ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS OF NEWCOMERS TO INTEGRATED HIGH SCHOOL [1]

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ABSTRACT. Recent changes to high school, including professional-technical training, pose some challenges for incoming students. Understanding their expectations at the beginning of their educational journey is an important strategy for helping them cope with challenges. This study aimed to identify and describe the academic expectations of first-year students enrolled in the Integrated High School (IHS) program in public schools in the cities of Rio de Janeiro and Niterói. Based on interviews with 33 participants, 15 of whom were female, the students' expectations for the professional training process were identified and described. A qualitative approach, using discourse analysis and the IRAMUTEQ software, was employed to create a corpus of interviews to characterize their expectations regarding social and academic commitment, the expansion of interpersonal relationships, the prospect of professional success, and concerns about self-image. The data revealed that incoming students value the opportunity to participate in educational activities, such as science fairs, debates, seminars, and conferences, as well as sports and cultural events offered by the schools. They hope to have a socially valued profession, though they acknowledge that earning a good salary in the current economic scenario is challenging. Overall, they desire to attend university, and to this end, they aim to achieve better grades throughout IHS. The results also indicated significant concern that they will feel frustrated with their chosen qualification by the end of the course.

Keywords: integrated high school; academic expectations; professional qualification.

EXPECTATIVAS ACADÊMICAS DE INGRESSANTES NO ENSINO MÉDIO INTEGRADO

RESUMO. As mudanças realizadas recentemente no Ensino Médio, incluindo a formação técnica-profissional, impõe aos alunos ingressantes alguns desafios. Conhecer suas expectativas, no início da caminhada pode ser uma importante estratégia para apoio no enfrentamento das situações durante a formação. O presente estudo teve o objetivo identificar e descrever as Expectativas Acadêmicas de alunos matriculados no primeiro ano do Ensino Médio Integrado (EMI) de escolas públicas dos municípios do Rio de Janeiro e Niterói. A partir de entrevistas com 33 participantes, 15 do sexo feminino, foram identificadas e descritas as expectativas que os alunos possuem para o processo de formação profissional. A abordagem qualitativa com metodologia de análise dos discursos, utilizando-se o Software IRAMUTEQ, partiu da criação de um corpus com as entrevistas para caracterizar o que esperam sobre o compromisso social e acadêmico, a ampliação

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das relações interpessoais, a perspectiva de sucesso profissional e a preocupação com a autoimagem. Pelos dados coletados, os alunos ingressantes valorizam a possibilidade de realizar atividades pedagógicas, como feiras científicas, debates, seminários e conferências, associadas à prática esportiva e a eventos culturais proporcionados pelas escolas. Esperam ter uma profissão valorizada socialmente, embora saibam que alcançar um bom salário, com o cenário econômico atual, é um grande desafio. De forma geral, há um desejo de chegar a cursar uma universidade e, para isso, pretendem alcançar melhores notas no decorrer do EMI. Os resultados também apontaram que há uma grande preocupação que ao final do curso sintam-se frustrados com a qualificação que escolheram.

Palavras-chave: ensino médio Integrado; expectativas acadêmicas; formação profissional.

EXPECTATIVAS ACADÊMICAS DE LOS RECIÉN LLEGADOS A LA ESCUELA SECUNDARIA INTEGRADA

RESUMEM. Los cambios realizados recientemente en la escuela secundaria, incluida la capacitación técnica profesional, imponen algunos desafíos a los estudiantes de primer año. Conocer sus expectativas, al comienzo del viaje, puede ser una estrategia importante para ayudarlo a enfrentar situaciones durante el entrenamiento. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo identificar y describir las Expectativas Académicas de los estudiantes matriculados en el primer año de Bachillerato Integrado (EMI) en escuelas públicas de las ciudades de Río de Janeiro y Niterói. En base a entrevistas con 33 participantes, 15 mujeres, se identificaron y describieron sus expectativas para el proceso de capacitación profesional. El enfoque cualitativo con metodología de análisis del discurso, utilizando el software IRAMUTEQ, comenzó con la creación de un corpus con entrevistas para caracterizar las expectativas sobre el compromiso social y académico, la expansión de las relaciones interpersonales, la perspectiva de éxito profesional y la preocupación por la autoimagen. A partir de los datos recopilados, los estudiantes entrantes valoran la posibilidad de llevar a cabo actividades educativas como ferias científicas, debates y conferencias relacionadas con la práctica de un evento deportivo y cultural proporcionado por la escuela. Esperan tener una profesión valorada socialmente aunque saben que lograr un buen salario con el escenario económico actual es un gran desafío. En general, existe el deseo de ir a la universidad y para eso tienen la intención de obtener mejores calificaciones durante la etapa. Los resultados también señalaron que existe una gran preocupación de que al final del curso se sientan frustrados con la con la titulación que eligieron.

