Territories of Innovation: The local dimension of innovative inclusive education practices

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Part of a wider research project analysing practices, voices and pathways of inclusive education, and considering a set of socio-educational practices developed in the framework of two nationwide intervention programmes in Portugal (one school-based, one community-based), in eleven different empirical contexts, this paper will look into the innovative dimension and the local dimension of such practices. It is a multi-case study, intended to contribute significantly to the analysis of the intervention on school failure and dropout, by mapping the points of view of the institutional actors engaged in a panel of inclusive socio-educational practices. These actors identify and characterize locally based, successful socio-educational practices to overcome school failure and dropout, contributing to the understanding of the processes, factors, rationales and partnerships that support them.

This paper addresses two specific research questions, within that wider project:

a) what new approaches can be identified amongst these inclusive socio-educational practices, in particular in regards to resource management, engaged partners, audiences, forms of participation, strategies for measuring success and dissemination networks; and

b) what is the role of the local community in the development, implementation and evaluation of these inclusive socio-educational practices?

The diversity of practices and contexts, and the plurality of voices – many of them usually ‘hidden’ (and thus less known, such as the voices of young people) in exclusion processes, in general, but particularly in socio-educational processes – warrants the scientific and social relevance of this study.

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