

Benefits of the Use of Participatory Tools to Support Students' Curricular Learning: 4 Case Studies

Beneficios del Uso de Herramientas Participativas para Apoyar el Aprendizaje Curricular de los Estudiantes: 4 Estudios de Caso

José F. Amiama¹, Aida Sanahuja^{2,*}, Patricia Mata-Benito³ e Irina Sherezade Castillo⁴

¹Universidad del País Vasco/Enskal Herriko Unibertsitatea, España

²Universitat Jaume I, España

³Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, España

⁴Universidad de Murcia, España

KEYWORDS:

Participatory action research
Case study
Inclusive school
School practices
Competencies

ABSTRACT:

This work is part of a project financed by the Spanish Ministry for Economy and competitiveness and the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER) in which researchers from four Spanish universities accompany four Primary schools to problematize, change and improve their curricular practices. This work considers if the own participation in these democratic and inclusive processes enhances the student's willingness to learning through IAP's own tools. It is a multiple case study, articulated through 4 cases. The study was carried out in schools in the following Spanish regions: Murcia (C1), Valencia (C2), Madrid (C3) and the Basque Country (C4). The selected schools were immersed in a participatory action research process. After a brief presentation of the process, the participatory tools used on different occasions by teachers, students, families and social agents, within the participatory action research process, are presented. From this triangulation of tools and participants, the positive impact of the use of these qualitative and participatory tools in the teaching-learning processes of the students is observed. The results focus on satisfaction with the PAR methodology and how it promotes the learning of curricular content.

DESCRIPTORES:

Investigación-acción participativa
Estudio de caso
Escuela inclusiva
Asistente de aula
Prácticas escolares
Competencias

RESUMEN:

Este trabajo forma parte de un proyecto financiado por el Ministerio español de Economía y Competitividad y el Fondo Europeo de Desarrollo Regional (FEDER) en el que investigadores de cuatro universidades españolas acompañan a cuatro escuelas de Primaria a problematizar, cambiar y mejorar sus prácticas curriculares. Se plantea si la propia participación en los procesos democráticos e inclusivos mejora la disposición del alumnado al aprendizaje a través de herramientas propias de IAP. Se trata de un estudio de caso múltiple articulado a través de 4 casos. El estudio ha sido realizado en centros escolares de las siguientes regiones españolas: Murcia (C1), Valencia (C2), Madrid (C3) y País Vasco (C4). Las escuelas seleccionadas estaban inmersas en un proceso de investigación acción participativa. Tras una breve presentación del proceso se presentan las herramientas participativas utilizadas en diferentes ocasiones por el profesorado, el alumnado, las familias y los agentes sociales, dentro del proceso de investigación acción participativa. A partir de esta triangulación de herramientas y participantes, se observa el impacto positivo del uso de estas herramientas cualitativas y participativas en los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje del alumnado. Los resultados se centran en la satisfacción con la metodología IAP y como esta fomenta el aprendizaje de contenidos curriculares.

CÓMO CITAR:

Amiama, J. F., Sanahuja, A., Mata-Benito, P. y Castillo, I. S. (2023). Benefits of the use of participatory tools to support students' curricular learning: 4 case studies. *Revista Iberoamericana de Evaluación Educativa*, 16(1), 67-84.
<https://doi.org/10.15366/riee2023.16.1.004>

1. Introduction

The world conference organised by UNESCO in Salamanca (Spain) in 1994 highlighted the importance of action research as a functional qualitative methodology that, through contextualisation and listening to diverse voices, can trigger changes leading to more inclusive schools (Arnaiz, 2018).

Research on inclusive education calls for close consideration of the research design to be used (Barton, 2011). All agents, predominantly teachers, students and families, must be involved in order to bring about educational democratisation, thereby facilitating improvements for all participant groups based on critical analysis (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2012). When educational communities engage with participatory processes they become 'learning schools', capable of mobilising their own resources to provide solutions to their problems and satisfy their needs, as well as generating learning and meaningful, lasting transformations (Harris & Jones, 2018; Kinsella & Senior, 2008).

1.2. Participatory Action Research (PAR): Inclusive strategies that facilitate learning

PAR methodology is based on participation and a firm commitment of the agents involved (López et al., 2020; Sales et al., 2021). This leads to spheres of equality where knowledge is mobilised (Trocmé et al., 2009) and helps to shape new forms of more social and responsible citizens (Stainback & Stainback, 2004; Wright, 2020). PAR methodology is conceived as a good strategy to accompany school improvement processes (Moliner et al., 2022). Its main phases are: 1) Contact with the context and negotiation, 2) Diagnosis and shared analysis, 3) Action planning, 4) Implementation and 5) Evaluation and dissemination (Aguirre et al., 2018).

School leadership plays an essential role in supporting educational innovations in the school (Cuevas et al., 2008), and even more so when an inclusive approach is taken which increases students' participation in the decisions that affect their education (León, 2012).

In the words of Belavi and Murillo (2020), the construction of a democratic curriculum requires participatory construction processes between students and teachers, trying to involve the entire educational community. Family participation in the school goes a long way to explaining academic (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019; OECD, 2017) success and students' attitudes to the school and its curricular activities (Reparaz & Nava, 2014; Santos et al., 2018; Weis, 2014). The students obtain a profit in their learning (León, 2012; Wright, 2015). Also increase the attitude of the teaching staff, perceiving the students as subjects of learning to whom they are given the floor (Sañudo & Susinos, 2018). The UNESCO report on the four pillars of education (learning to know, to do, to be and to live together) (Delors, 1996) deliberately opens the way towards competencies, where the school and teachers must be more aware of the need for meaningful learning in citizenship education (Álvarez & San Fabian, 2018), and for a curriculum linked to its territory (Sales et al., 2018).

Students' contributions to and involvement depend on their position on the ladder participation proposed by Hart (1992). This ladder starts with minimum contributions in which scholars only inform on the change, considered to be false participation, and rises to an intergenerational participatory democracy in which decisions are taken by students with the support of adults (Fielding, 2011; Goessling, 2020; Susinos & Ceballo, 2012;). Such participation in designing, developing and evaluating the school's

proposals for innovation can be considered as a facilitator of learning, since it improves students' attitudes to curricular practices (Álvarez & San Fabian, 2018; Griebler & Nowak, 2012).

