


THE LEADERSHIP ROLE OF PNAE MANAGERS IN EXTREME CRISIS CONTEXTS

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the leadership systems in the management of the National School Feeding Program (PNAE) in the municipalities of Taubaté-SP and Viamão-RS as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, the National Fund for the Development of Education (FNDE) ratified FNDE Resolution No. 2, which regulated the distribution of foodstuffs, at the discretion of the local government. And this created contingencies, restrictions and unique situations in which decisions occurred according to the leaders of the PNAE. This leadership was not restricted to a single person, but to a leadership system inserted in an extreme context. Thus, this study sought to reconcile studies of extreme contexts and leadership systems in a public policy, based on the experiences, perceptions and reflections of its catalytic agents. To achieve the objective, a qualitative-descriptive and abductive logic research was used, through multiple cases and semi-structured interviews.

Keywords: Extreme Context. Covid-19. Management. PNAE. Leadership System.

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INTRODUCTION

The National School Feeding Program (PNAE) is a policy that aims to guarantee school meals to public school students. Its relevance is due to its wide reach, both because it involves all municipalities in Brazil and because of the demand for food. With the publication of Law No. 11,947, it is required that of the total financial transfer of the PNAE, at least 30%, be used in the acquisition of foodstuffs from family farming. On May 8, 2020, FNDE Resolution No. 6 was approved, which brought news and standardization of measures that had already been adopted by some municipalities.

However, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, even before FNDE Resolution No. 6, Law No. 13,987 was approved on April 7, 2020, which amended Law No. 11,947, to authorize, on an exceptional basis, during the period of suspension of classes, the distribution of foodstuffs, purchased with PNAE resources, to the parents or guardians of students in public schools of basic education. On April 9, 2020, the FNDE instituted FNDE Resolution No. 2, which regulated the distribution of foodstuffs, at the discretion of the local government.

The Covid19 Pandemic has created contingencies, restrictions, and particularly unique situations. The decisions were contextualized, but not determined only by the context, they occurred according to the PNAE leaders in each municipality. According to Dynes, Quarantelli and Kreps (1981), in addition to the disaster itself, the second largest source of negative results comes from commission errors or omissions in the actions of the organization and its leaders in response to the disaster and its consequences (HANNAH; UHL-BIEN; AVOLIUS; CAVARRETTA, 2009).

Furthermore, when determining the role and capabilities of leaders in extreme contexts, it is not restricted to a single person. It is necessary to evaluate the demands of the leaders seen by the governance authorities and the followers. If these other people are genuine components of the leadership system, it is necessary to determine the capabilities necessary to define their contribution to success, and therefore other components, including environmental factors, need to be considered (PEPPERELL, 2021).

Pepperell (2021), considers that those in leadership roles and roles that interacted with leadership should be heard. This approach aims to know the entities and concepts of the leadership system and to better understand the requirements, expectations, and tensions of the resulting relationships.

To give you an idea, municipalities such as Taubaté-SP and Viamão-RS presented different solutions to the extreme context that was the Covid-19 Pandemic. The decisions made were influenced by the type of management of the PNAE (which can be centralized, decentralized or outsourced), characteristics of local agriculture, but mainly by the worldview of local leaders. Leaders in the management of the PNAE are nutritionists, secretaries of education, secretaries of agriculture, among other actors who can be identified as catalytic agents. These catalytic agents, based on their knowledge and field of action, were able to mitigate or intensify the effects of the pandemic period.

Although the Covid-19 Pandemic is under control, during the period of 2020 and 2021, it was responsible for the shutdown of schools distributed in 5,568 municipalities. This brought immediate effects and post-pandemic consequences to the PNAE. Therefore, the following question arises: How did leadership systems deliver more successful results in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic?

In view of this, the objective of the research is to analyze the leadership systems in the management of the PNAE in the municipalities of Taubaté-SP and Viamão-RS as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic. This is relevant because, in addition to showing the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic on municipal schools in two regions of Brazil, it exposes how the teams faced the adversity of the period and what were the consequences in the way the program was managed in the post-Pandemic.

To achieve the objective, a qualitative-descriptive and abductive logic research was used, through a multiple case study and semi-structured interviews. The interviews, as well as the observation process, were documented through the use of field notes. After the transcription of the interviews, content analysis was used.

This article is divided into 5 sections, the first is the introduction, the second section is characterized by the theoretical framework in leadership in extreme contexts, the third section concerns methodological procedures, the fourth section is characterized by results and discussion, and finally, the fifth section is the conclusion.

