



Neoliberal educational policies: academic work and health of female teachers

Políticas educativas neoliberales: trabajo académico y salud de profesoras

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Abstract

Neoliberal educational policies have been implemented for more than three decades in Latin America and they have altered teaching practices. Likewise, the educational reforms have not considered the characteristics or idiosyncrasies, in this case, of Mexico, and they have been a copy of the European and U.S. educational models. Based on these problems, the main objective was to: make evident some problems in professional teaching practice, as well as the health repercussions of high school and university teachers as a consequence of neoliberal educational policies. There was the participation of 10 teachers who work at different educational levels: High School and Higher Education; in the State of Mexico, Hidalgo and Chile in South America. The research was divided into three phases: before, during and after the pandemic. The methodology used was qualitative, with a descriptive and interpretive approach. The results were presented as a “novel” constructed from the participants' narratives. Their problems related to teaching work, trigger a series of sickness at a biopsychosocial level. Definitely, the educational institution is going through a crisis and a rethinking of teaching work is urgently needed so that, the meaning of the teaching role does not die and along with it, the educational institution.

Keywords: educational policy, educational reform, neoliberalism, teaching, violence, health.

Resumen

Las políticas educativas neoliberales se han implementado durante más de tres décadas en Latinoamérica, alterando el quehacer docente. Además, las reformas educativas no han considerado las características ni la idiosincrasia, en este caso, de México, debido a que han sido una copia de los modelos educativos europeos y de los Estados Unidos. Con base en estas problemáticas, el objetivo central de esta investigación consistió en evidenciar algunas problemáticas en la práctica profesional docente, así como las repercusiones de salud de profesoras de bachillerato y Universidad como consecuencia de las políticas educativas neoliberales. Se contó con la participación de diez profesoras que se desempeñan en diferentes niveles educativos: Bachillerato y Superior; en el Estado de México, Hidalgo y Chile en Sudamérica. La investigación se dividió en tres fases: antes, durante y después de la pandemia. La metodología utilizada fue cualitativa, con un corte descriptivo e interpretativo. Los resultados se presentaron como una “novela” construida a partir de las narraciones de las participantes. Sus problemáticas relacionadas al quehacer docente, desencadenan una serie de padecimientos a nivel biopsicosocial. Sin duda, la institución educativa atraviesa por una crisis y es urgente un replanteamiento de la labor docente para que el sentido del rol docente no muera y junto con él, la institución educativa.

Palabras clave: política educativa, reforma educativa, neoliberalismo, docencia, violencia, salud.

1. Introduction

Neoliberal educational policies have been present in Mexico since the Porfiriato, although they intensified from 1982 with President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado. One of the neoliberal educational policies more rejected in Mexico was the reform promoted by President Enrique Peña Nieto (period 2012-2018), which was rejected by teachers because its content threatened their job security, since it sought to measure the productivity and effectiveness of teachers both for the provision of incentives and for the conservation of their work (Ávila & Casas, 2022). In addition, for its elaboration, the participation of teachers was never resorted to (Castillo, 2013).

In Mexico, as in other Latin American countries, plans and programs developed in other countries have been adopted, most of them unrelated to the idiosyncrasies of each country. In the case of Mexico, the institutional managers in charge of education generated endless problems due to reforms ranging from preschool to graduate school, regardless of the biopsychosocial costs for teachers, students and parents.

Although the revaluation of the Mexican teaching profession has been sought, the truth is that it faces other problems, as a result of the loophole of educational reforms, one of them is the significant administrative overload. The former secretary of the Ministry of Public Education (SEP), Esteban Moctezuma Barragán, acknowledged this problem by pointing out that teachers spend up to 50% of their time attending to matters outside their professional practice (SEP, 2018).

Neoliberal educational policies have generated a dynamic of competitiveness and violence in the daily dynamics of schools. The reforms led to individuality, personal gain, and the division of institutional actors. Ávila and Casas (2022) point out that education, in this context, went from being a right to be considered as a commodity, where access is increasingly conditioned by the rules of supply and demand. Moreover, the systematic assessment of teaching performance that has been used to establish salary categories and provide monetary stimulus has fostered the logic of competition and rivalry.