Palabras-clave: escuela secundaria integrada; expectativas académicas; formación profesional.

Introduction

The high school reform, carried out by Law No. 13,415 in February 2017, amended the Guidelines and Bases of National Education Law (Brasil, 1996). Notable changes to the final stage of basic education include the consolidation of the Integrated High School (IHS), which combines professional education with general training (Silva, 2009; Wanzeler & Prates, 2019), an increased student workload at school (Chagas & Luce, 2020; Miranda & Rech, 2018; Silva & Boutin, 2018; Wanzeler & Prates, 2019) and a flexible curricular organization.

Another important point is the need to develop the General Sciences of Basic Education presented in the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC). These promote comprehensive education, placing students at the center of school experiences with general competencies that address students' physical, intellectual, cultural, social, and emotional aspects (Ferreti & Silva, 2017). The goal is to encourage young people's autonomy and protagonism in direct relation to their current and future choices, enabling them to plan and execute their life projects. Therefore, decisions about starting and continuing a career should emphasize involvement in community activities and family life as much as other factors.

Among the cited factors of the highlighted changes is the expansion of the workload, which may also occur outside the school environment or remotely. This expansion is defined by the duration and location of curricular activities and should encourage the development of modules, study centers, observatories, debate clubs, workshops, projects, and other forms of curricular organization. It is worth noting that the portion of the workload conducted remotely cannot exceed 20% of the total for daytime hours and 30% for nighttime hours (Brasil, 1996) for knowledge construction.

The BNCC defines these essential learning objectives as a normative document established by the 1988 Federal Constitution, the LDB, and the PNE. Developed with the participation of states, municipalities, and various societal sectors, it serves as a mandatory reference for structuring all public and private educational networks and is expressed in the form of competencies. In addition to defining learning, the BNCC is committed to comprehensive education, highlighting the need to intentionally construct educational processes that promote students' intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and cultural development and address societal challenges. It is based on a set of general and specific competencies for each area of knowledge (Silva, 2018). The main objective is to promote the integration of values such as ethics, freedom, democracy, social justice, plurality, solidarity, and sustainability. This enables students to develop skills for making decisions in diverse and challenging situations at school, at work, and in life outside these environments (Klein & Arantes, 2016).

In this scenario, students entering the final stage of basic education may choose professional training, for which they need the conditions necessary for their complete development (Ferreti, 2018; Lima & Maciel, 2018) in Integrated Secondary Education (EMI). On the other hand, the path to promoting qualifications for the world of work requires a prior understanding of this reality for the best possible performance in the face of challenges (Ferreira, 2017; Miranda et al., 2018). The motto "qualification for the world of work" was idealized in mass advertising campaigns spread across a variety of channels, targeting young people. Silva (2018) points out the significant risk of disqualification of HS, emphasizing criteria such as efficiency and productivity. Therefore, it can be argued that the ultimate goal is training. This preparation is administered and controlled by external interests, which subordinates individuals to the logic of mercantile activity (Filipe et al., 2021). The lack of studies investigating the reality of those entering IHS makes it difficult to understand what is being offered and what these students expect to receive.

Providing conditions for students' complete development is just as important as knowing their expectations of school, given these changes for which they were not prepared. Academic expectations are the predictions students make about how they will perform in school to meet their own needs and the needs of others involved in their education (Gomes & Soares, 2013). Little is known about the factors that contribute to the development of academic expectations upon entering IHS since it is a relatively new teaching modality. Silva Filho and Araújo (2017) state that expectations differ among students who remain in the

program, those who drop out, and those who graduate when they become disenchanted with the educational process. Given the changes in IHS, it is crucial to understand these expectations to help shape students' trajectories.