Such high levels of participation, typical of PAR, are uncommon and tend to be applied in questions of school organisation rather than decisions on the classroom curriculum (Susinos & Ceballo, 2012). Along the same lines, Stojnic's research (2020) demonstrates the relationship between school experience and the development of democratic attitudes. Mainly, he affirms how the effective possibility of the student body can influence relevant issues in their school, influencing a greater recognition of the students as citizens with the capacity to exercise public power. A good example of this refers to the benefits of involving students in the evaluation process (Pascual-Arias et al., 2022).

In addition, contextualized educational research can facilitate, by itself, community learning and transformation processes (Parrilla et al., 2018). This idea leads us to talk about professional learning communities (Krichesky & Murillo, 2011) and the creation of more democratic schools based on the participation of the educational community.

For all the above reasons, in this study we examine the beneficial impact of PAR tools, mainly used in taking curricular decisions, on students' learning. The specific objectives are:

- To make visible the value of PAR tools in curricular improvement processes.
- To report participants' perceptions of meaningful student learning gathered through these inclusive and qualitative tools.

For this reason, we present the results of the data in two blocks. In the first one, a brief description of the different strategies and its use during the process; and in the second one, a collection of significant learning according to the participants.

2. Methodology

This study is part of a second five-year research project carried out in Spain. Grounded in a critical paradigm, it pursues social transformation through problematising, decision making and actions in schools contextualised by democratic approaches and collaboration among groups (Blaxter et al., 2008; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2012; Susinos, 2009).

The present article describes from a qualitative methodology a multiple case study (Simons, 2011; Stake, 2006). The participating schools have followed their own processes, a participatory action research process (Moliner et al., 2021; Sales et al., 2021).

Participants

Undertaken in schools in the following Spanish regions: Case 1: Murcia; Case 2: Valencia; Case 3: Madrid; and Case 4: the Basque Country. Of all schools in the four regions, the cases were selected on the basis of their interest in actively participating in a review of their curricular practices linked to the territory, and by the mutual trust of previous investigations.

The four public primary schools (children aged from 6 to 12) all use active methodologies in different contexts. The socio-economic levels are medium-low in Case 1, medium-high in Cases 2 and 3, and mixed levels in Case 4. Two schools are

located in cities (Cases 1 and 3) and the other two serve towns with populations below 10,000. Cases 1 and 4 have high immigrant populations. The students are used to taking part in assemblies, but only in Case 2 had the teachers opened up curriculum decisions to students and families prior to starting the study. To facilitate the understanding of the cases, they are presented in the results.

The management teams in the four schools, in compliance with current legislation, impartiality and equity in ethical treatment of data (Khanlou & Peter, 2005).

Data gathering tools

To meet the study objectives the tools of the PRA methodology presented in Table 1 were used to gather mainly qualitative data in order to systematically describe and understand the complex realities in their natural contexts (Melero & Ballesteros, 2019).

They are 8 techniques used in twenty occasions. All of them are explained in the work of Aguirre and others (2018), available online. There are also interviews (En) or Discussion group (DG) to evaluate the process in the schools (Table 1).

Table 1

PAR tools used in the four schools and participants

Murcia (C1)	Valencia (C2)	Madrid (C3)	Basque Country (C4)
Nominal group (NG) (S), (T), (F), (M), (LA)	Socratic wheel (SW) (S), (T), (F)	Mirror technique (M) (S), (T), (F)	Socratic wheel (SW) (S), (T), (F)
My ideal school (IS) (S), (T), (F), (M)	Time line (TL) (S), (T), (F), (LA)	Time line (TL) (S), (T), (F), (M), (LA)	Mirror technique (M) (S)
Assembly (A) (S), (T), (F), (LA)	Photovoice (Pv) (S), (T), (F), (LA)	Photovoice (Pv) (S)	Assembly (A) (S)
	Social mapping (Map) (S), (T), (F), (LA)	Assembly (A) (S)	
	Assembly (A) (S), (T), (F), (M)		

Note. Participants: students (S); teachers (T); families (F); management (M); and other local agents (LA)

Verbatim quotes were identified as follows: (Case. Tool. Participants). Data from interviews (case 4: M) and focus groups (case 1, 2 and 3: S, T, F) are also presented.

Data analysis

We apply an inductive analysis technique to identify key elements (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Saldaña, 2009). Two categories related to the objectives of the study were obtained from this analysis: 1) satisfaction with the PAR methodology and 2) and the perception of increased learning of curricular content. The triangulation of tools and participants in the four schools ensured the credibility of the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), thus enhancing the researchers' "control over quality in the research process and guaranteeing the validity, credibility and rigour of the results" (Aguilar & Barroso, 2015, p. 73). The following table reports the sources of the data.

3. Results

This section presents the information on the four participating schools. Each school is briefly set in context before we describe the PAR tools and link the process to the students' perceptions of learning through participants' voices.

3.1. Case 1

This publicly funded, secular infant and primary school (3-12 years) between two to three classrooms per academic year is located in a neighbourhood of the city of Murcia. The families' socio-economic level is medium-low, and the school has a high percentage of students from immigrant families as well as children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The school has a high reputation for its work in this field and has two specialised open classrooms.

The PAR process began with a participatory social diagnosis (PSD) using the 'my ideal school' technique. For "my ideal school" a mural was placed on each classroom door, to reflect on the school we want, and each group had stickers of a different colour. The families participated taking advantage of the first semester group meetings held at the beginning of the academic year. This information was analysed by university researchers and discussed with teachers, who in turn passed it on to families and students.

A nominal group was then organised, comprising representatives from the different educational community groups and local agents with a view to drawing up proposals for action and taking decisions in light of the needs detected.

The objective of this technique is that all the participants contribute with argued ideas and describe how they would carry them out in order to later make decisions in a collaborative way by consensus about which proposal is the most appropriate priority. This allows a structured analysis of the existing "problems" and the drawing of conclusions in a rapid manner. In order to promote this speed, one person acted as group facilitator and was in charge of leading the proposals and subsequent voting.

