

Financial education: the challenges of training educators of young learners

Abstract: This paper aims to investigate the current scenario of how Financial Education is taught by teachers at an institution that trains young learners, in order to propose a continuing education program in Financial Education. It is considered essential that teachers have knowledge acquired from both training and practical experience. The methodology employed was applied research, with a qualitative approach, using data collection and analysis, as well as thematic analysis. The study presents a scenario in which the importance of Financial Education in the lives of young learners is recognized, but identifies that the lack of teacher training is an obstacle. This challenge can be overcome through continuing education and communities of practice to train them in Financial Education.

Keywords: Professional Education. Financial Education. Teacher Education. Young Learners.

Educación financiera: desafíos para la formación de educadores de jóvenes estudiantes

Resumen: Este artículo tiene como objetivo investigar el escenario de cómo es trabajada la Educación Financiera por docentes de una institución que forma jóvenes aprendices, para proponer un programa de formación continua en Educación Financiera. Se considera fundamental que los educadores tengan conocimientos adquiridos tanto a través de la formación como de la experiencia práctica. La metodología utilizada fue la investigación aplicada, con enfoque cualitativo, utilizando la recolección y análisis de datos y el análisis temático. El estudio presenta un escenario donde se reconoce la importancia de la Educación Financiera en la vida de los jóvenes estudiantes, pero identifica que la falta de capacitación de los docentes es un obstáculo, que puede superarse con capacitación continua y comunidades de práctica para capacitarlos en educación financiera.

Palabras clave: Educación Profesional. Educación Financiera. Formación Docente. Jóvenes Aprendices.

Educação Financeira: o cenário da formação de educadores de jovens aprendizes

Resumo: Este artigo tem como objetivo investigar o cenário atual de como a Educação Financeira é trabalhada por professores de uma instituição que capacita jovens aprendizes, a fim de propor um programa de formação continuada em Educação Financeira. Considera-se essencial que os professores possuam conhecimentos adquiridos tanto na formação quanto na experiência prática. A metodologia empregada foi uma pesquisa aplicada, com abordagem qualitativa, utilizando a coleta e análise de dados, bem como a análise temática. O estudo apresenta um cenário no qual se reconhece a importância da Educação Financeira na vida dos jovens aprendizes, mas identifica que a falta de formação dos professores é um obstáculo. Esse desafio pode ser superado por meio de formação continuada e comunidades de prática para capacitá-los em Educação Financeira.

Palavras-chave: Educação Profissional. Educação Financeira. Formação de Educadores.

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1 Introduction

Financial education has been a recurring theme in the society in which we live. The impacts of globalization, the diversification of financial products and the charms of consumption signal a scenario in which financial balance in the present is indispensable for guaranteeing a healthy and secure future. The liquid and fluid society, as described by Bauman (2008), presupposes changes in access to knowledge about financial issues. In this context, education is an indispensable pillar for the development of society, and Financial Education is even more necessary.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has been disseminating proposals and mobilizing member and non-member countries to make efforts to offer their populations access to financial literacy and knowledge. The Financial Education program proposed by the OECD seeks to minimize the impact that a lack of financial knowledge has, especially on the most vulnerable sections of society.

According to Bauman (2008, 2010), indebtedness, the difficulty of maintaining the minimum conditions for a dignified life and the *siren song* of consumption are driving a significant portion of the population to fail as consumers. The consumer society in which we live determines the behavior of the market: “Consumption is the key piece in this market game, so for the system to remain in operation, it is necessary to recruit a society of consumers who are ready to consume whatever is presented to them” (Barbosa, Araújo and Paes, 2020, p. 6).

From this perspective, Financial Education emerges as a way of minimizing the difficulties of living and surviving in a consumer society. Especially in Brazil, there is a movement of various actors - government, private initiative, educational institutions and the third sector - with the aim of organizing, producing and disseminating knowledge about Financial Education, making individuals aware of the importance of the subject

In the field of education, there is also growing mobilization to give visibility and concreteness to the topic of Financial Education. After two decades of debate, in 2017 the Base Nacional Comum Curricular [National Common Curricular Base — BNCC] — which provides for Financial Education as a Cross-Cutting Theme — was released, with deadlines set for its implementation. Inserting Financial Education as a Cross-Cutting Theme is a commendable attitude; however, it is necessary to reflect on how to implement this theme. In order to teach, teachers need to have specific training and a repertoire of knowledge, which differs from the reality of the initial and continuing training of active educators. Lopes, Kistemann Jr. and Baganha (2023) state:

If, on the one hand, public education managers are clearly paying attention to the subject of Financial Education in schools, through projects, programs, curricula and materials aimed at student development, on the other hand, we observe an underestimation of the need to build efficient ways of training the educator who will act in the classroom as a transforming agent through Financial Education (p. 147).