Investigating the academic expectations of students entering IHS involves searching for their subjective understanding of aspirations within the context of interactions with teachers, institutions, peers, and parents. These interactions influence the difficulties and/or advantages that students may experience throughout their professional development. Alves et al. (2012) point out that expectations can function as a filter through which students evaluate and make sense of current information and experiences in relation to future projections. Some studies have investigated various constructs and phenomena that may present associations or explanations linked to education, social interactions, self-image construction, stress, professional rewards, career development, and the development of competencies, such as those proposed by Almroth et al. (2020), Florêncio et al. (2017), Souza and Vazquez (2015), and Zhang et al. (2016).

Souza and Vazquez (2015) analyzed the expectations of 1,363 high school students from public schools, hypothesizing that they had high expectations for entering the job market and a low likelihood of continuing their studies. They highlighted that 75% of the students identified themselves as middle-class; for 78% of the participants, academic training was the only way to achieve better employment and salary prospects, as Delors et al. (1998) had previously noted. Their families supported their continued education; 83% intended to pursue higher education, while only 25% intended to take a technical course.

In this study, Souza and Vazquez (2015) highlight the students' unfamiliarity with the meanings of ENEM (National High School Exam, 23%), PROUNI (University for All Program, 35%), and SISU (Unified Selection System, 45.7%). On the positive side, students' greater knowledge of ENEM is related to its role as the primary access channel to most public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) through PROUNI and SISU. By problematizing the relationship between education, work, and social classes, without considering the identity-related or psychosocial universe of young people, the authors open the possibility of discussing the idealized subjective constructs about HS, which can determine how young people will face the challenges they experience at this stage, especially in technical and professional training. The BNCC, for IHS, focuses on employability, emphasizing competencies rather than the student's overall education. This targeted, prescriptive teaching model, linked to an efficientistic structure, inspired by behavioral theories, distances itself from an educational project aiming at critical and emancipatory training. Instead, it trains students for work according to political agendas, discouraging continuity and excluding these young people from searching for scientific knowledge (Filipe et al., 2021).

Zhang et al. (2016) examined 213 Chinese and 184 South Korean high school students and found that the South Korean students reported less stress due to academic expectations. They explained this difference by arguing that Chinese individuals experience more academic and family pressure than their South Korean counterparts. Family values are also a source of stress because they represent parental expectations that students feel pressured to meet in Chinese society. The study also indicates that Chinese female students experience more stress than male students, unlike South Korean adolescents. In Chinese society, women are expected to perform better academically, which is a determining factor for job placement. The results showed that, in general, the academic environment was more frequently reported as the main cause of stress than the personal environment. The five main sources of academic stress were parental expectations (96%), fear of failing exams

(96%), comparing oneself to others (89.9%), competing with other students for grades (89.4%), and the volume of assessments (74.7%). Identifying expectations in these and other areas can lead to the development of activities that minimize stress and enhance training in the final stage of basic education (Chase et al., 2014).

Florêncio et al. (2017) examined the stress perceptions and future expectations of 17 adolescents, aged 14 to 18, who were facing the challenges of HS. This sample was drawn from a total of 295 participants who responded to the Adolescent Stress Scale (ESA) (Tricoli & Lipp, 2011). The focus group, which focused on "Stress and Future Expectations," consisted of seven students who reported stress and 10 who did not. Based on the Bioecological Model of Human Development (Bronfenbrenner, 1996), which considers systemic structures involving the person, process, context, and time, data indicated that most stressed students had no future expectations (N=5). Among students without stress, the most common reports were professional fulfillment (N=5), raising a family (N=7), professional training (N=4), and helping family (N=4). The authors found that family relationships were a source of support for the non-stressed group but a source of stress for the stressed group, confirming that the quality of family relationships has negative effects on interpersonal dimensions.

