

Article

# Primary Prevention of Domestic Violence: Contributions of Curricular Practices to the Strengthening of Citizenship

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## ABSTRACT

At a global level, quality education is fundamental to achieve social and gender justice, stability, and sustainable development worldwide. Therefore, the education system is faced with the need to find answers to these challenges, which can result in multiple social violences. The investment in Portugal in an education for citizenship is based on the implementation of an educational policy that introduces, in an intentional and strategic manner, into the curriculum, fracturing themes in societies with the aim of its transformation. In this regard, the construction of the curriculum, as proposed by the Critical Theory, as a social practice, can constitute an educational strategy for the study and action on the problematic issue of primary prevention of domestic violence. The aim of this research is to understand to what extent the inclusion of the issue of domestic violence in curricular practices, in the context of citizenship education, contributes to the primary prevention of this social scourge. The methodological course of the research is based on a qualitative approach of exploratory nature, using a questionnaire with four open-ended questions. The study took place in two public schools, at the primary and secondary levels, in Oporto and in Lisbon. The former has a Prevention Project against Domestic Violence in place; the second has no similar project. The data were obtained using Google Forms tool. Eight participants were selected, four from each school, all teachers at the end of a schooling cycle, specifically: 4th year, 6th year, 9th year and 12th year. The study revealed that, in the school in Oporto, the implementation of the Violence Prevention Program, resulted in curriculum changes to meet social needs and requirements. In the school in Lisbon, on the other hand, since it was not implemented a Violence Prevention Program there were not significant curriculum changes, there being only awareness-raising on the subject.

**Keywords:** citizenship; Primary and Secondary education; curricular practices; primary prevention; domestic violence.

## RESUMO

A nível mundial, a educação de qualidade é fundamental para alcançar justiça social, de género e estabilidade e desenvolvimento sustentável. Por isso, a escola atual confronta-se com a necessidade de encontrar respostas para estes desafios, que podem manifestar-se em múltiplas violências sociais. A aposta em Portugal, numa educação para a cidadania tem na sua base a implementação de uma política educativa que introduz, de forma intencional e estratégica, no currículo, temas fraturantes das sociedades com vista à sua transformação. Neste sentido, a construção do currículo, tal como proposto pela Teoria Crítica, enquanto prática social, pode constituir uma estratégia educativa para o estudo e a ação na problemática da prevenção primária da violência doméstica. O objetivo desta investigação é o de compreender em que medida a inclusão da problemática da violência doméstica nas práticas curriculares, no contexto da educação para a cidadania, contribui para a prevenção primária deste flagelo social. O percurso metodológico da pesquisa assenta numa abordagem qualitativa de natureza exploratória, com recurso a um questionário com quatro questões abertas. O estudo foi concretizado em duas escolas do ensino público, Básico e Secundário: uma na área do Porto e outra na área de Lisboa. A primeira tem a funcionar um Projeto de Prevenção contra a Violência Doméstica; a segunda não tem qualquer projeto similar. Foram selecionados oito participantes, quatro de cada escola, todos docentes de final de ciclo de escolaridade, concretamente: 4º ano, 6º ano, 9º ano e 12º ano. O estudo revelou que, na escola da área do Porto, por ter um Plano de Prevenção Contra a Violência, existiam práticas curriculares direcionadas para esta temática. Já a escola da área de Lisboa, que não tem Plano de Prevenção Contra a Violência, verifica-se uma ausência desta problemática nas práticas curriculares, ocorrendo apenas sensibilização para o assunto.

**Palavras - chave:** cidadania; ensino Básico e ensino Secundário; práticas curriculares; prevenção primária; violência doméstica.



Submissão: 29/03/2024



Aceite: 14/05/2024



Publicação: 15/07/2024



## Introduction

The dynamic associated with globalization makes it increasingly hard to build a school, focused on combating inequalities, aiming to create a fairer society. It is essential to implement educational policies, in a holistic approach, from Primary to Secondary education, reflected in an action plan on quality pedagogical practices, with respect for diversity and living together.

One of the social scourges, that puts the harmony of societies at risk, is that of domestic violence. This concept, defined in the European Commission's report (2022), encompasses all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that take place within the family or domestic unit or between former or recent spouses or partners, regardless of whether the aggressor shares or has shared the same residence with the victim. Domestic violence does not just encompass women, but anyone living in the household, including men and children (Abdi et al., 2021; Husso, 2020; Paymar, 2015).

