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Educación de la primera infancia en Portugal: discursos, proyectos y prácticas (1834-1974)

Educação da infância em Portugal: discursos, projetos e práticas (1834-1974)

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Abstract

This paper is a summary of the path in early childhood education in Portugal, during 1834 and the end of the Estado Novo in April of 1974, proposing a comprehensive reading of the evolution of thinking and action on the care and education of children in early childhood education in Portugal. It is based on a study of the documentary sources, namely legislation, reports, minutes of meetings, documentary sources, and the scientific production in the field of early childhood education, compiled in the education and teaching archive. These sources allow us to analyze ideas, proposals, projects and practices in early childhood education in Portugal, in the mentioned period, and to understand the ruptures and continuities in the evolution of the Portuguese system. We have adopted as the critical method and conceptual framework the theoretical and methodological contributions of the Portuguese school of the history of education, which has been developing a critical reflection related to the material and symbolic conditions of pedagogical society. To a large extent, these contributions have contributed to an epistemological and methodological renewal.

Keywords

Child, childhood, early childhood education, nursery school, educational policy.

Resumen

Este artículo es un resumen del camino de la educación de la infancia en Portugal, desde 1834 hasta el final del Estado Novo, en abril de 1974, lo cual nos permite una lectura de la evolución del pensamiento y la acción sobre el cuidado y la educación de los niños en la educación de la infancia en Portugal. Se basa en un estudio de las fuentes documentales, como la legislación, informes, actas de reuniones, fuentes documentales y la producción científica en el campo de la educación de la infancia, compilada en el archivo de educación y enseñanza. Estas fuentes nos permiten analizar ideas, propuestas, proyectos y prácticas en la educación de la infancia en Portugal, en el período mencionado, y comprender las rupturas y las continuidades en la evolución del sistema portugués. Hemos adoptado como método crítico y como marco conceptual las contribuciones teóricas y metodológicas de la escuela portuguesa de la historia de la educación, que ha estado desarrollando una reflexión crítica sobre las condiciones materiales y simbólicas de la sociedad pedagógica. En gran medida, estas contribuciones han contribuido a una renovación epistemológica y metodológica.

Palabras clave

Niño, infancia, educación de la primera infancia, escuela de párvulos, política de la educación.

Resumo

O presente trabalho constitui um levantamento das políticas de educação de infância em Portugal, ao longo do Século XIX, entre 1834 e o final do Estado Novo, em abril de 1974, no sentido de propiciar uma leitura da evolução do pensamento e da ação sobre o cuidado e a educação das crianças na educação de infância em Portugal. Baseia-se em um estudo das fontes documentais, como a legislação, relatórios, atas de reuniões, fontes documentais e a produção científica no campo da educação de infância, compiladas no arquivo de educação e ensino. Essas fontes permitem analisar ideias, propostas, projetos e práticas na educação de infância em Portugal, no período mencionado, e compreender as rupturas e as continuidades na evolução do sistema português. Adotamos como método crítico e como quadro conceitual as contribuições teóricas e metodológicas da escola portuguesa de história da educação, que tem estado desenvolvendo uma reflexão crítica sobre as condições materiais e simbólicas da sociedade pedagógica. Em grande medida, essas contribuições têm contribuído para uma renovação epistemológica e metodológica.

Palavras-chave

Criança, infância, educação de infância, jardim-de-infância, política educacional.

Introduction

When discussing the meaning and education of children in their early years in Portugal, we need to keep in mind that this discussion is consistent with what occurred in European countries. Following the same patterns and transnational ideas, Portuguese society, from the 19th century, has been concerned with the care and education of children in their early years (Ferreira, 2011; Ferreira, 2014).

The discussion about childhood and attitudes towards childhood is linked to historical development. Therefore, attention should be paid to the social and cultural contexts in which childhood is constructed (Sarmento, 2004). In this sense, we can find a critical analysis of childhood in Portugal, the "lack of childhood" and the exploitation of children in the past, which is related to the lack of care and education, and the lack of a social and pedagogical discourse on childhood.

From this viewpoint, it is noteworthy that the economic, social and political transformations have had a direct impact on the conditions of life of children and their childhood. The changes that have occurred in Portugal, since the beginning of the 19th century, alongside an increasingly complex bureaucratic system, have put on the agenda new skills for those who are responsible for the care and education of children, and have created new demands for the training of those who work with children. The emergence of new professions, such as teachers, social workers, and other professionals who work with children, has created a need for training and professional development (Ferreira, 2002; Ferreira, 2003; Ferreira, 2007; Ferreira, 2009; Ferreira, 2010; and educational or pedagogical programmes spread throughout Europe, bringing new ideas and practices to Portugal (Ferreira, 2011; Ferreira, 2014).

The 19th and 20th centuries saw the spread of the idea that child rearing and education should be the responsibility of the state, that it should be the task of public schools, and that their task should be developed by the state. In 19th century, Portugal, the state was responsible for the care and education of children in early childhood education, through the Ministry of Navy and Overseas Affairs and Ministry of Justice, and by providing assistance to the poor. In the 20th century, the state was responsible for finding its leading attention in the educational market as primary school (Ferreira, 2002; Ferreira, 2003; Ferreira, 2009; Ferreira, 2010;

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