

PERMANENT EDUCATION, INTERVENTIONS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Based on a theoretical approach on continuing education, which recognises the multiplicity of educational contexts, the diversity of audiences, methodologies, and valuing learning, we intend to reflect on its importance for the full development of individuals, particularly those in higher education. In methodological terms, the research assumes itself as a case study, of interpretative characteristics, with the aim of describing and reflecting on projects and practices of socio-educational and cultural intervention dynamised by teachers and students, within the training offer of a Portuguese public institution of higher education, the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria. The experiences presented lead us to highlight the importance that an approach centred on education of an integrating and permanent nature has for the construction of a society intended for all. We also conclude that the use of reflective methodologies and holistic intervention practices can contribute to the well-being of individuals and communities.

Keywords: Education; Education as humanization; Adult education

RESUMO

EDUCAÇÃO PERMANENTE, INTERVENÇÕES E DESENVOLVIMENTOS, NO ENSINO SUPERIOR

A partir de uma abordagem teórica sobre educação permanente, que reconhece a multiplicidade dos contextos educativos, a diversidade dos públicos, de metodologias e a valorização das aprendizagens, pretende-se refletir sobre

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a importância da mesma para o desenvolvimento integral dos indivíduos, designadamente daqueles que se encontram em formação no ensino superior. Em termos metodológicos, a pesquisa assume-se como um estudo de caso, de características interpretativas, com o objetivo de descrever e refletir sobre projetos e práticas de intervenção socioeducativa e cultural dinamizadas por docentes e estudantes, no âmbito da oferta formativa de uma instituição pública portuguesa de ensino superior, o Instituto Politécnico de Leiria. As experiências apresentadas levam-nos a evidenciar a importância que uma abordagem centrada na educação de natureza integradora e permanente tem para a construção de uma sociedade que se pretende para todos. Conclui-se, também, que o recurso a metodologias reflexivas e práticas de intervenção holísticas pode contribuir para o bem-estar dos indivíduos e das comunidades.

Palavras-chave: Educação; Educação como humanização; Educação de Adultos

RESUMEN

FORMACIÓN CONTINUA, INTERVENCIONES Y NOVEDADES EN LA ENSEÑANZA SUPERIOR

A partir de un abordaje teórico sobre la educación continuada, que reconoce la multiplicidad de contextos educativos, la diversidad de públicos, metodologías y valorización del aprendizaje, pretendemos reflexionar sobre su importancia para el pleno desarrollo de los individuos, particularmente de los que cursan la enseñanza superior. En términos metodológicos, la investigación se asume como un estudio de caso, de características interpretativas, con el objetivo de describir y reflexionar sobre proyectos y prácticas de intervención socioeducativa y cultural dinamizados por profesores y alumnos, dentro de la oferta formativa de una institución pública portuguesa de enseñanza superior, el Instituto Politécnico de Leiria. Las experiencias presentadas nos llevan a destacar la importancia que un enfoque centrado en la educación de carácter integrador y permanente tiene para la construcción de una sociedad pensada para todos. También concluimos que el uso de metodologías reflexivas y de prácticas de intervención holísticas puede contribuir al bienestar de las personas y de las comunidades.

Palabras clave: Educación; Educación como humanización; Educación de adultos

Introduction¹

The starting point for the reflection we propose to make assumes education as a process that accompanies individuals throughout their life cycles, not restricted only to compulsory schooling. It is, therefore, a multidimensional process that allows contributing to a more

conscious and attentive participation of individuals in the community(ies) where they live, contributing, with another look, to the dignification of human life - this, here, conceptualized as a space of learning and development intended to be humanizing and democratic. In a context of great demographic transition and marked cultural diversity, issues related to the participation of individuals in their contexts, to

¹ English translation by Fátima Neto, Bachelor's degree in International Relations, Cambridge English Level 5 Certificate (CELTA)

the exercise of conscious and active citizenship and to (inter)generational relationships are significant.

In creating favourable conditions for individuals to live longer, 21st-century societies face, at the same time, challenges at the level of their education, their quality of life or their well-being. Considering this reality, it is the responsibility of institutions, including higher education, to create conditions to value access to knowledge, sharing experiences, deconstruction stereotypes and promote active participation of all people, including older people.

