

INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES: ADDRESSING PERSONALITY, VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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ABSTRACT

There are important phenomena that influence the adolescents' educational processes and development nowadays. Particularly noteworthy are those of a political and social nature, such as the widespread dissemination of far-right values, and the pedagogical and psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the ethical and professional stance of addressing these issues pedagogically, the "Interdisciplinary Educational Activities" project was developed with high school classes. This text presents an experience report of this project, which involved school psychology, school nursing, and Geography, Portuguese, and Sociology teachers. The project aimed to develop a teaching-learning process for content related to the social difficulties and interpersonal conflicts experienced by adolescents, using interdisciplinary knowledge, while also promoting mental health through the collective understanding and confrontation of these issues. The project is based on the concepts of "periodization of development" and "concept formation" from Vygotsky and "emancipatory educational activities", from Tonet. It was found that the project, by enabling the sharing of different realities, enhanced intimate-personal communication and the learning of concepts addressed in the disciplines. This is consistent with Vygotsky's formulations regarding school mediation through scientific concepts, supported by everyday concepts, which enables greater understanding and action in reality. It was also considered that the lack of spaces for dialogue in schools can lead to frustration with education and erupt into more complex processes of violence. Finally, it is highlighted the potential of interdisciplinary projects to strengthen the school community in the face of individual and collective difficulties, establishing networks of care and knowledge.

Key words: educational activity; school psychology; mental health; adolescence; high-school

Actividades Educativas Interdisciplinares: Abordando Personalidad, Violencias y Salud Mental entre adolescentes

RESUMEN

Hay importantes fenómenos que influyen los procesos educacionales y de desarrollo de adolescentes en la actualidad. Se subraya los de cuño político-social, como la capilarización de valores de extrema-derecha, y los impactos pedagógicos-psicológicos de la pandemia de COVID-19. A partir del posicionamiento ético-profesional de trabajar pedagógicamente esas problemáticas se desarrolló el proyecto "Actividades Educativas Interdisciplinares" con grupos de la enseñanza secundaria. El presente texto se caracteriza por un relato de experiencia de este proyecto, que se compuso por los servicios de psicología-escolar, enfermería-escolar y profesoras de Geografía, Portugués y Sociología. Él tuvo por objeto desarrollar un proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de contenidos relacionados a las dificultades sociales y conflictos interpersonales presentados por los adolescentes, por intermedio de conocimientos interdisciplinares, al mismo tiempo que la promoción de salud mental, por intermedio de la comprensión y enfrentamiento colectivo de estas cuestiones. El proyecto está basado por los conceptos de "periodización del desarrollo" y "formación de conceptos" de Vygotsky y de "actividades educativas emancipadoras" de Tonet. Se constató que el proyecto, al posibilitar el intercambio de diferentes realidades, potencializó la comunicación íntima-personal y el aprendizaje de conceptos abordados en las asignaturas. Eso coaduna con las formulaciones de Vygotsky acerca de la mediación escolar por conceptos científicos, apoyándose en los conceptos cotidianos, que posibilita mayor comprensión y actuación en la realidad. Se consideró, aún, que la falta de espacios de diálogo en las escuelas puede acarretar en frustraciones delante a la educación y resultar en procesos más complejos de violencia. Se muestra, por fin, la potencia de proyectos interdisciplinares para fortalecer la comunidad escolar frente a las dificultades individuales y colectivas, estableciendo redes de cuidado y saberes.

Palabras clave: actividad pedagógica; psicología escolar; salud mental; adolescencia; enseñanza secundaria

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Atividades educativas interdisciplinares: abordando personalidade, violências e saúde mental entre adolescentes

RESUMO

Há importantes fenômenos que influenciam os processos educacionais e de desenvolvimento de adolescentes na atualidade. Destacam-se os de cunho político-social, como a capilarização de valores de extrema-direita, e os impactos pedagógicos-psicológicos da pandemia de COVID-19. A partir do posicionamento ético-profissional de se trabalhar pedagogicamente essas problemáticas foi desenvolvido o projeto "Atividades Educativas Interdisciplinares" com turmas do Ensino Médio. O presente texto caracteriza-se por um relato de experiência desse projeto, composto pelos serviços de psicologia-escolar, enfermagem-escolar e professoras de Geografia, Português e Sociologia. Ele objetivou desenvolver um processo de ensino-aprendizagem de conteúdos relacionados às dificuldades sociais e conflitos interpessoais apresentados pelos adolescentes, por meio de conhecimentos interdisciplinares, bem como a promoção de saúde mental, através da compreensão e enfrentamento coletivo dessas questões. O projeto é embasado pelos conceitos de "periodização do desenvolvimento" e "formação de conceitos" de Vigotski e de "atividades educativas emancipadoras" de Tonet. Constatou-se que o projeto, ao possibilitar o compartilhamento de diferentes realidades, potencializou a comunicação íntima-pessoal e o aprendizado de conceitos abordados nas disciplinas. Isso coaduna com as formulações de Vigotski acerca da mediação escolar por conceitos científicos, apoiando-se nos conceitos cotidianos, que possibilitam maior compreensão e atuação na realidade. Considerou-se, ainda, que a falta de espaços de diálogo nas escolas pode acarretar frustração perante a educação e irromper em processos mais complexos de violência. Releva-se, por fim, a potência de projetos interdisciplinares para fortalecer a comunidade escolar frente às dificuldades individuais e coletivas, estabelecendo redes de cuidado e saberes.