Schools, like many other institutions, are battlegrounds in which power struggles are characterized by the existence of real or potential conflicts

between their members, due to ideological diversity (Ball, 1990, 1994). The diverse perceptions that institutional actors have around the school generate disagreements between them, violence and suffering. Everyday conflicts are over “budget allocations, both in terms of the distribution of money and in relation to appointments, schedules and control of space, influence on school policy” (Ball, 1994, p. 219).

In addition to the existence of conflicts within educational establishments, many schools are surrounded by external dynamics characterized by violence as a result of organized crime. Many times, these dynamics occur within educational institutions, since students threaten those teachers who are not to their liking or with whom they have had some kind of disagreement. This situation generates fear and impotence in the teaching profession (Herrera et al., 2021) and contributes to the appearance of problems at the biopsychosocial level in teachers.

Regardless of the educational level in Mexico, institutions and actors have suffered from neoliberal educational policies, until the COVID-19 pandemic annihilated and allowed the restructuring of the educational model in turn as a result of emerging needs.

Hence, a large number of teachers have begun to suffer from the Syndrome Acquired by Academic Work (SINATA), which is characterized by being:

A physical or psychological discomfort that may be manifested in some part of the body, or latent in the teacher's feeling. These sufferings cause mild, moderate and severe damage to the social and personal life of the teacher inside and outside the educational institution, causing a temporary, partial or permanent disability. (Herrera et al., 2019, p. 3)

According to the literature, the biological-medical health problems detected in teachers are related to the existence of nerve, muscle and tendon disorders (Antonelli et al., 2012). Olmedo-Buenrostro et al. (2013) indicate that it is common to find: cavities, overweight or obesity, digestive diseases and eye fatigue; and those teachers who are exposed to excessive levels of workload present: headaches, insomnia, chronic fatigue and venous insufficiency.

Regarding psychological problems, there are several psychopathological mismatches that manifest mainly in: lack of motivation, acute stress, depression, anxiety and sleep disorders (Ortiz, 2011). The presence of some phobias and paranoid symptoms has also been detected (Alonso, 2014); as well as epi-

sodes of panic and emotionally unstable personality (Fundación Médico-Preventiva, 2004).

Teachers' social relationships are also affected as a result of their professional practice, having to postpone personal projects, sacrifice time with family and friends, and having to negotiate the time dedicated to their partner in order to comply with institutional requirements (Herrera et al., 2019). These situations regularly generate conflicts, since teachers must play their professional role while seeking to be present with friends and family, which is often incompatible (Cifre et al., 2009).

Because of the latter, this research aims to highlight some problems in the professional teaching practice, as well as the health consequences of high school and university teachers due to neoliberal educational policies. This article seeks to answer the following questions: how do neoliberal educational policies intervene in teaching practice? How was the restructuring of the educational approach experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic? How does the presence of violence affect academic work? What biopsychosocial health conditions do teachers present?

2. Methodology

A descriptive and interpretive research was carried out to know in depth the problems, "to find the final cause of a phenomenon" (Zhizhko, 2016, p. 23) and describe it. An inductive-analytical method was used, since during the course of the fieldwork new questions and categories of analysis could be added, because at no time was it intended to evaluate hypotheses or pre-established theories (Herrera et al., 2019).

Educational ethnography was used because it provides "descriptive data of the contexts, activities and beliefs of the participants in the educational scenarios [...] and it can be deepened in the socio-cultural context investigated" (Zhizhko, 2016, p. 23). Educational ethnography also deals with the problems of teachers "as individuals and not only as members of a profession, with special emphasis on the importance of the notion of strategy to organize their work, their relationships and even their survival in difficult contexts" (Vázquez and Valenzuela, 2013, p.13).

It should be borne in mind that the educational institution should not be considered as a separate

entity from the "rest" of society, since it is directly influenced by it, so it will always involve macrosocial referents (Escolar, 2010). For authors like Barriga (1979), institutions are the result of an instituting society of a specific time, therefore, they reflect the philosophy of the moment. They have the ability to modify the aspirations of the subjects, so they are not restricted solely to promoting or limiting them, and their durability is related to the ability they have to create stable expectations with respect to the behavior of others (Hodgson, 2006). We can therefore conclude that the educational institution reflects what happens in its context, hence we must look inside the school to know under what conditions the teachers carry out their professional practice.