Some questions become pertinent: how can educators include the topic of Financial Education in the content of each subject they teach, if they themselves have not had access to specific training in this area? How can they associate their subject with knowledge for which they are not prepared and often not even familiar with? What are the challenges of designing

and implementing a Financial Education training project for educators in a training program for young learners?

2 Education and Financial Education

In the information society, students have access to countless data on different topics and subjects. The educator's challenge, according to Harari (2018), is to provide tools for the student to understand the meaning of the information; to develop a critical stance to differentiate between what is necessary and what is superfluous; and to relate learning to everyday situations. Applying this thinking to Financial Education, it is up to the teacher to help students understand the importance and relevance of the subject for a healthy and financially balanced life, regardless of their economic level.

Over the last few decades, the subject of Financial Education has become increasingly discussed in academia, society and the financial market. In each of these spaces, Financial Education is approached with different objectives and purposes.

The first official publication on Financial Education, the seminal text, is a document published in 2005 by the OECD, entitled *Recommendations on Principles and Good Practices in Financial Education and Awareness*. From the perspective of the OECD (2005, p. 3), Financial Education is “important to help consumers budget and manage their income, save and invest efficiently, and avoid becoming victims of fraud”.

In a consumer society, marked by a scenario of globalization, with the financial market constantly developing and becoming more sophisticated, the risks and responsibilities for financial decisions are becoming increasingly complex for individuals. The financial market itself realizes the need for financial education, so that it can strengthen itself by increasing access to financial services and products:

Financial Education should be considered in the regulatory and administrative framework, and should be seen as a tool to promote economic growth, confidence and stability, along with the regulation of financial institutions and consumer protection (including regulation on information and advice). The promotion of Financial Education should not be replaced by financial regulation, which is essential to protect consumers (e.g. against fraud) and which Financial Education is expected to complement (OECD, 2005, p. 5).

Financial Education is an ongoing, permanent and lifelong process, as financial decisions are part of an individual's life in every day-to-day situation. On the other hand, the teacher training process must be continuous and permanent, so that they are prepared to deal with the fluidity of the financial system and the different needs and abilities of students, promoting an environment conducive to learning.

In her dissertation, Chiarello (2014) sought to identify how teachers understand and deal with the challenge of promoting Financial Education in their educational practice. The author proposes a reflection on the structuring of a learning environment conducive to the inclusion of the subject in teaching practice, as well as on the social, economic, political and cultural dimensions included in Financial Education. For Chiarello (2014), Financial Education is a complex and challenging subject:

[...] to define Financial Education as knowledge that does not happen in isolation, challenging us to new perspectives, new possibilities and new learning environments.

This proposal for teaching EF (Financial Education) is not a solution, it is a challenge for our students, parents and teachers, seeking meaningful learning through a collective project (p. 31).

Financial Education can be seen as a way of training critical individuals who are aware of their role in society and capable of dealing with their resources — whether financial or otherwise — in a sustainable, responsible and effective way. Savoia, Saito and Santana (2007) reinforce this position, highlighting the importance of Financial Education:

In today's society, individuals need to master a broad set of formal properties that provide a logical and seamless understanding of the forces that influence the environment and their relationships with others. Mastery of some of these properties is acquired through Financial Education, understood as a process of transmitting knowledge that allows individuals to develop skills so that they can make informed and secure decisions, improving the management of their personal finances. When they improve these skills, individuals become more integrated into society and more active in the financial sphere, increasing their well-being (Savoia, Saito e Santana, 2007, p. 2).

Financial education for young people should focus on transforming the scenario of impulsive and thoughtless consumption characteristic of today's society into an education that aims to provide the basics for individuals to become conscious, critical, socially and environmentally responsible consumers. Kistemann Jr. (2020) highlights people's growing concern about acquiring knowledge of Financial Education that will give them autonomy and independence, enabling safe access to the services and products made available by institutions:

[...] Financial Education, according to the OECD, should be in all schools, in order to promote students' access to the economic world and its dynamics, access to guiding content on financial organization for access to financial products that can guarantee a stable economic future for these young people (Kistemann Jr., 2020, p. 31).

Financial education is fundamental for society, the financial sector, the economy and especially for individuals, who need to manage their resources in order to survive. When individuals become more aware, capable of organizing their finances and aware of their role as citizens, the effects are positive for all of society's economic sectors. Financial education is an important discipline for ensuring that citizens can exercise their rights and duties in the financial world, enabling them to make sound decisions.