Palavras-chave: atividade pedagógica; psicologia escolar; saúde mental; adolescência; ensino médio

INTRODUCTION

There are nowadays important phenomena that strongly influence the educational and development processes for young people in Brazil. The most relevant ones are the political phenomena, which lead to values and actions among young people, and the pedagogical and health impact of the pandemic period.

Concerning the sociopolitical dimension, there was in the past few years an intensification and capillarization of extreme right-wing values, inflaming individualistic principles that are contrary to collectiveness (Nunes, 2022; Cara et al., 2022), condoning intolerance to difference and the underappreciation of minority groups in a country that is historically plagued by racism, classism, and misogyny (Bento, 2002; González, 2020). According to the report "Ultraconservatism and right-wing extremism among adolescents in Brazil", young people have been recruited by circles of extreme right wing in online forums and social networks, which disseminate hatred against certain groups, propagate antidemocratic conceptions and glorify acts of violence (Cara et al., 2022).

This conjuncture is evidenced by a considerable number of assaults against schools. There are several examples of teachers being threatened or assaulted by family members that do not respect the precepts of a democratic education and accuse teachers of indoctrination. At the same time, the number of attacks to schools really increased in the last two years (Langeani, 2023); in most cases, the perpetrators of violence were students or former student who had gone through situations of violence or frustration throughout their school life (Cara et al., 2022). Such scenario agrees with

the research of the São Paulo education network, which points out that 48% of the students were victims of violence at school in 2022 (Apeoesp, 2023).

The aforementioned context is reflected also by the Brazilian annuary of public safety, which indicates that Brazil has become even more insecure for children, adolescents and women in 2022. There were more cases of rape, especially against minors, as well as domestic violence and femicide (FBSP, 2023). The same research exposes that 85% of the violent deaths of people aged from 12 to 17 were of black adolescents – with the police being responsible for a considerable percentage of these deaths, which reveals the racism and the violence perpetrated by the Brazilian state. It is important to emphasize that, while this text was being written, three great massacres were committed by police officers victimizing young black people from the slums.

The consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic have also had an impact on the learning process and development of adolescents. Data from the São Paulo Bureau of Education indicate that 70% of the students reported feeling symptoms of anxiety and depression in 2022 (IAS, 2022). These symptoms are a result of the period of social isolation and the return to onsite education, which demanded readaptation after a long period of mediation by video (Wang et al., 2021); the students also manifested less motivation, less interest, and less autonomy (Instituto Península, 2022).

This set of symptoms demonstrates the necessary preoccupation with the educational process and the mental health of adolescents at schools because they are factors that might occasion psychological suffering and generate barriers in schooling processes. In this sense,

based on this rationale, the project “Interdisciplinary Educational Activities” was developed with high school classes from a school of the federal education network. The report aims at presenting the realization of considerations about the project.

METHODOLOGY: EXPERIENCE REPORT/RELA TO DE EXPERIÊNCIA

This context is characterized by an experience report of the project “Interdisciplinary Educational Activities – personality, violence and mental health”, developed with classes of the first year of High School. It contains the elaboration report of the stages of the project, the synthesis of their application and the considerations regarding the project.

The project is part of an ethical-professional position and a need that was observed by the team, the need to pedagogically work contents that present themselves as conflict in the schooling process for adolescents. In this sense, it was elaborated with the objective to realize an interdisciplinary teaching-learning process, which at the same time should foster motivation among students in their study process by means of an approach on social contradictions that are present in their living contexts, and lead to a critical reflection regarding these realities; and develop comprehension and confronting strategies against social oppressions and contradictions, by means of scientific concepts and of collective dialogue, while promoting mental health and sharing networks.

