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CITIZEN TRAINING: RESCUING CITIZENSHIP

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Abstract: The object highlights the fact that adolescents from excluded families, studying in precarious schools, find in the Young Apprentice Program an opportunity for professionalization. The general objective is to understand the cultural, family and school contexts of adolescents. The specific objectives are to describe the cultural context; discuss the family scenario; explain the school environment. The methodology emphasizes that the research is qualitative in structure, since the data collection procedures are classified as participant observation. The results show that the richness of the testimonies heard shows that the young people's reality has changed as a result of the opportunity to become professionalized. There has been an increase in self-esteem, posture, behavior, dress and improved communication with colleagues and institutions. These teenagers stress the importance of the course in awakening them to the world of work. The conclusion highlights that the adolescents, through the Young Apprentice Program, obtain benefits such as better technical quality, inclusion in the job market, social integration, redemption of citizenship and citizen training, building an equitable society.

Keywords: Adolescent. Culture. School. Family. Apprentice.

INTRODUCTION

Culture is a perspective on the world that people come to have in common when they interact. Family, as a class of individuals with an *innate stigma*, is hindered, excluded and made invisible by society. School, with its precarious setting, excluded students and overworked teaching staff, gives rise to social inequalities.

The object of this study is the Young Apprentice Program, which facilitates finding a first job and links work with education. The problem reflects why adolescents want an

opportunity in a Young Apprentice Program? The general objective is to understand the cultural, family and school contexts of adolescents. The specific objectives are to describe the cultural context; to discuss the family scenario; to explain the school environment. The hypotheses are that the severity of poverty for the poor family represents the instability of emotional ties and the fraying of solidarity; that the family environment hinders the emotional health and cognitive development of adolescents; that the language, habits, customs and values of the family are different from those of the school community.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Culture, shared in interaction, constitutes a consensual perspective on the world and directs actions in this universe.

Ideas about the world are learned from others through interaction in families, schools and all forms of social institution. You seek the support of the group for what you believe in; you test your ideas with each other; you accept suggestions that are supported by the people you relate to and who are important. Belief is encouraged by the fact that community organizations are important for identity, for meaning as individuals.

Culture distinguishes those with whom you interact. The social institution means a single universal vision.

Every society develops a culture that has a set of truths, and so does every community in society, every formal organization, group and dyad.

Ideas are *cultural*, they are formed in social institutions and taught to people as members of them. Even if they are true to a certain extent, they are also limited in their ability to capture reality, because each one is an approach, exaggerating certain aspects of reality and downplaying others.

People develop a philosophy, a belief system, a vision of reality that is *useful* to them and that works for their organization. The ideas that work for individuals' situations become their truths, since each community institution is in a different context and has a different history, cultures are different.

In Brazil there are opportunities for those who *work hard*. It's a place where this type of person can reach the top. It is based on competition, which brings out the qualities, efforts and competitive characteristics of human beings. If someone succeeds in this system, they will be able to keep what they have achieved. If they don't succeed, the chances are that they haven't performed well enough. These suggestions are *cognitive*. They work to protect the economic system and social inequality.

A set of truths specific to a people may be functional for some people, but we must also remember the role of social structure in the creation of ideas. Power is an important aspect in all metropolitan structures, those with the most agency will have the greatest impact on the creation of wisdom, and in general the ideas that prevail in the social organization as part of its culture are suggestions that benefit those with the most power.

Culture is also made up of ideas about things worth striving for (goals). These are of two types: values and goals.

A value is a long-term commitment on the part of the institution or individual. It is a strong preference, a building principle around which objectives are set and action takes place. A *purpose* is a short-term goal of an individual or community organization in a specific situation.

Values are learned in interactions. Groups, formal institutions, communities and society direct priorities by teaching a set of beliefs. The precepts that the societal system teaches are difficult to question, as they usually seem to be the only sensible ones.

An intense commitment to a social organization means that the institution itself becomes an important value for the individual. You can be willing to give your time, money or even your life for it: you can see that your whole purpose in life is linked to it.

Values serve a purpose: they mobilize individuals around desirable ends and lead them to act in ways that help the organization. They reflect what is useful and taught by those at the top of the social structure.

Precepts are truly reflected in what you do, not in what you say. Goals, decisions and actions reveal values. Family life today is less important than it once was - no matter what is *said*, decisions reflect the fact that other purposes become more important to people.

The relationship between values and action is complex. Equality, for example, is a frequently held value, but it has clearly not been respected in relation to racial minorities.