It is clear that the neuralgic point of inserting Financial Education into education — be it Basic, Non-Formal, Technical Vocational or Higher Education — lies in the training of the teacher/educator/trainer. Mizukami *et al.* (2010) sums this up masterfully:

Instead of a step-by-step approach, the challenge is to think of comprehensive training, not limited to the mere transfer of content, methods and techniques, but fundamentally oriented towards what teachers are required to achieve with their students: learning to think, to reflect critically, to identify problems, to investigate, to learn, to teach. This would therefore be the meaning of the terms education and training, conceived differently from qualification and training (p. 42).

Machado and Formosinho (2009, p. 287) reinforce the importance of teacher training by stating that “teaching is a complex professional activity that requires ongoing teacher

training”.

Financial Education is mentioned as a cross-cutting theme in the Base Nacional Comum Curricular Base [National Common Curricular Base — BNCC] and is highlighted in educational initiatives by financial institutions concerned with consumer rights and duties. These initiatives support the development of strategies to enable individuals to integrate critically and consciously into the consumer society.

The concepts of Financial Education point to two different approaches: on the one hand, Financial Education is seen as a strategy by the financial market to facilitate access to its products and services, often without providing the necessary knowledge for conscious use, which can result in increased indebtedness and default. On the other hand, Financial Education is seen as a tool to promote a critical view of the use of money, helping individuals to become conscious, organized and planned consumers.

Despite the widespread positive results of some Financial Education programs, it is worth noting that, for some authors, Financial Education is an empty promise on the national scene. Saraiva (2017) points out that there is no significant data to confirm that Financial Literacy actually improves the lives of individuals, especially those who are economically vulnerable and have low levels of education and skills that can help them make sound financial choices. It should be noted that inequalities in access to employment and income, racial and socio-economic discrimination, as well as the unequal educational provision in the country, contribute to the low effectiveness of Financial Education programs.

Financial education can be a truly transformative agent for society, as long as it is not influenced solely by the guidelines and interests of the financial market. For the financial market, it is easier and more advantageous to deal with a precariously financially literate population than with individuals who are aware of their role as ethical and responsible consumers.

Brazil's economic stabilization since the 1990s has expanded the country's position in international markets and enabled access to credit and consumption for Brazilian society, impacting the financial behaviour of investors and consumers. During this same period, there was an increase in the supply of Financial Education programs, as well as an increase in indebtedness, especially among the economically vulnerable, who began to have access to credit without the minimum knowledge of Financial Education.

Many financial institutions, both public and private, have started offering Financial Education programs to their clients and to society in general. However, there are doubts about the usefulness of this knowledge for people who are in debt and have difficulty accessing digital media. Kistemann Jr. (2020, p. 49) offers hope: “we must believe in paths that lead us to alternative proposals for the genesis of individual consumers who develop their financial literacy and coexist in harmony with the economic and ecological system”.

In 2005, the OECD published a report outlining guidelines for Financial Education, with the aim of forming critical and conscious consumer citizens, going beyond the simple transmission of financial information. However, many financial education projects are still restricted to teaching financial mathematics, without encouraging a critical and sustainable approach to consumption. Furthermore, there is a lack of actions aimed at forming socially and environmentally responsible consumers.

The debate on Financial Education should include spaces for discussion about consumerism, environmental impact and the deepening social and economic inequalities of

contemporary society. Pessoa (2016) clearly points this out:

In addition to helping with money management, we also believe in the potential of EF [Financial Education] to encourage discussion about conscious consumption, the influence of the media on daily choices, reflection on what we want and what we really need, and the environmental impact that some choices can have (p. 241-242).

With regard to the education of young people, the importance of their training and preparation for work stands out, which takes place in different dimensions — philosophical, economic, sociological and historical. It is essential to promote insertion into the world of work as a way of producing wealth, generating income and being part of the consumer society, but in a context of transformation:

We are seeing changes in the ways in which workers participate in the various sectors of production, the diversification of labor relations, and the global increase in wealth, its different forms of concentration and distribution, and its effects on social inequalities. There is now more room for individual entrepreneurship, in all social classes, and the importance of Financial Education and an understanding of the contemporary national and global monetary system is growing, essential for a critical and conscious insertion into today's world (Brasil, 2017, p. 570).

The importance of Financial Education to prepare young people for the changes in production, work and consumption relations is clear. However, the lack of public policies and precarious working conditions hinder the financial stability of young entrepreneurs, highlighting the need to structure Financial Education to integrate young people into the job market and encourage further study.

3 Financial Education in Youth Education

The purpose of this research, which is the result of the author's master's dissertation and on which this article is based, was to answer the question: *what are the challenges of designing and implementing a Financial Education training project for educators in a training program for young learners?* The research *locus* chosen was the non-governmental organization (NGO) Rede Cidadã, which aims to promote human and social development to integrate people into the world of work, uniting the efforts of civil society, companies and public authorities.

