

Educational Challenges: Cultural Behaviors, Psychopathology and Psychological Intervention

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Introduction

In the present society we are facing behaviors mainly in young individuals that might be considered trends of culture or psychopathology. Both contexts are challenges for Education, Psychology and Health. This poster examines nine case studies specifically in Educational Psychology with the main goal to identify and to define phenomena contexts in school culture, the potential psychopathology involved and to present a psychological (and pedagogical) intervention for each case. The research was conducted by university students in the period between March 2017 and June 2017, in Portugal, and the childhood was focused. The case studies explored the cyberbullying; the bullying - victims and bullies' perspectives; the obsessive compulsive disorder; the perception and inclusion of children from homoparental families; the inclusion of foreign students in the higher education systems as host institutions; the low vision and the inclusion in curricular physical activities; the influence of doc-reality and media in attitudes and self-esteem; and the influence of morningness and eveningness types for learning in the same school timetables. The university students were supervised during their research analysis and two methods were available for the intervention research study: the meta-analysis and the empirical research. In the second phase, the pedagogical intervention was designed for the different educational contexts in analysis, especially concerning the school environments. The evidence of literature and the empirical studies showed new trends of school behaviors and educational disturbances that require further research and effective (and adequate to age, gender, nationality and culture) pedagogical instruments. Respecting the instruments, on the one hand, to identify behaviors, habits or pathologies and to highlight the role and the training of teachers, psychologists and health professionals, on the other hand, to promote the early intervention and to enhance healthy child development and the orientation of the families. To respond to both milestones, this poster presents nine pedagogical projects that will be discussed on their impact concerning advances for the psychological and educational intervention, in a person-centered approach.

1. Cyberbullying case study

Recent literature presents different statistics concerning cyberbullying phenomena. The cybervictims are rising up as well as the cyberbullies, also in Portugal. Attending to the current culture trends and cyber challenges for children and adolescents, we suggest the development of a Portuguese mobile application (app) that might be able to incorporate an algorithm that inform parents about the websites access of their children, connecting all the electronic devices at home. This would help to prevent cyberbullying episodes. On the other hand, this device helps to prevent the development of new aggressive behaviors. This device should be disseminated also in the schools' communities to improve the prevention of cyberbullying and to educate young students about healthy behaviors in the cyber world, distinguishing violence, empathy and positive human relationships.

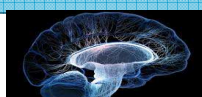
2 and 3. Bullying case studies

The research evidence established that the male gender suffers more from bullying episodes when compared to the females. Bullying is a school disturbance related to the indiscipline and measures should be considered for the (re)education about boundaries in relationships, mainly between school peers. Data indicate that bullies are organized in groups and the consequences are more frequently identified as low interest in school attendance (dropout), learning difficulties, academic success failure, and emotional problems (low self-esteem, depression symptoms, suicide). The aggressors also were observed as experiencing similar problems, in learning and in emotional balance. For intervention, first, they are suggested strategies of 90 minutes meetings (focus groups, for example). Second, general sessions of sensibilization in schools and involving victims, identified or not in the sessions, to improve their self-esteem and understanding about the bullying problem and the consequences to deal with.



4. Low vision case study

Based on a real diagnostic and considering the right perception to have toward the special education needs of the individual with low vision, a proper educational programme will assure the academic success in a fair and positive way, and person-centered. The adaptation of didactic instruments is not enough to respond to the low vision case. A pedagogical intervention is advanced here to promote socialization activities and effective curricular inclusion: the curricular physical activity should include the low vision students in school contests, for example with strength, flexibility and resistance training and tests. These contests develop opportunities to all the school community, because they become to be more understanding about equity (of skills and tasks), respect and acceptance. Also, apps were available as advantages for the daily of low vision subjects or for blindness cases.



5. Sleep case study

International evidence points out that the school performance does not depend directly from sleep events, in children, but those sleep events and the sleep patterns (such as the chronotype) were verified with predictive value for the diurnal mood, fatigue and cognitive functioning. In Portugal, the sleep research in children is still scarce in what respects the correlation between sleep and school achievement. However national authors already observed that children present high percentage of eveningness type (normally this chronotype is related to low achievement) and that children and adolescents are increasingly depending on electronic devices near the sleep and bedtime schedules. Those electronic devices are identified as a variable that causes prejudice for the daily school readiness and that influences the balanced sleep/vigil timetables. Here is proposed a pedagogical intervention that includes school, families and children: a mobile application (app) that measures body temperature and report activities of children in real time. Thus, to (re)educate the children's behaviors through the remote monitoring that parents might have with that app in order to understand the activities and the timetables of their children. From here, it should be easier to identify the causes and the solution for the failures (cognitive and academic) in specific periods of the day.

6. Homoparental families case study

Considering the children adopted by homoparental families, there is few research that acknowledge the importance of perceptions and well-being of those children. The sensibilization for this new reality, after the legalization of homosexual marriage, demands to reflect pedagogical intervention. The storytelling about the homoparental families in specific animal species is here suggested to be implemented in the Basic Education (primary schools), in a specific hour activity, combined with a visit to the zoological garden to observe the main characters of those stories. This educational measure promotes, in the one hand, the creativity and imagination through reading and listening, on the other hand, the awareness about the homoparental families in other species as normal context and living.

7. Compulsive obsessive behavior case study

In the cognitive-behavioral approach, several measures might be addressed for the children with suspected obsessive compulsive disorders. These children suffer from experiencing repetitive thoughts and behaviors and they need help to reorganize those thoughts and also to understand behavior patterns. In classroom should be taken into account to establish with them a daily routine with specific moments of physical contact between the child and peers and teachers. The traditional games are one example to attain that goal, because the physical contact is privileged. Differently from the videogames and electronic devices dependence. Also is suggested the development of devices to help the child and his family to monitor child behaviors (compulsion, for example, related to the hand washing). For that, the mobile applications could be useful to create an algorithm that identify a behavior and its recommended pattern. In this way, the deviance from that pattern is informed and the child receives the alert. A progressive improvement of compulsive behaviors is expected through these measures and related intervention.

8. Foreign students inclusion case study

In the context of a social project ongoing and focusing the students in Portuguese Universities that have origin in countries where the Portuguese is the Official Language (known as CPLP), a questionnaire was administrated to understand the perceptions that those students present regarding the hosting institutions. From the results obtained, specific measures are indicated: the universities should promote intercultural meetings inside the institution as well as to promote more support activities to identify and to monitor the learning difficulties that these students may have, mainly concerning linguistic ability. Also it should be noted that the previous educational background (of the country of origin and its system) matters to understand those difficulties. In the support activities and programs, the native students are encouraged to be involved. More didactic materials, adjusted to the digital advances (mobile applications and websites for interculturality). Finally, the proficiency diagnostic tests should be more carefully carried out at University, considering the arrival of the newcomer.

9. The Media and behaviors case study

We have examined how literature presents the influence of media and doc-reality contents considering the prejudice for the adolescents' perceptions about the real life and the valid goals to pursuit. Portuguese studies had revealed that parents are more concerned when their children attain the adolescence and tend to develop media preferences that might have influence in their well-being, autonomy and moral values. Research refers to the gender as main variable mainly focusing the health and psychological problems that young girls experience after long exposure to media contents. Those contents could enhance a body image and lifestyle that do not correspond to the real life of the majority of the population. It is suggested to develop cognitive 'reeducation' through parental dialogues in order to correct concepts about lifestyle, body image and life goals that could be biased by media and television shows.

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