CHILDREN, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE CONCEPTION OF PEDAGOGICAL PROJECTS

Teresa Sarmento, University of Minho, Portugal

School, family and community interrelation has been largely addressed by several opinion-makers in Portugal, questioning pedagogical sustainability of prolific activities taking place in public spaces involving children, teachers and even family. Actually, even though cooperation practices between school, family and community, ranging from presentation of medieval parades, popular fairs and Greco-Roman struggles are believed to work out, some doubts are raised questioning whether these demonstrations really portray the pedagogical teamwork concerning the effective involvement of families, children and professionals in the educational process. It is to our understanding that the value of this relationship between school, family and community resides in the fact that it is believed to be a basis for the development of democracy in the current society. Changing circumstances have brought to light new ideals and values highlighting citizenship as a collaboration practice, an intervention possibility and decision making process, all important in every corner of social life. Citizenship dynamics are consequently built in everyday school life, in collaborative processes and obeying to pedagogical principles fitting different groups and communities.

The current research aims to present and analyze three projects so that the socio-pedagogical foundations supporting it can be understood. Moreover it intends to answer questions regarding: the role played both by children and families in the conception of the project; the innovative and changing aspects provided; the recognition of community itself in the development of the project; the effects of the project for children and teachers’ cooperative learning process.

The mentioned projects, falling into three clusters of schools located in Northern Portugal, have been established on the basis of interaction activities kept between the University and local schools. Specifically, the projects are entitled as Friends of Heritage Club (children ranging from 10 to 12 years old), My garden is in Europe (children ranging from 3 to 5 years old) and, Rediscovering History (10 to 12-year-old children). The analytical approach is based on qualitative methodologies and, the document analysis related to the construction and development of each project has been carried out together with observations of some other activities and interviews with a sample consisting of children / pupils, parents and teacher. Apart from the uniqueness of each project, the above-mentioned one has not only brought a new reflection on education but also the experience of intergenerational relationships, especially significant into an age segmented society, as well as some enjoyment, satisfaction and joy, considered major factors for educational development, the redefinition of social living spaces and finally, improvement of citizenship.
**Keywords:**
Pedagogical project, Cooperation practices, Families, Children and professionals, Citizenship

**References:**