Since 2002, Rede Cidadã's Socio-Educational Program has played a fundamental role in preparing, training and inserting young people as learners into the job market. Rede Cidadã educators took part in the research by answering a questionnaire to identify their profile and knowledge of Financial Education. Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were carried out to further investigate the training of these educators in relation to the subject.

In Rede Cidadã's youth education, the social educator plays a crucial role in the construction of knowledge, even without necessarily having formal pedagogical training. Their work is fundamental to promoting citizenship, autonomy and the socio-cultural emancipation of the institution's beneficiaries. For Gohn (2010), this role becomes even more significant in organizations that prepare young people to enter the job market, as it directly contributes to these individuals becoming global citizens, capable of integrating and standing out in any environment. Through non-formal education, young people broaden their knowledge of the world, develop social skills and adopt an autonomous and positive attitude:

The emancipated citizen, in order to impose him/herself as a citizen, must have autonomy in thinking and doing. [...] autonomy as an instrument for training a citizen capable of being and acting, of having a critical understanding of globalized society, of reading the world based on values and goals of emancipation (Gohn, 2010, p. 41).

Financial education is essential for young people to enter the world of work, as it prepares them to be conscious and sustainable consumers. The training of educators must include knowledge of Financial Education, so that they can support young people in managing resources, conscious consumption and financial planning.

It is essential that the training of social educators or trainers includes knowledge of Financial Education. This is necessary in order to be able to guide and assist young people in understanding and practicing responsible consumption, financial planning and the effective management of personal resources.

According to Silva (2021), many teachers confuse Financial Education with teaching Financial Mathematics or the monetary system. For others, it is a reflection on their own lives, exposing students to their experiences in dealing with finances, experiences that are not always successful. This level of knowledge about Financial Education pointed out by Silva (2021) can be classified, according to Tardif's (2014) studies, as existential foundations of teaching knowledge:

They are existential, in the sense that a teacher “doesn't just think with his head”, but “with his life”, with what he has been, with what he has lived through, with what he has accumulated in terms of life experience, in terms of ballast of certainties. In short, he thinks from his life story, not only intellectually, in the strict sense of the term, but also emotionally, affectively, personally and interpersonally (Tardif, 2014, p. 103).

Financial Education contributes to the education of young people who make informed financial choices and are the protagonists of their lives, guaranteeing quality of life in the future. It goes beyond teaching mathematical concepts, awakening critical thinking and citizen responsibility, as set out in the BNCC (Brasil, 2017):

In the new world scenario, recognizing oneself in one's historical and cultural context, communicating, being creative, analytical-critical, participative, open to new things, collaborative, resilient, productive and responsible requires much more than the accumulation of information. It requires the development of skills to learn how to learn, to know how to deal with increasingly available information, to act with discernment and responsibility in the contexts of digital cultures, to apply knowledge to solve problems, to have autonomy to make decisions, to be proactive in identifying the data in a situation and seeking solutions, to live with and learn from differences and diversity (p. 16).

In short, Financial Education in Non-Formal Education plays a fundamental role in the formation of critical, responsible and aware citizens, preparing them for the challenges of the contemporary world. In this sense, Silva (2021) points out that

in order to teach Financial Education, teachers need to be able to work on the subject in the classroom in a critical, reflective and contextualized way in social aspects, considering the culture, place of speech and potential of each individual; in economic aspects, considering the teaching of the country's economic language and principles; in mathematical aspects, considering the teaching of Basic Mathematics and Financial

Mathematics; in psychological aspects, considering that decision-making is much more complex than just having the information, as the different heuristics and biases provide a shortcut to the many decisions we make on a daily basis; and in political aspects, indicating knowledge of government actions that affect individuals and society as a whole. It is necessary to reflect on the consumption of finite resources and how this consumption relates to time, affecting the present and the future (p. 17).

Financial education is a current demand for the formation of conscious and critical citizens in a less unequal society that promotes the inclusion of all. Furthermore, it is a field of knowledge that needs to be expanded and strengthened, both in the initial and continuing education of teachers and educators.

In order to implement effective Financial Education programs, we cannot fail to point out the importance of training teachers, educators and/or monitors, with the aim of mastering the topic to be shared with students. Financial education programs will be just as effective, if not more so, when educators have effectively mastered the competencies and skills for financial management of resources and are truly engaged with the importance of Critical Financial Education for the integral formation of the individuals they train.

4 Formation of the educator

It is crucial to reflect on the inclusion of Financial Education as a Cross-Cutting Theme in Basic Education, especially in youth education. This requires an in-depth understanding of the theoretical foundations related to teacher training and the construction of teaching knowledge. Understanding how teachers construct their knowledge is fundamental to thinking about the training of educators and effectively integrating Financial Education into their teaching practices.