LEADERSHIP IN EXTREME CRISIS CONTEXTS

For Hannah, Uhl-Bien, Avolio and Cavarretta (2009), extreme events are situations in which there is the potential for physical, psychological or material consequences, the consequences of which are considered unbearable by members of the organization, and which may exceed the organization's capacity to prevent these extreme events from

actually occurring. The authors differentiate between crisis and extreme context. While crisis involves the threat to a high-priority objective, its definition of extreme contexts is based on a stricter qualification. In his definition, such threats must reach the threshold of "intolerable magnitude" where the goals are not only of high priority, but those that influence leadership.

Although definitions of crisis include little or no response time, Hannah *et al.* (2009) do not see this component as an integral part of the definition of extreme contexts. The authors consider that there may be significant periods of preparation for such a situation. Another point to be explored is that the definition of crisis considers these situations as low probability, while extreme events, which characterize extreme contexts, are not necessarily so. Extreme contexts are not necessarily characterized by ambiguity of cause, effect, and means of resolution.

Bundy, Pfarrer, Short and Coombs (2017), as well as Williams, Gruber, Sutcliffe, Shepherd and Zhao (2017), believe that studies on extreme contexts are still superficial. Therefore, interdisciplinary theoretical knowledge and empirical rigor are necessary to pay more attention to the context, and consequently, lead to an understanding of how variables at one level of analysis affect those at a different level of analysis (HÄLLGREN; ROULEAU; ROND, 2018).

Johns (2006) points out that an analysis based on journalistic practice and classical social psychology can help to better understand the role of context. Hannah *et al.* (2009), consider that there is a type of leadership related to extreme contexts. In his "Typology of extreme contexts". They divide the term extreme contexts into four main components, the context itself, enhancers, those factors that amplify the context, attenuators, factors applied to improve the context, and the level of extremity, the cumulative impact resulting from the interaction of the previous three. This, in turn, is managed through a process that they describe as adaptive leadership response.

This process of adaptive leadership must show the best and worst of human and organizational behaviors, which accelerate process flows that are impeded by bureaucracy, power games and politicking. Thus, it is possible to obtain the description of organizational actions of adaptation and prioritization, resilience after an extreme event, and barriers to inertia, where organizations fail to respond (HÄLLGREN; ROULEAU; ROND, 2018).

Based on this assumption, Pepperell (2021) opts for a systems approach to leadership, as he considers the points of view of those in leadership roles as important as

others who are interacting with leaders. In its approach it aims to know the entities and concepts of the leadership system and to better understand the requirements, expectations and tensions of the resulting relationships.

Thus, Pepperell (2021), builds his analysis of leadership in extreme contexts taking into account the context, which is influenced by history, culture, threat, proximity, impact, complexity, understanding, perception, and volatility; intensifiers, which are factors that amplify the challenges imposed by the context; attenuators, which are decisions or actions that soften the context; purpose, which is the reason for existence, creation, or action; leadership, which concerns the credibility established through ethics, mastery, vision, character, reputation, and benevolence; people, who have expectations, emotions, and actions driven by the context, culture, focus, belief, trust, ability, and impact of the message; finally, the means of commitment, which are established by the appropriate use of an authority tool, which provides fortification of the message that improves inductive or deductive reasoning.

Despite what was presented by Pepperell (2021), there is little consensus in the literature about the most effective leadership style with respect to extreme contexts. Antonakis and Day (2018) and Bass and Reggio (2006) stated that in situations where safety is of paramount importance and there are high environmental risks, active management by exception, i.e., transactional leadership, may be necessary. There are, therefore, contrary reports in the literature regarding the relative effectiveness of leadership styles in extreme events. Thus, it is necessary to examine various ways in which people exercise authority, both in theory and practice, consider what other cultures have to offer, and reimagine a more comprehensive leadership model that addresses the multiplicity of factors present in extreme contexts (PEPPERELL, 2021).

For Barin Cruz, Delgado, Leca and Gond (2016), organizations are production systems, allowing performance structures or scripts that reduce the complexity and uncertainty of the environment. When organizations are disrupted, actors must deal with an extreme operating environment, characterized by increased risk, increased uncertainty, and scarcer resources. These extreme events can damage and disrupt the organization to such an extent that actors can no longer fully rely on them.

