

POLITICAL LEARNING IN THE EDUCATIONAL ITINERARY OF SOLIDARITY ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES**OLIVEIRA, A. A. R*^{*}; ABREU, T. L. de**

Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia da Paraíba

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6921-8951>*alysson.oliveira@ifpb.edu.br*

Submitted 05/15/2024 – Accepted 06/30/2024 DOI: 10.15628/holos.2024.17413

SUMMARY

The educational process in the solidarity economy is capable of creating new meanings and strategic political orientations, seeking to go beyond the economic sphere itself, reaching increasingly broader fields. The objective of this study was to analyze the educational itinerary in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises in the city of João Pessoa, PB, Brazil and its contributions to political learning. Methodologically, the work consisted of a multiple case study with a qualitative focus. The social unit of analysis is composed of

five EES, having as object of study their socio-educational practices, highlighting political learning. Data were collected through documents, focus groups and interviews. Regarding the data treatment strategies, we used the described technique of Discourse Analysis. In short, this allows us to conclude that the educational process in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises collaborates with the perspective of political learning, contributing to human formation for emancipation.

KEYWORDS: Solidarity Economy Movement, Solidarity Economic Enterprises, Political Learning, Socio-educational Practices.

POLITICAL LEARNING IN THE EDUCATIONAL ITINERARY OF SOLIDARITY ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES**ABSTRAIR**

O processo educativo na economia solidária pode criar novos significados e orientações políticas estratégicas, visando transcender para além da própria esfera econômica, alcançando um espaço cada vez maior. O objetivo deste estudo foi analisar o itinerário educativo no âmbito dos Empreendimentos Econômicos Solidários (SES) em João Pessoa, PB, Brasil, e suas contribuições para a aprendizagem política. Metodologicamente, a pesquisa consistiu em um estudo de caso múltiplo com abordagem qualitativa. A unidade social de análise compreende

cinco EPEs, tendo como objeto de estudo as práticas socioeducativas, destacando a aprendizagem política. Os dados foram coletados por meio de documentos, grupos focais e entrevistas e analisados por meio das técnicas de Análise do Discurso como estratégia de processamento de dados. Em síntese, isso permite concluir que o processo educativo no âmbito dos Empreendimentos Econômicos Solidários contribui para a perspectiva da aprendizagem política, proporcionando formação humana para a emancipação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Movimento de Economia Solidária. Empreendimentos Econômicos Solidários. Aprendizagem Política. Práticas socioeducativas.

1 PRESENTATION

Over the last few decades, with the transformations that have occurred in Brazil resulting from the process of global globalization and the advancement of new technologies, education has come to be seen as an instrument of democratization, capable of promoting knowledge and information necessary to include the individual in the world of work. However, reality points to a society in crisis, marked by neoliberal policy that is faced with serious problems in all areas, including education itself, which is faced with new situations that generate transformations in pedagogical issues. Thus, by not being able to meet the demands that are created, education seeks support in other segments of society in an attempt to combat, or, at the same time, reduce the difficulties resulting from its own capitalist system, generating new forms of social intervention. It is in this scenario that non-formal education, through non-school spaces, starts to stand out, as it is configured as a field of learning and knowledge. It enters the scene, increasingly occupying new significant spaces in society, thus deserving a different look.

These spaces thus configure a new field of education that addresses educational processes outside schools or not, in organizational processes of civil society, encompassing social and non-governmental organizations, strategic social movements, or educational processes articulated with the school and the community. In Brazil, non-formal education has a close relationship with social movements (Gohn, 2007). This relationship is focused on the political aspect, that is, on the educational character of the political organization of the collectivity.

The conception we have regarding the understanding of non-formal education in this research is based on the assumption that education itself is a set, a sum that includes the articulation between formal education, informal and non-formal education, which has its own field, although it can be articulated with the other two. Non-formal encompasses the knowledge and learning generated throughout life, mainly in experiences via social, cultural or political participation in certain learning processes, such as social projects, social movements, among others. Non-formal education contributes to the production of knowledge to the extent that it acts in the field in which individuals act as citizens.

Therefore, according to Gohn (2011, p. 13), "non-formal education will have to be considered a promoter of social inclusion mechanisms, which promote access to citizenship rights", because, if this is not the case, there is a risk of adopting welfare postures through which cultural deprivation is emphasized instead of valuing and re-signifying the cultural practices of the groups and people in focus. Still on non-formal education, Gohn (2010, p. 33) tells us that it is a "socio-political, cultural and pedagogical process of formation for citizenship, understanding the political as the formation of the individual to interact with the other in society".