In this article, based on theoretical contributions, we intend to reflect on the importance of permanent education for the integral development of Human Beings. We start from the conceptualization of permanent education as a principle of education as a human right, which was affirmed in the 1960s in demarcation of the education systems in force, based on a school logic, formal, inflexible, generator and reproducer of social inequalities, relating it to the issue of comprehensive and integrative education to contribute to the issue of human development. In other words, as advocated by Sen (2010) and expressed in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2016), human development is closely associated with the expansion of freedoms, so that all human beings can exercise the choices they value. Such expansion requires building human capacities, with education playing a vital role in this endeavour (UNDP, 2016; SEN, 2010). We are aware that human development is a complex term, involving different approaches. Nevertheless, there is unanimity that this type of development contemplates the interaction of different social factors, in a multidimensional logic and the creation of synergistic processes between the various elements (UNDP, 2020). Human development is, therefore, broader than other approaches (economic, basic needs, human resources, among others), it is the develop-

ment of people through active participation in the processes that shape their lives, where education is a crucial part (UNDP, 2016). To speak of human development is to speak of integral development.

In the second part of this text, of an empirical nature based on a case study, we will describe and reflect on examples of practices born within the training offer of the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, in the School of Education and Social Sciences (ESECS), which are streamlined by students and teachers and aim at education for all towards a more conscious, active and human citizenship. In particular, we will deal with a senior training programme - 60+ Programme - which aims to bring together different generations of students, contributing to mutual learning, deconstruction of stereotypes and socialisation, among other aspects. The community intervention projects, such as *Intervir. Humanizar. Contagiar, Como abraçar sem tocar?*, *ProAlfa* and *Maio Criativo*, are examples of close work with the community where ESECS belongs, involving students in active teaching-learning methodologies, challenging them to create, implement and evaluate diverse set of projects adapted to different contexts of intervention. With these projects, we seek, at the same time, the construction of innovative and inclusive responses at the level of social intervention and, simultaneously, the development of educational practices that promote dialogue, creativity and collective intelligence towards the promotion of integral and human development.

The contexts of permanent education

The end of the 1960s represents a turning point in the understanding of the concept of education, breaking away from the current approach, which focused on a formal model, schooling and generating inequalities of opportunities, to assume a broader perspective, which recognises and advocates the diversity of

educational contexts (formal, non-formal and informal), as well as of its publics - children, young people and adults.

The report of the II International Conference on Adult Education (II CONFINTEA), which took place in 1960 in Canada (Monreal), presents the need to understand education as a permanent process, that is, a “global project that aims both to restructure the existing educational system and to develop all the possibilities of training outside the educational system”, in which the individual assumes himself as “agent of his own education by permanent interaction between his actions and his reflection” (IRELAND; SPEZIA, 2014, p. 168).

The permanent education movement, which emerged in this context, gained more visibility with the publication in 1972 of the UNESCO Report - *Learning to Be: the world of education today and tomorrow* - coordinated by Edgar Faure (LOPES et al., 2021). The idea of permanent education presented in the Report is based on the pragmatist perspective of John Dewey, Lindman, Kurt Lewin, David Kolb and the humanist perspective of Carl Rogers (FINGER; ASÚN, 2003), which marked the educational theories of the early twentieth century. It was not, therefore, a creation of UNESCO, as Faure (1972) points out, but rather a (re)construction of the theoretical traditions that contributed to the field of adult education.

The movement advocated education as permanent, in the sense that it embraced the whole educational process that takes place throughout the life cycles of individuals, contemplating various moments, forms and experiences, going beyond the logic of the school model, which determines a specific time and space for it to happen.

At the end of the 20th century, the UNESCO report (DELORS et al., 1996) on education for the 21st century presents a renewed and expanded concept of lifelong education, valuing the concept of lifelong education (LLE), understood as a continuous construction of the individual in terms of knowledge, skills

and abilities to think and act. This approach emphasizes individual awareness and knowledge about the other, as well as understanding the context where each one is inserted, which allows knowing the roles that each individual plays in society, an aspect that is found in the concept of lifelong education. LLE is assumed to be response to the rapid transformations that the world is facing, highlighting the need to return to school to acquire new knowledge, to be better prepared to know how to deal with new challenges of modernity that Bauman (2001) characterizes as liquid. In this sense, it can be read that (lifelong) education should have the ability to adapt to societal transformation, without invalidating the transmission of essential knowledge, which derives from human experience (DELORS et al., 1996).

