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GOOD CONNECTIONS: CULTURAL DYNAMICS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

This study aims to describe the cultural dynamics for social inclusion developed in a vulnerable socio-economic context. The concept of social exclusion, produced in the last decades of the twentieth century, emerged from social, economic, political, social and cultural changes and exposed the Western world to a growing of divisions, fractures and social inequalities (Guerra 2012; Camargo 2017). As a response to social exclusion, the new millennium brought with it social inclusion (Guerra 2012). In the author's view, social inclusion reflects a dynamic (proactive) approach to well-being, requiring a holistic effort by social actors and societies.

It is a reflection path on the paradigmatic change in the praxis of the social sciences.

For Anthony Giddens (1984), the rapidly changing globalized world has been a crisis enhancer, generating disparate psychosocial and sociocultural problems, especially in vulnerable socio-economic contexts and often putting citizenship at risk. The multi-country world has become more complex, insecure, dangerous and uncertainty as to the common destiny of mankind takes on new and varied forms (Delors 1996). In this sense, the UNESCO Education report – Education, a treasure to be discovered, recommends cultivating, as a guiding utopia, the purpose of leading the world towards greater mutual understanding, a greater sense of responsibility and more solidarity, in accepting spiritual and cultural differences through Education.

The report states that education, in its various forms, has as its mission the creation of social ties between people which have their origin in common references.

Education can be a factor of cohesion if one takes into account the diversity of individuals and groups, avoiding becoming a factor of social exclusion (Delors 1996). What is at stake is, in fact, the capacity of each to behave as a true citizen, aware of the collective and social advantages of participating in democratic life (Delors 1996). It

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is a challenge for politicians, but also for education systems, whose role, in the social dynamics, should already be defined (Delors 1996).

On the other hand, since education for citizenship and democracy, *par excellence*, is an education that is not limited to the space and time of formal education, it is necessary to directly involve to it the families and other members of the community (Delors 1996). Faced with the crisis of social relations, education must therefore undertake the difficult task of making diversity a positive factor of mutual understanding between individuals and human groups (Delors 1996).

In an approach to the social formation of the mind, Vygotsky (Lindqvist 2003) designates by internalisation the internal reconstruction of an external operation. This process of internalization consists of a series of transformations, that is, an operation that initially represents an external activity is rebuilt and begins to occur internally; an interpersonal process is transformed into an intrapersonal process; the transformation of an interpersonal process is the result of a long series of events occurring throughout development. Thus, the internalization of cultural forms of behaviour involves the reconstruction of the socially rooted and historically developed activities of humanity.

There is an increasingly wide, deep and serious inadequacy, compartmentalizing on the one hand the increasingly polidisciplinary, transverse, global, planetary realities or problems (Morin 1999). But the essential problems are never piecemeal, and global problems are increasingly essential. In this sense, the pertinent knowledge is that able to place all the information in its context and, if possible, in the set in which it is inscribed. We must think from the consideration of the increasingly serious effects of the compartmentalization of knowledge and the inability to articulate with each other, generators of exclusion for the aptitude to contextualize and integrate the quality of the human spirit that is to develop instead of atrophy. Morin (1999) highlights the interdependent cultural, sociological, and civic challenges to today's crucial issues.

The risk factors pointed out in the literature highlight problems associated with family history, psychosocial, biological, genetic factors, stressful life events, exposure to maltreatment, environmental factors, low socioeconomic status, exposure to traumatic events and/or deviant behaviour, violence at school, parental abductions, unaccompanied migrants, etc. These problems affect family dynamics, especially those that integrate vulnerable socio-economic and cultural contexts. Alvino-Borba and Mata-Lima (2011) in the synthesis of factors of social exclusion point to unemployment, social injustice, social disqualification, educational inequality, lack of access to goods and services, unemployment, devaluation, job insecurity, poverty, violence and insecurity. Faced with the factors related to the factors of social exclusion mentioned above, established by the rejection of certain individuals or groups, the possibility of equal opportunities, Alvino-Borba and Mata-Lima (2011) contrasts factors associated with inclusion that cherish social equity. In its meaning there is a standardization of external influences

essentially associated with economy and culture, namely: security, social justice, social qualification, educational equality, access to goods and services, employment, human capital valorization, institutional programs, social solidarity and trainings.