For the purpose of this study, we delimit its scope to the political learning inherent to the socio-educational practices carried out in the Solidarity Economy Movement, in a special way, in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises located in the city of João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil. The EES consist of the main subjects and beneficiaries of the implemented policies of the Movement

of Solidarity Economy. Regarding the concept of the term EES, this research is based on the concept translated by the Solidarity Economy Information System (Ministerial Ordinance, No. 30 of March 20, 2006). That is, they are collective, self-managed, permanent organizations that carry out economic activities of production of goods, provision of services, credit funds (credit cooperatives and popular revolving funds), commercialization (purchase, sale and exchange of inputs, products and services) and solidary consumption. We start from the assumption that the EES are considered spaces of non-formal education, as they develop an educational aspect with well-defined intentionality and specificity anchored to the guiding principles of the movement.

Gohn (2007) also highlights other dimensions of non-formal education with an emancipatory character; argues that these educational practices have several dimensions, such as political learning, practices that empower individuals with community goals, in addition to providing individuals with a reading of the world from the point of view of understanding what is happening around them.

It was in this way that the genesis (motivating problem) of this study emerged, which became: how are the educational itinerary experienced in the spaces of non-formal education, and considering the EES as the sustaining axis of these practices, contribute to the political emancipation of the subjects participating in these enterprises? Thus, the central objective of this research was to analyze the educational itinerary in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises in the city of João Pessoa, PB, Brazil and its contributions to political learning.

The first essential reason for carrying out this study involves the theoretical point of view. There are few studies on the proposed theme, regarding the relational character of the terms, characterizing it as a new study, in the area of non-formal education, focused on the solidarity economy and, mainly, on the Solidarity Economic Enterprises of João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil. I think it will provide, at a theoretical level, a reflection on the development of socio-educational practices and their contributions to the formation of the subject, becoming an innovative theme. We also understand the importance of studies that deepen the problems experienced and felt by the popular classes, contributing, through this knowledge, to a reflection on the performance of this nature of social organizations, leading us to believe that research on this theme will be of great practical contribution to the educational actions of this type of actors.

2 METHODOLOGICAL TRAJECTORY: THE CHOICE FROM SO MANY PATHS

The research is motivated by a methodology that guarantees to think about education beyond the classrooms, that is, within the Solidarity Economic Enterprises, and, certainly, the case study is a good alternative in this direction. Thus, the present study consisted of a multiple case study that aimed to provide an act or effect of knowing the object under study, describing the characteristics of the phenomenon studied and establishing relationships between variables listed in the educational process experienced by the subjects who participate in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises.

From the point of view of Yin (2005), in the case study, the researcher's concern cannot be oriented to the size of the sample (statistical representation), but to the qualitative representativeness of the social units of study and to the consistency of the theoretical framework that will provide the basis for the descriptive and analytical exercises that will validate the conclusions. Therefore, we defined the case study as the best strategy for this research. Gil (1999) corroborates Yin's thought when he states that the case study is characterized as a deep and exhaustive study of one or a few objects, in order to allow broad and detailed knowledge of them.

In order to adopt the multiple case study method, the object of study was the set of socio-educational practices in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises and had as the social unit of analysis: (a) the Solidarity Economic Enterprises registered in the State Forum of Solidarity Economy of Paraíba; b) the EES located in the Zona da Mata, in particular, in the region of João Pessoa, Paraíba, that is, EES that operate in the urban area and that make up a challenge posed today; c) the individual EES, that is, those that are characterized, as a legal nature, as informal groups; and d) EES that act collectively in the activities of production, commercialization and consumption.

Thus, the social unit of analysis is composed of five EES located in the city of João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil, having as object of study its educational itinerary, highlighting the character of political learning. It should be noted that we chose these individuals because of their involvement and connection to the focus of the problem under study here.

To obtain data, bibliographic, documentary and field research were used. Marconi and Lakatos (2005) define bibliographic research as a general overview of the main works already carried out, which are important because they are able to provide current and relevant data related to the theme. With regard to documentary research, Minayo (2008) takes a position, stating that it is characterized by the search for information in documents that have not received any scientific treatment, such as reports, newspaper reports, magazines, letters, films, recordings, photographs, among other dissemination materials. Field research, in turn, presupposes the observation of facts exactly where, when and how they occur. In such circumstances, with the help of the results achieved with the bibliographic research, the researcher defines the categories of analysis that will guide the observation and, in a systematized way, records, interprets and relates the facts without manipulation of reality, that is, without experimentation (Lima, 1997).

During the investigation, the methodological option privileged as an instrument for data collection consisted of the triangulation between documentary analysis, focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews, in addition to a field notebook and a great desire to embark on that other side of the research, perhaps, let's say, the most practical, the one in which we would have closer contacts with the object of study. It was the desire to carry out a research that did not have excessive methodological rigidity, that could interact more freely with the subjects researched. According to Oliveira (2005), the individual interview is an excellent research instrument because it allows interaction between researcher and interviewee. In Morgan's (1996) view, focus group is

a research technique for collecting data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher.