In a relaxed and proactive atmosphere were proposed and decided, among others, learning support improvements, and the generalisation to other classes of the curricular practices that the students liked and were only implemented in one class 10 years old (curricular practices linked to the territory developed in the school over several years with the participation of senior citizens who talk to the children about their life experiences and tell stories in the oral tradition). The changes incorporated the need to invite participation from families in developing these activities and to collaborate with people from the Senior Citizens' Centre on subsequent activities related to the curriculum.

To design the activities that were to be implemented, working meetings between the teachers, the university team and the members of the Centre for Elderly People were held. After doing the activities, brief Assemblies are held, which lasted 20-30 minutes, aiming at knowing the point of view of the different participants, their assessments and new proposals, giving voice to all the members of the education community. From those Assemblies, new proposals of activities arise, which are implemented after these sessions, such as collecting the life stories of their grandparents or other relatives and reading them together in the classroom, and the proposal of writing an educational book with those stories. On completion of these activities, in order to deepen some aspects of interest, some Discussion groups are held among the different agents in multiple combinations, during an hour or an hour and a half (students-teachers; teachers-families; teachers-external agents; or students-families), small groups, led by a coordinator, discuss a discussion topic and make it possible the exchange of experiences, different points of view, knowledge, and decision making. At the same time, it opened a new cycle in which new symptoms and problems were detected, which led us to define new consensual objectives.

3.1.1. Effects on students' learning: Satisfaction with the methodology PAR

The PAR tools applied in the project encouraged democratisation and empowered participants by preparing the way for proposals on a curriculum linked to the territory.

The senior citizens' participation and collaboration served to transmit knowledge related to culture, values and citizenship, thus helping the students to value this knowledge and increasing their appreciation of the senior citizens, who they recognised as a reliable source of knowledge. Some of the students' comments reflect these observations:

I loved this experience, because it had never occurred to me to ask my grandparents about their lives, because, I don't know, I couldn't imagine it. Thank you for letting us feel this, the satisfaction of knowing what happened to those who came before us. (C1.DG.S)

And from the teachers:

So, for me, the most positive thing about this experience is that all of us learned the value of our older people, and the need to care for them and for us to think about them every day. (C1.DG.T)

3.1.2. Effects on students' learning: PAR as learning of curricular content

Turning to the impacts of the experience on different aspects of the curriculum project in terms of subject content, the data analysed reveal improvements in areas such as writing skills, orthography and narrative skills, showing that the students gained meaningful learning: "you wrote a text, you had to correct writing mistakes, you wrote some great narratives, you spoke about them in class, we recorded you telling your stories and how you were thrilled by others' stories" (C1.As.T). But many aspects remain that can connect curricular content with the senior citizens' experiences, as the following local agent explains:

You imagine a pebble weighing 5 g 10 g 20 g 100 g sinks to the bottom, how can you imagine a ship that weighs thousands of tons, not kilos, and on top of that it carries seven thousand passengers? It weighs thousands of tons, how can that ship float on the sea without sinking? Then you explain the Archimedes principle, and that's all physics. Amazing! Their eyes are wide open... and the questions they ask. (C1.DG.LA)

During these activities, cooperative working groups were formed that encouraged students' autonomy, their skills in resolving peer-group conflicts and their abilities to manage internal group tensions, as reflected in the participants' comments. One mother explained:

Watching them in action, even though we're with them in the group, but seeing from the outside how they organise, how they solve problems, for example in this case there was a bit of a row about who would be the spokesperson, and you can see how they resolved it on their own. (C1.As.F)

At the same time, creating heterogeneous groups motivated positive evaluations of diversity.

Dialogue takes place between different generations, different capacities, and all identities are expressed in the stories compiled. (C1.DG.T)

Giving students a voice and a role in this type of methodology is vital to boosting their motivation and, in turn, their learning. This motivation was seen in their interest in the activities, as reflected in the respondents' comments: "I saw them with their eyes popping out of their heads and their hands up; they were so keen to ask questions and learn..." (C1.DG.LA); the proposals they made or their demands for the experience to continue: "I'd love these presentations to continue, for them to be part of future courses, because it's another way of explaining what happened in the past and things

we don't realise" (C1.DG.S). Such comments demonstrate their confidence in the value, the benefits and the success of the activities.

3.2. Case 2

The second case study took place in a two-site rural school (colegio rural agrupado, CRA as per the Spanish acronym) in the province of Valencia (Spain). The school was constituted as a CRA in 2005 in order to optimise the available educational resources in two villages with fewer than 1000 inhabitants. It consists of two lecture rooms. One of them with a classroom per class, and the other a multi-level class, due to the fact of having a smaller number of students. The main participants have been: a class of 14 students who are eleven years old and another class which consists of 15 students of 9, 10 and 11 years old, in both classrooms with their corresponding teachers and family members. It is necessary to highlight that there are also other agents external to the school (architects, Councillors of the Town Council, etc.).

Our focus is on a democratic PAR process that instigated a curricular practice linked to the territory through service learning (SL) methodology. SL is an educational practice that links academic knowledge and social commitment by encouraging an active and participatory role of the student in the detection of needs, design, implementation and evaluation of actions aimed at improving or transforming the social realities of a given context. The main proposal was to improve and extend the school's infrastructures on both sites. The two schools were built in the 1960s and were showing signs of deterioration.

The first stage of the shared diagnosis and analysis coincided with the open days hosted by the school, during which social mapping and photovoice activities (participatory social diagnosis techniques) were organised. The Social Mapping (Map) consisted of making a graphical representation from the map of both municipalities. About 250 people participated in the workshop. The research team facilitated the Social Mapping activity, which consisted of presenting two big maps in panels (one for each municipality of the Gathered Rural School). The participants in the dynamics: students, teachers, families, and local agents identified in each map the most representative spaces, places, organizations, associations, etc. (marked with a small house icon), the most frequented ones (marked with stickers), and subsequently, they discussed the educational possibilities of some places or resources that appeared on the map, through interviews, showing potentialities to link the school to the territory.

For the Photovoice, mixed groups of 4 to 6 members (family, students, teachers, and other agents) were set up, which had to move, either on-site or online (a caravan where there was a tablet and internet connection), to one of the spaces of the municipalities, take a photo and fill in a form (1- The name of the service that they would provide: What would you do? 2- Which entities would be linked: Who? and 3- The objectives of the service: For what purpose?). Subsequently, the results of both dynamics were complemented with the Socratic Wheel, which helped to focus on the education community demands. It is an evaluation dynamic that makes it possible to compare a series of elements, criteria or of elements, criteria or action alternatives by assigning numerical criteria.