To combat this social scourge, it is proposed a preventive intervention that can be developed at three complementary levels, as stated by Dahlberg and Krug (2002): primary prevention, connected with the development of actions and approaches, in order to prevent violence beforehand, in individuals and groups for whom there is not a significant risk; secondary prevention, which refers to actions and approaches focused on immediate responses to signaled situations of violence or in situations in which there is a prominent risk; tertiary prevention, which involves actions and approaches associated with interventions focused on individuals or groups with processes of practiced or suffered violence with the aim of rehabilitation, reintegration, minimization of the impact and reduction of potential associated with violence in the medium and long term.

Considering the different interventions, this study is focused on the primary prevention approach, which includes the following actions: education and public awareness; early identification; training and development of life skills; security and support programs and legal policy (Oliveira, 2009; Hyman et al., 2000).

In order to prevent Domestic Violence and combat discrimination, it is crucial that schools carry out activities and projects within the scope of education for citizenship, working on behaviors and values, in order to ensure respect and appreciation for the cultural differences of all elements of the educational community as part of society (Magalhães et al., 2020; Silva & Rebolo, 2017).

The Citizenship Education Strategy adopted in Portugal (ENEC, 2017) is one of the educational priorities, being integrated in the national curriculum. It is foreseen in a transversal way in the components of the curriculums throughout compulsory education, thus responding to one of the main criticisms that Perrenoud (2002) pointed to in the classic approach of this area. In his understanding, education for citizenship does not function if it is developed occasionally, and if it is not at the center of the educational programs, connect with skills and knowledge.

The application of the curriculum should lead to a discussion on the problem of domestic violence, since the first years of Primary Education (Santos, 2007). Violent behavior can be avoided or remedied (APAV, 2020) through educational and empowering strategies with a preventive focus. This constitutes one of the great educational challenges of today's societies, which underpins and justifies this study<sup>1</sup>.

The research, of qualitative and exploratory nature, aims to understand to what extent the inclusion of the topic of domestic violence in curricular practices contributes to the primary prevention of this phenomenon. The study was carried out in two public schools, in Oporto and Lisbon, in each studying cycle: Primary and Secondary. In Oporto it was implemented a Prevention Project against Domestic Violence, while in Lisbon

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<sup>1</sup> This article is part of an investigation, carried out within the scope of the "Programa Fazer+: apoio à ciência e à inovação" program, of the Lusófona Group, with the title "A violência doméstica: uma reflexão multidisciplinar para além do crime".



such project was not implemented. Eight teachers (four from each school) from the 4th year, 6th year, 9th year and 12th year participated on the study.

At school, it is expected that education promotes the holistic development of the person, on a certain social context. As such, curriculum analysis should consider both creativity and innovation, combining the traditional scientific/disciplinary component with social training, providing students with the necessary skills to know how to be and act in society (Dias & Hortas, 2020). It is about educating citizens with personal, interpersonal and social skills that enable them to deal with divisive issues, such as domestic violence.

## **2. Education for citizenship: a strategy of the primary prevention for domestic violence**

Education is associated with citizenship, since the dawn of the contemporary notion of citizenship. In fact, according to the international guidelines proposed by UNESCO, Education is given the mission of teaching - learning to “*live together*” (1996) and “*reimagining our futures together*” (2021).

As a signatory country of the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe, 2011), Portugal readily developed the necessary actions to introduce the topic of domestic violence into school curricula, at all levels of education. This commitment would end up being highlighted in the National Strategy for Education for Citizenship (ENEC - Direção Geral da Educação, 2017), developed according to three complementary approaches: transdisciplinary nature in the 1st cycle of Primary Education; autonomous subject in the 2nd and 3rd cycles of Primary Education; and component of the curriculum developed transversally in Secondary Education. Thus, new Primary and Secondary Education curriculum would include "the Citizenship and Development component, as a field of work present in the different educational and training offers, with a purpose of promoting active citizenship, democratic participation, in intercultural contexts of sharing, collaboration and the debate of ideas on current issues" (Preamble of Decree-Law no. 55/2018, of July 6).

According to the guidelines of the National Strategy for Citizenship (2017), the issues of education for human rights, gender equality, education for development, health education and sexuality, should be worked on classroom or as a part of an interdisciplinary collaboration between different curricular units. From this perspective, citizenship is an active, individual and collective process, which requires reflection and action on social problems. This advocates a comprehensive approach to citizenship, in which equality and justice imply combating all forms of violence, including domestic violence.