Almroth et al. (2020) investigated adolescents' academic expectations and their association with future health and successful social integration. They explored potentially modifiable factors, such as parental involvement and expectations regarding their children's education, and individual student characteristics such as engagement, academic performance, sense of identity, and positive mental health, seeking to predict positive academic expectation development in early adolescence. Through their study of academic expectations, parental involvement, and their influence on academic achievement, identity synthesis, and mental health, the authors found that student engagement and higher grades were related to the resolution of uncertainties and the increase in academic expectations. Greater parental involvement in education was related to the resolution of uncertainties, while high parental expectations were related to an increase in student expectations.

Thus, changes in the HS structure and how students project their aspirations may raise some concerns, namely: Do those entering Brazilian IHS technical training programs have a realistic perception of the effort required to achieve their professional development goals? What are the main expectations of incoming IHS students regarding academic and social performance in technical training? What are the main expectations of incoming IHS students regarding stability in their chosen profession? Do they expect career rewards? Do they expect their profession to be valued in the future?

Thus, given the changes in the IHS and the studies reporting correlations between expectations and dropout, stress, and other constructs, the aim was to identify and describe the expectations of IHS students regarding aspects related to their education, academic and social performance, prospects for success in a valued profession, and stability and recognition in their chosen profession, and, in the future, obtaining rewards in their careers in a valued profession.

Method

Participants:

A total of 33 students, ranging in age from 15 to 18 (M = 14.6, SD = 2.7), were interviewed. Of those, 15 (45.5%) were female and enrolled in their first year of technical courses at an Integrated High School. The research took place at Integrated High Schools

in the public school system of the state of Rio de Janeiro. The sample size was determined by theoretical saturation, the point at which the researcher deemed it appropriate to discontinue data collection (Fontanella et al., 2011). For the present research, this assessment of theoretical saturation was carried out through an ongoing process of analyzing reports from the initial interviews. Considering the questions presented to the interviewees, which reflect the research objectives, the analysis sought the moment when the reports presented little substantial novelty for each field and for the discourses as a whole (Andrews et al., 2017).

Instruments

Interview Guide on Academic Expectations of Integrated High School Students

Due to the limited availability of instruments to measure academic expectations in higher education and their lack of application in IHS, a qualitative approach was chosen. This approach was developed to identify how individuals perceive the professional development process in IHS. It was chosen from a set of experiences to contribute to investigative practice by directing the most suitable techniques and instruments for specific contexts (Batista et al., 2017).

The interviews were conducted individually, audio-recorded, and transcribed with adjustments made to language that might hinder understanding. During the interviews, the interviewer asked for explanations of terms characterized as slang. A specific and flexible script was developed for the students, based on the Academic Expectation Scale for Freshman University Students by Marinho-Araujo et al. (2015), which is intended for a university context. Considering the structure, specific adaptations were made to the proposed dimensions for the present study: Academic Training, Social and Academic Commitment, Expansion of Interpersonal Relationships, Opportunity for Internationalization and Exchange, Concern for Self-Image, and Development of Competencies. Twenty questions were developed to assess each dimension. After a careful analysis of the vocabulary adopted, seven questions related to Internationalization and Exchange, and Development of Competencies, were eliminated. A pilot study with five students showed that the adopted script was suitable for the objective of the study.

Data collection procedures

The research was conducted in public schools in the state of Rio de Janeiro, which allowed us to access students. Participants were invited to take part in the study at their study sites, either randomly or by referral. They were informed of the study's objectives and that the interview was voluntary. The interviews were conducted during the participants' free and available time. All participants first completed the Sociodemographic Questionnaire (SDQ). This stage sought to maintain the topic of interest while simultaneously allowing interviewees freedom to construct a narrative and associate relevant topics with their expectations. This procedure facilitated interaction with the interviewees and helped build the corpus. This was demonstrated when, at the end of the meetings, the interviewees expressed their opinions about interacting with the researcher and whether they would recommend it to a colleague.