Within a country, each community also has a set of purposes, influenced by wider society, but also unique because of the interaction that takes place in a given community over time. Each shares the dominant wisdom, but each is somewhat unique in the precepts it emphasizes. Each formal institution also develops a value system, and the same is true for each group.

However complex and contradictory an organization's belief system may be, it is still different from other institutions and important for what people do. Individualism has been an extremely important value since the beginning of society.

Objectives, like purposes, are the ends that people work towards. Objectives are practical goals, precepts are moral goals. Targets must be achieved and replaced by others; values are general guides for action. Intentions are the specific outcomes around which action is organized, the endings that create the problems we are trying to solve.

Values are important for objectives. They are the long-term abstract commitments that oversee the goals. You work towards designs that are coherent with the commitments of purpose.

Values and goals are two components of culture. They emerge between people as interaction takes place over time.

Wisdom means agreement. Without unity in ideas about reality, purposes and objectives, groups will face conflicts, tensions and perhaps dissolution.

The concept of *subculture* testifies to the fact that there are many markedly different groups and communities in a society. At the same time, the term implies that it doesn't develop in a vacuum, but is influenced by wider wisdom in various complex and subtle ways.

The term *counterculture* is used to refer to other cultures within the dominant wisdom of society. The counterculture explicitly *rejects the norms and values that unite the dominant culture, while the subculture finds ways to affirm the national wisdom and the fundamental orientation of purpose of the dominant societal system.*

All societies have counter-cultures, which often provide the backdrop for criticism that leads to social change.

The term *group culture* is sometimes used to designate a wisdom that emerges in a formal group or institution. It also has its own emphases and makes its members at least slightly different from non-members.

Reality may exist *out there*, regardless of how you perceive it. However, the way you see it, what you think about it or what you consider to be correct comes from the social construction of truth. It is through social life that we come to know what exists, that we learn what is real, what to call it and how to use it. Between the *axiom as it is* and the *authenticity as the person sees it*, there is a social organization and its wisdom, the social lenses through which the person looks.

Souza (2009) points out that the real social problems that cause pain, suffering and humiliation on a daily basis for tens of millions of Brazilians are made invisible.

It is this intangibility of society and its conflicts that allows for a kind of economism where serious societal and political problems are perceived as issues of *resource management*.

It is this economic reasoning, which systematically abstracts individuals from their social context, that also transforms the school, thought of abstractly and outside its setting, into a solution to all the ills of inequality.

The process of social competition does not begin in the institution, but is already largely pre-decided in pre-school family socialization produced by distinct *class cultures*.

To hide the non-economic factors (social, emotional, moral and cultural preconditions) of inequality is to make invisible the two issues that make it possible to *understand* the phenomenon of social nonconformity: its genesis and its reproduction over time.

The transfer of *immaterial values* in the reproduction of societal classes as cultural capital is necessary. Where the process of affective identification legitimizes privilege, involving an advantage in social competition both in the organization and in the job market in relation to disadvantaged classes.

The familial roots of the reproduction of class privilege and the centuries-old social and political abandonment of entire social strata, exercised daily by global society, are made invisible in order to raise *awareness of privilege*, whether economic (upper strata) or cultural (middle classes), and make it legitimate.

The process of modernization in Brazil constitutes an entire class of individuals devoid of the social, moral and cultural preconditions that allow for this appropriation.

This social stratum is only perceived in the public debate as a group of needy or

dangerous *individuals*, treated fragmentarily by superficial topics of discussion, data that never even names the real problem, such as *violence, public safety, the hardship of public schools, the lack of public health, the fight against hunger*, etc.

The legitimization of the modern world as a *just* world is based on *meritocracy*, i.e. the belief that the barriers of blood and birth of pre-modern societies have been overcome and that today only the *differential performance* of individuals is taken into account.

Class of actors with an *innate stigma*. These are the people who are always one step away from delinquency and abandonment. This stratum is modern and is created by the affective, emotional, moral and existential impossibility of *incorporating* the assumptions indispensable to the appropriation of both cultural and economic capital.

What we have here is the opposition between a group excluded from all material and symbolic opportunities for social recognition and the other social classes that are, albeit differentially, included.

The *national myth* is the modern form par excellence for producing a feeling of *collective solidarity*, i.e. a sense of commiseration that *everyone is in the same boat* and that together they form a unit.

Although there are always economic and political interests behind ethnic and religious differences, the absence of a shared compassion of national adherence is decisive, where rivalries are resolved violently, cruelly and with genocide.