In this context, intervention to prevent violence must address diverse types of action of a pedagogical, clinical, psychological, police and judicial nature. According to the WHO (2002; 2013), violence addressed at the level of primary prevention implies the development of activities intended at the general population, on the causes of domestic violence, usually related with the stereotype of social roles between men and women, which normalize violence as acceptable or tolerable.

Therefore, recognizing the emancipating power of education the school is responsible for implementing projects and activities that fit primary prevention criteria (CIG, 2020). Such primary prevention initiatives can be carried out in a multiplicity of contexts and models. Namely, they can be implemented at the classroom level or at the school level. According to some literature, prevention programs are more effective when carried out through activities that actively involve the entire educational community, compared to programs implemented by individual teachers (Harne & Radford, 2008; Lloyd, 2018). In turn, the advantages of these types of programs are related to the fact that children and young people are at the ideal time to build and change pro-social attitudes and behaviors (Flood *et al.*, 2009) to prevent violence. Accordingly, violent prevention programs are more effective in contexts in which such kind of programs are applicable on the school level. This makes it possible to reach potential perpetrators, victims and bystanders, in order to raise awareness and teach them to



behave ethically, protectively and build respectful relationships (Pinto da Costa & Martins, 2023; Walden & Wall, 2014).

In this way, pedagogical intervention must be based on activities that involve significant learning (awareness raising) that allows “deconstructing the existing patriarchal and sexist culture and developing tools for the construction of a fairer and egalitarian culture” (Magalhães et al., 2021, p. 87).

Citizenship, more than a legal political status, is a construction influenced by the complex and constantly changing social reality in which it develops. Thus, education for citizenship asserts itself as a fundamental strategy, not only for the promotion of citizenship values, but also for the prevention of violences, specifically the primary prevention of domestic violence.

### **3. The importance of curricular practices in the primary prevention of domestic violence**

Due to ever changing social environment, education should be based on the development and transformation of citizens, supported by citizenship values, which are the basis of the democratic system (Teodoro, 2020).

This or other representations of Education are reflected in the school curriculum, since it may be characterized as a social and historic construction (Leite & Fernandes, 2012), in which it is recognized the importance of negotiating curricular decisions to be adopted by schools, depending on their audiences and contexts.

Traditionally, the curriculum included a sum of content planning, objectives and evaluation systems imbued “with a technical rationality in line with the world of work, in the context of the industrial revolution” (Gouveia, Pereira, Gouveia & Fraga, 2020, pp. 93-94). In contrast, Giroux and McLaren (2002, p. 144) defended the idea that school and curriculum should be “democratic public spheres”, where students should be “given a voice” and teachers should assume themselves as “transformative intellectuals”. In this logic, the intentionality of a contextualized curriculum is understood, taking into account the problem under analysis, the primary prevention of domestic violence (Ribeiro, Neves & Meneses, 2014).

It is important to rethink the social mission of the school, considering the curriculum as a collective space for commitments, an incentive for participation and reflection, as well as a way of developing education for citizenship. Portuguese legislation conceives the national curriculum as a flexible project (Decision n°. 5908/2017; Decree-Law n°. 55/2018), significant for different schools and students, which can be achieved through contextualized curricular practices. This policy encourages the use of pedagogical practices that promote participatory learning and contribute to achieving the desired student profile (Decision n° 6,478/2017) at the end of compulsory education.

Curricular contextualization presupposes placing the student at the center of the educational process; attend to the realities of the place where this process occurs; implement diverse curricular practices in the classroom; adapt the contents of the national curriculum, considering the students' experiences and the available resources (Leite, Fernandes & Figueiredo, 2020). Thus, the curriculum must allow the construction of the global from the local, connecting the school and the families, considering the environment and its plurality.

From this perspective, Operti (2021, p. 4) identifies ten clues for rethinking the curriculum: “understanding the new generations; combat factors related to vulnerability; reinforce understanding between the school and the families; deepen global education; enhance the focus on the person; promote synergies between values; value diversity; invest in education that enhances freedom; advance with hybrid forms in education; and inspire affection for the educators.”



This allows, in the author's opinion, to update the curriculum, so that it is prepared to face 21<sup>st</sup> centuries' needs. This concept of curriculum integrates the political, social and cultural influences of the context in which it is developed.