Thus, the data collection took place in three moments: the first, through documentary research that contributed to the analysis of the educational guidelines of the MES as well as to the mapping of the EES of the city of João Pessoa, in order to survey the institutions that would build the *corpus* of the research, also seeking written materials and/or interviews that helped in the historical construction of the process of creation of these entities, such as its statutes, regulations and other sources pertinent to its genesis and consolidation. In a second moment, we carried out the focus groups with the Solidarity Economic Enterprises that formed the social unit of analysis of our research. And, in a final moment, individual interviews were carried out with a group of people who benefited from the training, which allowed us to raise and deepen the relevant aspects related to the socio-educational practices developed, the points that are still obscure and the existence of possible controversies. With this triangulation, we perceive the representativeness of the learning process, through socio-educational practices regarding development from the perspective of the construction/formation of the subject.

Regarding the data treatment strategies, we used the described technique of Discourse Analysis (DA), establishing the relationship existing in the discourse between language/subject/history or language/ideology; therefore, those who follow this principle can affirm an affiliation with the DA of the French line, that is, "articulates the linguistic with the social and the historical" (Pêcheux, 1993, p. 82) in which language is studied not only as a linguistic form but also as a material form of ideology. In addition, it is "in the contact between the historical and the linguistic, that the specific materiality of discourse is constituted" (Pêcheux, 2002, p. 8). It is up to us to express the understanding that meaning has a direct correlation with the materiality of speech and meaning with the discourses that are behind this materiality. We consider, for the purposes of our study, that we could not have chosen a different technique of data processing, considering that, for Pêcheux, we are not the owners of our discourse. We have inherited it in our historical process from the contributions of so many factors that complement us.

3 The APPRENTICESHIP POLITICS AndOr ITINERARY EDUCATIONAL OF SOLIDARITY ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES

As a background to our research, we assumed the Gramscian and Freirean thoughts that guided us to the understanding that it is not possible to deal with emancipation only in the economic-structural plane. The dimensions of politics and culture are also fundamental aspects. We know that non-formal education has a close relationship with social movements (Gohn, 2007). This relationship is focused on the political aspect, that is, on the educational character of the political organization of the collectivity. Thus, based on this orientation and understanding, we investigate the contributions of socio-educational practices with the Solidarity Economic Enterprises with regard to political learning.

As a starting point, we can affirm, based on the testimonies of the subjects who are part of the Solidarity Economic Enterprises, that the contributions of the educational process are not limited only to the performance of these subjects and to the internal relations of the production group, extending to the field that goes beyond the boundaries of the enterprises, that is, to the communities where these production groups operate and to society in general.

A first research discovery is due to the fact that socio-educational practices promoted, together with the enterprises, contributions to the improvement and strengthening of the community, highlighting elements such as social transformation and development:

I think **the group has collaborated a lot with the community**. One of the spaces that we have been participating in as a group is the **Network for Peace**¹, due to the solidarity economy and the name that the group has to this day. [...] another important point of action in the community was that we managed to build **the Productive Inclusion Unit**², which brought benefits to the entire community. [...] Another participation that we had as a group was in the meetings of the **Democratic Budget**, because we were always present to try to **understand and decide for the collectivity**. I think that all this was **gained for the community**, that the **training will help us to go in search of these achievements**. **We have always fought for the improvement of our community** (INTERVIEWEE, 2, emphasis added, emphasis added).

[...] several people who have passed through our production group **are in other spaces, helping and contributing to the community**. Based on the principles of solidarity economy, that is, within this perspective of a better society. **Being present in these spaces, discussing improvements for our community is something important to us** (INTERVIEWEE, 10, emphasis added, emphasis added).

In the trainings, we always talked about ideas that would strengthen our community. Many of the actions we did to empower the community came from our association. Many people said: 'in the association it's just a party, Mother's Day, children's party'. But that's where we conquer so that they can then do a workshop, so that they can come and talk. So, many people said: 'that association only celebrates'. But if you don't do it, you don't call the population. Especially children, young people. Then you take music, you take games, you go to the city hall, to the CDL and get food and distribute it to the community. And there in your speech, you already start to put something in **the perspective of construction**: look, we are united and together, we are stronger. **And many people don't even realize that this strengthens you**, you take your idea, right? **You conquer. You transform. So, they are really political strategies** (INTERVIEWEE, 11, emphasis added).

We try to contribute to the community, but it's not that easy. We have already done the **promotion in the part of healthy eating**. We have already taken it to the churches, there was all this publicity. A whole work of **raising awareness for the change of healthier eating habits, which is the focus of our production**. Without the **training**, we would not have been able to give these lectures, this

¹ It is a network of social organizations located in the Alto do Mateus neighborhood to act in favor of a non-profit cause. Formally and autonomously constituted, NGOs are characterized by their solidarity and philanthropic actions.

² It is a public space with the objective of providing families in situations of social vulnerability with qualification and training for work in the clothing area, so that they can develop economic activities that favor the generation of work and income from the perspective of self-sustainability, with an emphasis on the solidarity economy. The unit will also offer all the necessary equipment and infrastructure, in addition to making them available to people in the community who wish to make repairs or make their own clothing.

sensitization. We have to know how **to multiply our knowledge and transform this into actions in the community** (INTERVIEWEE, 14, emphasis added, emphasis added).