The population considered for this study includes ten professors who work in: Baccalaureate and/or University. The educational institutions where informants located in the State of Mexico, Hidalgo (Mexico) and Chile.

The research was conducted in three phases: the first, prior to the pandemic, during the months of January to June 2019; the second, during the pandemic, in the months of March to June 2021; and the third, after the pandemic, in August 2022.

In the first phase, three teachers participated. The following keys were used to identify them: Professor 1 (PF1), Professor 2 (PF2), Counselor (InO1). During the pandemic, seven female teachers participated. The following keys were used: Teacher of Baccalaureate (PB), Professor of Bachelor/Baccalaureate (PLB), Teacher of Baccalaureate in Hidalgo 1 (BCH1), Teacher of Baccalaureate in Hidalgo 2 (BCH2), Teacher of Baccalaureate in Hidalgo 3 (BCH3), Teacher of Baccalaureate in Hidalgo 4 (BCH4) and Teacher of Baccalaureate in Hidalgo 5 (BCH5). And after the pandemic, two teachers participated: a Mexican researcher and a Chilean researcher. The following keys were used: Research Professor of Mexico (PIM) and Research Professor of Chile (PICH).

Sampling is non-probabilistic and key informants were chosen by having "political influence on the subject matter, degree of participation in decision-making; mastery of the subject; readiness to report, among others" (Quinn, 1990, p. 68, cited in Zhizhko, 2016, p. 92). The participants decided to collaborate voluntarily.

Naturalistic observations were made *in situ* using a pre-set format, and photographs were taken. Interviews were also conducted because, according to Zhizhko (2016, p.61), “the interview technique is used to confirm, deepen and compare data obtained through other instruments, in particular, the opinions of the people previously surveyed.”

For the interviews, semi-structured formats with pre-established categories were used. The inquiries were audio-recorded and for protecting those involved, the aforementioned keys will be used. In the case of investigations carried out during the pandemic period, these were carried out remotely, through the Zoom platform. Similarly, a field diary was kept for interviews and observations. Finally, it is necessary to mention that the participants are authorized to publish the results for academic purposes.

The research was articulated in three dimensions that allowed triangulating the data that helped to respond the established objective. This technique was chosen because applying different strategies to examine the same phenomenon achieves greater accuracy (Robles, 2011), because “triangulation is based on the verification and comparison of information obtained at different times and by different methods” (Zhizhko, 2016, p.105).

The systematization and analysis of the results obtained were carried out manually, i.e., no *software* was used, to avoid as far as possible that the research became a rigid approach.

3. Results

Neoliberal educational reforms led to the exploitation and precariousness of teachers by overburdening their academic activities with the minimum of possible resources. For decades, a large number of teachers have been hired for hours and have to travel to different schools to cover a working day. There are other teachers who, although they are hired for a certain number of hours, are always demanded more. Counselors are hired full-time, consisting of 25 hours a week, although they actually spend more time doing their activities “I start at 7:00 in the morning I leave at 2:00 in the afternoon. We don’t have lunch hours” (InO1).

In other cases, high school teachers have to invest extra time to meet institutional demands, as our participant says they *will never respect your sche-*

dules. “When they see you doing overtime at school, they even like it and say, ‘*Oh good, you stayed more time to work*’” (DBH1). This situation occurs regardless of the level of education, since in universities it is also common to encounter this scenario:

There is little money directed at hiring more staff and that implies the overload of teachers on a personal level. We are filled with administrative work... [...] The university teacher seems more like a worker than someone who is forming a learning process from other humans (PIM).

Administrative work has always existed for the participants who have been working for years in the field of teaching, no matter the educational reform that is in force “they only change the format and put another name on it” (DBH1) and their perception is that, over the years, in reality this work has increased “teaching is increasingly demanding, administratively speaking, by filling formats. When I arrived, they didn’t ask for so much documentation or so much paperwork” (DBH5).

The labor overload of teachers inside and outside educational institutions produces multiple discomforts and increases due to the various deficiencies, among which those related to material and economic resources. Many of the schools are characterized by rudimentary infrastructure, obsolete computer equipment and scarce consumables, among other deficiencies. A high school teacher comments: “Some curtains were put by parents, but there are other rooms where the kids put bond paper to protect from the sun. There are only two bathrooms” (PF1) for a population of more than 500 students, including teachers.