There are organizations that are thrown into extreme contexts by chance, and these "normal" organizations can suffer from a lack of training and resources to respond to such events, thus intensifying the extremes. "Naïve" organizations, because there is not a high

probability of such events, are less likely to apply resources to prepare for such events. However, given recent world events, one wonders if the number of naïve organizations that can be launched in an extreme context is growing (Hannah *et al.*, 2009).

Leaders, through adaptive and administrative processes, influence others and are influenced to agree on what needs to be done and how to do it. Thus, this article proposes an analysis for the management of the PNAE in the midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic, which considers dimensions such as location in time, magnitude and probability of consequences, physical and psychosocial proximity between the actors and forms of perceived threats, in a first phase. And in a second phase of analysis, intensifying and attenuating factors that act at decisive moments on leaders and people are considered, and the consequence of this interaction on school feeding and PNAE norms and rules.

This analysis considers PNAE laws and resolutions as forms of commitment. Although each municipality chooses a form of program management, there are some guidelines such as Law No. 11,947 of 2009 and FNDE Resolution No. 6 of 2020 that must be followed. The purpose, which influences people and leadership, is school feeding. Providing food for students was one of the main challenges during the Covid-19 Pandemic, so it is necessary to think of methods to extract information from this reality, as observed in the next section.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

To answer the research question in this article "How did leadership systems deliver more successful results in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic?", we opted for a qualitative-descriptive research (BLATER; HAVERLAND, 2012; SAMPIERI; COLLADO; LUCIO, 2013; KUMAR, LEONE, AAKER; DAY, 2018) and abductive logic (MEZIROU, 1991; CHARREIRE; DURIEUX, 2003; CRUZ, 2007), using a multiple case study as a strategy (STAKE, 2011; YIN, 2018) and semi-structured interviews (BISHOP, 2005).

In all, 14 people were interviewed, distributed in the municipalities of Taubaté (state of São Paulo) and Viamão (state of Rio Grande do Sul). The municipalities were chosen for their positive performance in compliance with Law No. 11,947, higher than 30%, in addition to having different PNAE management models. In Taubaté, management is outsourced, while in Viamão it is centralized. The collection period was characterized by the return to face-to-face classes after the Coronavirus Pandemic. Chart 1 shows the characterization of the interviewees and the dates on which the interviews took place.

Table 1. Characterization of the interviewees in the municipalities

| Institution | Respondent code | Characteristics of the interviewees | Dates of the interviews |
|--|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Municipality of Taubaté in the State of São Paulo | | | |
| SEED - Municipal Department of Education School Feeding Sector | ESEED 01SP | Nutritionist responsible for the PNAE | 22/11/2021 |
| | ESEED 02SP | Nutritionist | |
| | ESEED 03SP | Nutritionist | |
| | ESEED 04SP | Nutritionist and ADM | |
| SHA – Outsourced School Feeding Services | ESHAN01SP | Responsible nutritionist | 25/11/2021 |
| | ESHAN02SP | Nutritionist | |
| CAE – School Feeding Council | ECAE01SP | President | 23/11/2021 |
| Secretariat of Development and Innovation | ESDI01SP | Coordinator of Agricultural Affairs | 23/11/2021 |
| Municipality of Viamão in the state of Rio Grande do Sul | | | |
| SEME - Municipal Department of Education School Feeding Department | ESME01RS | Nutritionist responsible for the PNAE | 01/08/2022 |
| | ESME02RS | Nutritionist | |
| | ESME03RS | Administrative Manager | |
| | ESME04RS | Nutritionist | 03/08/2022 |
| CAE – School Feeding Council | ECAE01RS | President | 01/08/2022 |
| Municipal Department of Agriculture and Supply | ESMAA01RS | Secretary | 02/08/2022 |

Source: Survey data

The interviews, as well as the observation process, were documented through the use of field notes (LOFLAND, 1974; LOFLAND; LOFLAND, 1995). After the transcription of the interviews, content analysis was used (BARDIN, 2011). The content analysis was organized according to Silva *et al.* (2022, 2023a, 2023b, 2024), taking into account three chronological poles: pre-analysis; the exploration of the material; and the treatment of the results, inference and interpretation (BARDIN, 2011).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Taubaté is a municipality in the interior of the state of São Paulo and has a population of 320,820 inhabitants (IBGE, 2021), considered the second largest industrial and commercial hub in the Paraíba Valley. Its economy is based on services, industry and commerce.