Declining the idea of disciplinarization and fragmentation, B. Maciel (2016) invites an interdisciplinary reflection, under the premise that today the unidisciplinary view is insufficient for the understanding of complex phenomena involving the dynamics of culture, citizenship and social inclusion.

It is therefore important to take a close look at policy-makers and a holistic intervention by the community social partners, in order to find strategies that minimize exclusion and to promote the inclusion of all citizens. In this sense, the promotion of educational success has become the main focus of education policies in their different capacities, both formal and non-formal.

One of the possible formats that we highlight is related to cultural dynamics, with psychosocial effects, is based on an inter-sectoral, intergenerational intervention that involves families, the promotion and defence of rights and equality of opportunities for all, and aims at enhancing educational success and creation of social value.

Requests from all over the world must, as we have seen, respond to the demands of economic and social development, particularly serious for the poorest populations. They must also respond to the cultural and ethical demands they are responsible for. As a model of good connections for social inclusion, we highlight culture and Education. In an inclusive policy, Education advocates:

- a specific group approach involving first and second childhood; primary and secondary education; and articulation with families;
- cross-cutting policies applied in situations of special vulnerability; prevention of socio-educational risk; and in the promotion and defence of rights and equal opportunities.

We describe cultural dynamics for social inclusion developed in a vulnerable socio-economic context in the Autonomous Region of Madeira, Portugal by the *Cultural Association Império da Ilha*, in the context of non-formal education. The city, which has recently raised to city, is located on the coast, traditionally fishing and tourism, has great potential in the youth of its population.

Geographically pleasant, it congregates in an intersectoral and intergenerational dynamic, the *Cultural Association Império da Ilha*, having as good partners the Regional Government, the municipality, the parish council and other public and private recreational and sports associations, by facilitating the involvement of the entire population that belong to different social extracts and holding different academic levels, favours the strengthening of culture, information and debate on contextual risk factors, risk prevention and promotion of the right and duty of citizenship.

It shares the assumptions provided by J. Cuadros Rodríguez, J. Valencia Arias and A. Valencia Arias (2012). The *Cultural Association Império da Ilha* recognizes the right of each person to model their cultural identity, allowing their respect and acceptance from their different modes of expression that are linked to the development of expressive abilities, to the critical spirit and the unfolding of ties with the society and the territory, as basic elements of a full citizenship, the *Cultural Association Império da Ilha* integrates professionals of the Institute of Employment of Madeira, and teachers of the Regional Directorate of Education are the responsible ones for the fulfilment of the contracts. It is the Regional Directorate of Education, in the broad sense, that is responsible for the technical-pedagogical advice, pro bono, of social inclusion projects. The intervention weekly structured by the *Cultural Association Império da Ilha*, involves different themes, such as: carnival, flower festival, popular saints and harvest festival, tourist posters that help promote social inclusion, which requires the design and implementation of strategic intergenerational, cross-sectoral plans, integrating transversally the social, economic and environmental dimensions.

Realistic expectations of good partnerships, driving non-formal education, have generated reflections on the potentialities and limits of cultural dynamics, intergenerational socialization, integration, reduction of social disparities, educational success, and social inclusion. Finally, topics such as the prevention of social exclusion have been discussed and led to different interventions at individual, family and group level.

We believe that the participation of all individuals in social, cultural and leisure activities plays a crucial role as the foundation of social achievements for the promotion of citizenship, for social cohesion and inclusion, an inseparable element from the heterogeneity of a people that characterizes it in the context of social cohesion.