Despite the arguments presented by UNESCO justifying this new conceptual approach - lifelong education (LLE) - we find it a great economic motivation arising from the guidelines of international agencies, such as the European Union or the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), among others. The central argument is based on the need for organizations to have qualified employees, with appropriate skills, which contribute to the competitiveness of the labour market, which is increasingly global. In this sense, the LLE starts to focus on the training and academic qualification of individuals meeting the emerging needs of the markets, of the economy, with a very individualistic dimension called lifelong learning (LLL). The understanding of the humanist vision of education gave way to a utilitarian approach to the service of the society that claims to be a knowledge society. In the words chosen for the title of one of his works, Lima (2012), a critic of this subordination and instrumental appropriation of education, explains: “learning is to win and knowing to compete”.

The concept of LLL would become dominant since the end of the 20th century, evidencing a shift from a welfare state to the affirmation

of neoliberalism (LIMA; GUIMARÃES, 2011). In this sense, this terminological change is also ideological. Notwithstanding these paradigmatic changes associated with the understanding of education, our positioning, which guides this text, is in line with the Unesco vision from the end of the 20th century, stated in the report organised by Delors et al. (1996), which sees education as a right to participation and exercise of citizenship in a world in constant change and restlessness. It is also understood as an opportunity to construct and reconstruct the individual, in its various dimensions, highlighting its importance in building the balance between work, learning and citizenship (DELORS et al., 1996). This view of education is shared by Joaquim and Pesce (2021) who, in a recent article, put in dialogue the concepts of innovation, inclusion and lifelong education in a pandemic context.

Comprehensive and integrative education

Accordingly, and in line with what Ireland (2019) has been advocating, education should frame the actions that aim to develop people and societies, assuming that educational processes are not restricted to school moments, but occur throughout life, as a right to life itself. The individual is advocated in its multiple dimensions and contexts - an integral education. Integral, in the sense that it takes care of the whole and not the part, where the experiences, the expectations assume preponderance in the equation.

According to Araújo and Klein (2006), (integral) education should be able to prepare young people to exercise a citizenship based on ethical and democratic values. We agree with the authors. However, we consider it reductive to focus education only on the younger age groups. In our view, the target audience is all individuals, who want to learn at any time of life and in any context.

We talk about comprehensive education, not full-time education, since the first refers to an idea of completeness of the human being and the second, to the increase of activities in the school environment as a guarantee of the daily occupation of the student, without being synonymous with the human development to which we refer. This distinction is also associated with different moments in the history of education and, therefore, of public policies. However, we do not consider this the space for such reflection since our objective goes beyond that positioning. We intend to situate our educational practices in an understanding of education that we want for all, throughout life and that stimulates the participation and intervention of individuals in the (re)construction of their contexts of belonging.

According to Tavares (2009), for education to be comprehensive, there must be interdisciplinarity between the various areas of knowledge, promoting reflection and complementarity of knowledge, interculturality, recognition and acceptance of cultural diversity, characteristics of the contemporary world, based on a process of dialogue and integrative relationships (RAMOS, 2011).

In this XXI century, considered by UNESCO (2002) as the century of interculturality and citizenship, knowledge and respect for otherness, the promotion of lifelong education for all, regardless of gender, age, nationality or culture, are part of a perspective of humanist construction of society. In this sense, human and social development should be at the centre of the educational process in a global, plural, changeable and fragmented world, which an integrative basic education should driven.

The assumptions we advocate for the conception of such an education prioritise knowledge and practices on citizenship, human rights, interculturality, intergenerationally and social inclusion, worked on in the different courses we teach at the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria.

We consider that citizenship implies learning to know how to be and act with respect, aware-

ness, responsibility and dialogue. It is an act of commitment between an “I” and a “We”, the society, the world. As the Human Being is a Being of relationships and interaction, we must remember the importance that everyone assumes in society, recognising the rights and duties of each one. Knowledge and respect for the Other are crucial for a harmonious coexistence and a communication that is intended to be intercultural, for the construction of inclusive societies that enhance equal opportunities for all.