So, **we are always interacting with our community**. One of the objectives is **to bring some gain as well, in the feeling of improved food for our community space**. So several interventions were made in these spaces to bring enriched food for people to try, to **raise awareness**, to hold **lectures**. Now, as we are talking about a habit, **the change in diet is a very long-term thing**, isn't it?! And in low-income communities, people aren't wanting to know what they're eating. They want that R\$ 1.00 to be enough to buy coxinha. Now whether the coxinha is fat or without fat doesn't care. So it is a very time-consuming thing, but **we have always believed and realized that it is a great contribution of intervention in the community**. So, we gave **workshops, we always leave our space open to the community** (INTERVIEWEE, 17, emphasis added).

With these testimonies, it seems right that there is a more than significant sense of the action of the enterprises in their communities. We understand that the socio-educational practices promoted by the agents linked to the movement also have, in a considerable way, a political approach. A fact that caught our attention is that the actions of a political nature are not restricted only to the internal environment of the enterprises, but that the interventions of the people who make up the production groups go beyond the borders with a strong presence in the communities. Being present in other spaces of struggle in the community was a watchword present in the testimonies, expressing a feeling of not only a desire, but of interventions that promote concrete changes, improvements and social development for the communities.

Throughout our field research, with several visits to the enterprises that participated in our unit of analysis, with the realization of focus groups, individual interviews, which led us to a better knowledge of the production groups and their actions in the communities, we realized that many of the subjects involved in the enterprises and who believe in the proposal of the solidarity economy already had some principles and personal values that dialogue with the principles of the movement. Thus, participating in the project was a way to strengthen the already existing desire, that is, the search for improvements for the community, local development, the empowerment of those who live there and who make history.

In this context, we also realize that many of the people who participate in the projects also end up inserting themselves in other collective spaces of the community, in common the desire for struggle, the desire for a cry for freedom from so many situations of oppression that these communities have been involved in throughout their histories. This research finding shows us, once again, the importance of socio-educational practices of a political nature with the EES, when they end up raising awareness among those who experience them to the point of being present in other spaces and, thus, strengthening, in a certain way, their communities. Based on this understanding, we can even say that they are political strategies of involvement, of enchanting people in search of possible solutions to the many needs that their communities experience in their daily lives.

These behaviors expressed by the EES, in view of their practices in reality arising from an awakening from educational actions, are in line with the thought of Gohn (2007) when they state that non-formal education with an emancipatory character argues that these socio-educational practices have several dimensions, such as political learning, that is, covered with practices that empower individuals with community objectives, in addition to allowing them to read the world from the point of view of understanding what is happening around them. The understanding of the political act is placed, in this case, as an element of formation that characterizes the subject as an agent of his history. It is a political action, for our understanding, bathed in Gramscian thought, that is, to be in a position to face adverse situations and be able to build alternatives for change. With the testimonies, we observed that the people who are involved in the EES and who went through an educational process in these spaces of non-formal education awakened to act in favor of intervention in a given reality. And, for our understanding and the theoretical background that we have been carrying out in this analysis, this type of action is always a political action.

Thus, we found that this going beyond the boundaries of the enterprises involves elements of community participation, concrete struggles for improvements and local development, awareness of both individual and collective character to elements of socialization, multiplication and exchange of knowledge towards social transformation, based on reflection and action in the community context.

In the midst of this discussion, another research finding that adds to the one previously discussed and that was analyzed in our investigation was in relation to the formation of Solidarity Economic Enterprises and the promotion of a more analytical view among their members, leading to a feeling of empowerment of the communities, as we can observe in the discourses:

We always try **to be in other spaces in the community to defend our rights as citizens and rights as a collectivity, as a community**. Before I didn't have this thought, but **the training helped me a lot in this**. My vision was very limited, you know? **Today I can better see what happens to our community and think of solutions and fight for them**. Today we have a certain leadership in the community, we have representations in some spaces (INTERVIEWEE, 5, emphasis added).

So, **the training helped me to strengthen this story of having a different look at the community**. All my actions today are aimed at the community, **I do it for the community. I see myself as another human being, a human being who reflects, a human being who helps, a human being who is social** (INTERVIEWEE, 8, emphasis added).

We take on many problems of the community as if it were the group's. **Especially because the group is in the community and the community in the group**, you know what I mean? Today, there is the productive group that in our case we are calling a community bakery, but whenever there are some events in the community, whether from churches or from someone in the community, **the space is open to the community in general**. Not to mention that many people who have passed or are still in the group **end up contributing to the community in another way**. The **training helped us a lot to have this awareness, to take care of what is ours** (INTERVIEWEE, 18, emphasis added).