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Good connections: cultural dynamics for social inclusion

Abstract: Structural changes and social stratification in a rapidly changing world produce psychosocial and socio-cultural consequences that are expressed in mechanisms of discrimination and social exclusion and require the creation of mechanisms that motivate and reinforce culture as a strategy of social inclusion. This study describes the cultural dynamics for social inclusion developed in a vulnerable socio-economic context. The intersectoral intervention, structured weekly, involves four major themes: Carnival, flower festival, popular saints and harvest festival. The intervention in intergenerational partnership (regional government, municipality, parish council, recreational, cultural and sporting associations, sports, and other public and private institutions), made it possible to promote culture reinforcement, inform and debate contextual risk factors and prevent risk as a right and duty of citizenship. Realistic expectations regarding partnerships and social inclusion promoted reflections on the potentialities and limits of cultural dynamics in the current social context. Finally, issues for the prevention of social exclusion were discussed, generating opportunities for individual, family and group interventions.

Keywords: social vulnerability, social exclusion, social inclusion, culture, connections

Dobre połączenia: dynamika kulturalna na rzecz inkluzji społecznej

Streszczenie: W szybko zmieniającym się świecie zmiany strukturalne i stratyfikacja społeczna powodują psychospołeczne i społeczno-kulturowe konsekwencje, wyrażane w formie dyskryminacji i wykluczenia społecznego. Dlatego potrzebne jest stworzenie mechanizmów, które mogą wzmacniać kulturę jako strategię integracji społecznej. Niniejsze opracowanie opisuje dynamikę kultury wykorzystywanej do integracji społecznej, rozwijanej w trudnym kontekście społeczno-gospodarczym. Interwencja międzysektorowa, realizowana cotygodniowo, obejmuje cztery główne wydarzenia: karnawał, festiwal kwiatów, dni popularnych świąt i festiwal zbiorów. Interwencja w partnerstwie międzypokoleniowym (rząd regionalny, gmina, rada parafialna, stowarzyszenia rekreacyjne, kulturalne i sportowe, kluby sportowe i inne instytucje publiczne i prywatne) umożliwiła promowanie kultury, informowanie i debatowanie na temat kontekstowych czynników ryzyka oraz praw i obowiązków obywatelskich. Realistyczne oczekiwania dotyczące partnerstwa i włączenia społecznego sprzyjały refleksji na temat potencjałów i ograniczeń dynamiki kulturowej w aktualnym kontekście społecznym. Na koniec omówiono działania zapobiegające wykluczeniu społecznemu i dające możliwości dokonywania indywidualnych, rodzinnych i grupowych interwencji.

Słowa kluczowe: podatność społeczna, wykluczenie społeczne, integracja społeczna, kultura, znajomości

Boas parcerias: dinâmicas culturais para a inclusão social

Abstract: As mudanças estruturais e a estratificação social, num mundo em transformação acelerada, produzem consequências psicossociais e socioculturais que se expressam em mecanismos de discriminação e exclusão social, exigem a criação de mecanismos que motivem e reforcem a cultura como estratégia de inclusão social. Este estudo descreve as dinâmicas culturais para a inclusão social desenvolvidas em contexto socioeconómico vulnerável. A intervenção intersectorial, estruturada semanalmente, envolve quatro grandes temáticas: Carnaval, festa da flor, santos populares e festa das vindimas. A intervenção em parceria (governo regional, município, junta de freguesia, associações recreativas, culturais, desportivas, e outras instituições públicas e privadas), intergeracional, possibilitou promover o reforço da cultura, informar e debater os fatores de risco contextuais e prevenir o risco como direito e dever de cidadania. Expectativas realistas em relação às parcerias e à inclusão social promoveram reflexões sobre as potencialidades e limites das dinâmicas culturais no contexto social atual. Por fim, questões para a prevenção da exclusão social foram discutidas, gerando possibilidade de intervenções a nível individual, familiar e grupal.

Palavras-chave: vulnerabilidade social, exclusão social, inclusão social, parcerias