The comprehensive education that we advocate establishes an interaction between school and community, seeking to put academic knowledge at the service of society and, simultaneously, to recognise these spaces as places of learning, meeting the proposal of the city as an educating space (AICE, 1990, 2020), to contribute to the formation and (dis)involvement of individuals. This development is understood broadly as a process of economic, political and social transformation. In this framework, to ensure that development is universal, it is essential to acquire capacities, which should be seen from a life-cycle perspective, based on different teaching-learning processes (UNDP, 2016). With the framing idea that human development for all requires including all in discourses and the development process, the following section will present examples of initiatives developed from our teaching professional practice.

Methodology

The theme and the problematic reflected in the previous points lead us to the following research objectives: a) to describe and reflect on projects and practices of socio-educational and cultural intervention dynamised by teachers and students of the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria; b) to understand the importance of these projects for the integral and human development and the construction of a society intended for all.

Taking into account these investigative purposes, the case study method best defines

our approach, in the sense that it aims to understand in-depth (FORTIN, 2009; YIN, 2001) projects developed by an institution of higher education, providing knowledge from the description of the situation studied (GUBA; LINCOLN, 1994). In this sense, the research assumes a strong descriptive nature of qualitative characteristics (COUTINHO, 2015), conducted from the documentary research using various sources of information, such as reports, *website* of the projects and articles published about them.

Socio-educational practices and projects in portuguese higher education to promote the well-being of individuals and their participation in communities

The ideas raised so far reinforce the fact that higher education institutions are faced with new challenges today, very characteristic of contemporary society (MARQUES, 2018), which are closely intertwined with integral education, as reflected in the previous point. In effect, if for centuries memorisation was valued above all, currently, Higher Education is compelled, by the labour market, to train professionals with the ability to adapt to different situations, who are flexible and autonomous, who have communication skills and abilities, good interpersonal relationships and teamwork (SULEMAN, 2016).

These aspects illustrate the need to apply active and reflective teaching-learning methodologies anchored in integrative intervention practices. Like Mizokami (2018), this type of strategies allows for the development of competencies that imply external cognitive processes, i.e., reflection on societal changes, benefiting the student, but also the surrounding world. More practical and stimulating strategies arise in this context, which seek to lead students to interact collaboratively, build-

ing genuine learning communities (MANGAS; SOUSA, 2020). In this scenario, in addition to the investment by the educational institution in innovative, practical, flexible and diversified training strategies, students are also called to actively participate in their training process, in the development of competencies that go beyond knowing/knowledge and are related to knowing-being and knowing how to intervene.

The practices and projects we present below, identified as formative offer and projects with the community, aim to illustrate and reflect on what we have done in this area, as teachers on courses related to social intervention.

Training offer - The 60+ Programme

Education, regardless of age, should exist throughout the life cycle of individuals. Through the initiative of its institutions, namely Higher Education, the State should create conditions so that people can deepen their knowledge and value their expertise and experiences.

In this sense, based on the international recommendations about the importance of contributing to the affirmation of a lifelong education (COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES, 2000, 2006; UN, 2003), for all and in any context, the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria presented, in 2008, an innovative initiative for senior publics, the 60+ Programme. It is a training offer for people in a retirement or pre-retirement situation, aged 50 years old or more. It is carried out in a higher education context, sharing the same training spaces with younger people. This particularity distinguishes it from other projects promoted by other higher education institutions in Portugal (PIMENTEL et al., 2019; PIMENTEL; LOPES, 2016).

This lifelong education initiative has the following purposes: to ensure the opportunity to access knowledge; to value the sharing of experiences; to provide social interaction; to promote intergenerational and, concomitantly, to contribute to ageing with a higher quality

of life (LOPES; PIMENTEL, 2021; PIMENTEL; LOPES, 2016; PIMENTEL; FARIA, 2016).

The condition to access the 60+ Programme is the enrolment in at least one subject of the formative offer (Professional Higher Technical Courses - CteSP, and Degree Courses) of the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, of its five higher education schools which are located in three cities of the region: Leiria (ESECS, ESSLEI and ESTG), Caldas da Rainha (ESAD. CR) and Peniche (ESTM). This specificity promotes the approximation between the different generations of students attending the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, boosting intergenerational spaces with mutual benefits for those involved, meeting what has been discussed in academia (SÁEZ, 2002; VILLA-BOAS et al., 2016, PIMENTEL; FARIA, 2016; PIMENTEL et al., 2019).