Educational practice is full of challenges: the training of professionals; the construction of knowledge; the constant search for improvement; the different profiles of the student body; among others. In this sense, the teacher must consider each student, each aspect of the curriculum and the institutional objective, taking into account the broader social context. In addition to the formal and legal guidelines of the curricula, the teacher has a responsibility to adapt this knowledge in a way that is accessible and appropriate for their students' learning.

Teachers, according to Zabala (1998), are the professionals who dedicate themselves daily to solving problems so that the learning process is successful. It is up to them to understand the context in which they work, identify the needs and abilities of their students and select strategies so that the task of teaching is successful.

Knowledge of learning processes helps teachers, especially with regard to the diversity and individuality of each of their students. It is up to the teacher to adapt the knowledge to be imparted according to the students' abilities, needs and cognitive level. Having a thorough knowledge of the student body is a decisive factor in the success of the learning process, as Zabala (1998) points out:

The nature of a student's knowledge schemas depends on their level of development and the prior knowledge they have built up; the learning situation can be conceived as a process of comparison, revision and construction of knowledge schemas about school content (p. 37).

Teaching must be based on solid foundations of knowledge, but be fluid enough to adapt

to the profile of each student body. Solidity and fluidity represent two dimensions of teaching.

What knowledge underpins the teaching profession? In other words, what is the knowledge, know-how, skills and abilities that teachers mobilize on a daily basis, in classrooms and schools, in order to concretely carry out their various tasks? What is the nature of this knowledge? (Tardif, 2014, p. 9).

Zabala and Arnau (2010) emphasize that the main purpose of education is the full development of human beings in their social dimension. According to Tardif (2014), knowledge is social and shared between teachers, and is structured according to educational guidelines. The teacher not only masters the content to be taught, but also develops the skill of teaching, known as knowing how to teach. Teachers' work involves mediating knowledge and developing strategies to face challenges in the classroom teaching process.

Studies into teacher training and professional development have been significantly influenced by the contributions of Lee Shulman. According to Mizukami (2004), Shulman emphasizes the idea that teaching involves building bridges between the teacher and the students, with a two-way flow of knowledge, representations and know-how between their minds.

Teaching knowledge includes: specific content knowledge, such as subject concepts; general pedagogical knowledge about the teaching and learning process; and pedagogical content knowledge, in which the teacher adapts their specific content knowledge to the needs of teaching and the diversity of students. According to Shulman (2014) and Shulman and Shulman (2016), pedagogical content knowledge is the most innovative contribution to the study of teaching knowledge.

Sharing knowledge with other teachers arises within the educational context: collaboration between colleagues promotes the construction and consolidation of teachers' knowledge, deepening their professional training. Sharing knowledge among peers is an opportunity to translate or retranslate the theoretical training acquired, adapting it to the nuances of the reality encountered in the classroom. This practical experience provides a critical view of the knowledge acquired during training and in professional practice, validated by daily practice and peer evaluation.

When asked, teachers often find it difficult to explain clearly how they integrate their knowledge, how they acquired it and how they teach. It is essential that teachers understand what is to be learned and how to teach effectively, to ensure the success of the teaching and learning process. Shulman (2014) and Shulman and Shulman (2016) proposes an important discussion on the knowledge base needed for teaching, including basic skills, content knowledge and pedagogical competencies.

Pedagogical content knowledge is crucial for teachers, as it allows them to identify and assimilate the knowledge needed for teaching, adapting it according to the needs and characteristics of the students. This knowledge is what differentiates an ordinary teacher from a specialist in the same subject. It is a type of knowledge specific to teachers, as it goes beyond mastery of the content and also requires the skills to teach effectively.

In order to meet the demand for the inclusion of Financial Education as a Cross-Cutting Theme in Basic Education, Vocational and Technological Education and, more specifically, in Non-Formal Education - the focus of the research on which this article is based - it is necessary to ask: how can teachers teach content that they have no knowledge of and have not been trained

to teach? How can they find the coherence to teach what they didn't have access to in their own training? How can they use this knowledge to develop their lessons? How can educators of young learners identify with the subject of Financial Education and inspire young people to take up the subject?

The focus of this reflection refers to the challenges involved in designing and implementing a Financial Education training project for educators in a training program for young learners. According to Shulman and Shulman (2016, p. 124), “the new model holds that the characteristics of competent teacher development, and therefore of teacher learning, are: vision, motivation, understanding, practice, reflection and community”.

5 About the research

The theoretical basis for analyzing the current training scenario for educators of young learners on the subject of Financial Education was based on a bibliographic and documentary survey of Financial Education; Basic Education and Financial Education legislation; theories on contemporary society; the training of educators and communities of practice. These studies were essential for proposing training that takes into account the teacher as a subject who produces knowledge, the objective proposed for this research.