The project was elaborated by a team made up of a school psychologist, a school nurse, and the teachers of Portuguese, geography, and sociology. It is based on the concept of “emancipating educational activities” (Tonet, 2014); in the “periodization of development” and “concept formation” (Vygotsky, 1996; Vigotski, 2009; Tuleski & Eidt, 2020) and in the Technical References of the CFP (2020). We present now the planning, application and report of the meetings.

Planning: researchers considered the connection of three sources for planning: 1) The theoretical basis regarding the periodization of development and of the formation of concepts, 2) The dialogue with the classes in the project, 3) The pedagogical plan of the participating disciplines. It was the way the curricular content could be approached while taking into consideration the reality of the students, which was highlighted by these sources:

Regarding adolescence (1), it is understood that it is a moment of transformation, of another social situation of development, in which there is the establishment of a new way of thinking, due to the predominance of thinking by concepts. This mode leads to the complexification of reality, making adolescents able to retain distinct interests from the ones of childhood (Vygotsky, 1996). Among these, there is the relation with others, the comprehension of reality and of oneself. The guiding activity in this period, personal close communication and the study activity lead to the formation of a world

view and the conformation of personality (Tuleski & Eidt, 2020). At this moment, new motivations can be created and greater command over thought and behavior, especially if there is the mediation of scientific concepts of formal education.

From the dialogue with the classes, it was possible to observe the (2) emergence of needs and interests such as difficulties in interpersonal communication, such as the distance from friends and conflicts in relationships; the psychological suffering, self-awareness and plans for the future; learning difficulties in the transition to high school; family conflicts; social problems such as unemployment, police violence and political polarization; the lack of investment at school and the difficulties to access due to urban mobility.

The highlights in the education plans (3) were - Geography: sociocultural, geopolitical, and economic characteristics of the city, with a highlight on the master plan and its consequences; Sociology: the working world, sociological imagination in the comprehension of reality and economic systems; Portuguese: languages and social conscience, biographical report and text interpretation by means of diverse media.

Content of the stages/meetings: researchers realized an interlocution among the three sources above for the elaboration of the themes and of the stages, by means of a meeting with the team. The themes that give the project a name were defined – personality, violence and mental health. By these concepts, it is possible to deduce what the team defined as objectives of the semester, which is to approach “what constitutes them” (with a focus on the life history of the influences of territory), “what they want to constitute” (plans regarding oneself and society) and the relation of these contents with the current social context.

Regarding methodology, researchers agreed that for every meeting there would be a set of concepts to be approached, with previous organization of the pedagogical process and of group mediation; and that videos would be used, informative texts and text production, in addition to collective dialogue. The whole meeting would take place at the same time as one of the disciplines, and would be mediated by the psychology professional, by the nurse and by the teacher, with the presence of the other members whenever it was possible.

Regarding the stages, four were organized to be developed with the three classes of the first year of high school, with a total number of 12 meetings in the semester. The meetings and their contents will be presented now:

Synthesis of the report on the meetings .

1st meeting – the objective of the first meeting was to approach the influence of the territory and of the city in the life history and personality conformation of

Table 1: *Themes and methodology of the meetings of the project.*

Meeting/Class	Themes	Method and triggering material
Meeting 1 Geography	Personality, Territory and life histories	Round table. Pictures of the neighborhoods
Meeting 2 Sociology	Work, Life Projects and cultural determinations	Round table, whiteboard notes, “El Empleo” Video
Meeting 3 Portuguese	Prejudice, Political and Cultural Hegemony	Video: “O perigo de uma história única” (The Danger of a Single History). Elaboration of a review/autobiographical report
Meeting 4 Portuguese	Rights, Social Movements and Collectiveness	Round table, Video: “Eu quero a periferia na USP” (I want the projects at the USP) (Chavoso da USP)

each individual; how geopolitical, economic, and cultural characteristics influence the way people live, related to each other and develop. In order to get started, the team requested, days before, that the students take pictures of the photos of their neighborhoods. Thus, the pictures were useful in order to approach the way each region is structured, if it has health services, leisure time areas, the influence of the real estate market etc. The students highlighted areas of poverty and discrimination due to sociocultural contrasts, such as discrimination for the color of one's skin, class prejudice, religious racism, violence against women and so on. Also, there was a discussion on the characteristics of the traditional communities and of the relations of each neighborhood, such as the families of fishermen, indigenous communities, Umbanda temples, the existence or absence of community networks and how much that influences the quality of life and political power. It was possible to relate different concepts and start a discussion on the ways to comprehend and change reality – thus dialoguing with geography, psychology, sociology, and so on. It was possible to highlight the role played by school in this process by leading to preparation and discussion of social problems.