Besides the possibility of attending subjects of the formative offer referred to above, there is a set of activities aimed only at students of the 60+ Programme, one paid, in the area of physical activity, foreign languages and IT, and another of a socio-cultural nature, which is provided free of charge (<https://60mais.ipleiria.pt/>). It is worth noting, as Pimentel, Lopes and Maurício (2022) refer, that some free activities are streamlined by young students who volunteer, emphasizing the initiative's intergenerational characteristic.

Dialogue and interaction between different generations have been a constant throughout the existence of the 60+ Programme, allowing better (inter)generational knowledge, the deconstruction of stereotypes and the sharing of learning and experiences. Examples are some academic works carried out by young people with the participation of seniors, namely: short films on Alzheimer's disease and loneliness in old age, available at: <https://youtu.be/A9Zz-CyEK17s> e https://youtu.be/NaA_s2_wXcc The development of a training plan for seniors and its impact on their lives; promotion of a "laboratory" to show and explore some mobile applications (PIMENTEL; LOPES; MAURÍCIO,

2022); realization of the project “Spanish with Duolingo” or the Workshops for the creation of digital routes about the city of Leiria (CCP-IPL60+, 2019).

The intercultural dimension is also very present because of seniors` the opportunity to meet students of other nationalities who come to the Polytechnic Institute for their academic training. This is particularly evident with Chinese and African students. The initiatives developed by the seniors, in the form of cultural visits, social gatherings and mentoring programs, intend to increase the competencies of understanding of the Portuguese language and culture of the younger students, as stated by Pimentel, Lopes and Maurício (2022).

The benefits of training for senior citizens go beyond simply searching for knowledge and occupation of free time. It also highlights the discovery of self and others or the realisation of life projects. Participation in and the organisation of some activities have led some seniors to discover skills they were not aware of or to be able to express and share their talents in art, theatre, music, dance and literature workshops.

The Programme has been in existence for 14 years (2008-2022) and is mainly sought after by women, although the percentage of male participation has been increasing in the last years (CCP-IPL60+, 2020; CCP-IPL60+, 2022). The most represented age group is the 60-69 and their education levels range from the first cycle of primary education to university degrees, with a predominance for the latter.

The reasons that lead some seniors from the region of Leiria to attend a program with the characteristics described so far are related to obtaining knowledge, personal development, socialising with younger people, making new friends, occupying free time and fighting isolation and loneliness. These last two factors were more emphasised after the pandemic period (PIMENTEL; LOPES; MAURÍCIO, 2022).

The 60+ Programme is an example of education that is understood and intended for

all, to contributing to the social participation of individuals by seeking to value the role and contribution of senior students, giving them opportunities and encouraging them to express their ideas, their projects, to get involved in social and cultural initiatives, as a way of strengthening intra and intergenerational relationships.

Intervention projects with the community

We share the opinion of Maffesoli (2010) when he argues that professionals working in the area of social intervention today cannot objectify social phenomena. However, instead, they should seek to know and understand them, capturing the social breath of individuals, groups and communities. In this sense, we found in the community of ESECS a privileged territory to operationalise the active teaching-learning methodologies, in a logic of applying the knowledge acquired in classes in various real contexts, to building new technical and professional knowledge, in a win-win relationship, i.e., in a joint development of new practices and new ways of doing.

This type of methodology provides students with contact and knowledge of a variety of real-life situations where autonomous learning and developing skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking are essential (PAIVA et al., 2016). In addition, the pedagogical practices aimed to foster the interaction between various social actors of the community, articulating their intervention with the institutional actors.

We will now present the initiatives that were carried out within the scope of various courses in the area of social intervention, where we teach, and which involved various institutions of different natures: schools of all educational levels, institutions supporting older adults, institutions supporting people with disabilities, people in situations of marginalisation and social exclusion, health institutions, local development and cultural facilities, among others.

How to hug without touching?

The project *How to hug without touching?* was born amid the pandemic to implement activities and actions that promoted the social and affective relationships of people who were institutionalised in social support entities, contributing to their physical, social and emotional well-being. Thus, based on the assumption that human identity itself and well-being are closely related to relationship networks, this project was created, implemented and evaluated through a wide range of initiatives adapted to different audiences and intervention contexts, following the methodology of planning-action, observation and reflection.