Ethical procedures

This research was submitted to and approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee under No. 4,641,336. Minor students signed assent forms, and their guardians

and older students signed informed consent forms. Authorization was also obtained from the educational institutions where the meetings with the students were held. Participants were informed that the research guarantees anonymity and that they could withdraw at any time without consequence or disadvantage. The students and their guardians authorized participation, following the recommendations of Resolutions 466/2012 and 510/2016, Articles 2 and 5. These articles state that the consent process, based on building a relationship of trust between researcher and research participant, does not necessarily require written documentation. In Art. 5, "[...] the process of communicating free and informed consent and assent can be carried out through oral expression [...]" (Conselho Nacional de Saúde, 2012, 2016), during data collection.

Data analysis

The material collected through the interviews was grouped into a dataset (corpus) containing responses from first-year IHS students at public institutions in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Based on this grouping, the material was then analyzed using the Descending Hierarchical Classification (DHC) in the IRAMUTEQ software (version 0.7). This method divides the data into text segments (TSs) and classifies them according to their respective vocabularies. Each vocabulary constitutes a class based on the frequency of reduced forms and matrices constructed by crossing the TSs and words (χ^2 test). The DHC organizes these emerging segments into their respective vocabularies by similarity, for each class encountered in the process. The software constructs these matrices, which generate the DHC dendrogram. The dendrogram shows the relationships between classes and provides a description of each lexical vocabulary (class), consisting of words that achieved significant results. The visualization of the results, through correspondence factor analysis (CFA), presents the most characteristic TSs for each of the words in each class. From this point, one can evoke the contextualization of each word in each class. One can then contextualize each word within a class, which is composed of multiple TSs, based on the vocabulary distribution of the segments that form the relevant lexical field or semantic context (Camargo & Justo, 2016).

Results

The DHC of the Expectations of IHS students generated a corpus of 199 TSs, 165 of which (82.91%) were used, with 7,164 occurrences (words, forms, or vocabulary). Of these, 879 were distinct words and 723 had a single occurrence. The four different vocabularies that emerged constituted a general grouping called 'Recognition of effort required to achieve goals,' with four classes. Class 2, with 51 TSs (30.91%) and named 'Events involving Pedagogical, Physical, and Cultural activities,' anchored a cluster titled 'Performance to achieve training,' which included Class 1 with 44 TSs (30.91%) and named 'Academic/school performance,' from which another cluster derived, titled 'Career reward,' which contains Classes 4, with 31 TSs (18.79%), 'Valued profession,' and Class 3, with 32 TSs (19.39%), 'Stability in the chosen profession.' Figure 1 presents the dendrogram with the list of vocabulary generated for each class for better visualization. This analysis revealed results based on similar and different words that encompassed a characteristic universe of each cluster.

The responses of incoming IHS students reveal the effort required to achieve their goals, resulting in Class 2, "Involvement in pedagogical, physical, and cultural activities." This class emphasizes the importance of participating in events involving sports, fairs, debates, and scientific conferences, despite considering shyness a barrier to overcome.

They hope to gain a greater cultural experience through these activities, even though they cannot yet identify an ideal frequency in these areas. Among physical activities, soccer is the most frequently cited sport by both genders, followed by Jiu-Jitsu and basketball. They report that greater concentration ('Paying attention') is required for pedagogical activities because distractions in these spaces can compromise concentration, as exemplified by the following statements:

> '[...] I'm very interested in participating in these activities, but the thing is, I'm embarrassed, and a bit shy,' 'Integrated high school is difficult, but I hope it goes well, and that I can dedicate myself more and pay more attention in class. I think debates are cool, I've only participated in a few fairs,' 'I think every quarter should have two or three meetings, and debates on various topics, whatever the topic [...] whoever volunteers to do the debate could participate [...] I intend to continue playing soccer,' 'I need to talk less, pay attention in class, and limit my use of social media,' 'I'm very close-minded about this, but I really want to participate in all of them.'