2nd meeting – The second meeting aimed at developing reflection on the students' projects in the medium and long term, how much the sociopolitical context would benefit or hinder plans regarding what would be possible in such reality. Important concepts were approached: work, university, adult life and life project. The meeting was developed by means of reflexive questions, with the objective to approach the contradictions and possibilities of the working world in the capitalist society. The students brought, as content, the problematization of inequality and of social classes; the logic of profit as the basis for relations, family difficulties and health conditions. Finally, the short film “El Empleo” (Sotelo & Tacher, 2008) in order to connect with the content that was previously discussed. It is important to highlight that students brought the concepts of the discipline into the meeting (Sociology),

such as Alienation, Fetishism of Merchandize and the sexual-racial division of work.

3rd meeting – this meeting had the objective to prepare for the last stage of the project. Researchers aimed at reflecting on the concepts of oppressions and prejudices, so that in the last meetings they could approach how the students can behave regarding the social contradictions in their own lives. The video “O Perigo de uma História Única” (Adichie, 2009) was exhibited and participants were later requested to write a review, with bibliographical elements, reporting how they perceived the unique histories of their lives. Although they knew how to express themselves on prejudice and social violence, it was observed that some had difficulty to elaborate on their own experiences. In the reviews there were themes such as violence and prejudices experienced in the school period, such as racism, homophobia, and family violence. It is important to emphasize how the many experiences that happened in the first years of schooling kept reverberating in High School. It was a relevant moment to connect self-reflection and cultural conditions, as well as written expression.

4th meeting – the last meeting aimed at discussing propositions regarding the problems that had been previously approached. Initially, there was a survey of what difficulties today's generation of young people faces and what the possible perspectives are. After the triggering questions, researchers could make a list of difficulties if the passage between adolescence and adult life, and the students listed the high cost of life, working conditions and the difficulties to establish quality of life with a highlight on the processes of mental illness. After a few initial reflections, there was the exhibition of the video “Eu quero a periferia na USP” (Torres, 2021), after which most of the students expressed that the way of education and science is important for the collective promotion of an egalitarian society and as a means to get knowledge and work, in addition to the necessary participation in social movements that aim at equality – even if it was not a unanimous opinion. The collective synthesized the importance of these reflections in order

to establish life projects without being burdened by the problems of society.

DISCUSSION AND FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The present project became inspired when the team wondered how to approach a set of pedagogical difficulties that were combined with the psychological suffering of the students. Very soon, it was perceived that it would be convenient to develop an interdisciplinary collective activity with the pedagogical team and teachers. The previous conversation with the classes, when they were returning to onsite mode and entering high school, demonstrated the need for approximation between the team and the adolescents, by means of a mediation of concepts that were connected to the presented afflictions and conflicts.

Thus, the project was constituted by the curricular knowledge of the disciplines, by the theoretical-practical frameworks of Psychology and Nursery in the field of school education and by the contributions of the students. Thus, it became possible for the school and the team to serve their social purpose, in the teaching of cultural-scientific knowledge, and at the same time realizing a process of promotion of mental health and elaboration of violences that are present in the contexts of life. This approach corroborated the construction of connections while strengthening the school community and benefitting the processes of assistance by Psychology, Nursery, and Pedagogy and other members of the pedagogical team.

It is possible to highlight the fact that the proposal potentializes learning, because it leads to the sharing of different life contexts, encouraging the activity of personal close communication – which was one of the problems reported in the post pandemic period, and which is noticed for the social distancing of a group of individuals. It was observed that the approach to these social situations led to the materialization of concepts worked in the disciplines. This is in agreement with the formulations by Vygotsky (2009), who points out that school mediation by means of scientific concepts, dialoguing with the everyday life concepts, leads to restructuring conscience, promoting greater comprehension and action in reality – which was perceived by the students and by the team. This is evidence that it is important to have a process of teaching and learning that takes into consideration the units of reason-emotion, everyday-life and scientific knowledge and individuals.

It is considered that the lack of mediated spaces for conversations and collective dialogue at school, elaborated with school psychology professionals for example, harms the process of confronting the ethical paradigms of contemporary society and might lead to processes of suffering and frustration regarding education and result in more complex social processes of violence. Finally, it is possible to observe the power of the

collective effort by students and teachers by means of a dialogical proposal in order to construct the dimensions of education and affection regarding individual and collective problems while establishing networks of care and knowledge.

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Data Declaration: The authors declare that the set of data in the study is not publicly available because it contains information that is personal and also about educational institutions, and such information might lead to the identification of students.