In the dynamics of the Open Doors Day, a series of actions that could constitute service-learning projects were identified, through photos (Photovoice). With the Socratic Wheel dynamics, we aimed at evaluating options and prioritizing actions. To implement the dynamics, a cardboard with the 12 proposals was used. In each option, there was a rating scale of 1 to 10. The group of participants had to evaluate each

project according to the following criteria: curricular appropriateness of the contents, quality of service, and viability of the project. Each criteria had its own colour. The participants put stickers of each colour on each axis, as they agreed on the rating of the possible actions. 48 people participated in the dynamics: 21 relatives, 9 students, 11 teachers and 7 members of the research team. Given the large number of people who attended, the attendees were divided into four groups, each of them with representatives of all the groups. Thus, 4 Socratic Wheels were conducted. Subsequently, and aiming at starting the second stage of the PAR process, two plenary Assemblies were held, in which they picked up the results of the Socratic Wheel again. In the first one, the participants were the teaching staff of the Gathered Rural School and 4 members of the research group, with the relationship between curriculum learnings and linkage to the territory as the hub. In the second Assembly the participants were, apart from the teaching staff of the Gathered Rural School and the research group, the families.

In this assembly, the proposals to frame the Service-Learning Project (SLP) were evaluated and negotiated. The faculty, who in a previous session had been evaluating the curricular possibilities of the different proposals (derived from the Socratic Wheel), prioritized the improvement of the infrastructures of the two lecture rooms of the Gathered Rural School as the project theme.

In a second stage of formulation, reformulation and implementation of the proposal, two Discussion Groups were conducted, with the participation of the faculty, students and families. The two intended Service-Learning Projects were planned (one in each lecture room).

In a third stage of dissemination of the curricular practices linked to the territory, a «Timeline» was implemented to reflect the progress of the works.

In the third stage the curricular practices linked to the territory were disseminated at three levels –local administration, territory and educational community– by means of a timeline to reflect the process of the work. The Timeline facilitated, by incorporating all the voices, the joint construction of the project. For that purpose, all the stages and actions undertaken were represented using the digital tool TIKI-TOKI; that is, all the process that has meant the implementation of the Service-Learning Project. Thus, the past, present and future of the project was analysed, as well as the past, present and future of the Gathered Rural School.

At the local administration level, the students gave presentations about the projects to the town council; at the territory level, the project was publicised through an open day; and at the educational community level, weekly videos were recorded during the second stage.

3.2.1. Effects on students' learning: Satisfaction with the methodology PAR

Several PAR tools were used to reach the decision-making process; through SL, these decisions called for curricular planning that would encourage support from families: “At the start of the course we are told what our children have to do during the course, according to the curriculum, what targets they have to meet. Yes, they showed us it” (C2.LT.F), in reference to including the set curriculum in the SL project.

3.2.2. Effects on students' learning: PAR as learning of curricular content

The projects, therefore, enable the students to learn the curricular content in a meaningful and functional way, acquiring a range of competencies along the way: “they worked hard on developing communication competencies, language competencies,

mathematical competencies, learning to learn... if they have to write a formal letter, they can't do it just any way they like" (C2.LT.T).

They also learned about responsibility. As one of the mothers stated, "when you take on a role of responsibility, of an investigator, the fact that you're evaluating the information you have included, and you're working with that information, that makes learning really meaningful to you" (C2.LT.F).

This consensual service learning facilitates learning in different subject areas, such as mathematics: "if I have to measure the playground to make a real plan, then when I've got the measurements I have to look for an application that generates the plan, or I have to draw the plan by hand, so I'm working with scales. So they're working with mathematical concepts" (C2.LT.T). One student noted: "the scales of the plan, we didn't know how to do that, we learned..." (C2.DG.S). This way of working also reinforces their autonomy: "I hardly explained anything, they practically did it on their own. There were some days when I could have just left" (C2.LT.T).

The sense of being supported through adult collaboration also helps to link the curriculum to the territory by expanding the students' social learning: "They've investigated lots of things; they've spoken to other schools, head teachers, councillors, they've visited the town council and spoken to council representatives... It's been a unique experience for them" (C2.LT.T).

Finally, this curricular methodology, grounded in the decision-making process in the PAR, gives students a central role, thereby increasing their motivation and their desire to learn. This effect is reflected by the students, families and teachers. One family member noted that "they learn, and they don't realise that they are learning an awful lot" (C2.LT.F). According to one teacher,

it motivates the students to want to know. Here, knowledge is seen as something practical, other times knowledge isn't regarded that way, and so they think it's unnecessary. When there isn't a need, what's it for? This methodology is based on the idea that we do this, for this reason. It's very important for students to know what activity they're going to do and why [...]. So, you have to motivate the students, and this type of methodology does that, the motivation has its own momentum. (C2.LT.T)

The students also have the chance to reflect on their own practices:

I made a circular, I told my family and friends, I took part in the coordinating assembly, and I invited my parents and friends to the open day. (C2.LT.S)

I think I've made a big contribution. Because I did the open day activities, the coordinating assembly. And sometimes I told my family. The group has contributed. Because all together we made sure that our voice was heard. (C2.LT.S)

3.3. Case 3

This school is in a densely populated, demographically young city in the metropolitan area of Madrid. It started life in temporary buildings in 2006. The management team's campaign for decent installations was backed by the teaching staff and families, a process that created a strong bond which continues today. In its short existence the school has played an active role in defending public, collaborative, intercultural and inclusive education. It describes itself as a school that is open to its environment.

Participation lies at the heart of the school's activity and is one of the reasons why families choose to enrol their children there. The school holds weekly classroom and school assemblies, and it also has a Children's Council. Demand for places is high

because of its reputation as an inclusive school that strives to meet all its students' needs.

At the beginning of the course, the school's Pedagogical Committee was finding it difficult to manage all the suggestions for participation from newly arrived families. This situation exposed the need to consider the way participation, the school's hallmark, was developing. The PSD process began with a timeline activity, a tool that attempts to reconstruct the historical trajectory of a community, or of a specific process within it, in order to situate ourselves in the present time. The aim was to elaborate a subjective history of participation in the first ten years of school, identifying its most significant milestones, to discover what had been learned and the benefits, as well as its difficulties and limitations. The timeline activity attracted the participation of 147 people, mostly mothers, some fathers, six students from year 6, three former students, and seven teachers. Data were recorded on the timeline wall chart as well as in the field notebook.