The methodology adopted was applied research, with a qualitative, exploratory and descriptive approach, as it aims to analyze the training scenario for educators to develop the theme of Financial Education in their educational practice, pointing out proposals for the production of knowledge by educators and facing the challenges encountered in everyday life with regard to the education of young learners.

The choice of approach is justified by Creswell's definition (2010):

Qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem. The research process involves the questions and procedures that emerge, the data typically collected in the participant's environment, the data analysis inductively constructed from the particulars to the general themes and the interpretations made by the researcher about the meaning of the data (p. 26).

The research *locus* was chosen because it has maintained a professional relationship by promoting Financial Education actions for young students since 2017. These are criteria of convenience and accessibility, as described by Sampieri, Collado and Lucio (2013):

[...] two dimensions are essential in relation to the environment: convenience and accessibility. The first answers the following questions: Does the defined setting contain the cases, people, events, situations, stories and/or life experiences we need to answer the research question(s)? The second is linked to the question: Is it possible to collect data? Can we get access to the data we need? Gaining access to the environment is a condition for continuing with the research and implies obtaining authorization from those who control entry (the so-called gatekeepers) (p. 383-384).

The aim of the research is to investigate the current scenario in the training of educators of young learners in relation to the subject of Financial Education, in order to propose a training strategy that takes into account the teacher as a knowledge-producing subject.

6 Research method: Thematic Analysis

The choice of Thematic Analysis (AT) as a research method is justified by its potential to identify, analyze and report patterns (themes) in the data collected (Braun and Clark, 2006, p. 5). Considering that the individual interviews, based on a semi-structured script, provided detailed and rich data, AT is suitable for organizing this data and supporting the proposal of a product that addresses the current scenario of training educators of young learners in Financial Education. According to Braun and Clark (2006),

Thematic Analysis can be an essentialist or realist method, which reports the experiences, meanings and reality of the participants, or it can be a constructivist method, which examines the ways in which events, realizations, meanings, experiences and so on are the effects of a series of discourses operating within society. It can also be a “contextualist” method, located between the two poles of essentialism and constructivism, and characterized by theories such as critical realism, which recognizes the ways in which individuals create meaning from their experiences, and in turn the ways in which the wider social context features in these meanings, while maintaining a focus on the material and other boundaries of “reality” (p. 81).

By analyzing the inclusion of the topic of Financial Education in a training environment for young learners at Rede Cidadã, based on the reports and experiences of the educators, the Thematic Analysis made it possible to establish assumptions based on the trainers' practice and their teaching knowledge.

Reflection on the educators' practice brings us back to Shulman's studies, proposing that teaching knowledge is made up of: specific content knowledge, different concepts from specific subjects such as Financial Education; general pedagogical knowledge, how the process of teaching Financial Education concepts and practices works; and pedagogical content knowledge, in which the teacher acts as the protagonist, transforming their own knowledge of Financial Education in a way that is coherent with the purposes of teaching and the diversity of the students.

One advantage of choosing Thematic Analysis as a research method is its flexibility, a fundamental aspect for qualitative research, vital in applying the stages in a process that is not necessarily linear and in understanding the data collected. As stated by Ignacio (2022, p. 64), “through its theoretical freedom, it allows the research to be carried out in a flexible and useful way, which enables data collection full of details”.

The AT fits perfectly into the proposal of this research and will certainly be fundamental for the adequate and valuable analysis of the data collected for its elaboration, according to the phases and criteria established by Braun and Clark (2006).

The first contact for data collection was a conversation with an unstructured script with the Regional Manager/São Paulo of the Rede Cidadã institution, in order to align the theme of the master's research and discuss the interest in applying it in that institution. Given their long-standing relationship and professional knowledge, especially on the subject of Financial Education, the request was met with satisfaction.

The proposal to identify the educators' training scenario in relation to the topic, as well as to come up with a strategy to expand knowledge and set up a community of practice, was promptly approved. The Regional Manager/São Paulo appointed the pedagogical supervisor of the Learnership Program to mediate contact with the educators.

Subsequently, a conversation was held with the pedagogical supervisor, using the

Microsoft Teams platform, based on the following script: (a) presentation of the research proposal; (b) premises and rationale of the institution's Learnership Program methodology; (c) profile of the Social Learnership Program educators; (d) Financial Education in the Social Learnership Program; (e) challenges and possibilities for the educator in relation to the topic of Financial Education; and (f) research methodology. After aligning with the pedagogical supervisor, and based on the study question about training in Financial Education, the research instrument itself was drawn up.

