

ARTICLE

WHAT DO THE DELIBERATIONS SAY ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO CULTURE, INTERACTIONS AND PLAY¹

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to identify the intentions of municipalities in the state of Rio de Janeiro regarding the organization of materials, spaces, times, and relationships to ensure the realization of children's rights to cultures, interactions, and play in the deliberations authorizing the establishment and operation of educational institutions, issued by the Municipal Education Councils. The methodology considers the implementation of public policies and analyzes the speeches made in such deliberations, which reflect a clash of various social voices and may produce different effects of meaning, depending on the discursive strategies employed. The field was selected based on the concept of pairs, considering that municipalities with similar characteristics (population size, enrollment numbers, and GDP) may act differently regarding access. The 92 municipalities were categorized into eight groups to ensure better representation of these disparate initial conditions, with each group comprising municipalities with similar conditions (population size and GDP), but which achieved different results in the expansion of preschool between 2010 and 2017. The study included 16 municipalities and the state capital. It concludes that some national documents succeed in asserting themselves within the context of policy induction, whereas others are not even mentioned in the municipal documents. There are various formats and compositions of councils, generally including representatives of municipal departments, particularly SMEs, as well as civil society representatives, each with distinct understandings of "parity". In the deliberations studied, regarding terms related to culture, only 4 of the documents from the 17 municipalities investigated not refer whatsoever to the topic. In the category of interactions, 3 of the 17 documents do not mention subjects related to the topic; the same applies to play.

Keywords: municipal deliberations, culture, interaction, play

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O QUE DIZEM AS DELIBERAÇÕES SOBRE OS DIREITOS DAS CRIANÇAS ÀS CULTURAS, ÀS INTERAÇÕES E ÀS BRINCADEIRAS

RESUMO: O artigo tem como objetivo identificar a intenção de municípios do Rio de Janeiro na organização de materiais, espaços, tempos e relações para efetivação dos direitos às culturas, às interações e às brincadeiras nas deliberações de autorização e funcionamento aprovadas pelos Conselhos Municipais de Educação. A metodologia tem em conta a implementação de políticas públicas e analisa os discursos pronunciados em tais deliberações, que refletem um confronto de diversas vozes sociais e podem gerar diferentes efeitos de sentido, dependendo das estratégias discursivas empregadas. O campo foi selecionado com base no conceito de pares, considerando que municípios com características semelhantes (porte, matrículas e PIB) podem agir de forma desigual quanto ao acesso. Os 92 municípios foram categorizados em 8 grupos para obter melhor representatividade dessas díspares condições iniciais, com cada grupo contendo municípios com condições semelhantes (porte e PIB), mas que apresentaram diferentes resultados na expansão da pré-escola entre 2010 e 2017. O estudo incluiu 16 municípios e a capital do estado. Conclui-se que alguns documentos nacionais conseguem se impor no ambiente de indução, enquanto outros não são nem mencionados nos documentos municipais. Há diversos formatos de conselhos e composições variadas, geralmente com representantes de secretarias municipais, especialmente das SMEs e da sociedade civil, cada um com concepções distintas de “paridade”. Nas deliberações estudadas, em relação aos termos relacionados à cultura, dos documentos de 17 municípios investigados, apenas 4 não fazem referência alguma à temática. Na categoria interações, 3 dos 17 documentos não citam os temas relacionados à temática, o mesmo ocorrendo com a temática da brincadeira.

Palavras-chave: deliberações municipais, cultura, interação, brincadeira

QUÉ DICEN LAS DELIBERACIONES SOBRE LOS DERECHOS DE LOS NIÑOS A LAS CULTURAS, A LAS INTERACCIONES Y A LOS JUEGOS

RESUMEN: El artículo tiene como objetivo identificar las intenciones de los municipios del estado de Río de Janeiro en cuanto a la organización de materiales, espacios, tiempos y relaciones para hacer efectivos los derechos de los niños a las culturas, a las interacciones y a los juegos, tal como se reflejan en las deliberaciones de autorización y funcionamiento aprobadas por los Consejos Municipales de Educación. La metodología tiene en cuenta la implementación de políticas públicas y analiza los discursos pronunciados en dichas deliberaciones, que reflejan una confrontación entre diversas voces sociales y pueden generar diferentes efectos de sentido, dependiendo de las estrategias discursivas empleadas. El campo de estudio fue seleccionado a partir del concepto de pares, considerando que los municipios con características similares (tamaño, matrículas y PIB) pueden actuar de forma desigual en cuanto al acceso. Los 92 municipios se categorizaron en ocho grupos con el fin de obtener una mejor representatividad de estas diferentes condiciones iniciales, incluyendo en cada grupo municipios con condiciones similares (tamaño y PIB), pero que presentaron diferentes resultados en la expansión de la educación preescolar entre 2010 y 2017. El estudio incluyó 16 municipios y la capital del estado. Se concluye que algunos documentos nacionales logran imponerse en el ámbito de inducción de políticas, mientras que otros ni siquiera son mencionados en los documentos municipales. Existen diversos formatos de consejos y composiciones variadas, generalmente con representantes de secretarías municipales, especialmente de las SMEs, así como de la sociedad civil, cada uno con concepciones distintas de “paridad”. En las deliberaciones estudiadas, en relación con los términos relacionados con la cultura, de los documentos de 17 municipios investigados, solo 4 no hacen ninguna mención al tema. En la categoría de las interacciones, 3 de los 17 documentos no mencionan temas relacionados con la temática, lo mismo ocurre con la temática del juego.

Palabras clave: deliberaciones municipales, cultura, interacción, juego

INTRODUCTION

“Things are because we see them,
and what we see,
and how we see it,
depends on the Arts that have influenced us.”
(Oscar Wilde, 2007, p. 1088)

This article investigates Early Childhood Education (ECE) policies proposed by municipalities in the state of Rio de Janeiro (ERJ). It focuses on resolutions governing the authorization and operation of educational institutions, as approved by the Municipal Education Councils (CMEs). The study aims to identify municipalities' intentions regarding the organization of materials, spaces, time, and relationships necessary to fulfill rights related to culture, interaction, and play.

With the 1988 Federal Constitution (CF/1988) and the subsequent approval of various laws regulating, amending, and updating the system (Brazil, 1988, 1990a, 1990b, 1996), ECE has adopted new legal frameworks and become the first stage of Basic Education (BE). This stage encompasses daycare services for children ages 0 to 3 and mandatory preschool for children ages 4 and 5. Both the CF/1988 and the other relevant laws address the terms discussed in this article.