During the naturalistic observation, in a Technological Baccalaureate Center (CBT) of the State of Mexico, the participants corroborated this infrastructure: halls with a sheet roof, windows without glasses and very austere electrical installations. Not only is the lack of adequate infrastructure for the development of basic tasks evident, there are also shortcomings for the delivery of classes, since there are not even basic consumables: sheets, toner, as well as computers and printers.

Neoliberal educational policies have exacerbated educational inequalities, as they tend to favor educational institutions in large cities and families with greater economic resources, while families with low economic income and rural areas are at a disadvantage.

While one might think that those who work as researchers at State Public Universities have greater possibilities of access to funding to conduct research that contributes to the country's development, the reality is that "there is no funding. I have gone to conferences, research meetings with my own money... [...] *They tell me that they will pay me, but that you have to check expenses.* I present the receipts on time, and they tell me that there is no money" (PIM).

Although it is true that teachers already had to invest unpaid extra time to meet institutional demands, this situation increased with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, where the response to this global crisis consisted of the abrupt transition from traditional face-to-face classes to remote classes.

In Mexico, the Ministry of Public Education (SEP), together with the Ministry of Health (SSA), announced the suspension of in-person classes from March 23 to April 3, 2020. School heads ordered teachers to implement an emerging educational model, although the suspension of in-person classes lasted for more than two years in some states of the country. At the beginning, there was much bewilderment "I observed that there was no clear objective, they were redirecting with the circumstances" (PB).

The lack of experience in distance education of schools was clear, since institutions and actors did not have the necessary competencies for implementing the virtual modality. "It caught us off guard. In fact, as teachers we could think that we were prepared for using technology; however, we were not (PB). "Teachers had to learn about online platforms, get guides. Transform a classroom into an online one" (PIM).

The school we had known vanished from the pandemic and with it the educational models imposed by the neoliberals, at least as they had worked since its foundation, the educational institutions moved to the house of the institutions and the institutional actors and the classroom to the monitor. The teachers provided what they had at hand: "everyone had to get their digital tools to be in communication with the students. We did not receive extra support, with our salary we always look for some technological tool (PLB).

Moving the classrooms to the homes of the institutions and the institutional actors represented a challenge for teachers and students, who also faced a host of problems, mainly related to "network saturation" (DBH1) and the fact that many students "lived

in rural areas and returned to their homes where there was no internet, there was no connection" (PICH). In addition, the teachers had to find a way to balance the work environment with the staff: "Now that I finished my class, I went upstairs to dry the clothes that I had washed last night. Between one class and another, when I have time, I do the dishes" (DBH3). With women on the verge, "women have to be cooking all day, taking care of young children and also teaching online. It was double or triple work" (PICH).

The educational institution resisted thanks to the work carried out by the teachers, who adapted their spaces and personal life to a reality never lived before. However, when returning to institutional spaces, it was found that some institutional dynamics remained unmoved, as in some educational institutions, they cling to the educational colonialism imposed from Europe and the USA.

Educational institutions as transmitters of culture, are a sounding board of society, and a reflection of social problems in each country. Inside its facilities, there are disagreements between the institutions and the actors, mainly against the managers, there was "a confrontation where violence and screams were presented. The former director started fighting to the deputy director" (DBH5). And, in the most serious cases, teachers have become victims of workplace harassment by their bosses. "My relationship is very bad, because if you talk to someone and they don't answer, what do you feel as a person? You don't exist for them. I denounced for workplace harassment the then deputy academic director, who is now the director" (DBH3). In the most serious cases such as that of one of the informants, they preferred to resign "I did not accept that they continue to mistreat me, that they do not speak to me and would not tell me what is happening. So, I resigned, because I was not willing to accept that, because it was abuse" (PICH).

Parents have also become protagonists in confrontations, since sometimes they question and hinder academic activities. "Some dads get upset. They want their kids to get 10. They think that we teachers fail, but when you show them the activities that were developed and evaluations, they realize that their children are failing" (DBH3). On multiple times it is believed that it is the teachers who wrongly assess the performance of the students.

Faced with these and other situations, it might seem that the teachers would be united; however, the participants shared that conflicts have also arisen between the peers themselves. The disagreements have gone as far as verbal violence among older teachers against new generations of teachers “the division between the groups of teachers is very noticeable. When we had general meetings, the older ones made very unpleasant comments towards those of us who were new” (DBH4), generating that those who have been victims of these aggressions seriously consider resigning and comment to me: “I no longer want to come or share with them [with the teachers of greater experience] because the environment is very tense” (DBH4).