In operational terms, the process was as follows: the students were organised into groups of three to four people and chose the institutions with which they would like to collaborate in this project. A list of entities related to the School was already willing to participate in this project. However, the students could propose working with other institutions, widening the range of partnerships in the local community. We gave students freedom in selecting the areas/themes, and the age range of the participants with whom they would like to develop their intervention activities. It was also intended to give more significant motivational boost, involve and hold students accountable in their own learning process (MIZOKAMI, 2018; SULEMAN, 2016).

Thus, and as explained by Sousa, Fontes, and Mesquita (2021), in an initial phase, students were asked to prepare a diagnosis of needs, potentialities and intervention priorities regarding the public/entity/context where they would subsequently act, always taking into account the different actors of reality. This diagnostic interpretation implied the organisation of the data necessary to define intervention strategies and, subsequently, the development of an action plan, thus moving on to the next phase. Planning, intervention priorities, working hypotheses and action strategies were

established in the second phase. These action strategies were materialised in the developing activities to enhance the relationship with the Other. These activities were, in some cases, carried out *in loco* by the students; in other cases, they were implemented through the technicians of the institutions. One of the project's main aims was to promote actions that were stimulated by the students, but developed by the professionals in their contexts of intervention, in a logic of training and mutual gain. The projects took place in two major formats of intervention: face-to-face intervention (the group members were present and in direct contact with the target audiences) and non-face-to-face intervention (the group members were not in contact, and the technicians implemented the activities). Also in this phase, the schedule, the form of execution and evaluation of the project were organised. Both phases were built in close coordination with the partner institutions.

Although we are no longer in confinement in Portugal the project continues to be implemented, maintaining its strong points and adapting to post-pandemic realities.

Intervene.Humanise.Transmite

The *Intervene.Humanise.Transmite* project is born from a partnership with the Humanization Committee of the Santo André Hospital - Leiria Hospital Center (Portugal), in the second semester of 2019. This project presents as main objectives, on the one hand, to promote the humanization of the Hospital Centre and, on the other hand, to constitute an intervention and experimentation space for students, providing innovative knowledge and different forms of integration between theory and practice (SANTOS; ROCHA; PASSAGLIO, 2016).

This project is based on the concern felt by hospitals regarding the construction of increasingly humanised hospital spaces, both for professionals and for users and companions. The basis of this project recognises the importance of proximity with the other as a critical element in building experiences that promote

the well-being and health of individuals (KENBEL, 2019). These aspects are of the utmost value for the Humanisation Committee of the Leiria Hospital Centre, which presents as work priorities the formulation and implementation of proposals for humanisation actions (covering users, companions and professionals) in all services of the Leiria Hospital Centre.

One of the areas of these proposals for action includes sociocultural and artistic animation. Indeed, animation, as an intervention strategy, has proven to be significant importance in specific contexts of health promotion and well-being (SOUSA, 2021). Based on a psychosocial approach to the problems, the primary concern of animation is the social factors of health, working on the incidence that these factors have on individuals and communities, directing the action towards health rather than disease. Based on these determinants, animation practices value the group and social dimension. The well-being and mental health are seen from a multidisciplinary perspective, operationalised in the interaction between biological and social factors (SOUSA, 2021).

Thus, the creation of this articulation between the Hospital Centre and the ESECS intends, on the one hand, to meet the needs already presented by the Humanisation Committee and, on the other hand, to provide students with the opportunity to be inserted into a real context, living enriching and building experiences for a more solid higher education, contributing to the construction of the various fields of students' development by promoting the acquisition of cognitive, non-cognitive and socio-emotional skills (SOUSA et al., 2019). We refer to the implementation of participatory teaching-learning methodologies with students from courses linked to social intervention. At the beginning of each semester, students are challenged to: design and implement a set of sociocultural and artistic intervention strategies in the Hospital; plan and implement social and artistic activities with patients and respective accompanying persons; and, together with the

professionals from all services, promote humanisation processes and the (re)construction of relationships within the hospital unit.

Students have the autonomy to choose the hospital service where they want to develop their activities, just as they can define the recipients (users, companions, professionals) with whom they will work. The duration of the sessions, the nature of the activities, and the spaces to be used are decided by the students in close cooperation with the heads of the services and the professionals from the Humanisation Committee.