The methodological approach focuses on the implementation of public policies, which, according to Lotta et al. (2021, p. 397) and drawing from Hill and Varone (2016), involves “understanding how policy rules and plans are transformed into concrete actions through the activities of various actors.” The authors emphasize that education policies in Brazil unfold through multi-layered and multi-level processes (involving different levels of government and various entities within them). These processes operate within the legal framework established after the 1988 Constitution and under a system of intergovernmental collaboration in which general standards are defined nationally and coordinated by the Federal Government. “Thus, considering processes of change in education means developing participatory arrangements involving multiple actors who generally do not operate within a hierarchical structure” (Lotta et al., 2021, p. 402). Municipalities draft these documents within a context of policy implementation shaped by federal government initiatives. This process is characterized by significant conflict, particularly regarding conceptual issues. While participation in implementing ECE policy is virtually mandatory, the drafting process by Municipal Education Councils (CMEs) experiences low ambiguity due to a consistent legal framework, despite the existing conflicts.

Given this scenario, we ask: how do the institutional discourses delivered by CMEs translate and construct meaning about the reality of policy implementation in ECE? Drawing on Bakhtin (1999), who posits that discourse only gains clarity when situated within a dialogic system, we must discuss the power of narrative to shape perceptions through the constant production of meaning. For him, social life is inherently dialogic. The discourses articulated through these deliberations reflect a clash of multiple voices and can generate vastly different effects of meaning, depending on the discursive strategies employed.

Analyzing the work of Alice Krieg-Planque (2012), Hutin and Schepens (2022) emphasize that discourse analysis focuses on the reality of discourse within its specific context and situation. The authors highlight several conditions that influence how political and institutional discourses operate. These include the social factors that contribute to the effectiveness of performative utterances, the

relationship between the legitimacy and authority of the discourse, and the way in which specific organizations define their identity, missions, and actions through speech acts. An utterance encompasses both presupposed and implicit meanings. The former establishes a structure based on self-evidence, while the latter reflects the deeper significance of the utterance.

Our choice of the study area was based on data regarding GDP per capita, population size, and changes in preschool enrollment between 2010 and 2017 across the 92 municipalities of Rio de Janeiro state. The municipalities were categorized into eight groups to represent varying initial conditions. These groups were structured based on four population groups (up to 20,000 inhabitants; 20,001 to 50,000; 50,001 to 200,000; and over 200,000), and two GDP per capita groups (up to R\$12,500.00 and above R\$12,501.00). Once the data were organized into these eight categories, two municipalities were selected from each, chosen for having similar initial conditions yet differing outcomes regarding preschool expansion, with the state capital also included in the selection.

The resolutions were located through online searches. Because these documents are generally unavailable on municipal government websites, locating them often required extensive searches, frequently through the website of the Rio de Janeiro State Public Prosecutor's Office (MPRJ-*Ministério Público*). The empirical material for this study consists of resolutions issued by the CMEs that establish operating standards for ECE institutions. However, in the absence of such resolutions, other documents were used, as shown in Table 1, which reveals that most municipalities (14 out of 17) had a deliberation formally approved by the respective Municipal Education Council.

Table 1 – Documents establishing operating standards for Early Childhood Education in municipalities of the state of Rio de Janeiro, by per capita GDP values and population ranges

Municipality	Document	Summary	Access: site...
1.1.1 – Cambuci	CME Deliberation n.º 003/2021	It updates Municipal Education Council Resolution 002 of August 4, 2021, which establishes standards for the authorization and closure of private school units in the Municipality of Cambuci, RJ, based on national and state regulations.	City hall
1.1.2 – São Sebastião do Alto	Decree n.º 306/1999a	It constitutes the education system of the municipality of São Sebastião do Alto.	MPRJ
1.2.1 – Vassouras	CME Deliberation n.º 01/2010	It establishes standards for the authorization of Early Childhood Education institutions within the Vassouras Municipal System and provides for other matters.	MPRJ
1.2.2 – Iguaba Grande	CME Deliberation n.º 01/2014	It establishes standards for Early Childhood Education within the municipal education system of Iguaba Grande and repeals Deliberation 01/2006 of April 11, 2006.	Unidentified
1.3.1 – Saquarema	CME Deliberation n.º 08/2023	It establishes operating standards for early childhood education institutions within the Saquarema Municipal Education System, provides for other matters, and repeals CME Deliberation 03 of October 23, 2014.	Official Gazette
1.3.2 – Guapimirim	Resolution SME n.º 005/2021	It approves the regulation establishing guidelines for student enrollment and class placement in Early Childhood Education units (Daycare and Preschool), Elementary Education, Youth and Adult Education, and Special Education within the public school network of the Guapimirim Municipal Education System, and provides for other matters.	Official Gazette
1.4.1 – Belford Roxo	Deliberation n.º 28/CME/2021	It establishes standards for the authorization and operation of Early Childhood Education within the Municipal Education System of Belford Roxo.	City hall

1.4.2 – Nova Iguaçu	Deliberation n.º 02/CME/2014	It establishes standards for the authorization of the operation of private early childhood education institutions within the Municipal Education System of the City of Nova Iguaçu, and provides for other matters.	MPRJ
2.1.1 – Carmo	Deliberation CME n.º 001/2012	It regulates Early Childhood Education within the municipality of Carmo, establishes standards for the authorization of the operation of private Early Childhood Education institutions, and provides for other matters.	MPRJ
2.1.2 – Quatis	Law n.º 496/2005	It provides for the Municipal Education System of Quatis and makes other provisions.	Chamber
2.2.1 – Santo Antônio de Pádua	CME Deliberation n.º 01/2022	It establishes regulations for the authorization of operation and the cessation of activities of private in-person early childhood education institutions, the first stage of basic education, that are part of the Santo Antônio Municipal Education System, and provides for other matters.	City hall
2.2.2 – Paraíba do Sul	CME Deliberation /PS n.º 01/2005a	It establishes standards for the authorization of private early childhood education institutions that care for and educate children aged 0 to 5 years and 11 months.	Unidentified
2.3.1 – Barra do Piraí	CME Deliberation n.º 02/2012	It establishes curricular and operational guidelines and defines the rules for authorizing the operation of early childhood education institutions within the Municipal Education System of Barra do Piraí.	MPRJ
2.3.2 – Teresópolis	CME Deliberation n.º 06/2007	It establishes norms for the operation and organization of the Teresópolis Education System and provides for other matters.	SME
2.4.1 – Niterói	CME Deliberation n.º 039/2019a	It establishes guidelines for the operation of institutions serving early childhood education within the Niterói Municipal Education System.	PGM
2.4.2 – Duque de Caxias	CME Deliberation n.º 14/2014	It repeals CME/DC Deliberation 02/2005, which establishes the standard for authorizing the operation of private early childhood education institutions that care for and educate children aged 0 (zero) to 5 (five) years and 11 (eleven) months.	MPRJ
Rio de Janeiro	E/CME Deliberation n.º 38/2020	Amends Deliberation E/CME 30 of January 3, 2019, which establishes standards for the authorization of the operation of private or community-based early childhood education institutions within the Rio de Janeiro Municipal Education System and provides for other matters, now taking effect with new wording.	City hall

