



Pedagogical and Didactic Prosocial Community inclusion Model (PCIM)

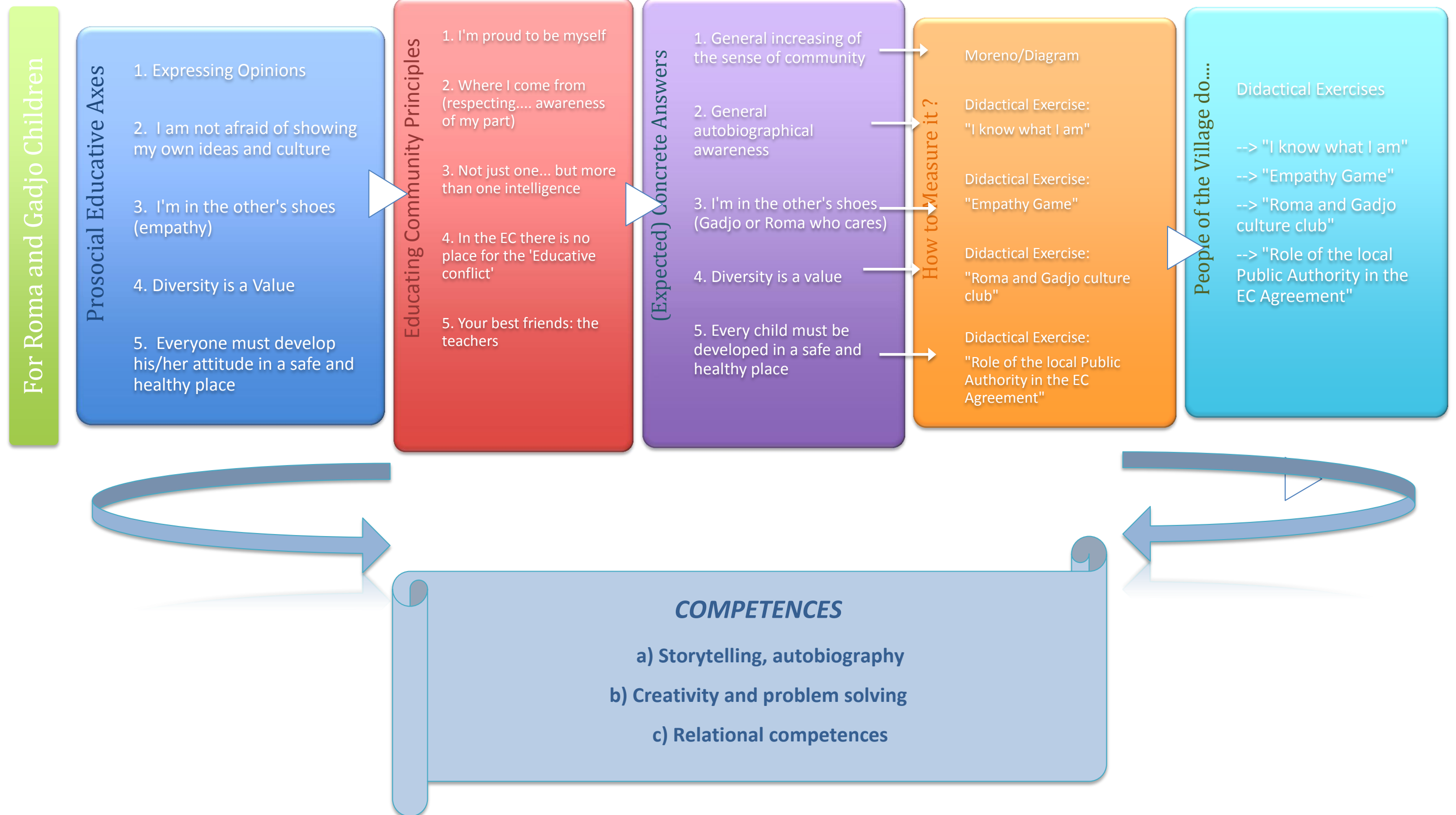
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PCIM Model

Educating Community & Social Inclusion: the Education in a Village



The PCIM model is a socio-pedagogic scheme whose aim is to give practical indication to the educators in the framework of the Educating Communities. The PCIM model takes inspiration to the social pedagogy theoretical framework. It is related to the application of the practises related to prosocial education; whose aim is to draw attention to the informal and no-formal education of Roma children in schools and in the social groups.

In the model, the definition of educators is quite wide. It includes:

- Teachers formally charged to develop educational activities in a formal organisation (school);
- Sport trainers;
- Representatives of religious associations;
- Cultural associations operators;
- Other operators that lead and organize activities whose aims are generating cultural, personal and spiritual wellbeing.

The main perspective is related to the so-defined “educative conflict”. It is generated when the formal educators (teachers) proceed in addressing an educative principle based on prosociality, through giving attention to the respect of the cultural diversity and the reciprocal recognition of the ethnic and linguistic status, in particular concerning the idea of building a community. The “alternative” educators contradict these indications proposing other principles and behavioural aptitudes. It is not always a strong alternative that can encounter the boundary of racism and discrimination. It is sometimes a “light version” of popular ideas of competitiveness or individualism. For example, the teachers are used to emphasize the importance of solidarity in the group of learners, while sport trainers can select the best players for winning the match. The example although simple, shows that if the context changes the educators tend to propose different behaviours to groups and individuals. This is more evident if the activities, external to the school, are addressed to children and not to a group of professionals. For the children all the teachings have a no-formal or informal educational content; sometime the formal or informal educators are not aware of it.