An effective national identity builds the foundations not only of dominant group solidarity, but is also an indispensable source, in modern conditions, for the very constitution of each person's individual symmetry.

The obstacles to voluntary symbolic belonging for ordinary citizens are almost insurmountable. Brazil saw itself - and

indeed was - as a poor nation. The country that became autonomous in 1802 and was therefore suddenly faced with the question of developing an identity for itself, suffered from an extraordinary inferiority complex, especially in relation to Europe, the ideal and unattainable dream of the educated elite.

For Freyre, in his novel *Casa Grande e Senzala*, being a mestizo was a source of pride and positive virtues.

Industrial Brazil, which is being inaugurated on a large scale in 1930, needs an ideology that calls Brazilians to united and joint action for national renewal.

The union, solidarity and love between *races* and *ethnicities* that would make up the empirically visible Brazilianness began to be taught in school books (even today with very few changes), celebrated with national singularity in government propaganda campaigns, carnivalized in sambas and parades, discussed and debated in newspapers and universities.

Without institutional and social practices that encourage and guarantee the possibility of criticism and independence of opinion and action, there are no free individuals. The problem is that it is not easy to see the insidious ways in which the practices of the dominant powers construct the illusion of freedom and equality.

The fact that the private, invisible and silent parental process that instills in privileged children the predispositions and *moral economy* - the set of propensities that explain each person's practical behavior - that lead to success - discipline, self-control, social skills, etc. - can be *omitted*. The *forgetting* of the social in the individual is what allows individual merit to be celebrated. It is this same *neglect*, on the other hand, that makes it possible to attribute unusual *blame* to those *unlucky* people who were born into the wrong families, the vast majority of whom only reproduce their own precariousness.

So is it the family's *fault* for reproducing inequalities, injustices and privileges?

Families of the same social class teach their children very similar things, and this is what explains why these descendants of the same class find friends, boyfriends and then wives and husbands of the same kind and start the whole process all over again. *In* other words, the fact that the overwhelming majority of people marry within the same class shows clearly and unsurprisingly that families actually reproduce the values of a specific social class.

Parental learning is affective; it only exists because the children's emotional and unconditional dependence and identification with their parents remains.

The lower classes in Brazil, or more precisely the lower social classes, often have neither. Sometimes, even though some parents encourage their children to go to the institution, the reasons for this choice are *cognitive, lip* service, since most of these parents have not been to the organization or had any personal experience of success at school.

It is the conflict, the struggle between contradictory needs, interests or ideas that enables the individual to acquire and form their own unique personality. It is also altercation that enables a whole society to perceive and criticize the perverse and inhumane consensus that permeates it and influences its history. Without making dissent explicit, both a person and a societal system are condemned to blindly repeating conventions and ideologies.

Incompatibility and its awareness are always costly undertakings, which require a lot of courage and energy, and their results are not guaranteed. It's always *risky* to face antagonisms head-on and to live with the truth.

People who make the cognitive and emotional effort to consume *credible responses* are also those who are more likely to criticize themselves and learn, at least to some extent, who they really are. Similarly, societies that make their conflicts explicit and gloss over their false social consensus learn to improve as a *society* and not just as a *market*.

The link between ideas and political practice is almost always rendered invisible, for good reason to those who need to forget the genesis of their customary habits. It only *appears* to the eye in its *effects*, in other words, as a mere *task without an author*, in the daily rituals of political life. This is why, in order to understand the dilemmas of a society's collective life, we have to reconstruct, from its inception, the common thread that explains why certain *interpretations of the world* come to life and others do not.

An important point is to understand the intimate relationship between common sense (including the theme of national identity in it) and science. Reflecting methodically, using the resources available to each scientific tradition, requires *moving away from consensus*.

It is the *racial encounter*, empirical and easily observable in the streets of Brazilian cities, that gives plausibility to all this reasoning, to the construction of a Portuguese and then Luso-Brazilian *trend*, to the *cultural encounter*. Emotionality, the emphasis on feelings, cordiality and sensuality are understandable elements in this context.

The *theory of social action* is a set of concepts and notions that explain why individuals behave the way they do. It must explain why actors and societies are different from each other.

Entrenched prejudices and outdated concepts go hand in hand in preventing a more elaborate and sophisticated understanding of the causes and consequences of peripheral modernization and its after-effects, such as abyssal inequality, marginality and sub-citizenship.

Racism, although disguised, continues in the culturalist vision that also *essentializes* and homogenizes individuals and entire societies.

The cordial man has the same characteristics as the *emotional theory of action*: the predominance of emotion and feeling over rational calculation, creating a world divided between friends and enemies.