Due to the low teacher participation in the timeline activity, three discussion groups were organised with teachers from the infant classes (3-5 years), and from the two primary courses (6-9 years). These groups gave teaching staff the opportunity to jointly analyse the information from the timeline, formulate their concerns and needs, and contribute their reflections to the diagnosis.

The discussion groups with the students and the photovoice technique aimed to incorporating children's voices into the process by gathering their ideas and points of view about their own participation in the school. The groups met during the weekly Assembly held the classrooms of the 7 and 10 years-old students of Primary School, a place where they felt comfortable to share their concerns, showing, as an example, their satisfaction with participatory conflict management practices, which had replaced the previous "point system" led by the teachers.

For the Photovoice, the recreational areas were used to contact, spontaneously, the children of the classes of 7 and 8 years-old. They were provided with a camera and invited to photograph the place in the school where they most participated, then explaining the reasons for their choice, which were recorded in short videos.

The activity sparked great interest among the students; we collected 16 photos and recordings, some of them taken individually but a substantial number taken collaboratively by some children. In their choices, they valued especially those places where they felt they were able to take the lead and make decisions: from the gym to the music classroom, going through the garden or specific areas of the playground.

3.3.1. Effects on students' learning: Satisfaction with the methodology PAR

The school's educational community considers learning to be closely linked to participation, and they understand it as an achievement not only of the children, but also of the adults involved in the school. The participatory diagnostic process strengthened the families' links with the school and as a result, also helped to raise student motivation. The idea of "going back to school and learning at last" (C3.TL.F) promotes a view of the school as a place of learning for all.

High family participation has led to greater involvement in decision making. In the words of one of the teachers, the school has shifted from "proposals from teachers and families who help, to families who make proposals and teachers who help" (C3.TL.F). The families attach great importance to the way the children learn and to the school's values. According to one mother, "the children learn by playing, not sitting

down all day doing exercises”. Recounting his daughter’s previous experience in another school, where he said the children were not allowed to talk and punishment was used, this father stated that “since her first day, she’s been treated with fondness and affection”. Another father explained why he had taken his daughter out of her previous school: “she did learn there, but I also wanted her to grow as a person” (C3.TL.F).

3.3.2. *Effects on students’ learning: PAR as learning of curricular content*

The students associated their participation at school with “learning lots of things, English, division, times tables, learning to make biscuits” (C3.A.S). The most commonly identified places for participation in the school revealed what and how they learn. Their preferences tended towards certain specific subjects, such as ethics, “where we debate and make suggestions about how to save the world” (C3.Pv.S), and the use of spaces other than the classroom, such as the multi-purpose hall, because they were able to present “the projects they do during the course in front of their families” (C3.Pv.S).

The parents also highlighted the valuable educational achievements that the children channelled to the rest of the family: “through the school, your children open your eyes to what’s going on in the world. The school opens up a window to real life” (C3.TL.F).

Collaborative learning is an integral part of classroom activity; the students talk about working in teams in which “roles are shared: a person responsible for materials, a coordinator, a moderator, a person responsible for making sure people don’t raise their voices, and a spokesperson” (C3.A.S). Fifth course students participate as a group in solving conflicts that arise in class: “there’s a poster to remind us of the three points in negotiations: calm down, listen to all versions, offer solutions” (C3.A.S).

What they learn at school influences the students’ initiatives and actions. One father noted the change in his daughter: “she was really shy when she started, but now she’s the indignant one in the house, she joins in everything”. Another mother observed that they “learn to stand up for their rights, their ideas, and to support their classmates in theirs too” (C3.TL.F).

3.4. *Case 4*

More than 25 languages are spoken in this multicultural school (of the Basque Country), which is also a member of the Amara Berri network (Martín 2011). Its flexible organisational structure is based on content seminars; students are grouped by cycles (two courses) to facilitate peer-to-peer tutoring; active methodologies are applied (project work; themed ‘content corners’; radio broadcasts to disseminate learning, thereby strengthening links with the community, etc). Students also participate in assemblies; however, prior to this research project, curricular decisions were taken exclusively by the teaching staff.

One of the outcomes of the PSD carried out the previous academic year, with the participation of teachers, students, and families, was a call for changes in homework (HW) proposals. Two main arguments were put forward, one related to the methodological disparity between curricular practices in the classroom and HW; and the second referring to the monotony of these tasks.

At the start of the second course, a discussion group, was held with teachers from the language and mathematics departments. The discussion groups compared the school’s curricular project and cycle plan with the type of HW in place and the evaluations of HW made by the three groups in the PSD. They concluded that the greatest disparity

was found in mathematics. One of the teachers and the school's special needs education specialist agreed to introduce changes in the mathematics HW for the third cycle, for which the teacher was also the course tutor (26 students aged 10 and 11).

The Socratic wheel was applied to take decisions. Two mixed groups were formed with the students, six families, the course tutor and the special education teacher. The four options to be discussed were: continuing with the same kind of homework; providing homework with different degrees of difficulty; relating homework with daily life (calculating shopping prices, etc.); and proposals of Internet.

The three criteria on which the groups had to reach a consensus through decision making were: effectiveness for learning, interest-motivation, and viability-ease. The highest scores are related to the use of the Internet, on the condition that all the students have access to it. For this reason, it is decided that they can do the homework in the IT classroom during the tutor's available hours, and in the village library, after having talked to the person responsible for this resource, which is underused by these students.

The research team and the teachers designed four different types of tasks based on the four 'content corners', spaces where students worked semi-autonomously and with the support of their peers. The students were also offered a choice of various Internet-based tasks. The proposal was presented to the students in the assembly meeting, and it was decided to rotate the tasks every week. The external researchers advised implementing a self-recording system (5-point Likert scale) to track the effect of the changes.

The following factors are written down on the blackboard: understanding of assignment instructions; difficulty; possible request for help; attractive; right amount; higher execution of the demand; and self-perception of learning. The draft proposal was approved after the discussion, and it was decided to assess the outcomes in two weeks' time using the mirror technique.