Curricular theories, considering Kemmis's (1992) categorization, configure different conceptions of the concept of curriculum: technical theory, practical theory and critical theory. In the latter, the curriculum is seen as a *praxis*, which elevates emancipatory legitimacy, highlighting the role of teachers as a key part in implementing the curriculum (Pacheco, 1996). The interconnection between school, family and environment is essential for Education that is focused on the values of democracy and citizenship.

According to Gimeno Sacristán (2017), building the curriculum as a practice implies the recognition of its socializing and cultural function, establishing a dialogue between “social agents, technical elements, students who react to it and teachers who model it” (p. 16). In turn, in the work “Currículo de Nova Geração e Cidadania: Desafios Contemporâneos”, Morgado (2021) assumes citizenship in the application of the curriculum as a “collective means of promoting equal opportunities and consolidating human rights” (p. 25) and, therefore, one of the structuring vectors of an equal and non-discriminating society.

In this line of thought, the construction of the curriculum, as proposed by critical theory, as a social practice, must be attentive to the issue of primary prevention of domestic violence, the focus of this study. According to the above, societal challenges must be taken into account in the curriculum, which requires abandoning the “one-size-fits-all” curricular model to adopt a “more diverse and broad approach” (Leite, Fernandes & Figueiredo, 2020).

Thus, education for citizenship and values, along with projects and programs for the primary prevention of domestic violence, must assume a 'place' and 'time' in curricular practices.

#### 4. Methodological strategies

Looking at the problem of domestic violence, the study focused on the guiding principles and educational aims of primary prevention, within the framework of citizenship education *praxis*. The starting question thus emerged: in what way can curricular practices work as a primary prevention strategy for domestic violence, within the scope of citizenship education? Accordingly, the research objective was to understand the extent to which the inclusion of the issue of domestic violence in curricular practices, in the context of citizenship education, contributes to the primary prevention of domestic violence. To achieve this, it was implemented a descriptive and exploratory study, with a qualitative approach. This methodological option makes it possible to attribute meanings to phenomena and understand their contexts (Creswell, 2014).

The study was carried out in two Portuguese public schools, in two different cities, namely, Oporto and Lisbon. For the selection of these two educational institutions, a distinction criterion was considered. In the school in the Oporto city, it was implemented a prevention project against domestic violence, and in the school in the Lisbon city there was not any specific project on prevention against domestic violence, and, therefore, it was only followed the Portuguese law obligations on the national citizenship education strategy.

Data was collected through a questionnaire prepared with four open questions, with the purpose of gathering detailed information from the participants. The application of the questionnaire complied with the ethical principles of the CEDIC Commission of Universidade Lusófona and the requirements demanded by the General Management of Education of the Portuguese State. Data collection was preceded by formal authorization from the management of the two schools and informed consent from the study participants. The questionnaire was sent and completed online, using the Google Forms, ensuring the anonymity of respondents and the two schools.



In total, eight teachers responded, four teachers from each school, at the end of the studying cycle: 4th year, 6th year, 9th year and 12th year. The participating subjects, all female, are identified in the text by PEL (Teacher from the school in the city of Lisbon) and PEP (Teacher from the school in the city of Oporto) followed by a number.

As for the data analysis technique, descriptive content analysis was used (Bardin, 2016), using the ATLAS.ti 22.0.1 software (Júnior & Leão, 2018), which allowed the analysis of the participants writings. Based on the hereabove mentioned, literature review and the development of the research process, it was possible to find answers to the research questions defined previously on this article's.

## 5. Analysis and discussion of results

The teachers at the two schools participating in the study have the following personal and professional characteristics: At the school in Lisbon teacher's age is between 30 and 60, while at the school in Oporto teacher's age is comprehended between 42 and 53. While in Lisbon 80% of teachers have the bachelor's degree and 20% obtained the PhD, in Oporto the relative percentage of doctorates is higher (30%), with 70% of teachers obtaining a Bachelor's degree. In both Oporto and Lisbon, a significant percentage of teachers are part of the scientific area of History, and, subsequently, Arts, Physical and IT Education. In terms of length of service, teachers from Lisbon have more than 30 years of service (60%), with 1 to 17 years as professionals at that school. The teachers from Oporto have between 2 and 29 years of service and have been at that school for 1 to 15 years.

The first question that guided the descriptive content analysis referred to the relevance of the guiding principles of the prevention of domestic violence in the Citizenship Education curriculum.

By analyzing the writings of Lisbon's teachers (without a Prevention Project against Domestic Violence), it was found, in general, that they consider the objectives and curricular guidelines of the education strategy to be relevant for the citizenship of their school.