Derived from Class 2, the cluster called 'Performance to Achieve Training' included Class 1, 'Academic/School Performance,' in which achieving the best possible grades is expected. This goal is not only for acceptance, but also for the prospect of entering higher education and the job market upon completion, indicating a tendency to combine work and study. They understand that their peers' better grades do not cause discomfort. Their peers' superior results reflect each individual's ability to dedicate themselves to doing a good job, as demonstrated in the following excerpt:

> '[...] I need good grades to get an internship and a good position, I'm happy when my colleagues get good grades', 'I hope for a better grade, I'm sad when I get a bad grade', 'they don't bother me because if their grades are higher than mine, it's because they were more responsible and dedicated. After all, I'm also capable of getting good grades and getting a job that I studied for 3 years', 'they don't bother me because when you want to get a good grade, you have to study, and if someone studied, they deserve a good grade [...] I want to work soon so I can have my own money'.

Class 1, originating from the 'Performance to Achieve Training' cluster, generated the 'Career Reward' cluster, which brought together Classes 3 and 4. In Class 3, called 'Stability in the Chosen Profession,' the vocabulary emerges in which respondents' perspectives point to searching for a stable job with a good salary, although they were unable to define what this means in terms of current values. Of the 33 participants, 12 do not believe that the current economic scenario can offer conditions that allow them to quantify their ideal expectations. According to the data, expanding social relationships can pave the way for entry into the job market and further education. Working in a field they enjoy and feeling that they have chosen the right path is a prominent theme, as highlighted in the following statements:

> 'Yes, because changing jobs isn't good,' 'I've made more friends, and I hope to make more. They'll be friends who help me with my studies. I like helping and being helped, yes; it's always good.' 'It's kind of hard for us to talk about salaries with this pension reform. People will start earning less than four hundred reais, so earning a high salary will be really hard now.' 'I'm not good at socializing. [...] Yes, it's always good to be a professional that people like. Having a good relationship with people can help.' 'If I have a salary range that allows me to help my mother with household expenses [...] social relationships, then I hope to pursue a career. It is necessary.' 'I hope I feel good about my choice. There's no point in working in a field just for the money, I'd quit in the first week.'

In Class 4, 'Valued Profession,' students expect to have a valued profession that also pays well. To this end, they emphasize the need for parental support and satisfactory salaries. Nine respondents mentioned the need to help their mothers. They understand that the value of a profession is reflected not only in the salary paid but also in the importance given to those who benefit from the work performed. These aspects are highlighted in the following excerpts:

'Everyone wants a valued profession,' 'When you do something well at work and someone recognizes it, it's great. I hope to have a good salary, but it depends on what I'm working with,' 'It's important to be valued at work; I hope to have an income that allows me to live well and be able to help my mother,' 'My parents have always helped me, I hope to work with something I enjoy,' 'Whenever there's something, my father always goes out of his way to help,' 'Meeting new people and expanding my group is important to me. I hope to work with what I love and that it will be forever,' 'Because my parents always want me to succeed, and I count on their help.'

In this class, it is worth highlighting the speech of a participant who mentioned his perspective on the dynamism of the job market, in the following excerpt:

"Many professions are valued, but I don't know if they will be in 3 years."

Figure 1. Academic Expectations of Students Entering Integrated High School

Expectation of incoming IHS students

Greater effort to achieve goals

Better performance to achieve training

Class 2

Participation in Pedagogical, Physical and Cultural activities

51 TSs – 30.91%

Form	f	x^2
Participate	24	58.46
Cultural	10	19.87
Debate	8	19.79
Teacher	7	16.34
Activity	7	16.34
More	24	15.7
Soccer	8	14.98
Event	6	13.92
Attention	6	13.92

Class 1

Academic/School Performance

44 TSs – 30.91%

Form	f	x^2
Note	25	57.52
Bother	20	46.63
College	14	30.11
Get	22	22.91
Enter	11	22.37
Take	13	18.42
Better	11	13.91
Pass	7	12.61
Stay	9	11.78
Ability	6	10.28

Career reward

Class 3

Professional Stability

32 TSs – 19.39%

Form	f	x^2
Yes	26	41.02
Stable	10	33
Salary	12	84
High	7	31.77
Earn	5	20.76
Employment	10	16.28
Care	3	13.64
Training	4	12.7
Wait	23	12.12

