

● **child studies** ○

N. 3, 2023

**EDITORIAL – BEING A CHILD IN A COMPLEX AND  
VIOLENT WORLD**

**EDITORIAL – SER CRIANÇA NUM MUNDO COMPLEXO E  
VIOLENTO**

*Rui Ramos*

Research Centre on Child Studies, Institute of Education,  
University of Minho, Portugal

*Sara Reis da Silva*

Research Centre on Child Studies, Institute of Education,  
University of Minho, Portugal

*Teresa Vilaça*

Research Centre on Child Studies, Institute of Education,  
University of Minho, Portugal

This is the third issue of *Child Studies*, a scientific journal published since 2022 by the Research Centre on Child Studies (CIEC) of the Institute of Education at the University of Minho. Overall, the empirical and/or theoretical studies published by *Child Studies* aim at substantiate the interdisciplinary and the multidisciplinary dimensions, and reflect the research on children and childhood from a holistic perspective that CIEC researchers carry out in their daily work. The papers published by *Child Studies* focuses on children's social contexts and practices, children's health, the environment and physical education, childcare professionals, pedagogical resources and cultural productions for children, lines that also structure CIEC's research.

This pluralistic approach, in its foundations and methods, converges in the attempt to understand and describe the complex phenomenon of what childhood is and how it develops, and what it means to be a child in a dizzyingly complex and often violent world, where the most vulnerable can easily become victims of the most powerful or ambitious forces that characterise our societies.

The five studies that make up this new issue of *Child Studies* bear witness precisely to the diversity of perspectives that research on and with children requires. The three studies on applied research with groups of children are diverse in their foundations and objectives, as well as their geography. They provide cases from three different continents.

The first article, "Public policies for preschool education in Angola: from formulation to implementation, what has changed?", by Narciso Dumbo and Teresa Sarmiento, focuses mainly on public policies for preschool education in Angola. The authors' analysis of different legal, normative and political texts shows that, although

there is government interest and commitment, the development and implementation of public policies, based on different projects, plans and programmes, are still not properly aligned with international agendas that strive for social justice and seek, at all costs, to mitigate inequalities in access to education. And official data, as the authors emphasize, proves this: “there is a disparity in access related to the child’s social group, where out of 10 children from medium and high-income families, 7 to 8 attend preschool, while out of 10 children from low-income families, only 2 children have attended (INE, 2017)”.

The second article, entitled “Application of the Decole Programme in a Natural Classroom Situation: Effects on Emergent Literacy Skills”, reveals the results of the implementation of a programme especially conducive to emergent literacy. Gatto and Barrera critically describe the implementation of the Decole Programme in a pre-school classroom with 53 Brazilian children. Before and after the intervention, the participants’ phonological awareness, vocabulary, listening comprehension and letter knowledge skills were assessed. The results of this study, implemented using a quasi-experimental methodology and quantitative data analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics, indicated the effectiveness of the Programme, “when applied in a natural classroom situation and by a properly trained and prepared teacher, for the development of emergent literacy skills, thus contributing to the scientific evidence of the use of theoretically based teaching methodologies”.

In “Efficacy of metacognitive intervention programme on reading comprehension in third grade students”, the third article, Ferreirós, Enríquez, Rodríguez and Rosell reflect on a reading comprehension programme implemented with 33 students from a third-grade class in the city of Ourense, Spain. It was a study with a purposive sample to respond to a specific situation in a classroom with students at risk of learning difficulties. The researchers conclude that “The group that received the intervention improved their inhibitory measures from pre-intervention to post-intervention and follow-up, producing an interactive effect”, as well as “As a result of the intervention, reading performance scores increased from pre-intervention to post-intervention and follow-up, with reading comprehension performance scores equalising in both groups”.

In the fourth article, “Sail away, save a whale: ocean awareness in children's books and picture books”, Maria da Silva Martins proposes a close reading of three books for children: *The Whale Watchers* (2022), written by Dougie Poynter and illustrated by Amberin Huq, *Calling the Whales* (2023), written by Jasbinder Bilan and illustrated by Skylar White, and *The Tale of the Whale* (2022), written by Karen Swann and illustrated by Padmacandra. This is a study that takes an original approach to the aesthetic and educational aspects of children’s literature. Emphasizing the topics of environmentalism and activism, particularly frequent themes in a particular contemporary publishing segment, it accentuates the powerful message of these aesthetically pleasing volumes and proposes a reflection on their contributions to ecoliteracy / environmental literacy and pedagogy.

Finally, in the fifth article “Biopsychosocial paediatric nursing interventions in the adolescent diagnosed with type 1 diabetes mellitus: a literature review”, Vieira et al. report on a study that aimed to identify and reflect on the interventions of nurses

specialising in Child and Paediatric Health, who should consider the adolescent with type 1 Diabetes Mellitus (DM1) in their macrosystem and that of their family. The nurse's decisive intervention in the context of the chronic disease in question covers the psychological, biological and social domains, and so it is concluded that "The way nurses perform their role will directly influence the involvement of adolescents and their families in their treatment, as the process of becoming a teenager may bring with it the appetite for some less appropriate behaviours from the point of view of health promotion in diabetes".

Attentive to and interested in the diverse and sustained treatment of issues relating to children and/or childhood, *Child Studies* will continue to focus on publishing quality, innovative and original articles that problematise the different lines of research already mentioned, which contribute to the production of holistic knowledge about children, as well as to the expansion and consolidation of child studies, both nationally and internationally.

### **Funding**

This work was financially support by Portuguese national funds through the FCT (Foundation for Science and Technology) and conducted within the framework of the CIEC (Research Centre on Child Studies of the University of Minho) with the references UIDB/00317/2020 and UIDP/00317/2020.