In the explanatory response to this question, PEL1 (from the 4th year) states that it is important to have space and time to develop "*know-how*" educational experiences, which allow students to become aware of strategies and values that promote primary prevention of domestic violence. Accordingly, PEL3 (from the 9th year) and PEL4 (from the 12th year) highlight the need for students to be truly sensitive to know how to recognize and act in real situations. On the other hand, PEL2 (from the 6th year) denounces the lack of transparency stating that it is urgent to "*explore the subject further*".

At the school In Oporto, considering that since 2021, it has been developed an autonomous Prevention Plan against Domestic Violence, the teachers also respond positively to the question about the relevance of the guiding principles for the prevention of domestic violence in the education curriculum for citizenship. PEP1 (from the 4th year) identifies a clear articulation between citizenship issues and the work carried out by the Psychology and Guidance Service, arising from a strategy foreseen in the Educational Project of their school. PEP2 (from the 6th year) says that it is possible to 'recognize an association between the principles of the primary prevention of domestic violence and the objectives and curricular guidelines of their school's citizenship education strategy.

From the analysis described above, there is an obvious contrast between the opinions of the teachers at the two schools. In the school in Lisbon, which does not have an independent Prevention Project against Domestic Violence, the objectives and curricular guidelines of the citizenship education strategy require increased attention to the issue of preventing domestic violence. In turn, teachers at the school in Oporto believe that learning knowledge and skills for the primary prevention of domestic violence is essential for the



development of students throughout compulsory education. This results from the close connection between citizenship education, the educational project and the autonomous Prevention Project against Domestic Violence. These results are in line with Perrenoud's (2002) highlighting the effectiveness of the curricular centrality of citizenship education in everyday classroom practices.

The second question concerned whether the purposes set out in the school curriculum, regarding the prevention of domestic violence, were clear in the school's strategic documents.

From a school in Lisbon, two teachers (from the 4th and 6th years) revealed that their school's strategic documents do not have enough information on the prevention of domestic violence. The remaining teachers, on the other hand, (from the 9th and 12th years) gave a vaguer perspective on the topic. PEL3 refers to the transversal nature of citizenship education, arguing that it is possible to address the primary prevention of domestic violence *“without necessarily making this subject mandatory in the curriculum”*. For PEL4, as strategic documents elaborate on core social values, such as respect trust and tolerance, it is in itself a form of primary prevention of domestic violence.

Returning to school in the Oporto, PEP1 states that awareness and educational action for the primary prevention of domestic violence clearly results from the curriculum guidelines *“molded in the activities within the scope of the Educational Project, Annual Curricular Plan and Class Curricular Plan”*. PEP2, implements activities that attest that the primary prevention of domestic violence is included in the curriculum and curricular documents of their school: *“PRESSE (Regional Sexual Education Program in School Health) and the program (Re)Desenhar Afetos”* carried out within the scope of the Education for Citizenship subject, in which topics relating to equality, stereotypes and social biases were worked on and debated.

When triangulating the information obtained from teachers at both schools, a different discourse was observed once again. At the school in Lisbon, not only does the curriculum not reflect the theme of the primary prevention of domestic violence, but the topic is not written in its strategic documents. In the school in Oporto, the theme appears both in the curriculum and its underlying documents.

Once again, there is evidence of unequal attention to the issue in question (Estratégia Nacional para a Cidadania, 2017). It is therefore essential to fulfil the Primary and Secondary Education curriculum, which includes the Citizenship and Development component in the different educational and training offers (Decree-Law no. 55/2018, 6 of July).

The objective was also to find out whether the curricular guidelines of the school's citizenship education strategy, regarding the primary prevention of domestic violence, translate into the organization of pedagogical practices. PEL1 highlights that schools and teachers must have *“a more active role”* in their educational activities. PEL2 and PEL4 reveal that the pedagogical practices they carry out are *“raising awareness”*. PEL3 argues *“the lack of time”* to work on the issue of preventing violence through its *“pedagogical practices”*.

Distinctly, participants from Oporto mention that pedagogical practices for the primary promotion of the prevention of domestic violence are implemented in supervisory and collaborative teaching work (PEP1 and PEP3). This work between pairs translates into curricular and extracurricular activities (PEP2 and PEP4).

The school in Oporto develops, a more down to earth approach on the curricular practices on the prevention against domestic violence. This specificity of collaborative work between teachers, in an educational community, results from the planning and implementation of a specific project on the primary prevention of domestic violence.