As shown, institutional spaces present violence and chaos, inherent to the various social problems, among which the presence for *Organized Crime* stands out. Academics, managers and the State know that it is present in many schools in the country. Both teachers and counselors say that very close to a CBT in the State of Mexico, there are “whole families who steal, we know who they are” (PF1). While in Hidalgo, there have been cases of enforced disappearances “I have had students who have recently been kidnapped, they have been bulletinated by different institutions” (DBH3).

In addition, students think drug dealing is a very attractive business and it is well known by members of the school community, “in recent years, there is crime, assaults, and also drug sales inside the school” (DBH3). Regarding the illegal sale, the issue is openly discussed by students, who mention their teachers that they know or distribute drugs “the students say: ‘I sell huachicol, teacher and I know a person who sells such a thing’. I was thinking, is he threatening me or reporting to me?” (DBH1). For some teachers, educating students is complicated, causing them a series of ailments at the biological-medical, psychological and social levels.

As for the physical part, it is common to present a certain level of tiredness during classes “I must be standing all day and that makes you tired” (DBH1). Another area that presents pain is the area of the back “it hurts a lot, just last night my mom told me that she was giving me a massage” (DBH4), as well as the waist “there are some days that it hurts less than others, just last night I was giving a massage because it hurt up to the coccyx” (DBH3). It should

be noted that, although the presence of musculoskeletal pain is common in face-to-face classes, its prevalence increased during the distance modality, due to long and strenuous working hours, as well as the low or no level of physical activity.

In addition to the pain in the different areas of the body, the throat is affected, “I have had hoarseness, so I always have something to drink. I talk a lot, especially when classes restarted, but then the voice adapts to the rhythm of the work” (DBH3). And in the pandemic, being in front of a computer meant that teachers began to use lenses or increase the graduation of them “I have increased the graduation of my lenses, and none of the ones I had serve me. I started using them shortly before the pandemic, but my graduation has gone up a lot. I hardly see, it costs me a lot, especially the cell phone” (DBH3).

As a result of work schedules, teachers have to neglect their diet, which can be related to the appearance or aggravation of conditions such as colitis or gastritis “I had a very severe gastritis, I had to go to a gastroenterologist and although you follow the treatment you do not stay at 100” (DBH2). The presence of medical conditions is part of the epidemiological profile of teachers and are the result of demands inside and outside the educational institution.

In addition to their medical problems, teachers also have a number of psychological effects as a result of their professional practice. The conditions presented most often are stress and anxiety, among others, which are aggravated by the accumulation of work during evaluation periods “when we have to deliver grades I feel stressed. Students claim their qualification. Andou have to upload the averages to the platform, and you have to do it quickly and well” (DBH2).

Stress can also be associated with a hostile work environment “the violence I suffered was presented in a systematic way, it was not a day or two, it was two years of constant harassment I suffered and that generated stress” (DBH3); and during online classes you could relate to failures when using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The effects of stress can be manifested in multiple ways, either through hair loss, “stress affected me physically and detonated in the fall of my hair” (DBH3), the presence of gastrointestinal problems “due to stress gave me colitis” (DBH5), pains in the neck area “due to stress I get pellets in my neck”

(DBH4), or social withdrawal “you don’t say it as it is, but suddenly you think ‘what do they care?’ and you know it is due to stress” (DBH1).

Teaching also produces states of anxiety in academic institutions and directly affects their perception, as shared by the following participant:

There was a time when I had anxiety attacks and not so much for the students because I was happy with them, but because of the pressure of the collaborative work that you must do. The pressure that I am young and many teachers in my institution were questioning me “do you know how to do it?,” that was stressing and it was discouraging me. (DBH1).

The highest levels of anxiety are especially identified in the evaluation periods. While, during the distance modality, the presence of anxiety was mainly associated with uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of physical contact with the school community.

A third psychic problem in teachers, as a result of their work, is related to some alterations in sleep, mainly during non-face classes “I have had insomnia this last year. I went to the doctor and he told me that I had stress, but he didn’t want to medicate me because if I started taking sleeping pills it would be for life” (DBH4). As well as stress and anxiety, participants reported that during the evaluation period they had greater disturbances in their rest.