Source: Authors' table. Note: Municipality pairs starting with the number “1” have a GDP per capita of up to R\$12,500.00, while those starting with the number “2” have a GDP per capita above R\$12,501.00. The pairs were grouped in ascending order (lowest to highest enrollment expansion) based on four population ranges: up to 20,000 (1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2); 20,001 to 50,000 (1.2.1, 1.2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2); 50,001 to 200,000 (1.3.1, 1.3.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2); and above 200,000 (1.4.1, 1.4.2, 2.4.1, 2.4.2).

This study is organized as follows: first, it identifies references to national legislation in municipal resolutions; second, it analyzes the categories of culture, interaction, and play in these resolutions; and finally, it presents the study's concluding considerations.

REFERENCES TO THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN MUNICIPAL RESOLUTIONS

To identify the legal framework underpinning the municipal resolutions, we examined their preambular clauses, which generally indicate the legal bases on which the documents were drafted. Based on the national legal instruments relevant to ECE policy, we examined whether these national documents influenced the municipal resolutions, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – National legislation referenced in the municipal deliberations included in the sample

Municipalities	CF/1988	ECA	LDB	PNE	Resolution CNE/CEB 01/1999 (Dcneis/1999)	Resolution CNE/CEB 05/2009 (Dcneis/2009)	Resolution CNE/CP 02/2017 (BNCC)	Other Resolutions
1.1.1 – Cambuci			X					
1.1.2 – São Sebastião do Alto	X		X					
1.2.1 – Vassouras			X					X
1.2.2 – Iguaba Grande		X	X					X
1.3.1 – Saquarema		X	X				X	
1.3.2 – Guapimirim		X	X					X
1.4.1 – Belford Roxo			X					
1.4.2 – Nova Iguaçu	X	X	X		X			
2.1.1 – Carmo	X		X					
2.1.2 – Quatis	X		X					
2.2.1 – Santo Antônio de Pádua		X	X				X	
2.2.2 – Paraíba do Sul			X					
2.3.1 – Barra do Piraí	X		X	X		X		X
2.3.2 – Teresópolis			X					
2.4.1 – Niterói	X		X	X		X		X
2.4.2 – Duque de Caxias			X		X			
Rio de Janeiro	X	X	X				X	

Source: Authors' table. Note: Municipality pairs starting with the number “1” have a GDP per capita of up to R\$12,500.00, while those starting with the number “2” have a GDP per capita above R\$12,501.00. The pairs were grouped in ascending order (lowest to highest enrollment expansion) based on four population ranges: up to 20,000 (1.1.1, 1.1.2, 2.1.1, 2.1.2); 20,001 to 50,000 (1.2.1, 1.2.2, 2.2.1, 2.2.2); 50,001 to 200,000 (1.3.1, 1.3.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2); and above 200,000 (1.4.1, 1.4.2, 2.4.1, 2.4.2).

The main purpose of this table is to show how nationally produced documents influence municipalities in formulating their respective deliberations. Through these documents, CMEs' communicative act legitimizes implementation within a legal framework that enables their development and approval.

We observed no significant differences between the regional groupings or the different population size categories. National documents have played a key role, with some being more influential than others. For example, the 1988 Constitution (Brazil, 1988) and the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB) (Brazil, 1996). In contrast, the National Education Plan (PNE) (Brazil, 2014) and the Resolutions of the National Council of Education (CNE) (Brazil, 1999, 2009, 2017) have had less impact. Implementing these laws ensures the legitimacy of municipal proposals, particularly the LDB,

which regulates the organization of Brazilian education based on the principles established by the 1988 Constitution. A review of national legislation reveals that ECE is increasingly gaining importance in both public policy agendas and academic discussions. Access to this level of education, along with its quality, is being recognized as a fundamental right for children and their families.

Upon reviewing the laws concerning national education, we find that children are recognized as cultural participants. The educational process must honor the cultural, artistic, and historical values inherent in their social context, ensuring that children have the freedom to create and access cultural resources. Given that “culture” is a multifaceted term that encompasses a set of values, norms, practices, beliefs, customs, artifacts, and material instruments that mediate and shape human activities, influencing how individuals think, act, and interact, what meanings are ascribed to culture? How can these meanings be addressed within the school environment?

Culture is simultaneously the world presented to us and the way that world tells us who we are. How is this world presenting itself to children, and what does it say about them?

Chauí (2006) argues that giving culture material form through cultural products is a way to systematize, preserve, and circulate it, as well as to safeguard its longevity, ensuring that more people across time can access it. The distinction between practices that can be systematized and preserved through records or products and those that exist as events lies in the modes of their transmission, circulation, and potential for learning, that is, in the way culture becomes accessible to people and the way people can engage in a dialogue with culture.

Analysis of the material allows us to group the meanings of culture into four broad, interrelated dimensions or non-hierarchical levels:

The first dimension concerns the protection and dissemination of culture and cultural assets, as outlined in the 1988 Constitution (Brazil, 1988), a document in which the word “culture” appears 60 times. This dimension also highlights the definition of Brazilian cultural heritage as comprising both tangible and intangible assets, the recognition of lands traditionally occupied by Indigenous peoples as essential to their physical and cultural reproduction, and the teaching of Brazilian history in a manner that acknowledges the contributions of diverse cultures and ethnic groups to the formation of the Brazilian people.

The second dimension concerns the right of access to culture and the transmission of cultural concepts, as endorsed by the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA) (Brazil, 1990). This dimension highlights the protection of the right to familial transmission of beliefs and cultures, respect for social and cultural identity, and the guarantee of the right to information, culture, leisure, sports, entertainment, performances, and products and services.