For this strategy, the university team organizes the data from the self-registration forms in graphs. In a tutoring session, only the students interpret the data, which in this occasion are their data. Thus, they go deeper into the subject qualitatively.

The group assessed the results with the mirror technique and, conscious of their contribution to the school as a pilot group, asked to continue recording their own activity for a further two weeks. The teachers agreed to the idea and also made some improvements to the design. They felt the experience had been positive because fewer conflicts had arisen with some of the students, and because they observed the children to be enthusiastic and motivated. The children discussed the tasks they had most enjoyed, and their repertoire of activities began to grow. Two weeks later the mirror technique activity was repeated.

3.4.1. Effects on students' learning: Satisfaction with the methodology PAR

Once the PAR activities had been completed, the head teacher and the two participating teachers evaluated the experience in interview sessions.

The head teacher noted that the pilot had been "a bonus" for the educational community in which "everyone has seen how their own efforts have contributed, and this is motivating" (C4.I.HT). She added that this type of strategy generates more democratic leadership in line with the school's ideology to "try and delegate" (C4.I.HT).

In the Assembly, where the self-registration form is decided, students become aware that, apart from being a personal benefit, it can also be an improvement for other classes. A student states that we are lab rats (C4.As.A). This sentence will be used as a slogan at the beginning of the rest of the class meetings, motivating and committing the class.

3.4.2. Effects on students' learning: PAR as learning of curricular content

The students, in light of the high average scores (above 5) in “self-perception of learning” (4.5 and 4.5) and in “higher voluntary homework performance” (3.4 and 3.3), looked for arguments linked to the other factors in the self-registration form: understanding of assignment instructions (4.5 and 4.7), “with your help (referring to the external researchers), we are doing it in class and it’s easier” (C4.TE.A). Regarding the average score given to “less difficulty” (4.1 and 4.5), they state that “they are quite easy and if one of them is difficult, I don’t do it and nothing happens”. Another aspect highlighted in light of the high scores (4.5 and 4.7) is that “they are funnier” (C4.TE.A) or “the computer is cool” (C4.TE.A); and they also consider that there is the right amount of homework (4.5 and 4.4). They insist on the idea that they are the ones who have decided to do it this way, and this is causing envy to the rest of the classes, who continued doing homework in the form of task repetition worksheets.

The teachers observed a willingness among the students to try these curricular practices and recognise some changes. The students are more autonomous, they ask questions out of curiosity and show more interest in being corrected, “things that didn’t happen before, with a different attitude” (C4.I.T), where “the students’ enthusiasm was contagious, and the other groups also asked for the same” (C4.I.T).

The teacher noted a considerable impact on the students’ learning, observing that they now spend a lot of time thinking about “how, why, and how could we do it better?...”; in sum, they spend more time thinking and reasoning why an answer is correct; and that different strategies can be used to reach the same conclusion. “You’ve got a different answer to me. Why? Why is it easier for him or her than me?” (C4.I.T). The teachers also reflected on the diversity in the class: “Every student works at a different pace and faces their own difficulties, each one has what they need” (C4.I.T).

They acknowledged the participatory strategies as effective classroom activities for shared, motivating reflection.

When the graphs of the first mirror technique were presented, the tutor, who did not know the results in advance, got very emotional due to the high scores. She took photos of both graphs: “a higher voluntary homework performance” and “perception of learning”. She showed the results to the rest of the teachers with pleasure and surprise.

4. Discussion and conclusions

From a holistic, systemic perspective, it is obviously not possible to identify individual variables that influence the students’ attitude towards learning, such as the active curricular methodologies present in the participatory action research proposals (Blaxter et al., 2008; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2012). Nonetheless, our data, gathered in four schools with very different back stories and legal frameworks, provide evidence that these PAR tools effectively (Ferguson & Konstanz, 2021; Malorni et al., 2022; Sales et al., 2021; Vázquez et al., 2022), encourage learning for all students in schools that want to continue innovating through a participatory and inclusive approach

(Ainscow et al., 2004). School teachers can implement curricular proposals aimed to enhance competencies, but according to our findings, the involvement of other agents in curricular practice decisions, in addition to facilitating greater educational and social transformation, also helps to improve the quality of students' learning, since the presence of other groups increases their commitment to the curriculum and enhances their feeling of security (Nind, 2014). This motivation has an impact on their attitude to the task at hand, which they perceive as useful and connected to their environmental context (Pintrich, 2003). Such learning takes place at conceptual and procedural knowledge levels, as well as in values and how to live together (Perrenoud, 2012), all of which are vital to shaping critical, responsible citizens in the democratic and inclusive school.

Maintaining a line of continuity and complementarity between the environment and the school community is not an easy task; it involves understanding the social dynamics of a territory and properly identifying the possibilities of action of the neighbourhood in the school, with its different participating agents (Moliner et al., 2021; Sales et al., 2021). The collaborative work reflected here lays the foundations for favouring this connection; thus, shortening the cultural distance between the school curriculum and the environment surrounding the institution and bringing what happens within the walls of the school closer to the local culture, broadening the possibilities and promoting more stimuli. And this is achieved when agents from the "outside" context are part of the "inside" team and take a leading role in the educational task, participating not only in the development of specific actions, but also in joint decision-making that leads to the creation of a common context of learning.

As a limitation of the study, it should be pointed out that it is a broad investigation of 4 cases with different PAR processes and dilated in time. This makes it too complex to be presented in a short article. Nevertheless, an attempt has been made to present in a brief way the impact of the support of PAR tools on the improvement of student learning.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to everyone from all the groups involved who actively participated in this inclusive innovation process in the four schools.

This study forms part of the research project "The Included School: Planning and Implementing Curricular Educational Practices Linked to the Territory", financed by the Spanish Ministry for Economy and competitiveness and the European Regional Development Fund (FEDER) (EDU2015-68004-R).

