Toward Sustainable Intergenerational Education Programmes: current challenges and future prospects

Claudia Azevedo, PhD, University of Porto

Theoretical significance

The emigration process in the fifties and seventies takes away the young people and causes a deduction on the potential of fertility which intensely affected the Portuguese age pyramid. The last Census (2011) shows that the ageing process is not an inland phenomenon but is spread all over (long) the country. The political agendas, both at the international level, as well as at the European and local level drive us to create synergies that structure a more cohesive society for all ages, founded in intergenerational solidarity and lifelong learning which are capable to generate closer and stronger relationships between generations. We observe that all this demographic, social and economic changes who led us to a growing interest in approaches that seek to increase intergenerational relationships. We defend that IEPs are a positive choice to increase these relationships. In addition, the literature states and highlights many benefits of IEP. Education is a key concern for the development of an Intergenerational Program. The argument is that IPs addressed formal education activities and must be seen as lifewide and lifelong. Hence we want to enhance the places on these IEPs occur plays an important role inasmuch as “affect the places that social groups cohabit or inhabit separately” (Mannion, 2012:396). The school is an excellent place where joining together the generations could happen. The school has the duty to provoke this kind of changes.