The third dimension reinforces the importance of culture in human development, grounded in the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB): “education encompasses the formative processes that unfold in family life, human interaction, work, teaching and research institutions, social movements and civil society organizations, and cultural manifestations” (Brazil, 1996, Art. 1).

The fourth dimension is an extension of the third. The meanings of the word “culture” are expressed through interactions and play, grounded in pedagogical proposals. They are anchored in the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEIs) (Brazil, 1999, 2009) and the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC) (Brazil, 2018).

The guidelines present a set of practices aimed at integrating children's experiences and knowledge with the cultural, artistic, environmental, scientific, and technological heritage. They recognize the children as historical subjects and rights-holders “who, through the interactions, relationships, and daily practices they experience, construct their personal and collective identity, play, imagine, fantasize, desire, learn, observe, experiment, narrate, question, and construct meanings regarding nature and society, thereby producing culture” (Brazil, 2009, Art. 4).

Finally, the BNCC (Brazil, 2018) shows the curriculum to be experienced in ECE schools. Interactions and play, foundational elements of daily life, must be guaranteed through six rights of learning and development: Living together, Playing, Participating, Exploring, Expressing, and Knowing oneself. Regarding the right of learning and development termed “living together,” the document clearly highlights culture: “Living together with other children and adults, in small and large groups, using

different forms of expression, and broadening knowledge of oneself and others, as well as respect for culture and human differences” (Brazil, 2018, p. 38). For the learning right designated as “playing,” both play and culture appear explicitly. The right designated as “exploring” includes expanding knowledge about culture in its various forms: the arts, writing, science, and technology. The right referred to as “expressing” highlights the importance of using different forms of expression. For the learning right termed “knowing oneself,” the document proposes concepts central to this study: culture, interaction, and play.

The legal references mentioned earlier align with international law, which emphasizes the importance of the right to culture, leisure, and play, among others, recognized by the international community following the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on November 20, 1959 (UN, 1959). Principle VII of that document establishes the “right to free education and to leisure for children.” This right was further strengthened by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, also adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 20, 1989, and promulgated by the Brazilian government (Brazil, 1990b). The Convention is more than a mere “declaration of intent”; it is a treaty signed by UN member states, including Brazil, aimed at protecting children and adolescents worldwide. The document expands upon children's rights, moving beyond the conventional approach of viewing (or guaranteeing) them solely in terms of freedom from child exploitation, a context in which play often fails to appear as a recognized right.

According to the Convention (Brazil, 1990b), the right to play, as well as the right to participate in cultural life, was explicitly outlined in Article 31, with the following text:

- States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
- States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational, and leisure activity.

Play has gained such significance that UNESCO/UN designated May 28, 1999, the date of the International Conference on Toy Libraries, as “World Play Day” to draw adults' attention to this right and responsibility of children. Despite this movement, references to national documents that articulate the meanings of culture through interactions and play are scarce at the municipal level.

National legislative documents play a significant role in the deliberations of the municipalities in the sample regarding three dimensions: the protection and promotion of culture and cultural assets, as formulated in the 1988 Constitution (Brazil, 1988); the right to access and transmission of culture, as endorsed by ECA (Brazil, 1990); and culture as a means of human development, as established by LDB (Brazil, 1996). However, the municipalities examined rarely reference documents that concretely define culture through interactions and play, particularly in their educational proposals. The absence of references to the DCNEIs and the BNCC (Brazil, 2009, 2018) suggests that quality requirements may be neglected because of the predominance of municipal legislation.

THE MEANINGS OF THE TERM “CULTURE” IN MUNICIPAL RESOLUTIONS

Based on an analysis of the selected material, we seek to identify the meanings of the statements found in municipal deliberations, highlighting that the democratic management structures in the legislation are essential for democratizing education and fostering citizenship. The approval of deliberations by these councils is one of the keys to promoting social participation in education through a process of collective construction involving the various actors operating across different educational settings.

According to Bordignon and Pereira (2008, p. 39), “education councils are executive bodies situated within the management structure of the education system and, in most municipalities, linked to the Department of Education.” Their scope of action is confined to the Executive Branch, precluding any encroachment upon the Legislative or Judicial spheres, and involves exercising either an advisory

function (where the council offers an opinion) or a deliberative one (where the council makes a decision). Within the deliberative role, regulatory authority is paramount, as it “empowers the council to regulate the functioning of the education system and interpret the proper application of the law within its jurisdiction. Defining curricular guidelines, accrediting institutions, and other such tasks are standard, traditional responsibilities of these councils” (Bordignon & Pereira, 2008, p. 39).

Mapping the intentions of municipal documents

To survey the “culture” category, we focused on the following terms or keywords: cultural diversity, different cultures, different languages, cultural manifestations, cultural traditions, cultural characteristics, artistic manifestations, cultural expressions, artistic expressions, cultural diagnosis, popular culture, children's culture, access to cultural assets, cultural activities, historical-cultural heritage, historical subject, stories, sociocultural, art.

We begin our analysis with the conception of the child found in several official resolutions. In the ‘whereas’ clauses, Vassouras emphasizes ‘that children are social and historical subjects situated within a culture that shapes them and is, in turn, shaped by them.’² This conception of the child runs through several municipal resolutions, such as that of Teresópolis, which defines the child as a social and historical subject who both influences the environment of their development and is shaped by it. The deliberations from Santo Antônio de Pádua and Rio de Janeiro add that the pedagogical proposal must be grounded in a conception of the child as a citizen, a person in the process of development, and an active social and historical subject in the construction of their own knowledge. Saquarema and Barra do Piraí go even further, establishing that Early Childhood Education pedagogical proposals must view the child as a historical subject and a rights-holder who interacts, plays, imagines, fantasizes, desires, learns, observes, experiments, narrates, questions, and constructs meaning regarding nature and society, thereby producing culture. The Duque de Caxias deliberation stipulates that the development and implementation of the pedagogical proposal must take into account conceptions of the child, childhood, education, Early Childhood Education, knowledge, culture, learning, development, curriculum, and society, as well as the socioeconomic and cultural profile of the population to be served and the community in which the institution is located. Identifying these conceptions of the child within the resolutions brings us closer to the definitions outlined in the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEIs) (Brazil, 2009): regardless of race/ethnicity, religion, social class, origin, place of residence, gender, or parental status, children “have the right to quality education that expands their development, cultural horizons, and knowledge of the physical and social world, as well as the formation of their subjectivity and self-esteem, while fostering exchanges and interactions” (Kramer & Motta, 2010, p. 2).