References

- Aguilar, S., & Barroso, J. (2015). La triangulación de datos como estrategia en investigación educativa [Data triangulation as education researching strategy]. *Píxel-Bit. Revista de Medios y Educación*, 47, 73-88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360311032000158015>
- Aguirre, A., Benet, A., Moliner, O., Sales, A., Sanahuja, A., & Traver, J. A. (2018). *Técnicas para la participación democrática. La formación para la convivencia democrática en los procesos de mejora [Techniques for democratic participation. Training for democratic coexistence in improvement processes]*. Universitat Jaume I.
- Ainscow, M., Booth, T., & Dyson, A. (2004). Understanding and developing inclusive practices in schools: A collaborative action research network. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 8, 125-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360311032000158015>

- Álvarez, C., & San Fabian, J. L. (2018). La voz del alumnado en el aula: Una propuesta dialógica en educación primaria [The voice of the students in the classroom: a dialogic proposal in Primary Education]. *Profesorado: Revista de Currículum y Formación del Profesorado*, 22, 33-50. <https://doi.org/10.30827/profesorado.v22i4.8393>
- Arnaiz, P. (2018). La investigación en el ámbito de la atención a la diversidad. *Gavi*, 5, 26-28.
- Barton, L. (2011). La investigación en la educación inclusiva y la difusión de la investigación sobre discapacidad [Research in inclusive education and dissemination of the research on disability]. *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, 70(25), 63-76.
- Belavi, G., & Murillo, F. J. (2020). Democracia y justicia social en las escuelas: Dimensiones para pensar y mejorar la práctica educativa [Democracy and social justice in schools: Dimensions to think about and improve educational practice]. *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana sobre Calidad, Eficacia y Cambio en Educación*, 18(3), 5-28. <https://doi.org/10.15366/reice2020.18.3.001>
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (2008). *Cómo se investiga [How it is investigated]*. Graó.
- Cuevas, C., Díaz, F., & Hidalgo, V. (2008). Liderazgo de los directores y calidad de la educación. Un estudio del perfil de los directivos en un contexto pluricultural [The headmaster's leadership and the quality of education. A research on their characteristics in a multicultural context]. *Profesorado. Revista de Currículum y Formación del Profesorado*, 12(2), 1-19.
- Delors, J. (1996). *Learning: The treasure within*. UNESCO.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. Sage.
- Epstein, J. L. & Sheldon, S. B. (2019). The importance of evaluating programs of school, family and community partnerships. *Aula Abierta*, 48(1), 31-42. <https://doi.org/10.17811/rifie.48.1.2019.31-42>
- Ferguson, M. R., & Konstan, D. A. (2021). Young people, big voices, Bangkok Noi: A participatory street photography project for connecting youth to a traditional community in a changing Bangkok. *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 18(2), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08873631.2021.1998993>
- Fielding, M. (2011). La voz del alumnado y la inclusión educativa: Una aproximación democrática radical para el aprendizaje intergeneracional [The voice of the student body and educational inclusion: A radical democratic approach to intergenerational learning]. *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, 70(1), 31-61.
- Goessling, K. P. (2020). Youth participatory action research, trauma, and the arts: Designing youthspaces for equity and healing. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 33(1), 12-31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1678783>
- Griebler, U., & Nowak, P. (2012). Student councils: A tool for health promoting schools? Characteristics and effects. *Health Education*, 2, 105-132. <https://doi.org/10.1108/096542812112>
- Harris, A., & Jones, M. (2018). Leading schools as learning organizations. *School Leadership and Management* 38(4), 351-354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632434.2018.1483553>
- Hart, R. (1992). *La participación de los niños. De la participación simbólica a la participación auténtica [Children's participation. From symbolic participation to authentic participation]*. UNICEF.
- Kemmis, S., & McTaggart, R. (2012). La investigación acción participativa. La acción comunitaria y la esfera pública [Participatory action research. Community action and the public sphere]. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Manual de Investigación Cualitativa. Vol III. Las estrategias de investigación cualitativa* (pp. 361-439). Gedisa.
- Khanlou, N., & Peter, E. (2005). Participatory action research: Considerations for ethical review. *Social Sciences, and Medicine*, 60(10), 2333-2340. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2004.10.004>
- Kinsella, W., & Senior, J. (2008). Developing inclusive schools: A systemic approach. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 12(5-6), 651-665. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110802377698>

- Krichesky, G. J., & Murillo, F. J. (2011). Las comunidades profesionales de aprendizaje. Una estrategia de mejora para una nueva concepción de escuela [Professional learning communities. An improvement strategy for a new school conception]. *REICE. Revista Iberoamericana sobre Eficacia y Cambio en Educación*, 9(1), 66-83.
- León, M. J. (2012). El liderazgo para y en la escuela inclusiva [Leadership for and in the inclusive school]. *Educatio Siglo XXI*, 30(1), 133-160.
- López, R. M., Valdez, E. C. Pacheco, H. S. Honey M. L., & Jones. R. (2020). Bridging silos in higher education: Using Chicana feminist participatory action research to foster latina resilience *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 33(8), 872-886. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2020.1735566>
- Malorni, A., Lea, C., Richards-Schuster, K., & Spencer. M. S. (2022). Facilitating youth participatory action research (YPAR): A scoping review of relational practice in US youth development & out-of-school time projects. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 36, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2022.106399>
- Martín, E. (2011). La estructura organizativa como estrategia de intervención: Sistema Amara Berri [The organizational structure as an intervention strategy: Amara Berri System]. *Organización y gestión educativa: Revista del Fórum Europeo de Administradores de la Educación*, 19(4), 25-28.
- Melero, H., & Ballesteros. B. (2019). El estudio de caso aplicado en el proceso de intervención socioeducativa. In B. Ballesteros (Ed.), *Investigación social desde la práctica educativa* (pp. 267-271). UNED.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. SAGE.
- Moliner, O., Lozano, M., & Sanahuja, A. (2022). Construction of a participatory model of school accompaniment to improve school inclusion. *Education Sciences*, 12, 708-131. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12100708>
- Nind, M. (2014). Inclusive research and inclusive education: Why connecting them makes sense for teachers' and learners' democratic development of education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 44(4), 525-540. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2014.936825>
- OECD. (2017). *PISA for development assessment and analytical framework: Reading, mathematics and science*. OECD.
- Parrilla, A., Susinos, T. Gallego-Vega, C., & Martínez. B. (2018). Revisando críticamente cómo investigamos en educación inclusiva: Cuatro proyectos con un enfoque educativo y social [Critically reviewing how we do research into inclusive education: Four projects with an educational and social approach]. *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, 89(31), 145-156. <https://doi.org/10.47553/rifop.v31i2>
- Pascual-Arias, C., López-Pastor, V. M., Fuentes Nieto, T., & Hortigüela-Alcalá, D. (2022). La formación permanente del profesorado como elemento influyente para implicar al alumnado en su evaluación: Un estudio de caso [Permanent teacher training as an influential element to involve students in their evaluation: A case study]. *Revista Iberoamericana de Evaluación Educativa*, 15(1), 81-99. <https://doi.org/10.15366/rie2022.15.1.005>
- Perrenoud, P. (2012). *Cuando la escuela pretende preparar para la vida. ¿Desarrollar competencias o enseñar otros saberes? [When the school pretends to prepare for life. Develop skills or teach other knowledge?]*. Graó.
- Pintrich, P. R. (2003). Motivation and classroom learning. In W. M. Reynolds y G. E. Miller (Eds.), *Handbook of psychology: Educational psychology* (pp.103-122). John Wiley and Sons.
- Reparaz, C., & Nava, C. (2014). Bases conceptuales de la participación de las familias [Conceptual bases of family participation]. In MECED (Org.), *La participación de las familias en la educación escolar* (pp. 21-32). Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. SAGE.