From it, individuals from these societies, perceived as pre-modern precisely because of their emphasis on emotion and feeling, as opposed to plausible calculation, can perceive themselves as *warmer*, more *hospitable* than people from cold and insensitive advanced societal systems.

Social conflicts are carefully suppressed in the *enthraling theory of action*. Everything would happen as if all the actors in these *emotionally integrated* societies were essentially similar, without any class division, and only differed in the income they earned. The whole process of social domination and the legitimization of inequality, in other words, the very core of any critical theory of the sodalium, cannot be discussed because it is not even perceived as a doubt or a fundamental question.

Almeida (2022) testifies that today, despite the consolidation of democracy, it is possible to see that Brazilian socio-economic inequality is associated with inequality of opportunities and conditions. In other words, there are differences in circumstances that affect people's success and that do not depend on their efforts or personal decisions. These circumstances include the level of education and occupation of the parents, the quality of the school the individual attends, their socialization environments, as well as other elements such as skin color.

Taking poor Brazilian youth as an example, we can see that social inequality helps to explain the different realities experienced by this segment of the population. Whether

in economic terms or in terms of gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation, which are not always valued equally, this segment suffers from a series of particular forms of discrimination and unequal conditions.

The situation of inequality has sometimes been considered natural, given its long existence. One factor that should be highlighted, however, is the binomial equal opportunities vs. unequal conditions, which is in itself a contradiction. Currently, most countries have the assumption of equal opportunities, i.e. all citizens have the right to equal treatment under the law, and arbitrary differentiations and discrimination are forbidden - as stated in Article 5 of the Federal Constitution of 1988, which states that *everyone is equal before the law, without distinction of any kind (...)*. This assumption enshrines the principle of equal opportunities.

However, this proposition of equality is reflected in the immense inequality of conditions, for example, when it comes to starting and continuing studies or ensuring adequate food. These are two examples, among others, that demonstrate the impact of social inequalities on the generation of possibilities for personal and professional development.

There is a major challenge when it comes to reducing the gap between formal equality of opportunity and real inequality of conditions. In general terms, this challenge would be to improve social policies and programs aimed at redistributing income, based on clear and comprehensive operating rules, and which, above all, are state policies, not government policies, in other words, which have continuity, regardless of who occupies the executive branch. On the other hand, there is an urgent need to expand opportunities so that young people can find real ways of social mobility, which means better conditions of access to education, health, the job market and a reduction in the violence of which they

are victims, especially those who represent discriminated social minorities, such as women, blacks and indigenous people.

Ceccon; Oliveira and Oliveira (1984) say that parents are very worried because not all their children manage to get a place in the organization and, even those who do, start to do badly. They fail, have to repeat the year and run the risk of leaving without having learned anything.

Teachers in turn feel overloaded and undervalued in their work. Their working conditions are poor: overcrowded classes, lack of teaching materials, very long and complicated syllabuses, etc.

Surrounded by difficulties on all sides, educators feel tired and discouraged.

For the students, the institution is a place where they don't feel comfortable or at ease. The organization has nothing to do with their daily lives.

Everyone wants the academic community to be a kind of ladder that leads to a higher floor, to a better life, to a good job with a high salary.

This expectation of what school can and should do is even stronger among the poorer social classes. For these people, school is practically the only means of economic advancement, of getting ahead in life. Success in studies would be the great opportunity offered to everyone to compensate for societal inequalities.

The great hope of those fighting for compulsory and free education is that with an equal starting point for everyone and with the same course, nine years of basic education, they would now have equal opportunities for success.

There is a chasm between these promises and reality, between intentions and facts, between what the organization should be and what it actually is.

The difficulty of access is greater in rural areas, where only one child in two attends school. In the poorest regions, such as the Northeast, only one in three manages to study.

The organization caters more and better to children from urban centers and the most developed regions of the country, which only exacerbates the inequalities between rich and poor districts.

A large number of students who manage to enroll in the first grade, however, fail the end-of-year exams and are forced to repeat or leave school.

Failures and repetition continue in the following years, only decreasing in the last grades of compulsory schooling; they decrease to the same extent that the number of students who stop studying and leave the institution increases.

Only twelve percent - in other words, practically only one in ten - of pupils attending the first year manage to finish compulsory education.

It is mainly children from working class backgrounds and rural areas who fail at school and are forced to stop their studies.

It's the parents of the children who drop out who have made the greatest sacrifices so that their children can study. They are the ones who have struggled and sometimes waited years to get a *place* to enroll them.