The School Feeding Sector is allocated to the Department of Education (SEED) and is composed of 3 nutritionists and an administrative manager. The nutritionists took the exam in 2018, before the department was composed of a nutritionist and the administrative manager and hired nutritionists. This team is responsible for 42 thousand students,

distributed in 142 schools, 77 of which are units serving Early Childhood Education, 53 Elementary Schools, 05 High School Units, in addition to projects such as EJA (Education for Youth and Adults), 4 Integral Education Units, and 3 partner schools.

It is up to the nutritionists of the School Feeding Sector to prepare public calls to acquire food from family farming, receive and inspect this food and send it to schools. They also inspect the schools to verify that the outsourced company is complying with the agreement in the contract, prepare the students' menus, in addition to monitoring the students who have special food.

The PNAE management system in the municipality of Taubaté is fully outsourced. These schools in the network are served by a contract for the supply of meals between the Department of Education (SEED) and S.H.A. COMÉRCIO DE ALIMENTOS LTDA. The S.H.A Comércio de Alimentos team is composed of 9 nutritionists, who take care of 12 to 14 school units. They employ an average of 300 food handlers. Usually depending on the size of the school, there are up to 4 cooks. Each nutritionist is responsible for their group of schools, they make requests for replacement of foodstuffs, carry out good practice procedures, evaluate the conditions of storage, organization and hygiene, in addition to the preparation of meals, checking if they are following the menu. The supervisors who do this, they have to make at least two visits to each unit in the week, of at least one hour each visit. And the administrative coordinator also makes at least two visits a week to the schools.

During the Covid-19 Pandemic, managing school feeding was not simple, there were measures to authorize, on an exceptional basis, during the period of suspension of classes, the distribution of foodstuffs, acquired with PNAE resources with Law No. 13,987, of April 7, 2020, and later with FNDE Resolution No. 2, of April 9, 2020, which regulated the distribution of foodstuffs, at the discretion of the local government. Although there were norms that facilitated the engagement of initiatives for students to receive food, the effort made by the teams of both the School Feeding Sector and S.H.A. led to deep perceptions and reflections in the face of many realities faced by the two teams. Both were pressured by the public prosecutor's office, the population and the hired employees, who could lose their jobs during the period.

At the beginning of the Pandemic, as the first initiative to locate in time, they opted for the distribution of food kits, but faced some difficulties in putting this initiative into practice, as shown in the following interview fragment.

We tried to make a kit last year, we did it only once. But what happened? [...] We even bought the bag, we assembled everything, we did a service shift. that I... So it was surreal. If you have photos and We went to the trading floor and we came back very frustrated, that the companies raised prices too much. The bridge that we wanted to put one-kilo rice, right. Because it was portioned, which is according to that rule I was putting in, you could work according to the student's level of education, so we opted for smaller packages because it's one kit per student, right? When we saw that we wanted him, the person launched a price of R\$10.00 a kilo of rice and we make that quotation so we can't, it's the lowest price. And we were very frustrated. Especially with rice. How is a kit without rice, right? It was rice and beans that we couldn't buy. So several items failed. Then it was delayed, then you could start from scratch, then put everything together again, then until it was published, so it generated a lot of discomfort for us because they were following what we were doing (Interviewee ESEED01SP).

At first, the stoppages would be for 15 days, however, anticipating the magnitude of the consequences, the team began to prepare for a longer period, as reported by Interviewee ESEED04SP.

Theoretically, students, many students, depend on school meals. Then the pandemic came saying that it was going to stop fifteen days, but seeing the world as it was outside, it was believed that it was going to be a little longer, right. So the administration was concerned about this, that it was almost sure that it was going to be a long period and what it could do to help the students (Interviewee ESEED04SP).

The team thought about the probability of the consequences, a good part of students in the municipal school network have a poor profile. There was a great concern about school dropout, as these students did not have the structure at home to follow classes remotely. The Covid-19 Pandemic brought economic decline and many parents became unemployed, so distributing food was a way to keep in touch with these students, so that they could continue to receive study material as well as meet their food needs.

The complexity of assembling Kits was something that intensified the stress factor in the nutrition team. They arrived around 5:30 am at the gymnasium intended for assembly, everyone from the department participated in the process and there was no rotation among the professionals. Other SEED employees participated and even received help from the army, while the nutritionists were divided between receiving, assembling and bidding for the

purchase of items. The bids were taking time, some auctions did not take place, because no company was interested in participating. There was still the issue of students who are allergic, the municipality of Taubaté has approximately 2,000 children who receive special food. And the bidding process with items in which these students could eat did not advance according to the following fragment.