I have no doubt that **the production group contributes in some way to the community**. We are managing to include ourselves in the issue of **public policy**, which is not something so easy. We have quality work and maintaining a production unit, even changing public management is not so simple. **It is necessary to know how to dialogue, to know how to articulate so that there are no losses for our community**. Our group has become a reference in sewing. **A reference that the proposal of a solidary economic enterprise can work**. We have already been invited to talk about our experience in other spaces. I think we **are indeed a reference and a pride for our community**, because today **we help to train other women**, we are giving continuous **training work**. We are articulators within our neighborhood. We believe that it is possible to change many things that need to be changed. **Transform many signs of deaths that our community has into signs of life. We are part of the community** and, therefore, we must make some contributions (INTERVIEWEE, 21, emphasis added).

Taking the aforementioned discourses, it should be emphasized that the sense of production groups for collaboration in their communities generates a genuine sense of belonging to them. This element shows us that training has contributed to individual and collective empowerment. This empowerment expands to the communities where the enterprises operate, strengthening and even awakening the bonds of belonging, that is, of taking care of the spaces that belong to the EES. To promote a necessary awakening of the population, that is, the recognition of where they came from, where they are and where they are going, with awareness of the place from which they speak, the attention given and the neglect that are imbricated in those realities. The feeling of belonging leads the subjects to believe in possible changes, supported by a reading of the world that was previously a practice unknown to the subjects of the EES, when we can even define such a situation as a social myopia.

We believe that the first condition for a being to be able to assume a committed act is to be able to act and reflect. Only a being who is able to leave his context, to "distance" himself from it to be with him; capable of admiring it in order to transform it and, by transforming it, to know that it has been transformed by its own creation; a being that is and is being in the time that is his, a historical being, only he is capable, for all this, of committing himself. All of this converges in the act of incorporating one's own values and cultures, of belonging and inherited feelings. Individuals belong to those spaces according to determinations of origin, race/ethnicity, religion, among others. These are values that form the native cultures to which individuals belong.

Similarly, another type of contribution made by the Solidarity Economic Enterprises configured as an action beyond the internal limits of the production groups and highlighted in our research deals with the educational process experienced by the EES as promoters of multiplying agents of learning, favoring a continuous and two-way education:

I believe that **the trainings have helped us a lot to carry out interventions in our community and thus help in development**. It's so much so that the production group, here at the unit, we don't have instructors and many women from the community come to us many times so that we can teach them how to sew. And we teach without any return, without any exchange. **We have this experience with the community**. The spaces that we are going to take courses, we always give them the support they need in anything, both in sewing and in other lines. **We have this**

articulation with the community. In the training, we learned that we have to multiply our learning (INTERVIEWEE, 13, emphasis added, emphasis added).

We try to contribute to the community, but it's not that easy. We have already done the **promotion in the part of healthy eating.** We have already taken it to the churches, there was all this publicity. A whole work of **raising awareness for the change of healthier eating habits, which is the focus of our production.** Without the **training,** we would not have been able to give these lectures, this awareness. We have to know how **to multiply our knowledge and transform this into actions in the community** (INTERVIEWEE, 14, emphasis added, emphasis added).

In view of the above, the testimonies alert us to an element present in the discussion of Solidarity Economic Enterprises as non-school spaces and that these socio-educational practices were, in a way, thought within the perspective of popular education that encompasses the knowledge and learning generated throughout life, mainly in experiences via social, cultural or political participation in certain learning processes, such as social projects, social movements, among others. Non-formal education contributes to the production of knowledge to the extent that it acts in the field in which individuals act as citizens. To this end, it was also possible to verify the enterprises as spaces open to the communities, emphasizing, with this, the importance and contributions of these in local development. We understand that the fact that the space is open to the community only adds to the empowerment of these subjects, confirms the feeling of ownership that the subjects who make the Solidarity Economic Enterprises have of their communities and the importance of socio-educational practices to create this context. In all these senses, it is possible to consider that the EES are actors and promoters of local transformations, which change the relationship between the cooperators and between them and their families, neighbors, public authorities, religious, intellectuals, among others. In fact, it is about changes at both the individual and the social level.

It is worth noting that, within the aspect of political learning, in addition to investigating the contribution of the educational process to the action/participation of the group in the community, that is, the action in the community, another research finding that emerged throughout the scientific trajectory concerns the issue of citizenship formation and the relationship of this formation with the socio-educational practices experienced in the EES. That said, the first finding present in this indicator element linked to the Socio-Educational Practices variable affirms that political training has helped subjects to work on citizenship due to the discovery of their rights and duties, according to the following statements:

After participating in the **group's training, I felt my self-esteem improved.** I have always been a person who has never liked injustice. And, within the group, you learn **to fight for your rights, because everyone knows how to say duties, but few have this knowledge.** We fight a lot for our rights as a community, as a group (INTERVIEWEE, 2, emphasis added).

