

**Abstract**

## **Key learning experiences in the professional development of a cohort of pre-service teachers**

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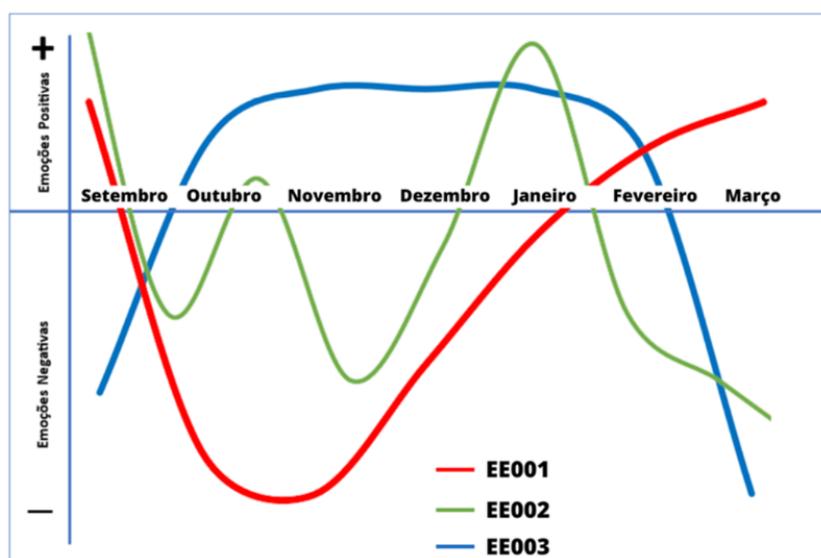
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Identity changes over time through a series of external (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Flores & Day, 2006; Sachs, 2005), but also of internal factors, such as emotions (Rodgers & Scott, 2008). The school placement is the pre-service teachers' (PST) first year of confrontation with teaching and is characteristically an emotional experience (Zembylas, 2003). Several authors focus on the development of teachers at the beginning of their professional practice (Meijer, 2011). Moirs (1999) identifies five phases: *anticipation*, *survival*, *disillusionment*, *rejuvenation*, and *reflection*. The literature encourages us to continue investigating school placement contexts to better analyse and interpret the PSTs' learning, thus improving teacher education (e.g., Gomes et al., 2023). This case study aimed to examine how PSTs perceive their learning trajectories by reflecting on the most memorable experiences of their school placement and associated emotions. In 2022/2023,

three PSTs, two female and one male, aged between 22 and 24-year-olds, attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the master's Teacher Education programme in Teaching Physical Education, filled out a Timeline (Adriansen, 2012) from September 2022 to March 2023, and attended a focus group for greater depth of their emotional/ learning trajectories. A content analysis (Patton, 2001) revealed that: In September, PST1 and PST2 began their journey with positive emotions (euphoria, enthusiasm, joy and hope) related to the first contact with the school and their classes –*anticipation*. PST3 reported negative emotions (anxiety, fear, concern) due to the volume and nature of the work he was expecting to deal with. During October, November and December, the PSTs' 1 and 2 trajectories were marked by negative emotions (sadness, disappointment, frustration, lack of confidence, desire to give up), as they drew a descending curve - *survival* and *disappointment*, associated with a poor pedagogical relationship with students, the observation of classes, a bad relationship with the PST peers or the accumulation of work extra school. PST3 described a rising learning line, marked by positive emotions (confidence, pleasure, motivation), related to his success in teaching, the dynamisation of school activities and the good interaction with other teachers - *rejuvenation* until reaching a plateau of *reflection* between October and February. In January, February, and March, the PSTs' 2 and 3 curves took a pointy downward before reaching a new *anticipation* phase (PST 002), subscribing to negative emotions (boredom, anxiety, sadness, and feelings of incompetence). The PST's 1 learning curve assumed regular growth since November and December, marked by positive emotions (hope, confidence, motivation, joy), resulting from the success in implementing student-centred teaching strategies - *new anticipation*. At this point of their school placement, PST2 never reached an uplifting of her emotional/learning curve (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Emotional learning and development trajectories of a cohort of PSTs.

**Keywords:** School Placement; Physical Education; Learning Trajectories; Emotions; Timeline.

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