The sessions are carefully planned based on a thorough analysis of the context. After gathering the essential information for building a good knowledge of the reality and context, the planning of the sessions takes place in the classroom, with the support of the teachers of the subjects involved in the project. This support takes the form of personalised work where, together, the teacher and the students look for and analyse the best tools to use, given the characteristics of both the situation in which they are going to intervene and the profile of the students themselves. Therefore, there is learning in different times and places, where skills and learning occur in various situations. The theoretical part is applied outside the classroom through a more personalized teaching-learning modality, The practical part is brought into the school context, to be discussed and appropriated with teachers and colleagues (SOUSA; FONTES; MESQUITA, 2021).

This project began before the pandemic due to COVID-19. Except for the most acute months of the disease's manifestation, which caused significant changes in the hospital's operation, the project continued to develop in 2020, 2021 and 2022. Naturally, the activities had to be adapted and were often developed via video-conference and in close coordination with the professionals. It should be noted, however, that even these experiences were helpful learning moments for the students and development of personal and social skills for all those who

participated in the activities developed at the hospital.

ProAlfa - Literacy workshops for seniors

Given the above, promoting spaces and educational moments for different publics, seeking to meet the societal transformations that have been taking place since the mid-20th century, have sought to create new learning and social interaction dynamics. However, it was realised (LOPES et al., 2020) that much remains to be done with the senior public, namely those who live institutionalised in Residential Structures for Older People. The knowledge and experiences accumulated throughout their lives should be understood as essential personal wealth and for the communities where they live. For this audience, education should contribute to maintaining and stimulating their functionality and individual development (CACHIONI; NERI, 2008). Above all, it should contribute to participation and social interaction (LOPES et al., 2019), meeting the assumptions of comprehensive education.

In this scenario, *ProAlfa - literacy of seniors for seniors* emerged in 2016, within the scope of a curricular internship of the degree course in Social Work of the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria. The project assumes an educational perspective, implemented through generational strategies of socio-educational animation that enhance the empowerment of people and communities, that recognize and value the multiple contexts where people learn and share their knowledge, seeking to meet the international guidelines on the importance of education for the promotion of active and healthy ageing (INTERMINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP, 2017; COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, 2011; UN, 2003).

As already mentioned in other contexts (LOPES et al., 2019, 2020), *ProAlfa* arises from the will of some senior users of the Social Solidarity Association of Marrazes - Leiria (AMITEI), who together with one of its animators

sought the Coordination of the 60+ Programme for the development of literacy workshops for institutionalised users.

The initiative ran from 2016 to March 2020 regularly, being interrupted by the pandemic by COVID-19 and needing, to date, conditions to resume its activity in how it was created. This project aims to develop literacy workshops based on learning to read and write, aimed at older adults institutionalised in AMITEI, to promote social interaction and the sharing of knowledge and experiences. Moreover, to value the skills acquired throughout life. The initiative aimed to contribute to the enhancement of communities, the deconstruction of stereotypes and the bringing together of generations and was energised by seniors from the 60+ Programme who volunteered for this purpose.

The workshop took place once a week, in an AMITEI space, for approximately 90 minutes. Between 15 and 20 users aged between 65 and 101 years old, participated every week. The work of planning the activities was done jointly by the volunteers of the 60+ Programme (about 4 to 5 volunteers throughout each academic year), by the animators of the institution and by a team of four researchers from the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, which has accompanied the project since 2018. The preparation of the workshops did not obey any rigid model implying learning objectives, strategies and goals to be achieved; on the contrary, it gave freedom of choice to its participants, meeting their motivations, objectives, expectations and life contexts. The activities were varied, involving moments of reading, writing and painting. The participant made the choice individually with the help of the seniors of the 60+ Programme, who respected the choices and rhythms of each one. The aim was cognitive stimulation, but also relational, with affection being significant in this context in which support networks are often absent or non-existent.

It is a project that is assumed to be intergenerational, where the need to dedicate oneself to the Other and the desire to share knowledge,

experiences and affections are the reasons that led the seniors of the Programme to get involved in the development of these spaces of socio-educational animation (LOPES et al., 2019).

Creative May - Project of Artistic Intervention and Animation

Creative May is an arts intervention and animation project born within the scope of the Master in Arts Intervention and Animation (MIAA) course, in the 2018/2019 academic year. At the basis of this initiative is the idea that the arts are fundamental in individual and collective development. Reinforcing this thought is the fact that, in recent years, multiple national and international programmes that support activities of artists and associations in the development of projects aimed at specific issues or audiences have gained recognition (MAGUETA; SOUSA; MILHANO, 2022).