The suffering experienced by many teachers is hidden, as they must continue with their work without the rest of the institutional actors suspecting what they are living. The presence of psychological conditions such as stress and anxiety, among others, has existed from the face-to-face modality; however, as a result of online classes, there was an increase in their intensity due to multiple factors.

In the social area, teachers have also been affected as a result of the demands of teaching, having to find a way to balance their spheres: social, family and work. Either in person or during the online modality, teachers have sought to negotiate with their partner the distribution of domestic work and childcare “my husband works on his own and can support me when I need it” (DBH5), although it is not always possible to carry out this type of negotiations, which implies that teachers make a double or triple day “my husband leaves in the mornings and no longer returns until the night, it has always been

so and now [during the pandemic] there has not been much difference” (DBH2).

In addition to seeking to balance work and personal life, some teachers have also postponed personal projects, from those related to continuing their academic preparation “I want to study a master’s degree abroad, but they told me ‘you have a stable job, wait until you get the papers’ and I have been postponing it” (DBH1), developing independent professional projects, starting a business, going on vacation, to those related to health care “sometimes I have neglected my health, going to the doctor when it must be or exercising” (DBH5).

Teaching requires almost exclusive dedication from its actors, making it difficult for them to find a balance between the various spheres of their lives, especially in the pandemic as traditional school classrooms were transformed into teachers’ rooms, rooms or dining rooms. The educational institution went through a crisis, but it was the teaching work that managed to rescue it and, undoubtedly, after its resurrection the institutional dynamics of the schools changed slightly.

4. Discussion and conclusions

Following Foucault (2004) “an act of failure must be established” (p. 277) for the prison system; likewise, it must be accepted that the neoliberal educational policies imposed for more than 36 years have failed. The Mexican educational system has strong bases to develop its own educational models and stop having colonizing paradigms that leave aside the idiosyncrasy of the Mexican.

Currently, various educational systems are going through a crisis because of their longevity and because society has mutated over time. The implementation of neoliberal educational policies that did not take into account the reality of life in Mexico triggered multiple sufferings for teachers, students, managers and parents.

But it was not just the pandemic and education reforms that caused a shift in neoliberal education models. The truth is that the neoliberal model alone was not sustained because the paradigm shifts are just beginning to be carried out. There are still internal and external contexts of violence, labor overload and lack of resources, among others.

Labor overload is a topic that has interested authors such as Villagra (2015), who points out that due to excessive workload, the processes related to the education of students have passed at the end, because teachers usually pay more attention to filling out bureaucratic reports. Another important point to highlight is implicitly related to the pandemic, as teachers sacrificed some of the little time left in their private lives.

The workload increased considerably, which coincided with Sánchez et al. (2020) who indicated that online classes represented an extra workload, due to the fact that adjusting the contents to be taught required teachers to dedicate more time. In addition, institutional actors faced a number of difficulties in continuing with the teaching-learning processes, since not all students had access to a computer and internet, because it represented a luxury reserved for a sector of the population (Méndez, 2020).

During this period, students have limited economic possibilities. We agree with Ávila and Casas (2022) who highlight that the Mexican educational system has reproduced the structural conditions that favor a small group, leaving aside the rest of the population, which contributes to the historical presence of social inequalities where the lack of access to technology can limit the learning of students, as well as the teaching work. Those students who were able to cover the expenses continued studying, those who could not ended up unsubscribing and losing the opportunity to access other levels of culture such as Bourdieu and Passeron (2003) argue, "for individuals from more disadvantaged sectors, education remains the only way to access culture" (p.37).

The results of this research showed that the facilities where teachers work are characterized by being rudimentary and have serious shortages of resources to perform the primary task and social mandate of the educational institution, which agrees with Fernández (1996) who states that "it is a common experience the limitation that means an inadequate space, scarce, poorly equipped, and the overeffort - sometimes impossible - that requires working as if that limitation did not exist" (p.100). Society, institutions and parents, among others, have increased utopian demands on teachers, without granting the necessary resources to carry out this task (Esteve, 2011).

