Autobiographical methods in pedagogical research for lifelong learning

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Introduction

Educational policies need wide-spreading lifelong and life-wide learning in sustainable ways. Autobiographical methods in pedagogical research are gradually spreading, as they can be used in different contexts of life. Specifically, main question concerns usefulness of autobiographical methods in many contexts of formal, non-formal and informal education, and also in different and difficult environments, such as the prison.

Methodology

The multi-year research project and sub-projects used different samples. They were asked to fill an autobiographical writing format, which stimulates personal reflection and recovery of experiences through cognitive, affective, emotional, perceptive solicitations to achieve better identity awareness and orienteering to improve and plan own future in LLL way.

Data analyses were carried out using both quantitative, through main statistical methods, and qualitative methodologies, through an original method inspired by Grounded Theory by Glaser and Strauss, reading and analyzing writings, encoding and decoding, labelling and identifying explicit, implicit, specific and comprehensive meanings. After, a cognitive and satisfaction questionnaire was administrated using the same data analysis methodologies.

Results

Main survey’s data show that most people of samples have a great desire to take time to reflect on themselves and on their own experiences, to communicate and share them, because first of all they said autobiographical writing experience was very involving, challenging, agreeable, useful and educational/self-educational, as it allows increasing their awareness and desire to improve themselves. Most people from all samples said they felt well-being in recalling to memory and in autobiographical writing. They also agreed that autobiographical experience was very useful to better know themselves and to project into the future and to positively plan their future, in a aware and mature lifelong and life-wide way.

Conclusion

As results showed, thanks to activating an intimate dialogue with one’s own and with the others, communicating one’s own experiences can also mark the beginning of a spiritual and educational rebirth in a lifelong and life-wide perspective. Usefulness of autobiographical methods in pedagogical research has confirmed by results: they allow achieving multiple goals, primarily confirming the questions made above.

References