The vast majority of poor minors are excluded from the organization, without any qualifications or diplomas, without having learned anything useful for their life and work. Practically the only lesson that years of schooling teach them is to see themselves as inferior and the others as successful.

They leave the institution, but they take with them the mark and humiliation of failure: they leave convinced that they have failed because they are less gifted, less intelligent and capable than others.

The fate of the vast majority is to accept the hardest jobs, with the lowest pay and the greatest risk of unemployment in times of crisis.

Many see organizational delay as a psychological fact, as the consequence of an individual problem specific to the child.

Their failure at school is blamed on their family, their social environment and their living conditions.

Poverty and misery have a major influence on institutional results.

Work is detrimental to organizational performance and students end up dropping out of school.

The child drops out because they can't live up to the institution's demands.

School regulations and requirements are seen as the cause of many of the problems that children and parents have to face: there is the problem of a lack of places, not all pupils are able to enrol in the first year at the right age.

Then there's the problem of where the institution is located. Often mothers can't get a place at the organization closest to their home. The children are forced to travel long distances every day.

The rigid school timetable is widely criticized. It is not set according to the interests and real situation of the population, but according to criteria defined by the education authorities.

Then there's the problem of spending money on the things the institution requires. In principle, the organization is free. But in fact, it's not. Parents have to pay for fees, academic materials, uniforms, etc.

Many of the problems mentioned could be solved if the school had a different attitude to inopia. Up until now, the institution has treated sloppiness as if it were people's fault, a birth defect that only gets in the way of the organization's work. And, in fact, it gets in the way because it wasn't designed for the poor.

We don't try to adapt the school to the needs of the deprived, which would be perfectly possible; on the contrary, we ask them to fit into an institution that wasn't made for them, which is practically impossible. And since they can't perform this *miracle*, they are gradually eliminated, which makes the problem *disappear*.

Minors arrive at the organization in an unequal situation.

To put an end to the mass failure of the poorest children, we need to see and understand how the school is set up from the inside. We need to know the mechanisms and the way this machinery works, which makes a few succeed and the vast majority fail.

The law says that the institution is the same for everyone. But in reality, there are big differences between them: there are the *good* ones and the *poor* ones.

In *poor* organizations, teachers are overworked and dissatisfied. As a result, they spend little time at school. The teaching materials (booklets, books, etc.) are inadequate and insufficient. Classes are overcrowded and children have less time in class. In these institutions, teachers are absent more often, students are rebellious or disinterested and there are more discipline problems.

Everything changes within the organization. Those same children who have always been able to manage on their own, who have learned by observing and doing, who at home and on the street are smart and talkative, at school they don't understand what the teacher says, they feel incapable of learning, they close in on themselves, they become quiet, sad and passive.

As soon as they enter the institution, poor children have to learn to speak and write in a different language to the one they have always spoken at home with their parents and friends.

Little by little, the child becomes unable to communicate. They don't understand what

the teacher says, they're ashamed to say they can't think, they can't keep up with the lessons and they become increasingly afraid to speak.

The organization doesn't try to get to know or value everything the child already knows, all their life experience that they have learned at home and on the street and that they bring to school. For the institution, minors have insignificant knowledge, they bring nothing positive, quite the opposite. They bring ways of speaking and behaving that need to be corrected.

Poor children have few opportunities to get it right, to answer a question fully, to do well in an exam, because what they know is not taken into account and what they have to learn has nothing to do with their life experience outside the organization.

That's why she is rarely greeted by her teacher, doesn't feel rewarded for her babbling or encouraged to try harder. The constant corrections, poor results and lack of encouragement pile up and take away any motivation to keep striving for better results.

Children simply don't understand most of the things that school teaches, nor do they know why they should learn them and not others.

Academic exercises are almost always based on problems that don't exist in real life. When the teacher asks a question, she already knows the answer and only accepts what she knows as a correct statement. The institution does not help students to solve concrete problems, situations that they really understand and for which they are interested in finding a solution.

The way the organization teaches doesn't help students learn how to learn. It doesn't instruct what to do to recognize the existence of a problem, how to look for possible decipherings, choose and test the solution that seems best and check the result.

The way the school is organized, it doesn't encourage solidarity, mutual help between

students or teamwork. The fundamental rule of the institution is that everyone must manage as best they can.

The small minority of students who succeed in the organization attribute these good results to their own merits and talents. This makes them consider themselves superior to the vast majority who fail.