I think that one of the things I **learned in the training in the group was the understanding of the term citizenship,** this has always been confusing to me. I think this makes inclusion a little difficult due to this lack of understanding. Today, I know that I have to fight for my **rights.** I think that this

Understanding is a facilitator for all other things. When a person knows what it is to be a citizen, knows **his rights**, knows **his duties**, he **contributes politically to the whole context in which we are inserted**. It contributes to social control, to budgetary control, to the control of everything. Do you want something more participatory than being part of a council? This is very important! For the group, I joined a council during this process of the solidarity economy forum, I was also part of the state council for food and nutrition security for a year and a half. **It was an immense learning of citizenship** (INTERVIEWEE, 9, emphasis added).

After participating in the production group and the trainings, I am a great citizen! Especially for myself. **Today it is more difficult to deceive me, because I know my rights**. I think that for me to leave it with my head down it has to be very good, you know? That now I don't let this happen anymore (INTERVIEWEE, 13, emphasis added).

The neoliberal organization of society, already fragmented by the regime of capital accumulation, now more intensely globalized, prevents the inclusion of disadvantaged groups in a path in which human rights are recognized. For this statement, we take as a basis the opinion of Santos (2002, p. 17):

[...] It is the voracity with which hegemonic globalization has devoured, not only the promises of progress, freedom, equality, non-discrimination and rationality, but also the very idea of the struggle for them, that is, social-hegemonic regulation is no longer made in the name of a project for the future and with this has delegitimized all projects for an alternative future previously designated as projects of social emancipation.

It seems clear to us to state that the EES, as spaces of non-formal education, must strengthen their participants in the aspects of the construction and strengthening of citizenship. By making this statement, we share the thinking of Gohn (2011, p. 13) when he argues that "non-formal education will have to be considered a promoter of social inclusion mechanisms, which promote access to citizenship rights", because, if this is not the case, there is a risk of adopting welfare postures, through which cultural deprivation is emphasized instead of valuing and re-signifying the cultural practices of the groups and people in focus. We assume this understanding of education as a sociopolitical process of formation for citizenship, understanding the political as the formation of the individual to interact with the other in society.

Regarding the set of findings of our investigation, we highlight another that showed us that socio-educational practices of a political nature have contributed to the subjects working on their citizen constructions in the sense of awakening to the importance of knowing how to speak and knowing how to listen, that is, within the idea of respect for the other, as we can observe:

I grew a lot as a person, as a citizen. Of course, as I am a person who, sometimes, I question a lot, **the training helped me to realize that I was not always the owner of the truth**, you know? That thing like this: **I learned to give in, I learned to listen**. This for me is also being a citizen, because it involves respect for the other (INTERVIEWEE, 3, emphasis added).

I believe that I am a better citizen because of the history of transformation. I've lived in the northern region, I've lived with indigenous people and, in fact, I think there's something inside me, as I often put in my speeches, which is my essence: **respect for others**, respect for wanting to see others grow and help you do that. And, within my condition, if I can do it, I will do it and I will continue to do it. I believe that being within the movement this is easier. If at this moment, I can pass on my help to the groups when I put myself on their behalf and when we sit down and cry together, because one of the women was beaten by her husband, for example, then **this is an act of citizenship for me** (INTERVIEWEE,4, emphasis added).

The construction of social relations based on principles of equality and social justice, when present in a given social group, strengthens the exercise of citizenship. According to Gohn (2011), the transmission of information and political and sociocultural education is a strong axis in non-formal education. It prepares, forms and produces knowledge in citizens, and educates human beings to civility, as opposed to barbarism, selfishness, and individualism.

Political training has helped subjects in the citizenship element by leading to personal and collective growth, promoting transformations. This was another important indicator we found in our investigation:

I think that **the training has helped many of our group**, for example: **when today I look into the eyes, I open my mouth and speak. When I have the courage to question, including the group itself, to question the educators who arrive, the teachers.** This is a **political growth, a growth as a citizen.** All this to say: I am also a part, I also speak, we can discuss as equals and when I am not sure, to look for people, to get advice and then I believe in this growth that we all need to grow constantly (INTERVIEWEE, 5, emphasis added).

[...] I already felt like a good citizen, with good conduct. Today, I feel even better, because **the training contributed a lot to my personal growth. I think I am a better person and more prepared to live in today's society** (INTERVIEWEE, 14, emphasis added).

Thus, we understand that socio-educational practices have provided the participants of the enterprises with personal growth and, especially, in terms of understanding and experience of collectivity, a differentiating factor present in an EES. With this, we can affirm that the more these formations are associated with an educational vision that takes it as a right of citizenship, the more it can contribute to the democratization of labor relations and to imprint a social and participatory character to the development model.

In continuity with this discussion of the aspect of political learning, another research finding that we addressed was the issue of the participation of the subjects in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises and the meanings of these experiences as a political act. Initially, one of the findings linked to the indicator element states that participating in the production group is a political act, because the training has contributed to the reflection and action of the subjects, leading to personal and community changes, according to the following statements:

I consider that participating in the production group is a political act, because when you meet with people who believe they can improve their lives, and that this **improvement goes in search not only of your person, but of the entire community**, when you fight for something, I think that this is already a **political act**, because even you **fight for your right and that of the other is a political act** (INTERVIEWEE, 2, emphasis added).