Class 4

Valued profession

31 TSs – 18.79%

Form	f	x^2
Everything	8	22.47
Value	6	21.46
Profession	5	17
Father	7	15.54
Mother	10	14.53
Speak	6	11.85
Course	8	11.31
Work	9	10.25
Music	4	9.35

Integrate	6	13.92	See	9	9.7	Expectation	4	9.99	Currently	3	8.49
Less	8	12.01	No	43	8.57	Know	4	9.64	Time	5	8.43
Class	9	11.78	Dedicate	5	8.01	Now	4	8.9	Think	5	6.8
Shy	5	11.53	Because	22	7.78	Like	5	6.66	How	7	6.23
Form	6	10.28	Happy	6	7.65	Then	3	6.66	When	6	5.81
Right	7	9.79	Bad	3	6.83	Important	5	6.38	Disturb	3	5.74
Teaching	11	8.63	Great	3	6.83	Money	4	5.44	Expand	3	8.74
Pay	5	8.01	Complete	3	6.83	Network	2	5.12	Market	2	4.59

Discussion

The results indicated a general understanding of the expectations regarding the effort required to achieve objectives related to the guiding dimensions of the interview guide. Class 2 indicates a desire to participate in educational, cultural, and sporting events, which may be related to proactive social behavior in activities aimed at integrating into academic life. These responses address the question of responsibilities in the institutional and social spheres, which are associated with the dimensions Concern for Self-Image and Development of Competencies, on which the interview guide was based. Participants also reported that greater concentration is required during activities and that overcoming shyness is necessary for interacting in these moments, which are linked to the dimensions Academic Background, Social and Academic Commitment, and Expansion of Interpersonal Relationships.

These observations are in line with Wanzeler and Prates (2019), who argue that these activities promote knowledge construction because they are part of the BNCC's curricular components, which are articulated through various content and experiences. Peregrino (2011) argues that students who experienced these opportunities in better-equipped public schools, with amenities such as sports courts, gymnasiums, laboratories, and theater and dance spaces, had fewer failures.

Thus, interacting with different spaces within the school or in urban centers close to students' realities that offer such integration provides more frequent and elaborate experiences, contributing to their overall development. This is in contrast to students with more limited experiences due to the unavailability of such resources. Therefore, even if students cannot identify an intensity in this area in their current lives, they can develop a greater cultural background in systems that contemplate this diversity of development spaces that foster student engagement (Chase et al., 2014).

Derived from Class 2, by reporting that they expect better performance in pedagogical activities to achieve their training, the discourses indicate that students aspire to better grades for higher education, which is associated with Class 1 and the Academic Training dimension of the research's basic outline. However, the BNCC for IHS articulates producing a productive workforce in service to capital, which harms scientific academic development (Filipe et al., 2021; Silva, 2018). In this vocabulary, students entering IHS aspire to achieve the best possible grades, regardless of their peers' results. They believe that good performance is a result of personal effort, which is related to the Concern for Self-Image dimension. The reports emphasize the importance of acquiring relevant knowledge for their

desired future. Engaging in professional training is necessary to achieve this objective, which highlights the importance of the Social and Academic Commitment dimension. This fact was also observed by Chagas and Luce (2020) and Moura (2007).

Chase et al. (2014) argue that school engagement is key to fostering academic competence by developing positive social relationships with teachers and peers. Students who experience a positive, supportive educational atmosphere may be better able to take advantage of this support, which can lead to improved academic performance. The authors found that the frequency of engagement-oriented behaviors and student effort independently and significantly explained several measures of academic performance. The findings of this study suggest that students' expectations focus on institutional engagement.

When seeking better performance, students expect to be rewarded for their efforts with career stability and recognition of the importance of their work. By highlighting the prospect of expanding social relationships and achieving a valued profession in the future, combined with the desire to support their families, students indicate an aspiration for social mobility, as Zhang et al. (2016) point out. The results highlight the association with the dimensions of Expanding Interpersonal Relationships and Concern for Self-Image. This suggests that the career choice is an important model for students and their professional relationships, allowing them to perceive recognition of the importance of their work. Delors et al. (1998, p. 149) emphasize that, for many, completing technical training is the only way to obtain a higher-level profession. For these young people, the skills developed or acquired in technical training "[...] can be recognized by companies and the formal education system, including universities, especially during their professional lives."

