

Invitation to participate in a research Project.

The research group GIE (Interuniversity Group of Studies) of the University of Santiago de Compostela, led by Prof. Miguel Zabala, coordinates a research project selected in the last Research National Plan of R+D+I (Research- Development- Innovation) 2012.

The name of the Project is: *Curriculum design and Good Practices in Early Childhood Education: an international, multicultural and interdisciplinary approach*. 38 researchers (23 women and 15 men), belonging to 9 Spanish universities will be involved in the research.

We start from the idea that Education, in general, and more particularly Early Childhood Education, has become a major commitment to the political agenda for the coming century. This goal is unattainable without the support of research and education professionals. UNESCO picked up this idea in its strategic objective for the education of this decade:

"Promoting experimentation, innovation and the dissemination and sharing of information and best practices, as well as dialogue on principles of action in the field of education" (UNESCO 31C / 4). In similar words, the Bureau International d'Education (BIE) states as its primary

mission for these years: *"(a) To facilitate the flow of information and exchange of experiences around the world and (b) systematize, analyze and make available such information and experiences."*

Our project is located exactly at the mentioned strategic line : looking at *identification, analysis, representation and visibility* of good practices in Early Childhood Education. It intends to do so in an *international* (involving researchers and teams from different countries), *multicultural* (looking for models that meet the characteristics of the different cultural context) and *multidisciplinary* (taking into account innovative approaches in the various areas of the curriculum and / or management of Early Childhood Education) perspective.

This project has been built around three basic objectives:

1. To *identify, analyze, represent and make visible* a hundred examples of good practices in the various components and dimensions that characterize and affect Early Childhood Education.
2. To establish a flexible and plural framework of features and conditions on the analyzed experiences: What is the uniqueness of each experience and what can be transferred to others?

3. To create an international community of researchers and practitioners able to generate strong dynamics of cooperation and exchange.

The selection of "Best Practices" will be done through pre-established and agreed criteria extracted by the team from the current research. In agreement with the institution, each of the experiments and the selected practices will be studied in situ through a triple approach: (1) interviews with managers and / or teachers (depending on whether it was an institutional or class-centered practice); (2) practice observation and collection of evidences (recordings, products, patterned observations); (3) analysis of institutional and professional documents (educational project, learning schedules).

Analyses were conducted on three levels: (a) individual analysis of each studied *good practice* (both in its theoretical foundation and as a real practice: what is distinctive, how they started, how they evolved, what results have been obtained), (b) analysis of clusters of good practices (reviewing those belonging to the same scope or to one curriculum area), (c) comprehensive analysis of all practices looking for common and divergent aspects between them.

The product expected from the project is a repository of 100 (or more) good practices described and analyzed both individually and as a whole. These practices will, thus, be made available to all persons and institutions involved in preprimary education and child policy.

Through this issue of RELADEI we cordially invite all colleagues and teams from other countries interested in this subject to participate in our project. For more information, please contact us through the following emails:

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