

MIFGASH

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL-EDUCATIONAL WORK

- › Expressive-instrumentalism in a non-formal education program in Israel's geographic and social periphery
- › The valuable resilience of social-community education in the Corona crisis
- › Relationships between teachers, at-risk students and not-at-risk students
- › The criminal justice process through the perspectives of adolescent victims of sexual abuse
- › Single mothers by choice of children with disabilities
- › The experience of emerging adult siblings of individuals with autism spectrum disorder



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ABSTRACTS

“I came for the fun, and stayed to contribute”: Expressive-instrumentalism in a non-formal education program in Israel’s geographic and social periphery

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The acknowledgement of the contribution of non-formal education to diverse populations has increased in recent years. Within the geo-social periphery, non-formal education aims to fulfill social and educational deficits. The network of non-formal educational centers that are the focus of this article serves as a notable example. This study aims to examine how feelings of belonging and commitment to non-formal educational programs are shaped among participants in this network and to explore their perceptions of its influence on them. To achieve this, we conducted two rounds of interviews with a group of participants. Exploring both retrospective and prospective views allowed us to gain a deeper understanding of the processes the participants have undergone in the non-formal program. Our analysis is grounded in the principle of expressive instrumentalism, which posits that non-formal education inherently combines activities undertaken for their immediate gratification with those undertaken for their future value. We identified five stages in the development of commitment and belonging to the program. We maintain that this multi-stage process consists of two primary phases: (1) materialization of expressive instrumentalism in the non-formal activity, beginning with emphasis on the expressive dimension and evolving to enhance the instrumental dimension; (2) the participants’ development of awareness of the instrumental dimension while deepening their belonging and commitment to the program. By focusing on the contribution of non-formal educational programs to the life chances of youth in the periphery, this study seeks to enrich the knowledge on non-formal education.

Key words: non-formal education, socio-geographical periphery, expressive instrumentalism, non-formal code

“The anchor, the compass and the rudder in a stormy sea”: The valuable resilience of social-community education in the Corona crisis

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This study was designed to explore the coping resources of the social-community education (SCE) teams, who continued social pedagogical activities during the COVID-19 crisis. An online open questionnaire was filled in by 69 SCE instructors (61 women, 8 men) who are responsible for creating a social – alongside an educational – agenda. Based on the salutogenic theory the analysis revealed the resilience of SCE teams as a sense of coherence resulting from comprehensibility, meaningfulness and manageability characterized by social involvement, creativity, flexible pedagogy, continuity and availability of contents, team partnership and student participation. The analysis of the metaphors illustrates that the sense of coherence converges along two dimensions: transcending self-enhancement versus self-transcendence, and openness to change versus conservation. This gave SCE’s coherence the meaning of moral resilience.

The study has practical implications for broadening social pedagogy and the encounter between formal and nonformal education, so that moral resilience will be shared by the entire educational team.

Key words: social-community education (pro-social education), sense of coherence, social involvement, COVID-19 crisis, moral resilience

Teacher–student relationships: A comparative analysis between teachers, at-risk students and not-at-risk students

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This research examines the quality of relations between teachers and at-risk students vs. non-at-risk students, with focus on “affective fabric.” Effective fabric accentuates the developmental-emotional needs of adolescents and discusses components related to the healthy social-emotional development of students at school. The recent COVID-19 pandemic led to an increase in dropout rates and a rising number of at-risk students. This emphasizes the importance of examining the various needs the school provides its students, especially teacher–student relations. The main research question was: Are there perceptual differences of the teacher–student relations between the two student groups? This research is founded on qualitative research which included 2,155 students, of whom 966 are at-risk students. Additionally, 214 teachers participated in the evaluation of the quality of the relationships with their students. The findings indicate that the quality of the teacher–student relationship is perceived more positively among at-risk students compared to the students of the comparison group. Therefore, it is eminent to focus on resolving the emotional needs of at-risk youth since they benefit from this relationship more than those not at-risk.

Key words: at-risk students, boarding school, Etgar class (youth at-risk program), teacher–student relations, youth village

Under the therapeutic jurisprudence lens: An analysis of the criminal justice process through the perspectives of adolescent victims of sexual abuse

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Sexually abused adolescents face numerous challenges during criminal proceedings against their perpetrators. Their involvement begins with the police report and continues through investigations, prosecutorial preparations, and testifying in court. These unusual experiences raise questions about the best interests of the child and youth victims involved in criminal justice proceedings. Current knowledge typically revolves around their testimony, and it is usually concerned with their reliability as witnesses. Little is known about the youth's subjective narratives and meaning-making of the criminal process. The article reviews the findings of a qualitative-phenomenological study based on semi-structured interviews with 12 adolescents and young adults who were sexually abused (ages 14–22) and were involved in criminal justice processes following their victimization. Predictability, victim-inclusiveness, and relationality were identified as qualities with therapeutic value. Further studies with larger and more representative samples are needed to confirm these initial results.

Key words: sexual assault, child victims, criminal procedure, therapeutic jurisprudence

"They think I'm weak because I'm alone, but I'm the strongest": Single mothers by choice of children with disabilities

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Nowadays, families headed by a single mother who conceived by means of sperm donation are very common, especially in Western societies, as is the case in Israel. The current study is a preliminary study that examined the parental experience of single mothers by choice who conceived a child

with a disability through sperm donation. In this qualitative study in the phenomenological tradition, 11 mothers were interviewed by means of semi-structured interviews. The analysis of the interviews revealed four themes: 1. The decision to become a single mother from sperm donation; 2. Coping difficulties and hesitations in making decisions; 3. Strengths and advantages as a single mother; 4. Sources of support.

The words of the mothers provide a window of observation into their inner world. This observation enables an understanding of the characteristics of their unique parenting, its difficulties and strengths. This understanding makes it possible to offer practical recommendations regarding assistance and support to these mothers and serves as an effective work tool for multi-professional teams that are in contact with them. Developing awareness of experiences and struggles will help the teams work in a more coordinated and cooperative manner with the mothers, thereby strengthening them and their children in therapeutic and educational settings and lead them towards a sense of growth. Observing the inner world of the mothers may also help remove the barriers and the negative attitudes in society, which some of the research participants experienced.

Key words: single mothers, single mothers by choice, single mothers from sperm donation, sperm donation, mother of a child with a disability, raising a child with a disability, family of a child with a disability

"It's something I grew up with, that's a part of me": The experience of emerging adult siblings of individuals with autism spectrum disorder

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Being a sibling to an individual with ASD is an experience that has a profound effect on the lives and development of the siblings. Utilizing a qualitative approach, this study investigated the life experiences of siblings of children with ASD who are in the developmental stage of emerging adulthood and the unique aspects of this time period. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 emerging adult siblings of individuals with ASD. The ages of the participants ranged from 18–27. The interviews revealed that the typically-developing siblings encountered complicated experiences in their childhood and adolescence such as loneliness, difficulties with their mothers, dynamic emotions towards their sibling with ASD, coping with how their environment relates to them, and the impact of their sibling on

their partnerships, early parenting, and profession, in addition to the future care of their sibling. It appears that these challenging experiences shaped their lives, both internally, in the development of strengths, character traits, and self-awareness, and externally, such as awareness of the “other” in society, and choosing to live a life with a mission and giving to others. The research findings form the basis for recommendations to support siblings and parents raising a family with a child with ASD.

Key words: siblings, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), emerging adulthood, qualitative researchs