The purpose of school, as it exists today, is to train a privileged minority who will later think, direct, plan and give orders to others. The fate of the majority marginalized by the institution will be to carry out the orders and plans made by the owners of power and knowledge.

The few poor students who succeed are always held up as an example of how everyone could have won if they had really tried. It is this myth of equal opportunities that makes those who fail blame themselves for their setbacks, feeling ignorant and inferior. Those who are victorious, in turn, also believe that they owe this outcome to their own merits and superior talents.

The way schools are organized is the result of the composition of society as a whole.

The poorest are marginalized by the organization in the same way that they are exploited in terms of employment relations and prevented from participating in political life.

The school is not democratic because society is not yet truly egalitarian. The owners of power are also the controllers of knowledge and the poor are excluded both from the institution and from participating in decisions.

The social system is not just the landlords, it is also all those who, until now, have had no voice.

The corporate system can and must change.

Change will only come if the main stakeholders take action. Transformations are always the result of the actions of those who

protest against the unfair treatment they have been receiving from the organization and demand a different school that really serves the interests of the majority.

A lot can be done to improve the institution. However, we should start immediately with the measures that benefit the greatest number of people and meet the needs of those most in need.

As it is the poorest children who need the organization the most, it is an urgent priority to adopt measures to ensure that *all* of them can get *into* school and *stay* there for as long as possible.

Some of these practical measures, which have an immediate positive effect, are as follows: extending the length of the school day; adapting the school timetable and calendar to the needs of working children; distributing all academic materials free of charge.

In some places, the decision has been taken to automatically pass all students from first to second grade. This avoids the huge failure rate at the end of the first year, giving students with difficulties more time to get used to school and acquire the skills and behaviors that facilitate learning.

Education doesn't start at school. It begins much earlier and is influenced by many factors. Throughout their physical and intellectual development, children go through various phases in which the life scenario, i.e. the family environment, the socio-economic conditions of the family, the place where they live, access to the media, play a very important role. The early years are decisive: studies show that children have their basic personality structure defined by the age of two, long before compulsory schooling.

During this period, it is important that the child is closely monitored and encouraged to develop their potential. It is also at this stage that a balanced and healthy diet is necessary to build a solid foundation on which they will

grow stronger in the future. It has been proven that a lack of vitamins can result in *handicaps* in terms of intelligence. As a result, when they arrive at the institution, some children will have serious difficulties keeping up with the others.

The awareness that the decisive phase is the one before compulsory education has led a growing number of scholars to propose that children should be looked after earlier, as the only solution to compensate for the disadvantages that affect the poorest children, giving them a better chance of success when they enter school later.

After these administrative measures, which have an immediate impact, we need to tackle the more complicated and difficult issue of changing teaching content and methods.

The institution needs to be adapted to the real conditions experienced by the vast majority of its students, who come from the most disadvantaged homes.

In this sense, it is very important to help teachers consider teaching more and better. It is often because they don't know how to practically deal with the difficulties encountered by poor children in learning that educators blame the victims. With this excuse, they don't take into account the real situation of their students or question their own way of teaching.

We need to ensure that all students can learn essential things such as how to read and write their mother tongue well; develop mathematical reasoning well; acquire basic knowledge of history, geography and the social environment.

The path to be followed to change the organization is the same route that the people are already taking in search of solutions to so many other problems in their daily lives.

Instead of waiting for solutions to come from above - from the authorities, the government, the experts - the people themselves decided to

act. Discussing together, in small groups and communities, they began to become aware of their own strength and their ability to unravel recent decipherings. It was by discovering new solutions together and by helping each other instead of staying quietly in their own corners that people came to understand how to organize themselves to defend their rights. In this daily struggle for survival and a better life, they *learn* and *teach*.

They get to know it as they understand how society works and gradually dismantle the complicated machinery of which the school is just one part. People identify when they try to understand together why their children are doing badly at school and discover that the problem is not an individual one, but a collective one, and that its solution depends on the whole community.

By seeing, judging and acting together, people educate themselves and show that education doesn't just happen in an organization. We educate ourselves every day, throughout our lives, learning from the experiences we have and assimilating even more if they are shared and discussed together.

But when people come together to find new solutions to their problems, they also teach. Throughout their journey, the people shed light on the lessons of hope and solidarity. They explain how it is possible to find ways out of situations where there seems to be no way. They explain how to survive when unemployment and poverty could lead to despair. They explain how it is possible to invent solutions from within.

It is in this process of organizing from the bottom up, tempered by the struggles of each day, the victories and defeats that have so much to argue about, that the seed of a new attitude and a new way of acting lies: relying on one's own strength to find the answers and put them into practice.