Because the allergic people until then were not being attended to according to what they needed and we had one, we made a selection of thirty-three items, all of which failed. Then it stopped, then we, we tried three times. Three times try the allergy sufferers' products! And then we met with the council because I have two counselors who have very victimized children, very allergic. So, we explained it to them and tried to help them for everything we wanted. They saw up close that it was a failure. And then we managed to assemble the kits and then we assembled the kits for allergy sufferers in a more succinct way, okay? We took what they could eat, because we have students here who are allergic to rice. [...] It took us more than a month to filter and be able to know what each one could eat because then we were afraid (Interviewee ESEED01SP).

In this fragment, although it identifies a problem that the nutritionists had been facing, it also shows the social mitigating factor, as the servers receive comfort from the mothers of allergic students who are part of the School Feeding Council (CAE), although they were unable to complete the bidding, there was a concern for the children who needed special food.

In one month they managed to deliver 30 thousand kits, but the conditions for this to be repeated in the following month were increasingly distant. The following fragment shows in which state the team was, and as a psychological mitigating factor it was important for the strengthening of the School Feeding Sector.

So, what we experienced last year was extremely exhausting, I think we, we cried a little... a lot, we fought, we cried... wow it was like that ... We grow, we mature. And that here and we had to receive it very quickly, because we were being pressured (Interviewee ESEED01SP).

Time acted as an intensifying factor in the context, as the bids took a long time and the population was not properly served, in addition to many complaints to the public prosecutor's office, as shown in the following fragment.

There was pressure from the population because it took us too long to get it (Interviewee ESEED01).

The pressure was so great that it forced the team to think of a new strategy. Thus, they began to study solutions developed by other cities in the region. Here the influence of physical and social proximity is verified, in this case networking with other municipalities that have adopted outsourced management, and that was how the idea of making the lunchboxes came about.

It was another management, he called and we found out in advance that São José dos Campos was already offering lunch boxes and they gave a momentary and urgent option and that it was the most viable. It's because I was going to enjoy the kitchens, right? That's how the kitchen workforce is, too, the company had to reduce precisely because you didn't already have a school, right? So what did they do? Poles, instead of having all the units working, which generates costs for the company, they made poles in a main school (Interviewee ESEED03SP).

Then, under even more pressure for time, the team began to put the idea of the lunchboxes into practice. They put new clauses in the S.H.A. contract to acquire the packaging and established the menus that would be used.

So, the administration was already doing this and along with the prosecutor's request, there was this idea of making the lunchboxes, right? Because then we couldn't eat at school anymore, so we thought about it, then the contract was edited so that we could have the packaging that we already have for food, if the menu was adapted a little, right. And that was it, very quickly so good that I was able to adapt the contract because I was also imagining it, the packaging, the plastic. Yes, the packaging was not foreseen, right? So we had to add it. With these justifications of social isolation, distancing that everyone has to do, right? And we pay for the normal menu. But then we selected the six menus. A menu that suits more in the positioning of the lunchbox, right? And then that was it (Interviewee ESEED04SP).

On the other hand, the crisis caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic also affected S.H.A. There was apprehension about what would happen to the company, as it works exclusively with school meals. The nutritionists of the team also went through difficult times in this extreme context, as observed below, there was a need to prepare the food, but it was not sure of the amount of lunchboxes to be prepared.

That was a new service so it was crazy, right. Because we didn't have a number, we didn't know, how many families were going to withdraw, right? And we knew that contractually we could not let it be lacking and we could not throw food away either. So we would have to have control, right? And then in the first week it was very difficult. To even get it right, right? But thank God we got it, the City Hall gave a number, right? They passed a number and we followed until we adjusted and until we entered, right? In the rhythm, normally, after a while it was always the same parents so the number of lunchboxes didn't vary, right? But with a little of one, two more or sometimes less. So it flows like this (Interviewee ESHAN01SP).

The possibility of delivering the lunchboxes served for S.H.A to mitigate the situation of its employees through its organizational resources. They managed to retain the cooks, redistributing the teams among the schools that would be distribution centers. Some cooks were unable to work due to restrictive health issues and the company was able to keep them during 2020.