In this sense, the primary purpose of this project is to provide students, throughout May, with practical experiences of intervention, associating artistic, cultural, didactic and pedagogical knowledge. More specifically, the project has the following objectives to provide MIAA students with experiences of artistic intervention and animation, promoting real contexts for reflection on methodologies and dynamics transferable to the community's educational, social and cultural intervention spaces; to promote the sharing of theoretical and practical knowledge on artistic intervention and animation; to promote reflection on artistic participation in different educational, social and cultural contexts, for populations with distinct characteristics and needs; to share works of artistic expression and creation carried out at ESECS and by community partners, including those developed by MIAA students and by students who, in their study plans, also have artistic training, namely in CTeSP and licentiate degrees.

In operational terms, the project is structured during Planning, Implementation and

Evaluation. Planning involves teachers and students of this course, but also the partner institutions. The implementation concerns the time of concretization of the different activities: Workshops; Open classes; Online Meetings; Concerts; *Performances*; Exhibitions and Presentations of artistic products in various formats, at ESECS and other community spaces. It should be noted that during this month, the academic community of ESECS and the surrounding community are provided with opportunities to participate in artistic learning experiences, namely in activities of artistic experimentation, fruition and creation.

Evaluation is a fundamental element that allows us to perceive the level of achievement of the objectives and to understand where further reinforcement is needed in the desideratum of training professionals capable of acting in social realities, using the arts as intervention tools. The relationship with reality facilitates the understanding of the contents, since they gain meaning and strength, while promoting the development of critical thinking.

The innovation of this project takes shape in multiple dimensions, emphasizing the joint systematization of ideas, processes and strategies, taking into account the formative purposes. In addition, it calls for a restructuring and reorganization of classroom spaces and school spaces, demonstrating that the intervention of educational, cultural, social and artistic scope occurs in diverse and undefined places, in a logic of constructing of multi-referential learning spaces (SOUSA et al., 2019). The students' accountability towards the roles assumed in the project is also fundamental, as well as the creation of new forms of sociability among all participants.

In short, this project aims to challenge the academic community of ESECS as a whole. In addition, it gives space to different aesthetic and artistic education practices of people and educational, cultural, social, artistic and health institutions of the surrounding community, calling upon the existing interpersonal, formal

and informal relationships and the establishment of new forms of pedagogical, scientific and artistic connection.

Final considerations

In a time when unpredictability, uncertainty, volatility are the common denominators of liquid societies (BAUMAN, 2001), knowing how to live and face these transformations becomes a fundamental requirement. The 60+ Programme and the intervention programmes with the community (How to embrace without touching?, Intervene.Humanise.Transmite, ProAlfa and Creative May), described and analysed in the previous sections, meet the first objective of this study, intend to become references of a dynamic approach, adapted to the contexts, centred on people and on their needs and motivations. These programmes demonstrate how human development can be promoted from active teaching-learning practices in a logic of integral and integrating education. They reflect the importance attributed to the agency and self-determination of individuals, as well as the freedom and ability to make choices in a dynamic world with changing living conditions (UNDP, 2016). Through them, we seek to build environments of humanization and empowerment and, simultaneously, the development of educational practices that promote dialogue, creativity and collective intelligence, towards the promotion of integral and human development of individuals.

From the above, we understand the importance of these projects for the construction of a society that is intended for all and for all ages, responding to the second objective of this research. Thus, we understand that permanent education is a response to the constant and ephemeral changes in sociocultural, economic and political life, seeking to recognize diversities and contribute to affirming the right to education. We consider it to be a strategy for transforming society by promoting informed and participatory citizenship, knowledge

and respect for Others and the promotion of intergenerationality.

The advocacy of permanent education is based on active learning methodologies in the form of spaces for reflection, project work, action-research to contribute to the social participation of individuals and, thus, the consolidation of societies as democratic spaces where everyone feels integrated and valued. Therefore, we understand, like Barros (2020), that, in the logic of Faure's idea of permanent education, the school should provide the appropriate tools so that, autonomously, students can obtain the knowledge and information to learn to communicate, to work, to live together, i.e., to be (people).

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