The research instrument is a semi-structured questionnaire to collect data on the profile of educators and their views on the subject of Financial Education. This survey instrument was sent out via *Google Forms* so that data collection could be broad and reliable, enabling proper data analysis and the formulation of hypotheses about the proposed question.

7 Profile of the Socio-learning Program educator/trainer

The survey instrument was applied to the group of educators from the Rede Cidadã Learning Program — São Paulo Hub, made up of 9 educators and 1 pedagogical supervisor, resulting in a high rate of interest and willingness on the part of Socio-learning professionals to take part in the survey (90% of the sample). The data collected was essential for identifying the profile of the educators and their perceptions of Financial Education.

The results indicate that the sample is balanced in terms of gender, with practically equal participation from female and male educators. In terms of age, there is a balanced distribution between the ages of 20 to 30, 31 to 40 and 41 to 50. In terms of academic background, the majority of educators have postgraduate degrees (55.56%), with a variety of areas of training.

It is important to note that only one educator has specific training in Mathematics, which could facilitate the approach to Financial Education. The diversity of the educators' backgrounds (Literature, Pedagogy, Social Communication, Information Technology, Psychopedagogy and Active Methodologies for Learning) could certainly enrich the exchange of knowledge in the proposed community of practice.

With regard to knowledge about Financial Education, the majority of educators seek out information on a self-taught basis (77.8%), highlighting the need for specific training in the area. The educators' self-assessment indicates that most of them have a basic knowledge of the subject (77.8%), which suggests the importance of more comprehensive continuing training.

All the educators recognize the relevance of Financial Education in the Citizen's Network Socio-Learning program. Availability was also high, with 55.56% of the sample scheduling individual interviews, which broadened data collection and supported the training strategy and the creation of a community of practice.

8 Data analysis and discussion of results

To analyze the data from the interviews, the Thematic Analysis (AT) methodology was used to investigate the scenario of Financial Education in the teaching practice of the educators of the Socio-learning program of the Citizen Network. This analysis is relevant to support the development of the master's research product: a continuing education program in Financial Education for teachers of young learners, exploring how this knowledge is inserted into teaching practice.

Five themes emerged from the interviews: (1) Financial Education in people's lives; (2) Purposes of Financial Education programs; (3) Importance of Financial Education in the education of young learners; (4) Teacher training in Financial Education; and (5) Construction

of knowledge about Financial Education.

8.1 Financial education in people's lives

Financial education aims to provide knowledge to support financial decisions in everyday life. According to Mundy (2008), many people don't have the ability to manage their own money properly, which results in negative consequences for both the individual — such as default and debt — and for society in general, characterized as a society of consumers.

In the interviews, we identified points related to this issue, reinforcing the presence of Financial Education in people's daily lives. It can be seen in the educators' statements that they recognize the importance of the topic in their own lives and in managing their own financial resources.

Raising interest and awareness about the importance of Financial Education in people's lives is one of the foundations of the National Financial Education Strategy (ENEF). ENEF aims to organize, produce and disseminate knowledge about Financial Education, making people aware of the relevance of the subject. Established in 2010, ENEF has driven the expansion of initiatives by public authorities, private initiative and educational institutions, broadening debates on the subject.

By offering the opportunity for an open and transparent space to exchange ideas and perceptions on the subject, it was possible to confirm that debt and difficulties in dealing with their finances in a balanced way are part of the daily lives of many of the interviewees. The question that arises is: how can educators teach basic concepts of Financial Education if these concepts are not present in their own reality? The importance of training educators in Financial Education is once again evident.

8.2 Purposes of financial education programs

In the consumer society, as defined by Bauman (1998), there is an expansion of consumption opportunities, promising well-being through the act of consuming. However, at the same time, social disparities between full and failed consumers are increasing, with the latter getting lost in thoughtless and unsustainable consumption patterns.

Kistemann Jr. (2020) proposes a crucial reflection on the objectives of Financial Education programs: do they really serve the interests of the individual, promoting responsibility, awareness and sustainability in consumption? Or do they serve the interests of the financial market, encouraging the consumption of financial products and consumer goods in order to increase the sector's profits? This question can also be observed in the interviewees' statements when discussing the purposes of the Financial Education programs available in Brazil.

The design of Financial Education programs should be guided by clear objectives and an understanding of who they benefit. It is advocated that such programs aim to train conscious, responsible and ethical consumers. Financial Education can play an important role in building a more balanced, sustainable and less unequal society, as highlighted by Kistemann Jr. (2020) in his research.

8.3 Importance of Financial Education in the education of young learners

Financial Education is mentioned in the BNCC (Brasil, 2017) as a cross-cutting theme that should be included in all basic education content. In Vocational Education and Non-Formal Education, Financial Education becomes a relevant topic, especially considering that, in these

types of education, training young people to enter the job market is one of the main objectives. On entering the job market, young people are faced with the challenge of managing their financial resources in a balanced and sustainable way, resisting the temptations imposed by consumer society.