Exactly the company embraced it even though it didn't know how it would be. But like, S.H.A is a company with a very good structure, the company succeeded, right? Quick, running after a supplier for packaging because it's something that didn't exist, right? So the company also had to restructure itself because the company, 90% is a snack, right? And then many contracts stopped. So, the company also had to reinvent itself during this period to be able to stay standing, right? And keep the cooks even doing their job. The company still kept employees for a good period, practically 2020 the company kept all employees the whole year, right (Interviewee ESHAN02SP).

In the beginning, when classes took place remotely, 41 thousand lunchboxes were delivered daily, then, with the partial return, this number decreased to 16 thousand, 13 thousand, 10 thousand and in November 2021 they were delivering 8 thousand. It was a joint effort of all nutritionists, both those from SEED and S.H.A. The purpose was to deliver food to students in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic and even among intensifying and mitigating factors they managed to achieve their goal. The following excerpts show how the nutritionists felt about their work.

Almost a year, right? No, more than a year. It's because we started last year in March. If I'm not mistaken, Back in March 2020. Okay? And we stay until today. So, fifteen months. That large demand for lunch boxes was up to 70%. [...] And so, the interesting thing is that we were able to serve quickly, because the lunch box was a

strategy to serve immediately, right? [...] There is not much to do, it was a very decisive moment, very important and it served well. And from what I saw there are no complaints (Interviewee ESEED03SP).

It's a food, they don't have a criticism like the kits. It's just that many times the family had to prepare. And if you didn't have food, you didn't even have gas at home. There was that. What didn't exist is how much we heard these things, so I think it satisfied the hunger of many people. We are aware of this that killed the family's hunger. It was the only food of the day and besides the lunch box went with dessert (fruit), I think it was juice but we even put juice, then banana and tangerine from agriculture (Interviewee ESEED01SP).

The School Feeding Sector, in Taubaté, went through intensifying and mitigating factors during the Covid-19 Pandemic. This crisis also extended to the S.H.A. team, and together with SEED they had to develop solutions to guarantee school meals, the supply of lunch boxes was an example.

However, the municipality of Taubaté was not the only one to go through this extreme context. The municipality of Viamão, located in the metropolitan region of Porto Alegre, in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, also went through the problems faced. The city has 255,224 inhabitants (IBGE, 2021) and its total number of students in the Municipal Public Network is approximately 26,572 students, distributed in 71 schools, 13 of which are kindergartens and 14 are rural schools. It is worth mentioning that for 2023 there is a forecast for the delivery of 11 children's schools.

Unlike Taubaté, the management of the PNAE is centralized, that is, it is up to the Department of Education to acquire the food and distribute it in schools, in addition to supervising the activities involving its management. The School Feeding Department is made up of 3 nutritionists and an administrative technician. The nutritionists work in the nutritional organization of the program, visiting the schools, organizing the menu. While in relation to purchases, contact with farmers, organization of public calls and bids, it is up to the Interviewee ESME03RS. She has been working in the city hall for 18 years, started as a school servant, went through the purchasing department and now works in the school feeding sector. The team manages approximately 125 lunch cooks, 25 of whom are civil servants and 100 are outsourced.

During the Coronavirus Pandemic, basic food baskets were delivered to students in situations of social vulnerability, taking into account the Bolsa Família Program and verifying

the situation of social vulnerability. The purchase was justified considering that the municipality serves an average of 42 thousand meals a day and that for many low-income families, school meals are the only or the most important meal of the day, aiming to ensure the offer of a balanced diet, ensuring the necessary nutrients for the good health condition of the student.

The basic food baskets were assembled and delivered to 35 schools in the municipal education network. The delivery of the basic food baskets to the schools was made by the Management Team to those responsible with the signing of the delivery protocol. During the year 2020, 4 deliveries of basic food baskets were made. It is worth mentioning that the baskets were tendered via electronic auction. Deliveries in 2021 included a larger number of students, 26 thousand, deliveries were made every 2 months (8 deliveries) in 63 schools in the network.

In the midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic, in July 2020, the mayor passed away due to complications caused by the Coronavirus. And in November of the same year, the municipal elections took place, that is, at the height of the crisis, there were still significant changes in the political direction of the municipality. In this there was a change of secretaries of education and the team of the School Feeding Department had to adapt. They were certainly intensifying factors in this extreme context.

In the first administration, in 2020, it was decided to assemble food kits, the municipality adopted the posture of providing the kits to all students in the municipal school network. During this period, the objective of the city hall was to acquire the largest possible number of products from family farming. At first, regarding the magnitude of the consequences, it was believed that the period of stoppage would be long, and, therefore, it was a priority to foster the local economy.