The PCIM model comes from socio-pedagogy. The term ‘social pedagogy’ is used both in European countries and in the USA. It is related to community development activities. Historically the idea of *sozial pädagogik* first started to be used around the middle of the nineteenth century in Germany, as a way of describing alternatives to the dominant models of schooling. However, by the second half of the twentieth century social pedagogy became increasingly associated with a concern on the well-being or happiness of the person, and with what might be described as a holistic and educational approach.

Defined also in terms of ‘community education’ the social pedagogy interests the work in education done in favour of weak sectors of the society with a regard to the social inclusion. For this reason the aim of the social pedagogy seems to be adapted to create a proper pedagogical framework for the inclusion of Roma children.

The area of interest can be defined as following:

- Social integration and socialization
- Social conditions and social problems
- Social care and holistic approach

The nature of social pedagogy can be defined by the subtitle of a book edited by Claire Cameron and Peter Moss ‘Where care and education meet’ (2011). Social-pedagogy is to be considered an expression of pedagogy and as such is rooted in education – and in the philosophy of people (see Montessori and Steiner).

It is holistic in character, as Montessori says, there is concerned with the children and *their* world.

Also, it is related to fostering sociality

And is based in the relationship and community dimension

Moreover, it is oriented around group and associational life in that idea that educators become part of the lifeworld of those involved (Smith 2012).

The term *social* linked to a conception of education relates to what is the personal and community development. Since the beginning of the common use of this term, the philosopher Friedrich Ernest Schleiermacher (1768-1834) affirmed that this meaning implies that being social is 'beyond the pedagogical principles of "natural self-development", it is to embrace an "education for community" (*Gemeinschaft*)' (Lorenz 1994: 91). *Social* in this sense could relate to the aim of the educational endeavour – the creation of community –in society.

In general terms, the idea of prosociality represents how individual intentions are already directed towards sociability and towards social goals.

The strict conceptual relations between pedagogy and community are key theme of important authors such as Dewey and Freire. Those contributions take into account the role of the community in pedagogy as 'the permanent and real form of living together, while society is only transitory and apparent, and therefore community should be seen as a living organism and society as a mechanical aggregate and artefact' (Natorp - 1924).

In Montessori's terms "As a rule . . .we do not respect children. We try to force them to follow us without regard to their special needs. We are overbearing with them, and above all, rude. . . let us treat them, therefore, with all the kindness which we would wish to help to develop in them. . .Kindness consists of interpreting the wishes of others, in conforming one's self to them, and sacrificing, if need be, one's own desires. (*Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook*. (Holt, Rinehart and Winston,1967).p.133)

A comprehensive idea of education takes place in social environments: meant as "the educating community", it includes the future free self-education of adults of all social backgrounds' (Marburger 1979 quoted in van Ghent 1994: 97).

The concept of social education as a result of specific goals of a Community was further defined through the work of Hebart. He underlines how learning requires the participation in community life (community in the terms defined by Dewey as sharing a common life and social goals). In this idea the classroom was to be meant as a community in itself – a place where there are group activities – where people cooperate. Teachers were to join in with the activities – to take part in a common endeavour. People learn through interacting with a social environment.

In conclusion, the PCIM-model can allow an approach in terms of community education as 'education for community within community'. In other words, what we are used to define as 'a community' is the place or context in which education is to occur. The process of becoming part of an existing social network in order to encourage dialogue and learning is sometimes labelled as informal education in EU documents. Especially in UK we can find a specific reference to the term community education. For example, CeVe (Scotland) have defined community education as: "...a process designed to enrich the lives of individuals and groups by engaging with people living within a geographical area, or sharing a common interest, to develop voluntarily a range of learning, action and reflection opportunities, determined by their personal, social, economic and political needs". (CeVe 1990: 2)

The main aim of the PCIM Model is to include the notion of social pedagogy in a prosocial perspective as a pedagogical ground for building an interesting set of paradigms for informal educators – especially highlighting education for sociality. In these terms the prosocial paradigm is not a general point of reference in the way of developing positive behaviours, but includes the social educative inclusion of social groups and teachers in accepting different cultures. Furthermore, it is the dimension of the community learning and development tradition which provides the closest approximation to the spirit of social pedagogy.

In conclusion, the way of building integration of Roma children in schools can be facilitated by the adoption, at pedagogical and practical level, of a prosocial perspective. This has as a consequence developments the new idea of community and gives floor to the creation of "educating caring communities" involving Roma and non-Roma. This model is meant to be an initial contribution at pedagogical level, which is highly complex. But as the Bible says in Jeremiah "Set up road signs; put up guideposts. Take note of the highway, the road that you take(31:21)".

Prosocial Educative Axes

The model is shifted in 4 educative axes:

- Freedom of expressing opinions;
- Freedom of showing the cultural background;
- The value of diversity;
- The opportunity of developing one's personality in a safe environment

The axes are related to principles that the Educating Community has to take into account in order to encourage the expression of the cultural diversity, especially in case of Roma children. In the first step of the path towards the creation of the educating community, these principles have to be shown and explained to all the children in the schools. It is useful to organize specific sessions with the children and their teachers whose suggested focus should be the identification of the rights the children have and the fundamental axis of the community. It is also very relevant that the steps toward the creation of the Educating Community which would support this didactic activity. The formal agreement that institutes the Educating Community should be explained in this phase with the presence of the cultural, sport and religious associations and any other members of the community (See Chapter 5).

The educative axes should be shown in a poster, not only in common areas in schools, but also in all the space related to the associates. They should be explicitly mentioned in the agreement. The presence of the Roma families in this first phase is essential, as it can give a great contribution to the impact these first activities can have on the children and their education.