Some municipalities, such as Vassouras, Barra do Piraí, and Teresópolis, incorporate the importance of children's cultural aspects into the development of their pedagogical proposals. This inclusion is crucial because it recognizes that children are shaped by several cultural influences. Thus, the child is viewed as a “young person who produces culture and is produced by it, who plays, learns, feels, creates, and changes throughout the historical process that constitutes human life” (Kramer & Motta, 2010, p. 1).

The aesthetic principles outlined in the DCNEIs (Brazil, 2009) are closely linked to cultural aspects in both the development of pedagogical proposals and the activities planned and implemented. These principles are reflected in the deliberations from Santo Antônio de Pádua, as well as those from Teresópolis and Rio de Janeiro. Some documents, such as those from Saquarema, Barra do Piraí, Niterói, and Duque de Caxias, provide a more detailed explanation of these aesthetic principles (linking them to cultural expressions) by highlighting the importance of freedom of expression across various artistic and cultural forms. These expressions are examined in detail in the Barra do Piraí text, which indicates that the pedagogical practices comprising the ECE curriculum proposal must be guided by interactions and play. These practices should ensure experiences that foster children's immersion in diverse forms of

² To facilitate reading, the municipal “documents” will not be cited individually, as their types and years of approval are already presented in Table 1.

expression and their progressive mastery of various genres and modes of communication, enabling ethical and aesthetic experiences with other children and cultural groups, broadening their frames of reference and identities through dialogue and the recognition of diversity, promoting relationships and interactions with diverse forms of music, visual and graphic arts, cinema, photography, dance, theater, poetry, and literature; and facilitating interaction with and knowledge of Brazilian cultural expressions and traditions. Cultural expressions form part of educational processes, in accordance with Article 1 of the LDB (Brazil, 1996). As seen in these statements, within the pedagogical field, the aesthetic refers here to the human mode of appropriating reality, “linked to the social, cultural, and historical conditions of each subject; it therefore presents variations [...] that question tradition, that which is real and commonplace, as it also manifests in the presence of the ugly, the sublime, the comic, the monstrous, and the tragic” (Souza; Vasconcelos; Schmith, 2021, p. 5).

Access to culture manifests in various ways. For example, the “whereas” clauses of the Saquarema resolution emphasize that early childhood education (ECE) is fundamentally important in adapting children to formal educational settings, facilitating their understanding and mastery of the languages and content inherent to Elementary Education (EF). This perspective views ECE as a preparatory stage for the future rather than just an event in the present. Other resolutions take a different approach. The Nova Iguaçu resolution, for instance, highlights the purposes of ECE as recognizing children's cultural characteristics, valuing childhood culture, and democratizing access to cultural resources. It ensures the inclusion of diverse forms of expression, such as pictorial, performing, musical, visual, image-based, and written forms of expression, in cultural and artistic activities. According to the Carmo resolution, achieving the goal of a child's holistic development requires respecting their personal history and individual and cultural characteristics. This includes valuing childhood culture and democratizing access to cultural assets, while also ensuring access to cultural and artistic activities that involve various forms of human expression, including pictorial, performing, musical, visual, image-based, and written forms of expression. The Barra do Piraí resolution identifies promoting equal educational opportunities for children from different social classes as a guideline in its pedagogical proposal. This is aimed at ensuring equitable access to cultural resources and recognizing the lived experiences of childhood. Additionally, the Niterói resolution states that a child's holistic development must be rooted in respect for cultural characteristics. This involves valuing childhood culture, democratizing access to cultural assets, and guaranteeing access to cultural and artistic activities that encompass diverse forms of human expression. The importance of cultural expressions is also highlighted by the municipalities of Belford Roxo, Niterói, and Duque de Caxias, which mandate that outdoor areas support artistic expression activities. Public cultural policies play a crucial role in children's development by ensuring their right to enjoy cultural resources and recognizing them as active participants in cultural creation and implementation. In this context, promoting children's access to and active involvement in culture is essential for building a more inclusive and diverse society (Brazil, 2024, online).

Culture can be understood as synonymous with education, rooted in the access conditions to products or information selected by institutions that consider themselves responsible for recording history. “This gives rise to expressions such as ‘having culture’ or ‘being cultured’, adjectives applied to individuals who have had access to a wide variety of cultural products or who have been able to ‘acquire’ such products” (Pereira, 2016, p. 53). Under this conception, children are viewed merely as recipients rather than producers of culture. Pereira (2016) invites us to reflect on the creation of culture as a collective endeavor, recognizing that children possess the capacity to experience the world, thereby enabling them to generate their own memories and actively engage with culture.

The issue of access is closely connected to the themes of cultural diversity and the existence of different cultures. Cambuci emphasizes that any educational proposal should be developed in a participatory manner that takes cultural diversity into account. Similarly, documents from Saquarema, Nova Iguaçu, Barra do Piraí, Niterói, and Duque de Caxias highlight the importance of adhering to the principles outlined in the National Curriculum Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (DCNEIs), which include respect for different cultures as a core ethical principle. It is essential for children to have access to various cultural perspectives to enrich their understanding and experiences. As noted by Pereira (2016, p. 56), “the history of these children and the history of their families can be recognized as

fundamental elements of their cultural repertoires." This recognition is crucial for considering the ethical implications of forming values and aspirations that are disconnected from their own histories.

Article 3, Item II of the LDB (Brazil, 1996) establishes that education shall be provided based on the principles of freedom to learn, teach, conduct research, and disseminate culture, thought, art, and knowledge. These principles are echoed in the documents from Saquarema and Quatis, specifically, in this context, highlighting the dissemination of culture. Regarding Quatis, the legislation consulted further establishes that education in the municipality (not referring exclusively to Early Childhood Education) is grounded in various principles, including respect for the values of popular culture. While disseminating culture is a function of Early Childhood Education units, it is also important to pay close attention to the topics children bring up and the practices they construct among themselves. Understanding culture as the link connecting us to others, whether contemporaries or ancestors, calls for the creation of strategies to circulate culture, transforming it into an exercise in belonging and, simultaneously, an exercise in communication. According to Pereira (2016, p. 57), "bringing culture to life entails fostering encounters, recording events, creating new languages, establishing collective experiences, learning to be together, listening to lived stories, and engaging in dialogue through words, gestures, and even silences and moments of quiet."