According to Zabala (1998), teachers need to have an understanding of learning processes, respecting the diversity and individuality of their students. Students' acquisition of knowledge depends on their level of development and previously acquired knowledge. Working with Financial Education content must therefore respect this premise in order to arouse young people's interest and promote learning.

For the Citizen Network educators who took part in the interviews, this theme was highlighted. By analyzing parts of the interviewees' speeches, we can see that they are aware of the importance of their role as educators in the training of young learners. In addition, they consider it essential to learn basic concepts of Financial Education in an interesting and motivating way, regardless of the career paths to be followed by the young people.

According to Harari (2018), in the information society, students already have an arsenal of information. The teacher's challenge is to help students understand the importance and necessity of Financial Education knowledge.

The interviewees say that in their teaching practices they try to relate the subject of Financial Education to concrete situations in young people's daily lives, as advocated by Skovsmose (2014), avoiding just lists of exercises that are disconnected from reality. Young people need to realize that Financial Education is part of their daily lives and that it can be an ally in building their personal and professional life plans.

8.4 Teacher training in financial education

The formation of educators, whether initial or ongoing, is relevant to teaching practice, as it favors learning and enables the development of both educators and students. The profession of trainer requires a range of knowledge and skills that are not always acquired in their training processes. For the educators at Rede Cidadã, training in Financial Education is less than desired and is a source of constant concern.

Excellence in the education of the educators contributes to the critical and conscious action of the young learners with regard to the application of the concepts of Financial Education in their lives. The concern and investigation of one's own practice, contributes to the expansion of knowledge for practice, in practice and from practice, according to the conceptions established by Cochram-Smith and Lytle (1999).

The interviewees recognize the gap in Financial Education in their own training, whether initial or continuing. Most of them go to great lengths to seek out knowledge on the subject on their own, so that they can adequately meet the needs of young people in training, in terms of knowledge of the basic principles and concepts of Financial Education. It's worth pointing out, however, that the knowledge acquired by educators is not always aimed at training conscious, responsible and sustainable consumers. The *siren song* of consumption and the financial market itself can lead to over-consumption and consequent indebtedness.

8.5 Building knowledge about Financial Education

According to Shulman (2014) and Shulman and Shulman (2016), communities of practice consist of meetings of professionals from related areas who aspire to common goals and who voluntarily promote opportunities for discussion, exchange of experiences and

development of strategies and solutions to face the challenges encountered in their educational practice.

According to Wenger (1998), communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or passion for something and aim to learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. Applying Wenger's (1998) concept of communities of practice makes it possible to create a learning space, minimizing the difficulties encountered by teachers when faced with the challenge of teaching what they did not learn in their initial and/or continuing training.

When questioning the interviewees about their perception of communities of practice as an opportunity to build knowledge about Financial Education in order to strengthen their own practice, it is clear that although the educators are aware of the gap in their training in relation to Financial Education concepts and knowledge and have an intense work routine, they hardly ever find solutions and ways to face this challenge on their own. The proposal for continuing training and the creation of a community of practice meets the wishes and interests of the educators taking part in this research.

Bergamo (2021) summarizes the importance of the teacher educator's training so that they can actually contribute to teaching practice:

Teachers should be considered as those who learn and develop professionally through participation in different practices, processes and contexts, intentionally or not, and this path promotes the formation or adaptation of teaching practice (p. 28).

The communities of practice, centered on the theme, have emerged as a strategy to bridge the training gap in the specific content of Financial Education. To paraphrase Shulman (2014) and Shulman and Shulman (2016), teaching means, first and foremost, understanding that the starting and finishing point of the teaching process is an act of understanding.

9 Final considerations

The aim of this paper was to investigate the current scenario of how Financial Education is taught by teachers at an institution that trains young learners, in order to propose a continuing education program in Financial Education for these teachers. To this end, the research was based on scientific and academic studies, resulting in the development of a training program for the educators of the Citizen Network, including topics such as Financial Education in people's lives and teacher preparation.

This study takes a critical approach inspired by Skovsmose's Critical Mathematics Education, with the aim of forming conscious and ethical citizens. In addition to training, the creation of communities of practice to share knowledge is suggested.

The analysis revealed a scenario in which teachers recognize the importance of Financial Education and introduce it into the classroom based on everyday situations. However, this effort does not always lead to critical education, as advocated by Skovsmose (2014). There are still challenges to its inclusion in teaching, such as the lack of training programs for educators in Financial Education that adopt a critical approach, providing emancipatory teaching. Communities of practice are a possible way of overcoming these challenges, providing more appropriate training for Financial Education educators.

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