So the first kit was with what they had in the schools. Non-perishables leave our warehouse, while perishables go straight to schools. So, for example, we took everything that was non-perishable, we brought it here and here we made the kits to send to the schools. [...] There were five of us. But then there was help from the pedagogical people, it helped a lot. [...] We distributed the kit, almost all year round, we made like three or four kits in the year of the pandemic. I think every two months. Yes, every two or three months I had made a kit. So, the first was with what was in the schools, so it was something else. [...] The others that there were no longer with what we had. Then we were the ones who bought a lot of things from agriculture, but everything was not perishable. Oh yes it was already a little bit smaller. But so, in

this year of 2020, which was the year of the pandemic, we ended up having a very high value of the PNAE. With a piece for family farming because of this (Interviewee ESME01RS).

Although the nutritionists received institutional support, with the directing of servers from other departments to assemble food kits, it was still a complex task. In the middle of 2020, the mayor dies and in November the municipal elections take place, in 2021, a new direction occurs. In this second phase, attention is focused on the working conditions of the team and also on students who return to classes part-time.

So it was even bad this logistics because you imagine that you wouldn't give a banana to the student, you would have to give at least a kilo. Then there are schools with a thousand students the amount of bananas that would have to go. So this is the logistics that we ended up not being able to get there in my warehouse assembling the kits. Family farming delivered to my warehouse. The last one we went to the gym. It went to the gym and then we set it up there and then they delivered it straight there. And then the people from the warehouse took them to the schools. A year, then that partial return came back, right? It was 2020 and 2021, we started between May and June, more or less we came back with partial classes. And then they came by group, which was by day. Because then I think it was more difficult, because I had to make lunches and I still had to go assemble the kits. But then it was a time when the city hall took a new direction, we bought the kits, we were no longer the ones who assembled, then the kits came ready. It was almost monthly like this (Interviewee ESME01RS).

In addition to the extreme context influencing their work decisions, the teams were also affected on a personal level, as their children were enrolled in municipal schools. The following fragment is the speech of the president of the School Feeding Council (CAE), who is also a pedagogical advisor to the Department of Education. It shows the physical and psychosocial proximity to which the servers were exposed.

So they really worried about making this distribution to everyone and I saw it happening, I was even one of the people who had two children, right? So I took the food baskets and then we sometimes passed by, you know? For a family that needs more. I can help someone who needs it, you know? And we know that it's also a question sometimes of how am I going to say it like that... Sometimes people are ashamed too, right? Sometimes you need it and then you don't take it because you're ashamed to assume that you're going through that need, right? But then

when the school distributed it to everyone, then the person no longer feels embarrassed to be receiving that aid, right? (Interviewee ECAE01RS).

During the partial return of the students, the team of the School Feeding Department and the lunch cooks were faced with some intensifying factors, as reported by the nutritionist in charge of the technical below.

But then it kind of increased to a hundred in fifteen days, the lunch cooks were panicking. They panicked, so were we! Why? For the shipment it was complicated what we sent from here, you know? Oh, we send, I don't know, five I don't know, ten kilos of rice, which was what we were enough for the twenty, but we started the month with twenty, ended the month with a hundred students. So, in the middle of the month they were already calling us and asking "look, the rice ran out". So we had to send it back to them because we started to get lost in this amount. And it started to increase every day, more students went. [...] It seems that more students appeared. During 2020 and 2021 it's true, I think we managed to keep this flow of the return because it starts to come back little by little, but oh, like, it was a little bit very big like that. (Interviewed ESME01RS)

It was in this return to classes that the Department of Education identified psychosocial problems with the students, but also with the servers. In addition to being in financial need, many lost family members, some children returned in a situation of vulnerability. So in 2021, the Integrated Office for the Care of People (GIP) was created, in order to offer socio-emotional support to students, families, teachers and education employees. The following excerpt shows how the initial idea of GIP was being perfected.