This creativity and solidarity is not learned in school life as it is today, but in the school of life. The challenge, then, is to tackle the problem of organization in the same way that people have tackled much more complicated challenges. We need to bring into the institution lessons that people have learned and taught in the school of life.

METHODOLOGY

The method was rational inductive (knowledge from the particular to the general), with an upward direction and apodictic causal demonstration. Analysis (from the least to the most complex) and synthesis gave knowledge a global meaning through qualitative, bibliographic, ethnographic, applied, descriptive and participant research. The documents came from primary sources. Primary data was collected through universal selection, coding, tabulation and interpretation. The techniques used were participant observation and content analysis with independent and continuous variables and non-probabilistic sampling by accessibility.

RESULTS

The research problem of *why teenagers want an opportunity in a Young Apprentice Program* runs through the wide-ranging and complementary paths of this important undertaking of being an apprentice.

The target audience was teenagers between the ages of fourteen and eighteen who were attending school and had been enrolled in an apprenticeship program. They had to work four hours a day. They should have a family income of up to half the regional minimum wage per capita, preferably from a family benefiting from federal government social programs aimed at the low-income population. They were in their first year of high school, with fifty students in the class. Ten percent of them were enrolled in apprenticeship programs.

From the wealth of testimonies heard, it was clear that the young people's reality had changed with the opportunity to become professional.

Sponsoring organizations go to great lengths to see their goals of inclusion realized in the face of an exclusionary society. This exclusion is caused, among other things, by failure at school, as successive failures aggravate the situation of the less fortunate, who, because they don't have a degree, present themselves at an almost insurmountable disadvantage to company recruiters. Many, considered by corporations to be incapable, are definitively excluded from the world of work and deprived of any possibility of social inclusion.

It is gratifying for all the professionals who work in the young apprentice programs to feel, at the end of the modules, the growth of the teenagers demonstrated by their increased self-esteem, posture, behavior, way of dressing and improved communication with colleagues and institutions. When asked, they emphasize the importance of the course in awakening them to the world of work. They say they are aware of the changes that have taken place in this process and of the new market possibilities that are opening up, thus improving their quality of life and that of their families.

Parents often report significant changes when they attend an organization and are grateful for the opportunity of the course, as well as the prospect of future work, which will make them more responsible.

The simple observance of the apprenticeship legislation, articles 428 to 433 of the Consolidation of Labor Laws, and the inclusion of adolescents in these programs, has the power to produce significant changes in the lives of young people. In fact, it can be seen that young people have grown as human beings and citizens as a result of their professional initiation, combined with schooling and specific professional training.

DISCUSSION

The theoretical basis confirmed the *hypotheses*: The seriousness of the situation of poverty for the poor family represents the instability of affective ties and the fraying of solidarity; The family environment hinders the emotional health and cognitive development of adolescents; The language, habits, customs and family values are different from those of the school community.

We need to realize that poverty surrounds us: it persists in schools, in the news and in various social studies. In classrooms, this reality is evidenced by the hungry and impoverished bodies of children and adolescents who arrive at schools, who are often equally lazy. Due to such a significant presence, this issue has become the subject of public policies, such as *poverty eradication* programs.

The possibilities for reflection and action, problematizing the issue of inopia and social inequalities in the educational context, underpin the recognition of the situation of social exclusion.

It is important to analyze how learning takes place in these conditions and what action the school can take. In disadvantaged classes, low family income results in inadequate nutrition and poor housing with no resting conditions or suitable environment for study. In addition, most of these people only have contact with books and other cultural goods in general when they go to school and see it as an opportunity to change their living conditions. However, often when they arrive at school they find an environment with problems, mainly caused by a lack of resources that compromise the infrastructure and educational work.

In the face of discussions and laws calling for equal rights for all, education in the 21st century is still not considered a priority in government policy, which translates into the challenges of financing and managing education. Perhaps these are political,

administrative or cultural issues. Or perhaps, in addition to all the real difficulties that poverty brings, there is also the behavioral barrier of complacency, thinking that it has always been like this, that no changes are possible, a thought that comes from both the subject and the educational community itself.

In the course of this scientific work, I have observed, in my relationship between what I have analyzed and my self-analysis as a researcher, mediated by interactions with other professionals (specialists, authors, experts), that there have been conflicts that have energized the research process. I interpret this as a relational perspective as a condition for the so-called *humanities* to operate when it comes to qualitative scrutiny methodologies. Here I signal ways of thinking, judging and giving opinions as indications of value. Perhaps in this recognition lies the attribute I have highlighted.