The set of expectations related to Career Reward, which includes classes 3 and 4, is also associated with providing better living conditions for parents. This is once again associated with the Social and Academic Commitment dimension. Helping the family can mean acknowledging the efforts of loved ones who have an emotional influence on these students. In this regard, the results corroborate Almroth et al. (2020), who associated parental involvement with improved expectations about adolescents' future education.

The authors point out that greater parental involvement in education fosters a positive outlook, reducing students' uncertainty and contributing to higher grades. However, individual-level psychological factors, such as identity synthesis and positive mental health, have not been longitudinally associated with positive changes in academic expectations. While there is no consensus in the literature, Almroth et al. (2020) emphasize that parental involvement in education is a significant predictor of positive academic expectations in adolescents. They also note that school engagement predicts a positive change in academic expectations during this phase of adolescence, with a bidirectional relationship between academic performance and academic expectations.

The participants' responses indicate that, in the institutional, vocational, and social fields, as well as in the use of school and curricular resources, the expectations presented are linked to developing behavioral models with components focused on comprehensive training in all the guiding dimensions of the presented guide. Clearly, expectations related to building a quality academic career are not limited to understanding pedagogical techniques focused exclusively on subject content and processes. Rather, their effectiveness also resides in meeting the dimensions of Academic Training, Social and Academic Commitment, Expansion of Interpersonal Relationships, Concern for Self-Image, and Development of competencies that the general educational structure can offer, as Kriewaldt (2015) highlights. Klein and Arantes (2016) state that young people incorporate

school practices into their expectations as an important component for entering the job market, not as a determinant.

Final Considerations

This study aimed to identify and describe the Academic Expectations of students enrolled in Integrated High School (IHS) programs in public schools in the Rio de Janeiro and Niterói regions. One theoretical contribution of this work to Academic Expectations in IHS may be the combined development of physical, pedagogical, and cultural activities at school as a means of achieving expected professional development. Little is known about the process of constructing expectations in IHS because studies in this area either focus on preexisting expectations and their consequences or analyze a very specific reality. Providing data that contributes to the exploration of this mental framework for future technical training experiences in IHS is relevant, especially during a period of significant life changes for adolescents, including changes in beliefs, opinions, discoveries, and experiences. Creating spaces for discussion about the academic and social reality of IHS can help students find the path that best suits their potential and circumstances.

This study found that factors that could influence students' development, such as diversified activities, align with their expectations for building their careers at this level of education. Although this is a new topic for this group of students, they perceive the need for an educational structure that addresses their expectations. This may demonstrate a possible association between needs and expectations. In the future, an appropriate methodology should be used to investigate this association and identify the step prior to the imaginary creation of future experiences. Students are somewhat concerned about family and individual factors, such as engagement and the desire to follow parental guidance. These findings can improve our understanding of the processes involved in identifying academic, social, and professional goals, as well as how students envision their future paths involving activities that complement classrooms and laboratories.

Increasing the length of stay in school should include activities that meet these students' expectations, which involve understanding not only their expectations but also their needs. Schools can implement complementary activities such as seminars, discussion groups, and sports and cultural activities to create a healthy environment where students want to be without incurring additional financial costs. The greatest cost of this process may be time, for those who learn information that will not be useful to them and for those who teach it. Understanding students' expectations regarding their education is a step forward in creating an environment conducive to continued attendance. Developing a tool to measure this construct could provide valuable information for adapting the Integrated High School context to align with incoming students' expectations.

This research was limited in scope because it did not include regular high school students, which made it impossible to measure academic expectations in this population and make potential comparisons. This also made it impossible to extend the results to this context. Future studies may benefit from considering the socioeconomic conditions of the interviewees and grouping perspectives based on financial situation. In addition, a more in-depth discussion of the theory of competencies would be valuable. Due to the lack of instruments to measure this construct, developing a scale or questionnaire on academic expectations based on the found data could provide input for future induction programs to prevent incoming IHS students from withdrawing from school, changing courses, or dropping out.

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