References to heritage were observed in three municipalities. In Cambuci, the mention of institutions authorized to operate in listed buildings demonstrates a concern for preservation. In Belford Roxo, the general objectives include expanding children's experiences and knowledge by incorporating elements of cultural and artistic heritage, thereby promoting the holistic development of early childhood education students. In Barra do Pirai, the early childhood curriculum is described as a set of practices that seek to link children's experiences and knowledge with cultural and artistic heritage, among other forms of knowledge. According to Canclini (2000, cited in Passos, 2017, p. 10), cultural heritage is a social construct with its own culture. It "encompasses not only historical monuments, as was long assumed, but also urban design and other physical assets, as well as lived experience embodied in languages, knowledge, intangible traditions, and ways of using goods and physical spaces." The general population often fails to recognize its own cultural heritage and, consequently, does not value it. For Passos (2017, p. 10), "knowledge, appreciation, and preservation of cultural heritage play a vital role in ensuring 'cultural continuity' and fostering a sense of identity and belonging." Thus, the author argues that the construction of meaning regarding the cultural heritage that tells our history should take place throughout the process of individual development, starting in early childhood education, "since it is during childhood that children internalize or reinterpret 'cultural content', such as images, symbols, values, models, or representations, contributing to the reproduction and appreciation of culture" (Passos, 2017, p. 10).

Several policy documents mentioned historical and cultural values. Among the responsibilities of the municipal government of Quatis is the mandate to establish minimum curriculum content to ensure a common basic education and respect for regional, national, and Latin American cultural and artistic values across all instruction provided in both public municipal and private schools. The Barra do Pirai policy suggests that pedagogical proposals must ensure the organization of materials, spaces, and timeframes to realize children's rights. Among other aspects, this includes the child's sociocultural expressive dimension, the children's appropriation of historical and cultural contributions from Indigenous, peoples of African, Asian, and European descent, and those from other countries in the Americas, and the recognition, valuing, respecting, and interacting with African and Afro-Brazilian histories and cultures, alongside the fight against racism and discrimination. In Duque de Caxias, the objectives of ECE include promoting meaningful and intentional learning situations that enable the appropriation and production of knowledge and culture. It further specifies that ECE curricula must be based on a national common core, complemented at each school by a diversified component required by the regional and local characteristics of society, culture, the economy, and the students themselves. Ferreira, Mendes, and Souza (2022) highlight that various national documents guarantee practices grounded in the multicultural values of our society and make these available to ECE professionals; the school environment fosters interaction among children of diverse backgrounds, socioeconomic levels, customs, religious beliefs, and worldviews. Inclusion and respect for diversity are rights held by children attending ECE, just as they are at other stages of education. Drawing on Gadotti's (1992) premises, the

authors highlight the school's potential to expand children's cultural repertoire, provided it operates to broaden students' horizons, seeking to understand other cultures, languages, and ways of thinking in pursuit of a pluralistic and interdependent society. Such an approach can be “simultaneously an internationalist education, seeking to promote peace among peoples and nations, and a community-based education, valuing local cultural roots and the immediate daily environment where each person's life unfolds” (Gadotti, 1992, cited in Ferreira, Mendes, & Souza, 2022, p. 2).

The Rio de Janeiro resolution establishes that, should there be a need for care on days or during periods outside the regular school calendar, educational institutions opting for this alternative operating arrangement may devise their own solutions, planning activities focused on leisure, art, and culture. Must activities focused on art and culture take place outside the school calendar, occurring only on special occasions?

WHAT MUNICIPAL DOCUMENTS SAY ABOUT INTERACTION AND PLAY

Finally, there is the category of “interaction and play,” which constitutes the guiding axes of ECE according to the DCNEIs (Brazil, 2009). Regarding interaction, we are grouping terms such as: social interaction, social engagement, social relations, coexistence among children and adults, the lived experience of childhood, forms of sociability, collective activities, social development, social aspects, affective aspects, children's movement, social subjects, and the social realm. The terms considered for play include: playing, toys, games, playfulness, leisure, recreation, recreational activities, open areas, playgrounds, playground equipment, swimming pools, sandpits, and sunbathing.

The conception of the child as a social individual, and a being who requires interaction, is reflected in various policy documents. For example, the regulations in Vassouras explicitly state in their “whereas” that children are social subjects, a stance shared by Carmo, Santo Antônio de Pádua, Teresópolis, and Rio de Janeiro. Opening this section with this concept is crucial for understanding the interaction needs of children in early childhood education, recognizing that human beings are shaped through social interaction and relationships with others. After all, as Kramer and Motta (2010, p. 1) tell us, “when interacting, children learn, develop, create, and transform; they are active subjects who participate in and intervene in reality; their actions are ways of reworking and recreating the world.”

Focusing specifically on the term “interaction,” we find it appearing in various policy documents across different contexts, such as in Nova Iguaçu, Carmo, and Niterói, which propose play as a privileged form of expression, thought, and interaction for children. Barra do Piraí mandates that ECE pedagogical proposals must recognize the child as a historical subject and a rights-holder who constructs their personal and collective identity through the interactions, relationships, and daily practices they experience. The text states that pedagogical proposals must ensure the organization of materials, spaces, and time to realize these rights, while acknowledging children's age-specific needs and their individual and collective uniqueness. It calls for promoting interactions among children of the same and different ages, and fostering recognition, appreciation, respect, and interaction regarding African and Afro-Brazilian histories and cultures, alongside combating racism and discrimination. It further notes that pedagogical practices are guided by the principles of interaction and play, ensuring experiences that: promote children's engagement and interaction with diverse forms of music, visual and graphic arts, cinema, photography, dance, theater, poetry, and literature; encourage interaction with, care for, and knowledge of biodiversity and the sustainability of life on Earth, as well as the avoidance of natural resource waste; and facilitate children's interaction with and understanding of Brazilian cultural expressions and traditions. According to Konrath (2017, p. 18), incorporating diverse cultural expressions into ECE requires taking into account the variety of ethnicities, beliefs, customs, and values that shape the lives of children and their families within their local realities. Ultimately, “all of this must be considered in curriculum organization, as an educational proposal, as well as in the organization of time and physical space, and in the very relationships established and experienced within the institution.”

Still regarding the term “interaction,” Niterói specifies that indoor spaces must include dedicated rooms for each age group. It needs to be organized in an environment aligned with the institution's pedagogical approach that enables children to engage in exploration and play. These spaces

should ensure identity, safety, confidence, socio-educational interactions, and privacy, while fostering opportunities for learning and development. Among the procedures for evaluating and monitoring pedagogical work, the Duque de Caxias resolution requires ensuring critical and creative observation of children's daily activities, play, and interactions. In early childhood education processes, interaction is crucial for the child's holistic development. Silva (2018) emphasizes that children learn through their actions, whether by exploring objects and materials or through exchanges with peers or adults.

