

Study on
Individuals



RESEARCH
brief Nr.1



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IMPACT STUDY OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGIES ON SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Latest information to the existing status of the project
Frugality as Value and Practice

by CFIA
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INTRODUCTION

The decade of the 60s was one of the most socially mobilized decades in Latin America in the 20th century. Political activism began to be evident at all levels and it became the user perfect framework for the emergence of grassroots movements in the region. It was in that context that the critical education group in this study was launched, starting as a single school in a space offered by a family. The Group of Educators of Religious Origin that promotes Critical Pedagogical Approaches (GEROCPA) started its work by reaching the most remote areas of Latin America, locations that the state did not reach at that time.

GEROCPA

GEROCPA is an international federation of schools that promotes critical pedagogies in comprehensive, inclusive and high-quality educational processes from, with and for communities in remote places throughout Latin America. Since 1960s GEROCPA has positioned itself as a grassroots' social movement that aims to contribute to social change by delivering the best possible quality education in resource-constrained settings. It is widely recognized for its innovativeness and successful educational experiences in rural Latin America, but the empirical evidence that can account for the results and impacts on the beneficiary population is scarce and highly focused on educational performance.



THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The research included a set of studies with different methodologies, led by Dr. Georgina Gómez, Associate Professor of the International Institute of Social Studies.

This study aimed at collecting and analyzing evidence to understand in what ways the outcomes of that particular educational model differ from those of traditional pedagogical approaches. The research project included several studies with various levels of analysis and methods.

Do GEROCPA schools serve the poor and what are the effects of their critical pedagogical approach? This policy brief answers the question of how GEROCPA has contributed to the construction of citizenships with social engagement in resource-constrained settings.

Do GEROCPA schools serve the poor and what are the effects of their critical pedagogical approach?



THE STUDY

The study among students and graduates aimed at identifying the effects of GEROCPA in the construction of students' life projects and their households.

Primary data collection facilitated the determination of the socioeconomic characteristics of students and graduates, as well as the perception of GEROCPA contributions to their life projects, the strengthening of their critical awareness, leadership values and social commitment.

The study included a statistically significant sample of students at GEROCPA schools with representative geographical coverage and at their nearest state-run schools in six countries in Latin America. The state-run schools were chosen as control group and were called "mirror schools" as basis for comparison of the results.

FINDINGS

GEROCPA SCHOOLS ARE LOCATED IN AREAS WHERE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POVERTY IS SEVERE

Both GEROCPA and mirror schools serve populations with similar characteristics, as the vast majority of the students and their households live in socio-economic poverty (above 80% in all schools visited). The value and mission of GEROCPA is reflected in the focused attention to this vulnerable population:

- 49% of GEROCPA students' households live in extreme socio-economic poverty conditions.
- A second level of analysis reveals that the better-off among the poor in the area place their children in GEROCPA schools instead of the state-run schools. The efforts to get a vacancy include planning months in advance, spending a night in a queue and mobilizing local networks.
- GEROCPA schools show educational performance rates (approval, permanence and completion percentages) slightly above those of the "mirror schools" and, where available, at a similar level or slightly higher than the national averages.
- The study found a large percentage of children in GEROCPA schools with at least one parent who has also attended GEROCPA schools.
- The data suggests that GEROCPA's schools are attended by children in socio-economic poverty and are a preferred option for the better-off parents among the poor, some of whom have also attended GEROCPA schools. Their preference for GEROCPA schools could be partially explained by a slightly higher educational attainment but their extreme efforts to get a vacancy in GEROCPA schools required additional analysis: why do the poor (and the better-off poor) families strongly prefer a GEROCPA school?

The answer to this question was revealed in another part of the research

GEROCPA EDUCATES YOUTH IN "VALUES" AND ATTITUDES, SHAPING CRITICAL CITIZENS AND PROVIDING TOOLS TO EMBRACE A DIGNIFIED LIFE PROJECT

A set of questions were targeted to identify if the education given in the surveyed schools provided tools to build successful life projects, as well as training critically conscious citizens. The results showed that GEROCPA educational system provides greater tools than the "mirror schools" for students to analyze and find solutions to possible problems, exercise their leadership and form opinions in relation to situations in their context.

- 59% of GEROCPA students said that what they have been taught at schools allowed them to form their own opinions on their reality, compared to 42% in state-run schools
- 80% of GEROCPA graduates considered that their life quality is better than their parents' and 28% believe that such an improvement is a result of the access to an education in GEROCPA schools.

CONCLUSIONS

1



The set of studies in the research concluded that GEROCPA contributes to the construction of citizenships with social engagement among the poor. By educating human beings with a critical pedagogical approach with a strong emphasis on social inclusion and community development, GEROCPA schools seem to have allowed families to scale socially, overcome their conditions of poverty and achieve a better quality of life than the previous generation or their poor neighbors. Evidence suggests that attending GEROCPA schools is perceived as a first step in a social advancement life project. Naturally, this advantage may also lead the elite capture by those who have escaped poverty.

2



Secondly, GEROCPA educational approach promotes critical thinking, so students can better understand their reality and commit themselves to changing their situation and their social environment. They exercise leadership with opinions and capacities to seek solutions, as well as participate in the governance of the school and in the functioning of social organizations in their communities.

3



Lastly, the evolution of the critical education approach has become a benchmark for achieving structural changes in remote areas in Latin America. It is an example of how critical pedagogies can respond to the particularities of each local context and promote social transformation.