We learn **to think better to act and act for the other**, for the collective well-being. **For me, it is not a more dignified political act than this**. So, all these educational, political and awareness processes existed within the group (INTERVIEWEE, 8, emphasis added).

I think it is a **political act**, yes, because in the green kitchen there is also a lot of work on **the gender issue**. We are always discussing this and they are always participating in the women's movement. So, **women who together believe that they can grow and that they want to grow, want to work together and always thinking about their community**. I really believe in all this collective potential, that it is a **political act** (INTERVIEWEE, 17, emphasis added).

In non-formal education, it is essential to learn content that enables individuals to read the reality in which they are inserted, that is, from the point of view of understanding what is happening around them. From this reflection, the intervention of many of these enterprises to change a certain reality. We realize that, if socio-educational practices, in a way, awaken individuals to organize themselves with community objectives, aimed at solving everyday collective problems, we can understand this act as a political act.

In continuity with this discussion, another research finding declares that socio-educational practices of a political nature have helped the subjects to understand that participating in the enterprises is a political act, as there is also a contribution in the debates related to party politics:

Especially because today, **after so much training, after readings, lectures, seminars [...]** we realize that people still see politics as that, I'm going to vote for so-and-so. No, we know that **everything you do and involves more than two people, you are having a political conscience**. I think you, it's so much so that these stories of participating in the democratic budget, of fighting for us to have a Solidarity Economy secretariat is **all a political act** (INTERVIEWEE, 3, emphasis added).

I believe that our participation in the groups is not a partisan political issue, but one of **political awareness**. The training helped us to **reflect and act for myself, for my group, for my community, for society**. **For me, this is acting politically** (INTERVIEWEE, 4, emphasis added).

[...] it is a political act as well. And I think it's **time for discussion**. **It is a policy because we speak what we think and listen to what the other has to say**. **It is a political act**. **Even partisan too**, right? (INTERVIEWEE, 13, emphasis added).

Through these testimonies, we can affirm that participating in socio-educational practices in the EES is like a political act, as it generates a political awareness on the part of the subjects' views. This was another important finding we found in our investigation. This factor is in line with another point that emerged from the testimonies, taking on a meaning that is extremely important in this discussion: the fact that participating in the enterprise is a political act, as it is a space open to dialogue and debate, generating a critical consciousness, as we can see from the subjects' statements:

The group was a political space, as it was always **open to dialogue, to debates. The training helped us to act more critically**, with a more critical eye (INTERVIEWEE, 18, emphasis added).

I feel that it is a **political space, because we feel free to say what we want and have our own opinion**, because if I didn't have it, I wouldn't even be here, because I think we have to **have freedom**. From the moment that every Monday we get together to discuss and see **what is best for the group and also for the community, I think it is a political act** (INTERVIEWEE, 20, emphasis added).

In view of the above, such testimonies lead us to the sense that participating in a Solidary Economic Enterprise is an experience that can educate for political practice and for the conscious exercise of political rights and duties – through decisions taken collectively in assemblies or by democratically elected representatives, collective auditing of accounts, transparency of information, the guarantee of equal voice and vote to all members. Supporting Gramscian thought, we believe it is possible that social movements, linked to the popular strata, could, through political action, promote transformations in favor of quality of life. With the concept of organic intellectuals, it helps us, today, to make statements in the sense of social mobilization, for the political engagement of the subaltern layers, in the struggle for emancipation. Gramsci's ideas were born as one of the expressions of the political emergence of the popular classes and, at the same time, led to a reflection and a practice directed at the popular movement. By addressing directly to the great mass of the super-exploited and the impoverished, educational thought and practice suggest the need for politics. Thus, we can affirm that the educational process present in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises has enabled a review of life based on a citizenship formation that provides a change in reality, favoring the emergence of many of its participants.

In this discussion, we would also like to draw attention to the fact that Gramsci (1982) and Freire (1979) understand the pedagogical aspect of political action and the political aspect of pedagogical action, recognizing that education is essentially an act of knowledge and awareness and that, by itself, it does not lead a society to free itself from oppression. Based on this understanding, education is always a political act.

4 SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

The theoretical-methodological reflection brought in this study indicates the importance of the political dimension for the Solidarity Economy Movement. In the same way, we discussed the principles that govern the Solidarity Economy Movement, emphasizing educational practices as political action.

This analysis allows us to understand and affirm that, for the context of the Solidarity Economic Enterprises studied, political learning contributes to the social movement, which fights for the change of society, for a different form of development, which is not based on large companies or large estates with their owners and shareholders, but rather a development for people and built by the population based on the values of solidarity, democracy, cooperation, environmental preservation and human rights. That is, a political dimension, as collective organizations, in which democratic, cooperative and self-managed practices prevail among the members. Firsthand, these enterprises adopt the principle of strengthening the capacity for action of the impoverished.