Regarding “play,” we begin with the verb “to play”, cited in some of the policy documents. The “whereas” clauses in the Vassouras text highlight “the specific nature of development in children aged zero to five, with play serving as their primary means of self-expression, understanding the world, and transforming it.” Saquarema and Barra do Piraí establish that ECE pedagogical proposals must recognize the child as a “historical subject and a rights-holder who interacts, plays, imagines, fantasizes, desires, learns, observes, experiments, narrates, questions, and constructs meaning regarding nature and society, producing culture.” Teresópolis stipulates that, given the specific developmental characteristics of children aged zero to five, ECE fulfills three indispensable and inseparable roles: educating, caring, and playing. Thus, play is considered fundamentally important for child development. Martins (2013, p. 10) explains that “play is inherently voluntary, driven by intrinsic motivation, and pursued out of personal interest, serving as more than just an end in itself.”

The theme of “play” appears in various regulations concerning the diverse rights that must be included in pedagogical proposals and guaranteed to children, such as in the municipalities of Belford Roxo and Barra do Piraí. It also arises in the context of a child's holistic development, with play serving as a privileged form of expression, thought, and interaction, as seen in Nova Iguaçu, Carmo, and Niterói. Regulations from Teresópolis and Niterói indicate that both indoor and outdoor spaces must include, among other features, areas for children's play, organized within an environment suited to the institution's pedagogical proposal. As part of the procedures for evaluating and monitoring pedagogical work, the Duque de Caxias resolution mentions the need to ensure critical and creative observation of children's daily activities, play, and interactions. The Barra do Piraí resolution establishes that the pedagogical practices comprising the Early Childhood Education curriculum proposal be guided by the principles of interaction and play. After all, “it is through interactions and play that children demonstrate their sadness, joy, feelings, and emotions, as well as the pleasure of participating in that process and developing holistically” (Silva, 2018, p. 220). Vygotsky (2009) links children's play, even in early childhood, to the creative process.

Toys also feature in the regulations of certain municipalities. Among the physical space requirements for facilities where care and educational activities take place, the Nova Iguaçu regulation mandates the availability of games, toys, and educational materials suited to the age group served. These must be sufficient in number, easily accessible, and safe to handle. The Barra do Piraí regulation recommends that pedagogical proposals ensure the organization of materials, spaces, and time to uphold rights, while promoting accessibility regarding spaces, materials, objects, toys, and facilities. Regulations in Teresópolis and Duque de Caxias stipulate that both indoor and outdoor areas must include a space for individual rest, at least for children up to one year of age, and an open area for movement. They also require toys and educational materials that are well-maintained, age-appropriate, and sufficient in quantity for the number of children served, arranged to ensure safety and autonomy while supporting other intentional activities. The Convention on the Rights of the Child seeks to ensure a sufficient supply of age-appropriate toys, emphasizing the importance of adequate opportunities for developing a child's capabilities. Sufficient free time, spaces, and environments must be provided, alongside “forms of stimulation and diversity, as well as the level of adult supervision and engagement, to ensure that children are adequately protected from risks while exercising their rights to play and recreation [...]” (Martins, 2013, p. 18).

Among the principles established in the DCNEIs (Brazil, 2009), various deliberations refer to aesthetic principles as guiding foundations, proposing the theme of play or the concept of playfulness, whether within the aims of ECE, in relation to planned and implemented proposals, or in the development of pedagogical plans, as can be observed in Saquarema, Nova Iguaçu, Carmo, Santo Antônio de Pádua, Barra do Piraí, Niterói, Duque de Caxias, and Rio de Janeiro. The DCNEIs establishes

the playful nature of activities as part of the aesthetic principles of Early Childhood Education. Drawing on Vecchi's (2020) premises, Souza, Vasconcelos, and Schmith (2021, p. 3) highlight that "when choosing an object, a proposal, a color, or a scent, or when organizing a space or a game, for example, we adopt attitudes imbued (or not) with sensitivity and empathy, characteristics of an aesthetic dimension."

The terms "recreation" or "recreational" appear frequently in various regulations, generally in relation to facilities, open areas, or spaces that must be provided, maintaining a minimum area per child for activities and adhering to occupancy limits compatible with service capacity. These spaces must feature natural or surfaced flooring and be clearly designated for the use of Early Childhood Education (EI) children, even in units that also serve other stages of Basic Education (EB): Cambuci, Vassouras, Iguaba Grande, Belford Roxo, Santo Antônio de Pádua, Paraíba do Sul, Barra do Piraí, Teresópolis, and Rio de Janeiro. Playgrounds and/or fixed recreational equipment, while optional in most regulations, are frequently mentioned, generally with recommendations that they comply with manufacturer or ABNT standards and undergo periodic upkeep and maintenance: Cambuci, Vassouras, Iguaba Grande, Saquarema, Santo Antônio de Pádua, Paraíba do Sul, Barra do Piraí, and Niterói. According to Martins (2013, p. 12), recreation is "[...] an umbrella term used to describe a wide range of activities, including, among others, participation in music, arts, crafts, community involvement, clubs, sports, games, hiking and camping, and the pursuit of hobbies."

The term "leisure" generally appears in the resolutions in connection with the requirement for early childhood education (EI) facilities to include an area or courtyard designated for leisure, featuring either natural or paved surfaces and preferably being fully or partially covered, to facilitate such activities; this space must be clearly defined for the exclusive use of the EI facility, as seen in municipalities such as Vassouras, Iguaba Grande, Saquarema, Belford Roxo, Paraíba do Sul, Barra do Piraí, Teresópolis, Niterói, and Rio de Janeiro. Under the Rio de Janeiro resolution, should there be a need for service provision on days or during periods outside the standard school calendar, educational institutions opting for such alternative operating schedules may devise their own solutions based on responsible criteria, including the planning of leisure-oriented activities, among others. Leisure is closely related to play and recreation. Martins (2013, p. 14) defines leisure as "free or non-obligatory time that does not involve formal education, work, domestic responsibilities, the performance of income-generating tasks, or engagement in activities directed by someone other than the individual themselves [...]."

Regarding building conditions, certain regulations stipulate that facilities serving children, particularly daycares, must have an appropriate area for sunbathing or a solarium. This requirement appears in the regulations for Iguaba Grande, Saquarema, Carmo, Barra do Piraí, Teresópolis, Niterói, Duque de Caxias, and Rio de Janeiro. The designated sunbathing area can serve as a space for fun and play, especially for babies.