Finally, it was also sought to find out whether it was possible to reinforce the approach to primary prevention of domestic violence at a classroom level, requesting two examples of curricular activities carried out in the classroom.

The teachers from the school in the Lisbon pointed out examples of students constructing information leaflets to raise awareness among the educational community about the topic. In turn, PEL4 (in the 12th year) states that dramatizations take place in their classroom, which are then debated by the class. Conversely, PEL3 (in the 9th year) states that he had not carried out any activity focused on the topic. This means that at this school there is individualized and punctual work.

It was observed that at the school in Oporto, activities promoting the primary promotion of domestic violence carried out in the classroom were diverse. PEP1 said they had held webinars. There were also dramatizations and activities integrated into PRESSE (PEP1 and PEP2). The work developed in collaboration with civil society institutions, such as APAV and CIG, was disseminated throughout the school. Slogans were also created to illustrate this issue and encourage the reporting and prevention of domestic violence.

Unlike the school in the Lisbon, the school in the Oporto, in addition to presenting a diversity of educational activities related to the primary prevention of domestic violence, in different contexts and formats, highlights collaborative work between teachers that benefits from a coherent link between strategic documents, curriculum guidelines and curricular practices.

As several researchers have affirmed, the important thing is to encourage, in schools, reflection, planning and concretization of a contextualized curriculum, in collaborative work between teachers (Ribeiro, Neves & Meneses, 2014; Leite, Fernandes & Figueiredo, 2020). It is a critical theory of the curriculum, based on the *praxis* (Kemmis, 1988).

### Final considerations

This qualitative study was based on the evidence provided by teachers from two schools in different territories, in order to analyze the effect of including the issue of domestic violence in pedagogical practices. In this way, it was possible to bridge the gap between theory and practice, regarding the inclusion of the primary prevention approach to domestic violence in curricular practices, in the context of citizenship education.

The two schools where the research was carried out work on citizenship issues, in curricular terms, in the context of the Citizenship Education Strategy. However, this does not mean that this topic is effectively worked out with students in the classroom, although, the importance of addressing this issue is recognized in both schools. The difference between the two schools is the fact that the theme of the primary prevention of domestic violence integrates, in the school in the in Oporto, an autonomous intervention project, which is linked to the area of education for citizenship and is supported by its Educational Project. In this understanding, it proved essential at this school to build the *praxis* based on a contextualized curriculum and applied collaboratively, with a concrete project on the primary prevention of domestic violence.

It becomes relevant for an effective intervention that social issues to be addressed in a school context, such as domestic violence, are part of the school culture. That is, the participation of the entire educational community in the construction of values, attitudes and behaviors must be a collective commitment, developed on a daily basis, in coherence with the school's strategic documents and clearly expressed in the curriculum and educational practices, both in the classroom and in the school as a whole.

Without the framework described above, collaborative work between teachers, in the inclusion of the topic being studied in the contextualized curriculum and in pedagogical practices in the classroom, reveals to be difficult. Proof of this is the fact that school teachers in the Lisbon present more individualized work, which





has implications for the supervisory dynamics of pedagogical work, both in the classroom and in the community, in relation to the primary prevention of domestic violence.

On In turn, the fact that there is a curricular framework for the educational approach to the issue of domestic violence does not prevent creativity, diversity and innovation in the pedagogical practices to be implemented, as was seen in the school in the Oporto. Accordingly, school culture can encourage awareness and internalization of values, attitudes and behaviors capable of preventing and promoting a change in mentalities regarding domestic violence.

Concluding, and in response to our starting question, the study allowed us to prove that it is possible to materialize the primary prevention of domestic violence within the framework of citizenship education through a global, integrated and collaborative educational strategy. This primary prevention program allows for the possibility to transform the culture of the community, aiming for the primary prevention of domestic violence, as set out in the general objective and, inherently, strengthening the training of Primary and Secondary Education students for citizenship.

However, this exploratory study should be further developed in the future, with the participation of the students from the respective schools, in order to consider the overall perspective from the educational agents within the community. Furthermore, it's not enough for the issue of domestic violence to be on the agenda of educational policies. The school must consider this issue a priority and, therefore, a key area in the curricular practices in the classroom, using specific programs and projects for this purpose, supported by the school's strategic documents and the collaborative work of teachers, students and families, as actors in the educational community.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed editors and dedicated reviewers who have contributed their valuable time, expertise, and insights to shaping and refining this research paper.

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