We had some actions that were linked to social assistance and health, right? Some dynamics and then during the pandemic we received some more families to donate clothes and then we prepared a tea for a hot thing, it was in winter. And then we registered, right, because social assistance here also has the issue that sometimes families can't go to the CRAS to register and stop receiving even their benefits, right? Because of this lack, so we work a lot together. And then we did some actions and we were always very concerned about the issue of receiving the families, of giving, you know? To offer a snack, to offer a snack, to offer something. We also did the vaccination, our vaccination was inside the schools, right? Then, during the vaccination, we also offered something on account, because the child had to stay there for an hour, right? I think it was a time when the child was there waiting. Then we also gave this possibility that the school is offering something else, we are doing

some activity there with these families who were going to vaccinate the children, right? And GIP came up with the idea of us working on the socio-emotional issues of post-pandemic children, so it has this purpose, right. During the workshops that the workshop participants work on socio-emotional issues, right? Group dynamics that work on these issues, so that the child feels safe to talk about their emotions, to work on their emotions, so we had several reports like this from children who did not report it to their parents, did not report it to the teachers, but reported it to the workshop workers because they felt in that space, a space that they have a whole dynamic, They make a pact of silence that happens there and can't be talked about, right? These issues they make a whole agreement with the children, with the participants so that they stay and feel safe, right? To bring up these issues. And then he brought this intention, right? He initially started with this one with the intention of working on socio-emotional issues such as workshops, right? (Interviewee ECAE01RS).

GIP was so successful that even with the full return of face-to-face classes, it continued. In 2022, during the vacation period, approximately 10 thousand children attended the school carrying out the proposed workshops. It was up to the nutritionists to acquire the food for the preparation of meals during this period. In the department's routine, this measure influenced the vacation period, because as schools will no longer go into recess, it will be necessary to have a nutritionist on duty in the sector.

In Viamão, the Covid-19 Pandemic brought a lot of apprehension to the team of the School Feeding Department, this same team had to adapt to different managements, without deviating from its purpose, which is to guarantee school feeding. On their way they found intensifying and mitigating factors. And in the end, some measures, such as the GIP, became permanent, even after this extreme context.

CONCLUSION

Discussing leadership systems in extreme contexts is already a challenge, even more so when analyzing successful results in crisis management. Usually when talking about the Covid-19 Pandemic and the PNAE, the first thing that comes to mind is the situation of the students, however, although there is legislation that supports the teams responsible for managing the program, materializing the school food service was not simple during this period. Decisions depended on managerial, cultural, learning, political and available resources. In short, there was no model of solution to be followed.

In view of this extreme context, we sought to analyze the leadership systems in the management of the PNAE in the municipalities of Taubaté-SP and Viamão-RS. These municipalities, first, were chosen for their good performance in the execution of Law No. 11,947. But then, the good result they presented in relation to the Covid-19 Pandemic was observed. It is relevant to highlight that the two municipalities have different forms of management of the PNAE. In Taubaté, management is outsourced, while in Viamão it is centralized. Although the purpose is the same, the dynamics between those involved are different.

In the city of São Paulo, in addition to the concern with the delivery of food to students, the difficulties that the outsourced company could experience due to paralyzing its services were taken into account. It was a process of learning, negotiations, and discussions on intensifying and mitigating aspects of the crisis. After the physical and mental exhaustion of the School Feeding Sector team with the distribution of food kits. The solution of daily distribution of lunch boxes was a mitigating factor in the crisis, which facilitated the activities of SEED's nutritionists, but also helped to manage some problems of the S.H.A. In the end, the population was better served with the delivery of the lunchboxes.

The southern municipality of Rio Grande do Sul, on the other hand, has centralized management, and the Department of Education is responsible for receiving resources from the FNDE, buying food and distributing it among the schools in the network. The School Feeding Department team, at first, in 2020, organized itself to assemble food kits, prioritizing products from the local farmer. In a second moment, 2021, with the beginning of a new term in the city hall, they had to adapt to the purchase of ready-made kits and the partial return of classes. It was at this stage that they realized the situation of vulnerability of the population and created the Integrated Office for the Care of People (GIP), in order to offer socio-emotional support to students, families, teachers and education employees.

The focus of this research was focused on the experiences, perceptions and reflections of the catalyzing agents in the management of the PNAE. by presenting the Covid-19 Pandemic as an extreme context, a broader contextual story could be provided. This approach raised the possibility of multiple perspectives for a similar role for the same event. In addition, during the interviews, the wealth of corroborating data for the purpose of this article became clear, providing a vivid picture of the perceived problems.

As a limitation of this study, a third municipality with a decentralized management of PNAE resources was not explored. Thus, it would be possible to explore the reflections of school managers, together with the team of the school feeding department. This will be a suggestion for future studies. In addition, for future research, studies aimed at the systems approach to leadership in extreme contexts are suggested, taking into account teams associated with the leadership function, support partner agencies and the relationship between leadership and the public.

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