Four municipalities address concerns regarding institutions with swimming pools, which can offer excellent recreational space for children. The regulations in Carmo and Niterói specify that any early childhood education facility with a swimming pool, garden beds or sandboxes must comply with specific legislation regarding the maintenance and safety standards for these areas. The regulation in Santo Antônio de Pádua mandates that educational institutions with swimming pools obtain registration from the relevant oversight body (the Fire Department). The Duque de Caxias regulation goes further, requiring that any institution with a pool employ a properly qualified "Pool Lifeguard", holding a certified course in the field, in sufficient numbers to cover the existing pools.

Scientific conceptions are associated with paradigm shifts regarding the view of the child, childhood, and early childhood education, necessitating the establishment of a curriculum that seeks quality education and is capable of fostering children's holistic development, "expanding their cultural universe and their participation in the social and natural worlds, fostering the construction of their subjectivity, promoting exchanges and interactions, respecting differences, and contributing to their physical, emotional, and affective well-being, among other aspects" (Nunes; Corsino; Didonet, 2011, p. 54).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The main challenge of this article is to understand how ECE policies incorporate the assumptions found in national documents. We seek to identify which assumptions are prioritized during the induction process and to assess the coherence – or not – of these interpretations with the established proposals. As noted by Nunes, Corsino and Didonet (2011), Brazil recognizes ECE as a child's right from birth, offered by municipal systems in collaboration with state and federal entities. The authors emphasize two principles that govern the relationships between the different levels of government: autonomy and collaboration. They explain that “by establishing the municipality at the level of an autonomous entity of the Federative Republic, the Constitution does not declare it self-sufficient; rather, it elects the principle of collaboration between the entities, to guarantee the conditions for each one to fulfill their respective competencies” (Nunes; Corsino; Didonet, 2011, p. 32). Arretche (2000) explains that, except where expressly required by the Constitution, municipalities are neither prevented from nor obligated to implement a particular policy. When the Federal Government proposes a program or action, municipalities generally decide whether to adopt it. It is therefore important to examine whether national legislation is reflected at the municipal level, since municipalities are responsible for implementing ECE policy. Municipal Departments of Education (SMEs) are responsible for proposing policy measures, while Municipal Education Councils (CMEs) are responsible for regulating them.

The choice of these municipalities followed well-defined criteria based on the concept of “pairs”, where similar municipalities (in terms of population, early childhood education enrollment, and GDP per capita) might exhibit different trends regarding access to ECE and included a large municipality that plays a central role in the state's ECE policy. The analyses were conducted meticulously, considering the sample selection criteria and comparing the groups of municipalities for each pair. Regarding the influence of national documents on municipal policies, there were no significant differences between the groups (higher vs. lower GDP) or across different populations. The analyses were conducted at a general level, reflecting the reality of the state of Rio de Janeiro.

After examining the “documents” from the municipalities in our sample, we observed how proposals generated at the national level influence municipal policy actions. Local management plays a crucial role, as it is at the municipal level that the contours of national policy are actually implemented. For analysis purposes, we categorized the meanings of culture into four dimensions: i) protection and promotion of culture and cultural assets; ii) the right to access and transmission; iii) the importance of culture for human development; and iv) meanings of culture associated with interactions and play. While the first three dimensions feature prominently in the municipal “documents,” the final dimension is rarely mentioned. This suggests that meanings of culture linked to interactions and play are overlooked due to the prevailing influence of municipal legislation. An examination of national “documents” revealed that some successfully assert their influence within the policy-shaping environment, whereas others go unnoticed, failing to appear even as citations in municipal documents. We observed that the 1988 Constitution (CF/1988) and the LDB are the most frequently cited documents, while others, such as the PNE and CNE Resolutions, appear in fewer instances.

Reading the texts of the municipal “Documents” enabled us to construct the categories of analysis, among many other possibilities, defined within the scope of this study as: culture, interaction, and play. Of the municipalities investigated, the majority (14 out of 17) had resolutions governing the authorization and operation of ECE institutions approved by their respective CMEs. Thus, under the country's consolidated legislation, “the CME expands its political and institutional importance, becoming part of the Municipal Education System, which is responsible for the legal and institutional organization of education and for the municipality's relative independence in this area” (Oliveira, 2008, p. 16).

Drawing on Krieg-Planque (2012), the statements found in the “municipal documents” provided the premises used to impose a structure based on the legal framework for ECE. They also enabled us to explore the meanings of “culture” within these documents, in alignment with the “national documents.” We categorized the following terms under “culture”: cultural diversity, different cultures, different languages, cultural manifestations, cultural traditions, cultural characteristics, artistic manifestations, cultural expressions, artistic expressions, cultural assessment, popular culture, children's culture, access to cultural assets, cultural activities, historical-cultural heritage, historical subject, stories,

sociocultural, and art. For “interaction,” we included: social interaction, social relations, interaction between children and adults, experiencing childhood, forms of sociability, collective activities, social development, social aspects, affective aspects, children's movement, social subjects, and the social. Finally, for “play,” we included: playing, toy, game/play activity, playfulness, leisure, recreation, recreational, open area, playground, recreational equipment, pools, sandbox, and sunbathing.

Regarding culture-related terms, out of the 17 municipalities investigated, only four did not mention this theme (São Sebastião do Alto, Iguaba Grande, Guapimirim, and Paraíba do Sul). In the categories of interaction and play, three of the 17 documents did not address these topics. For interaction, these are São Sebastião do Alto, Guapimirim, and Paraíba do Sul; and for play, São Sebastião do Alto, Guapimirim, and Quatis. Thus, the categories examined in this article are completely absent in two municipalities (São Sebastião do Alto and Guapimirim).

Of the five municipalities in which one or more categories were absent, two had deliberations governing the authorization and operation of ECE institutions (Iguaba Grande and Paraíba do Sul); two had legislation regulating their Municipal Education Systems (São Sebastião do Alto and Quatis); and one used a resolution governing class placement (Guapimirim).

The results of this study need to be widely disseminated and shared to inform the implementation of policy actions at the municipal level, broadening understanding of the development of national policies and their implications for local policies. However, the complexity of the subject should not be downplayed, as it certainly calls for further research to deepen and refine the debate on early childhood education policy, ensuring social quality and equity for all children.

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Author 1 – Active participation in data analysis and review of the final manuscript.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding this article.