

Title of your proposal

Preschool children's views on inclusion. The ISOTIS international participatory research with and for children.

Please select your theme

What methodologies are there for documenting and demonstrating early childhood accountability and how might the results be used?

Please select your strand

Paradigms, Theories & Methodologies for working with young children

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ABSTRACT

Abstract

The ISOTIS (www.isotis.org) international study 'Feel good: Children's views on inclusion' (Italy, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Norway, Poland) involved preschool and primary school immigrant and disadvantaged children in participatory research experiences aimed at eliciting their views on inclusion and their proposals on how to make their school and classrooms (more) welcoming and inclusive. Few studies have explored younger children's (3-6) views on these sensitive themes (Due, Riggs & Augustinos, 2014; Sime, 2017). The study aimed at addressing this gap, focussing on preschoolers' voices. The theoretical framework builds upon the research strands of Sociology of Childhood (Qvortrup, 1987; Corsaro, 1997), Socio-Constructivist Early Childhood Pedagogy (Clark & Moss, 2001; Mantovani 2007; Oberhumer 2005; Katz 1999) and Student's voice (Cook-Sather, Grion 2013; Colinet, Grion, 2013; Fielding 2006, 2012), recognizing children as competent actors, reliable informants and active citizens able to contribute with valuable ideas in all matters affecting them. Set within a qualitative and phenomenological paradigm of research (Denzin, Lincoln, 2015), a participatory methodology and a multi-methods approach was adopted, above data triangulation, to provide children with a richer and more comprehensive possibility of expression. Dealing with delicate issues, greater sensitivity and critical reflectivity were dedicated to balance children's right to participate with the need to ensure a worthwhile and well-being experience, shifting from a «research on children» to a «research with and for them» (Mayall, 2003; Mortari, 2009). Key points will refer to preschoolers' viewpoints and proposals, and to methodological and ethical challenges along the research process. Impacts regarded children's proposals to change their preschool; and professional development side effects on teachers in connection to the participatory research involving very young children.

Keywords

1. CHILDREN'S VOICE

2. INCLUSION

3. WELL-BEING

4. PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

5. PRESCHOOL