Partnerships Between Schools and Universities in Curriculum Innovation

Symposium

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School’s Life Observatory is an attentive to do research related with curriculum practices otherwise.

“Knowledge based curriculum progress requires a coherent interplay of experts, policymakers, practitioners and teacher educators alike”

(Hameyer, 2011, pp232)
Faculty of Psychology and Sciences of Education of Porto University has, since 4 years ago, an Observatory on Schools’ Life.

This device was created to improve a relationship among Schools and University.

The interest and the impact of this partnership is different as it is seen from the University's point of view, or from Schools'.
What is OBVIE’s main purpose?

To implement a network of information collection based on the use of research methodologies and protocols, which purpose is to establish access to updated information about Schools’ life.
Main challenges

To what extent University can establish an open conversation with Elementary and Secondary Schools, in order to innovate curriculum?

To what extent could OBVIE produce evidence that is interesting to Schools' work improvement?

What kind of evidence is the most useful to innovate curriculum?
To characterize the "observation nature" that is developed by School Life Observatory (OBVIE), its action and its impact in curriculum decisions taken by Schools, which are OBVIE's partners.

– Differently of what General Inspection of Education (GIE) does, OBVIE defines and organizes its action in a close process with schools.
Observation nature of the observatory (OBVIE)

Not to control what it sees... (like it is perform by GIE)

...but to perform as a hermeneutic mirror

As it:
- focus on processes
- emphasizes interpretations
- gives place to controversies and plural looks
- enhances actors as participant observers.
Dimensions we have been working on action

School Climate:
- Leadership;
- Collaborative practices among teachers;
- Pupils’ participation.

Learning practices:
- School level articulation;
- Educational support: accessorized practices between teachers;
- Curricular contextualization;
- Schools curricular offer
- Cognitive tasks at curricular work
Organizational issues action

University team

Tecnological resources

Mediator teacher

Periodical contacts

Schools (mainly from the region)
Data collection

- Combines both quantitative and qualitative approach;
- Sometimes gets a multi-case approach.

Dissemination

- Gives importance to dissemination among schools and further discussion which is aloud by data and findings;
- Promotes a mitigated benchmarking.

Uses a moodle platform to collect and to share data among schools.
• **Mitigated Benchmarking:**
  1. Collected data comes from the Schools interests’ previous declaration.
  2. Data is treated in global.
  3. Each School gets global results and its own’s. The comparison, if it exists, remains a School decision.
OBVIE’s **impact** in curriculum innovation made by schools

Therefore, it could be:

- Justaposition;
- Consonance;
- Critical dissonance;
- Colaborative ressonance (Marcelo, 1998):

  The impact of this partnership depends on Schools’ self autonomy.

Curriculum teachers’ practices and curriculum inquiry must be a shared responsibility and a way to improve curriculum innovation.
OBVIE’s impact in curriculum innovation made by universities

- It mobilizes and enlarges scientific and research interests of team’s members
- It problematizes and deeps theoretical knowledge that guides curriculum
- It improves theory and practice relationship.
Further questions to think about

To what extent is it possible to unveil curriculum discourses produced by Schools?

To what extent Schools' demands challenge research topics and methodologies?
Carlos Marcelo (1998) – relationship between Universities and Schools (focused on the ideas of learning and teaching)

Justaiposition: each partner has their own ideas and relationship is just an opportunity to show each other “how we work at our place”

Consonance: some teachers from the two institutions share teaching and learning ideas, and establish research and action networks, where

Critical dissonance: relationship search actively for dissonance among teachers’ perceptions in order to further deepening ways of improving teaching and learning practices.

Collaborative ressonance: based on the idea that teachers’ training must be a shared responsibility and a way to improve curriculum innovation.
www.fpce.up.pt/ciie/obvie