Finally, we understand that the socio-educational practices in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises strengthen their potential for social inclusion and political sustainability, as well as their emancipatory dimension. Thus, it is possible to affirm that education promotes the learning of emancipatory knowledge, which contributes and enables the individual to act consciously, engaging in the struggle for transformations of perverse, unjust and human dignity-denying conditions. In short, this allows us to conclude that, for this specific study, the educational process in the Solidarity Economic Enterprises collaborates with the perspective of political learning, contributing to the human formation for emancipation, considering these non-school spaces as a storehouse of counter-hegemonic ideological development.

5 REFERENCES

Abreu, T. L. de, & André Régis Oliveira, A. . (2023). EDUCAÇÃO ENQUANTO INSTRUMENTO DE FORTALECIMENTO DOS TRABALHADORES E TRABALHADORAS DA ECONOMIA SOLIDÁRIA. HOLOS, 2(39). Recuperado de <https://www2.ifrn.edu.br/ojs/index.php/HOLOS/article/view/15202>

Freire, P. (1979). *Education and Change* (14th ed.). Peace and

Land. Gil, A. C. (1999). *Methods and Techniques of Social*

Research. Atlas. Gohn, M. G. (2007). *Theory of social*

movements. Loyola.

Gohn, M. G. (2010). *Non-formal education and the social educator: performance in the development of social projects*. Cortez.

Gohn, M. G. (2011). *Non-formal education and political culture: impacts on third sector associations*. Cortez.

- Gramsci, A. (1982). *The Intellectuals and the Organization of Culture*. (4th ed.). Brazilian Civilization. LIMA, M. C. (1997). *The engineering of academic production*. United.
- Marconi, M. de A. & Lakatos, E. M. (2005). *Fundamentals of scientific methodology*. (6th ed). Atlas.
- Minayo, M. C. S. (2008). *The challenge of knowledge: qualitative research in health*. (11th ed.). HUCITEC.
- Morgan, D. L. (1996). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. SAGE Publications.
- Oliveira, A. A. R. de (2005). *Competency Management: the right person in the right place*. (Final Paper in Administration, Federal University of Paraíba, João Pessoa).
- Pêcheux, M. (1993). Automatic discourse analysis (AAD-69). In: Gadet, F; Hak, T (Orgs). *For an automatic discourse analysis: an introduction to the work of Michel Pêcheux*. (2nd ed., pp 61-105) Ed. Unicamp.
- Pêcheux, M. (2002). *The Discourse: structure or event*. (3rd ed.) Bridges.
- Saints B. from S. (2002). *The Tensions Of modernity*. Harbor Cheerful: 2002. http://www.susepe.rs.gov.br/upload/1325792284_As%20tens%C3%B5es%20da%20Modernidade%20-%20Boaventura%20de%20Sousa%20Santos.pdf
- Yin, R. K. (2005). *Case Study: planning and methods*. (3rd ed.) Bookman.

SUGGESTED CITATION:

Régis Oliveira, A. A., & Abreu, T. L. de. POLITICAL LEARNING IN THE EDUCATIONAL ITINERARY OF SOLIDARITY ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES. *HOLOS*, 4(40). <https://doi.org/10.15628/holos.2024.17413>

ABOUT THE AUTHORS**Alyson André Régis de Oliveira**

PhD in Educational Sciences from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte. Master in Administration in the research line Organizational Strategies and People Management from the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB). Bachelor of Business Administration from the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB). Currently, he is a full professor in the Graduate Program in Professional and Technological Education (ProfEPT) and works as an effective professor at IFPB, João Pessoa campus. He serves as Coordinator of the Center for Studies in Management and Business (NEGN). As a guest professor, he works in Master in Business Administration (MBA) and in organizational consulting. Today, he is the manager responsible for the Directorate of Innovation, Research, Graduate Studies, Research, Extension, Culture and Academic Challenges (DIPPED) of the IFPB, João Pessoa campus.

Email: alysson.oliveira@ifpb.edu.br

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6921-8951>

Tatiana Losano de Abreu

PhD student at the Graduate Program in Professional Education at the Federal Institute of Rio Grande do Norte (PPGEP/IFRN) - Capes Scholarship. Master in Economic Sciences from the Federal University of Paraíba (PPGE/UFPB), Master in Professional Technological Education from the Federal Institute of Paraíba (ProfEPT/IFPB), Professor of Economics at the Federal Institute of Paraíba (IFPB – Guarabira campus), Member of the Catalyzing Center for Solidarity Enterprises (NUCAES/IFPB).

Email: tatiana.abreu@ifpb.edu.br

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4865-1801>

Editor: Maura Costa

Ad Hoc Reviewers: Marlúcia Menezes Paiva and Valentin Martínez-Otero Périz



Received: May 15, 2024

Accepted: June 30, 2024

Published: from July 19, 2024