- Sales, A., Moliner, O., Amiama, J. F., & Lozano, J. (2018). Escuela incluida. Recursos y estrategias para la participación ciudadana [School included. Resources and strategies for citizen participation]. *Revista Mexicana de Investigación Educativa*, 23(77), 433-458.
- Sales, A., Moliner O., & Traver, J. (2021). Participatory action research: A case study on the school democratisation process. *Research Papers in Education*, 36(6), 704-725. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2020.1767182>
- Santos, M., Ferraces, M. J. Godas, A., & Lorenzo, M. (2018). Do cooperative learning and family involvement improve variables linked to academic performance? *Psicothema*, 30(2), 212-217. <https://doi.org/10.7334/psicothema2017.311>
- Sañudo, M., & Susinos, T. (2018). ¿Quién toma la palabra en la escuela?, ¿Quién escucha? Preguntas pertinentes desde la práctica reflexiva [Who speaks at school? Who listens? relevant questions from the reflexive practice approach]. *Revista Latinoamericana de Educación Inclusiva*, 12(1), 79-94. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S071873782018000100006>
- Simons, H. (2011). *El estudio de caso: Teoría y práctica [The case study: theory and practice]*. Morata.
- Stainback, S., & Stainback, W. (2004). *Aulas inclusivas [Inclusive classrooms]*. Narcea.
- Stake, R. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. The Guilford Press.
- Susinos, T. (2009). Escuchar para compartir. Reconociendo la autoridad del alumnado en el proyecto de una escuela inclusiva [Listening to share. Acknowledging students' authority in the project for an inclusive school]. *Revista de Educación*, 349, 119-136.
- Susinos, T., & Ceballos, N. (2012). Voz del alumnado y presencia participativa en la vida escolar. Apuntes para una cartografía de la voz del alumnado en la mejora educativa [Student voice and participatory presence in school life. Notes for a cartography of the student voice in educational improvement]. *Revista de Educación*, 359, 24-44.
- Trocme, N., Esposito, T. Laurendeau, C. Thomson, W., & Milne, L. (2009). La movilización de los conocimientos de protección infantil [Mobilizing child protection knowledge]. *Criminología*, 42(1), 33-59.
- Vázquez, M. L., Miranda-Mendizabal, A., Eguiguren, P., Mogollón-Pérez, A. S., Ferreira-de-Medeiros-Mendes, M., López-Vázquez, J., Bertolotto, F., Vargas, I., & Equity, L. A. (2022). Evaluating the effectiveness of care coordination interventions designed and implemented through a participatory action research process: Lessons learned from a quasi-experimental study in public healthcare networks in Latin America. *PloS one*, 17(1), e0261604. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0261604>
- Weis, H. B. (2014). *Nuevas orientaciones sobre el involucramiento familiar en el aprendizaje. Proyecto de investigación de Harvard [New guidelines on family involvement in learning. Harvard Research Project]*. Fundación CAP.
- Wright, D. E. (2015). *Active learning: Social justice education and participatory action research*. Routledge.
- Wright, D. E. (2020). Imagining a more just world: Critical arts pedagogy and youth participatory action research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 33(1), 32-49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1678784>

Breve CV de los/as autores/as

José F. Amiama

PhD José F. Amiama is a senior lecturer in the Department of Didactics and School Organisation with extensive experience in teaching and training teachers and families in areas related to the inclusive school and family participation. He is a member of the INKLUNI research team on inclusive education at the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU). Email: joxe.amiama@ehu.eus

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0320-5218>

Aida Sanahuja

PhD in Education. Professor at the Department of Pedagogy and Didactics of the Social Sciences, Language and Literature at the University Jaume I. She is part of the Research Group MEICRI (Educational Improvement and Critical Citizenship) and Laboratoire International sur l'inclusion scolaire (LISIS). Her current lines of research are the inclusive and democratic practices, school included in the territory and research- action-participation. Email: asanahuj@uji.es

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3581-8801>

Patricia Mata-Benito

PhD in Education. Professor at the National University of Distance Education (UNED), Director of the Euro-Latin American Master's Degree in Intercultural Education and member of the INTER Research Group on Intercultural Education (https://www2.uned.es/grupointer/index_en.html). She worked as Consultant for the Spanish Ministry of Education in the design and development of a Resource Center for Addressing Cultural Diversity in Education. She has been involved in several R+D and cooperation projects, funded by the European Commission, such as the INTER Project: A Guide to Implement Intercultural Education at Schools (2002-2005), awarded with the Evens Foundation Prize 2006. Her main lines of research are focused on Diversity and Equity in Education, Active Citizenship Learning and Participatory Processes. Email: pmata@edu.uned.es

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6660-2317>

Irina Sherezade Castillo Reche

Licensed in Pedagogy. PhD in Education. She works in a multidisciplinary center and is Professor at the University of Murcia. She's got a Master's Degree in Antropology, Culture, Migration and Health. She is part of the Research Group EDUCODI (Comunication, Educative Innovation and Diversity). Her lines of research and publications are about Diversity and Equity in Education and inclusive practices. Email: irinasherezade.castillo@um.es

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7965-1567>