities and numbers without difficulty, as well as provide solutions to mathematical problems.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aims to: Provide pedagogical leadership strategies that promote improvement in the academic performance of second-grade preschool students in Sabinas Hidalgo, Nuevo León, during the 2022-2023 school year.

The strategies used in the research were:

- Stimulate student development to provide lifelong learning.
- Encourage collaborative work that allows students to interact, promoting learning among peers or fellow tutors.
- Get to know students in their cognitive, physical, emotional and social aspects to understand the processes they go through.
- Carry out research on the problems you face in your daily practice.
- Practice continuous dialogue with the school community (students, parents, colleagues)
• Implement recreational activities that facilitate social interaction and make learning pleasant and motivating.

These strategies will favor academic performance in preschool students, as stated in the studies of Francesco Tonucci (2017). “It is very important that we as teachers make the students feel good, but without ceasing to be a serious school where children are willing to work from the facts, incidents or experiences they have to deal with content, it is also important that in the practices we carry out, we give importance to collective and individual work where children will express themselves and listen to their other classmates and build their knowledge.”

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