Josviak and Bley (2009) point out that it has been observed that youth is a time of transition in which people move on from the complete dependence that characterizes childhood and, through a series of stages, reach the full autonomy that is characteristic of adult life.

In the process of transition from childhood (dependence and studies) to adulthood (autonomy and work), the process of entering the labor market plays a fundamental role, which is conditioned by the aforementioned aspects, giving them a connotation of their own.

For years, in various legal systems, including Brazil's, the approach to work was to distinguish between the underage phase, up to the age of eighteen, and the adult phase. In recent decades, in Brazil, work and professionalization have been placed in the perspective of 14 years to 24 years, taking into account their specificity in this age group.

The ILO (International Labour Organization) reveals that within youth there are different clues about experience in the urban and rural sectors, about gender, about the total youth population, about those who work and study, who only study, who only work, about forms of work, including informal work, about the importance of youth *entrepreneurship*, about the need for professionalization in a globalized world in which the production process is changing, about youth unemployment with its causes and effects.

Various factors have led governmental and non-governmental programs to seek to include young people in other types of legal employment relationships: associations, of which cooperatives are one type, the self-employed, the family system and entrepreneurship.

In the most developed countries, there is a *gap* between an excellent or good level of education and the demands of the job market, leading legislators to create bridge contracts, special training contracts and apprenticeships.

This problem affects the reality of young Brazilians for completely different reasons: many did not have access to or continue their studies in primary and secondary school in their own town; the low average level of schooling revealed by surveys, the low percentage of teenagers who complete the nine years of elementary school, achievement that does not correspond to the years of schooling, restricted access to secondary school make the *gap* between schooling and the demands of the job market even wider.

There are a good number of successful governmental and non-governmental programs at the municipal and state levels aimed at preparing adolescents and young people for their first job.

The professionalization of young people is a relevant issue at the current juncture when it comes to their inclusion in a highly

competitive and demanding market in terms of the skills required.

Current technological transformations and the effects of economic globalization on the productive sector are demanding a multi-skilled professional with multifaceted employability.

The most perfect of the technical-vocational training alternatives is provided by school apprenticeships, regulated by articles 39 to 42 of Law 9.394/96 - LDB.

Law No. 11.180 of 2005 establishes the Factory School project as a form of initial and continuing vocational training for low-income young people aged 14 to 24 (monthly per capita income of up to one and a half minimum wages), provided they are enrolled in basic public education (primary and secondary education, art. 21, item I of Law No. 9.394/96) or in supplementary courses for young people and adults (art. 37 of Law No. 9.394/96).

CONCLUSION

Throughout human history, adolescents have always been seen as miniature adults. Rescuing their rights, constitutionally guaranteed by art. 227, is a duty imposed on everyone, and among these is acquiescence to professionalization. Among the various forms of occupation, apprenticeships have emerged as an efficient, legal means of providing real equality, as they enable those who are excluded to have access to them.

The rescue of citizenship, through citizen training, where the understanding of the cultural, family and school contexts of adolescents is solidified through the richness of the testimonies heard. I can see that the young people's reality has changed as a result of the professionalization opportunity. This is demonstrated through their attitudinal growth.

There is an increase in self-esteem, posture, behavior, dress and improved communication with colleagues and institutions. When asked, these young people emphasize the importance of the course in awakening them to the world of work. They say they are aware of the changes that have taken place in this process and the new market possibilities that are opening up, thus improving their quality of life and that of their families.

Today's world of work demands people with professional qualifications, a critical sense and pro-activity. These requirements are far removed from young people from low-income families, given their low level of schooling and access to job training. In this context, apprenticeships are returning to their origins as an alternative to change this situation.

The weakness of public policies contributes greatly to the exclusion of thousands of teenagers from the qualification process, further increasing social inequalities. More and more of the impoverished population's main objective is survival and, given this situation, talking about guaranteeing fundamental rights is almost an inoperative discourse.

With the advent of the Federal Constitution of 1988 and Law 8.069, of July 13, 1990 (Statute of the Child and Adolescent), the responsibility for the professionalization of adolescents became, in addition to the family, the responsibility of society and the State. And it is in this context that Law 10.097/2000 emerges, giving a new look to the apprenticeship institute, which has been present in the Consolidation of Labor Laws for over sixty years.

Thus, through the Young Apprentice Program, teenagers obtain benefits such as better technical quality, inclusion in the job market, social integration, recovery of citizenship and the contribution to a fairer and more equal society.

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