Another problem that this research addressed was related to the presence of violence, either as a

result of conflicts that are emerging within educational institutions or the presence of Organized Crime. Both managers, teachers, counselors and students use the school as a "stage to demonstrate, exhibit, prove that they are capable" (Fernández, 1996, p.123), generating a power struggle that seeks to benefit those who possess it, using various strategies to preserve it and benefit people close to them (Hoyle, 1982). During the investigation, it was found that there are teachers who must face situations of harassment at work because managers do not like them.

Another cause of violence is the segmentation of knowledge by generation between the most senior teachers and those who recently joined the teaching profession and younger people have had to endure the constant questioning of their pedagogical knowledge and skills. We agree with Ball (1990, 1994) who points out that educational institutions have become battlefields, where verbal and symbolic violence manifests itself in various actions that affect those who are not part of the close circle of those in power.

As for the violence, as a result of the presence of Organized Crime, the academics said they were afraid, since educating with organized crime that is lurking outside the facilities with the threat of kidnapping is complicated and more so when some students have relatives who support illicit acts. The exchange that one has with the external context coincides with Fernández (1996) who affirms that "every individual, group or organization maintains exchanges with the medium beyond its own limits. From these exchanges, [the educational institution] functions as a sounding board for external phenomena, and seeks to influence" (p. 55), as criminal groups affect the academic life of teachers and students.

The last discussion is aimed at the physical, mental and social health of teachers. After analyzing some of the elements involved in the professional practice of teachers, a series of affectations were found at the medical, psychological and social level, i.e., some have acquired SINATA.

In the medical part, the results of this research coincide with those reported in the studies of authors such as Antonelli et al. (2012) and Cezar-Vaz et al. (2013), who point out that the most common condition in teachers is related to the presence of musculoskeletal pains. It should be noted that, according to the participants, these discomforts increased once the online modality began, due to the long and stre-

nuous working days, a situation that coincides with what García and Sánchez reported (2020).

Regarding the effects at a psychological level, the most reported condition was the presence of stress, a fact that coincides with what Ortiz (2011) said, who mentioned that the teaching profession generates various psychopathological mismatches in teachers. The effects of stress have also been indicated in the literature, such as the case of Collado et al. (2016), who mention that physiological responses are characterized by low back pain, sleep problems, tiredness, irritability, headache, flu, memory and concentration problems, changes in appetite, generalized fatigue, nervousness, and loss of pleasure. This situation is confirmed in this investigation.

Other conditions found were related to the presence of anxiety, sleep disturbances and emotional tiredness. Findings that coincide with the study of Figueiredo-Ferraz et al. (2013), which indicate that the presence of negative feelings in teachers is frequent. In this research, these conditions were reported more frequently in the evaluation periods, as well as once the virtual modality began, due to what the educational paradigm change involved.

Finally, regarding the social area, the effects mostly presented were related to the fact that teachers had to negotiate or sacrifice time with their partner, family and friends. It coincides with Herrera et al. (2019) and the research with teachers from other educational levels in Mexico. Based on what was referred by the participants, it was found that during the online modality it was difficult to separate the work environment from the staff, since both were developed in the same physical space, which coincides with Gómez et al. (2020) who mention that during this modality it was difficult to separate the personal and work areas, which generated conflicts within the teacher's home.

The decadent social contract and the crisis process that the educational institution goes through, makes us urgently consider a rethinking of the teaching work, of its working conditions including the delimitation and attention both of its rights and duties in the institutional day to day, otherwise the sense of the teaching role will be lost and together with it, the educational institution. Although the reform of former Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador considered some demands of the teachers' union (Presidency of the Republic, 2019),

institutional actors are lacking in appropriating a national educational model.

In this sense, we agree with Pinos (2013) that the educational commitment should aim at an integral human formation as an essential pillar for the transformation of both individuals and society, involving teachers, students, educational institutions and other actors in the process of mutual learning. However, it requires a reorganization of teaching practice and the elimination of barriers and inequalities, being essential to address the complexity of changes in today's world.

Finally, we recognize and accept that generalizable conclusions cannot be made with what was found in the institutions of analysis. This limitation lies in the fact that the contexts of the educational institutions are diverse and dependent on the idiosyncrasy of the place, although there are many similarities that make them follow homogeneous parameters due to circumstances outside education, for example the COVID-19 pandemic, which demanded adjustments to the calendars and study programs and caused a series of changes in teaching practice and, in turn, greater suffering in the teachers.

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