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Global Perspectives: Exploring School-Based Brazilian Librarianship Through Institutional Ethnography

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Global Perspectives:

Exploring School Based Brazilian Librarianship Through Institutional Ethnography

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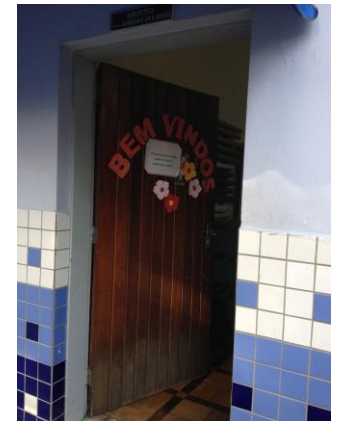
The Association of Educational Communications and Technology

Research Question

What are the experiences, practices, and challenges of school-based Brazilian librarians in efforts to meet the needs of 21st century learners?



Research Setting



Institutional Ethnography

- Dorothy Smith's (2005) "sociology for the people"
- The problematic
- Ruling relations
- Real world practice

Institutional Ethnography Method

- Point of entry
- Identification of institutional processes or elements
- Inquire, investigate, examine, & observe

Brazilian Education

- Ensino Fundamental & Medio
- Occurs in shifts
- 35% have dedicated school library space

School-Based Librarianship

- Pedagogue vs. Librarian
- Government Initiatives
- Reading for Learning vs. Reading for Pleasure

Data Collection

- Observations in Brazilian schools
- Semi structured interviews
- Institutional text
- Follow up emails/Skype sessions



(Johnston, 2013)

Data Analysis

- Inductive qualitative content analysis
 - Interview transcripts, observations, text
- Open coding & abstraction

Themes: Collaboration

- Struggle to develop collaborative partnerships
- School librarian not considered a pedagogue
- Impact of shifts and budget cuts - manpower
- Recent Brazilian legislation enables librarian licensure after two-year associates, or technical, degree

“I have one of the strongest collections in the area [fiction collection] but the teachers have no interest in using them or working with me. They don't think I know how to teach.”

Themes: Collaboration

“I have one of the strongest collections in the area [fiction collection] but the teachers have no interest in using them or working with me. They don’t think I know how to teach.”

“When we had people here, we could recruit more volunteers and the library was always packed. We put together this incredible program for 6th grade that integrated music, art, literature, and the library. They even created materials on the computer. But now we don’t have the manpower.”

Themes: Literacy

- Developed out of the strong federal legislative push for literacy
- Inequality and disparity in collections
- Reading for pleasure seen at one location only

Themes: Literacy

Marinete: I wanted this project to introduce them to the different poetry books we have here in the library. Each flower hanging from the ceiling has a quote from a poem and the call number so they can look for the book if they become curious.

Researcher: Can the students look at these anytime they want to?

Marinete: Oh yes! Anytime. I've even added a few based on student suggestions.

Researcher: Is this part of a formal lesson you deliver in the library?

Marinete: Yes. I read several poems and introduced them to different books that we had. These flowers are a mystery for them to solve because if they like the quote, they have to hunt for the book and find the poem that the quote is from.



Themes: Instruction

- Unique Brazilian approach to division of labor
- The typical duties associated with school librarianship: technology integration, reading enrichment, collection development et. al, are divided amongst the classroom teacher, the reading specialist, the technology/ computer teacher and the school librarian
- Division is fiercely protected
- One interviewee was warned by her principal (before speaking with us) to “not complain or share negative information because this is democratic rationing.”



Themes: Technology

- Theme reflected disparity witnessed between public and private schools
- Private schools had access to state-of-the-art computer labs housed within the school library, wireless internet and computer lab instructors under the supervision of the school librarian
- Public school librarians described their technology as outdated and unusable
- No public school libraries had online or offline catalogs



Themes: Learning Environment

- Different instructional projects reflect strong, nationalistic focus
- Intentional inclusion of Brazilian culture and local folklore
- Rich integration with fine arts such as drama and puppetry
- Inclusion of materials provided by the federal government
- School in different sessions and placement of probationary teachers as library assistants



Implications & Future Research

- Partnerships for practice
- Education of school librarians



- Ruling relations
- Replication

Questions?

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