

Emotional Skills and Promoting School Success in the 3rd Cycle: Students Perception

*Sofia Campos^a, Manuela Ferreira^a, Ana Paula Cardoso^b, João Duarte^a, Sara
Felizardo^b, ClaudiaChaves^a

*

* Sofia Campos:

^aInstituto Politécnico de Viseu, CI&DETS, ESSV, Viseu, Portugal, sofiamargaridacampos@gmail.com

^aInstituto Politécnico de Viseu, CI&DETS, ESSV, Viseu, Portugal, mmcferreira@gmail.com

^bInstituto Politécnico de Viseu, CI&DETS, ESEV, Viseu, Portugal, a.p.cardoso62@gmail.com

^aInstituto Politécnico de Viseu, CI&DETS, ESSV, Viseu, Portugal, duarte.johnny@gmail.com

^bInstituto Politécnico de Viseu, CI&DETS, ESEV, Viseu, Portugal, sfelizardo@esev.ipv.pt

^aInstituto Politécnico de Viseu, CI&DETS, ESSV, Viseu, Portugal, claudiachaves21@gmail.com

Abstract

The perceptions about school play a central role in behaviour, performance and learning outcomes. There is evidence that an improvement in emotional skills is associated with a higher school success. The aim of this paper is to establish the relationship between internalizing and externalizing behaviours, emotional skills and academic success of lower secondary education students. In order to promote students social and emotional skills, a pilot study in a School Grouping from the central region of Portugal was carried out. A diagnosis of disruptive behaviour (ASEBA) was made and 6 children aged between 12 and 14 years old were identified and followed by 3 focus groups of students, parents and teachers, respectively. Six students, mostly male, showing signs of externalizing behaviors and academic failure were identified. They didn't like school and showed no learning motivation. The relationship between parents and teachers was conflictive. All parents had the utmost concern about academic success and teachers showed good practices but without success. This programme is seen as a way to improve the educational agents' action and to help them manage different environments and relationships. The results point out the importance of a systemic intervention programme which aims are to improve the social and emotional competences and academic achievement.

© 2016 Published by Future Academy www.FutureAcademy.org.uk

Keywords: Students, emotional skills, school success



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1-Introduction

The 2014 OECD report establishes several educational measures and intervention programmes which aims are to improve education goals. However, in spite of those macro-systemic measures, there is a real need to implement effective programmes, programmes which will have to be adapted to the different teaching realities that will be found in the specific contexts of the Portuguese School Groupings. Programmes that will namely ensure the involvement of each and every education agent, promote school success and allow the improvement of the relationships that exist in all our schools.

School context should be able to allow each student's personal development, help develop his learning and his quality interactions with his schoolmates (Palácios & Hidalgo, 2007; Sánchez, Ortega & Menesini, 2012). Interpersonal relationships which are developed within a certain school context have been getting more and more importance in national and international research, especially when it comes to aggressive behaviours among peers and to students' emotional skills and how those skills are related to their school performance.

A child who experiences school failure may have, in his classroom, several behaviours which the school community may see as inappropriate, like restlessness, anxiety, aggressiveness, emotional instability, defiance, lack of concentration, for instance. Those behaviours will cause successive events that will turn into higher failure, more instability, more inadequate behaviours and, once again, into more failure.

Emotional instability is one of the most frequently referred children's characteristics (Fonseca, 1999). Ribeiro (2005) states that these "initial difficulties trigger the development of negative feelings towards learning and towards school tasks" (p.141).

To face school failure, the child should feel confident and safe. In order to develop his self-esteem he should have a good relationship with his parents, his family members, his teachers and with the whole school community. A stable emotional context reduces the child's anxiety and his restlessness. The students need to know who they can trust, what they can and cannot do and clear limits have to be set and understood. Therefore, it is essential that the student may develop the emotional skills which are required to achieve a suitable adaptation to the world in general and to school in particular. Esturgó-Deu, Sala-Roca (2010) have studied the relationship between disruptive behaviours and the emotional skills of students who were attending elementary schools. They didn't find any relationship between disruptive behaviours and the children's age, however they found out that the students' gender may influence emotional skills. Boys showed more disruptive behaviours than girls. The study also revealed a significant relationship between disruptive behaviours and the general level of emotional intelligence, the students' capacity to manage stress and to establish interpersonal relationships.

Lomas, Stough, Hansen e Downey (2012) have studied the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and aggressive behaviours among peers. The results showed that the lower scores obtained in the capacity to understand the other students' emotions are associated with a higher prevalence of aggressive behaviours. According to the authors mentioned, these teenagers may show difficulties in understanding the negative consequences their actions can have on the others.

In this context, several researches have been conducted on EI (Goleman, 2008) and its influence on school learning (Albuquerque, 2013). Brackett et al. (2011) present a review of the Emotional Intelligence construct and its implications in the personal, social, academic and professional fields. Fernández-Berrocal and Desiree Ruiz (2008) also carried out a critical review of the research on EI in an educational context, the relevance of this construct as an indicator of personal and school success and of personal and social adjustment.

The way people recognize, express and manage their emotions, the way they recognize them in other people and the way they will be able to establish affective ties with the others will determine the quality of the intra and interpersonal relationships they will create (Saarni, 1999a, 1999b; Sánchez, Ortega & Menesini, 2012), that is why the knowledge, the development and the teaching of emotional skills in children and teenagers is an essential tool in the combat against school failure.

Several programmes involving parents/tutors (T), teachers and students have been implemented. However, we still feel the need for a systemic and integrated approach that would involve, in a single study, and simultaneously, students, parents/tutors and teachers who will play a leading role as agents of change.

This study is part of a broader research on socio-educational systemic intervention directed to the qualification of all those who are part of the educational process and, specifically, to the promotion of behavioural adjustment and school success of teenagers suffering from socio-emotional and behavioural problems and always trying to involve parents, teachers and students.

The question which will guide our research is: “How can an intervention programme that will promote socio-emotional and motivational skills contribute to the improvement of personal and social behaviour and to the school adjustment of students who show disruptive behavior and school failure?”

2-Material and Method

A preliminary study was developed using the action research methodology. This would allow us to solve concrete problems and to generate knowledge about changes in social reality (Cardoso, 2014), overcoming the frequent dualism between theory and practice (Noffke & Somekh, 2010). In this case, it will consider the construction and implementation of an intervention programme involving youngsters, the “Develop +” programme, which seeks to promote socio-emotional and school motivation skills in students. The study took part during a six month period and included an initial assessment, a pretest, which used a battery of questionnaires and post-tests, which used the same instruments. An initial planning was subjected to successive reformulations according to the reflection and the evaluation of the sessions that were carried out. This cyclical process of planning/action/reflection was conducted during the implementation stage by the investigators whose preparation included psychological and educational backgrounds (Cardoso, 2014).

The convenience sample involved six 7th grade students, 4 boys and 2 girls, aged between 12 and 14 and who had been showing disruptive behaviors and school failure and who were part of two different classes of a school from the centre of Portugal.

To conduct this study, we requested the authorization to the Directors of the Grouping of Schools. The same request was made to the teachers, parents and students involved in the study. All the ethical and informed consent procedures were met, and the data anonymity and confidentiality were respected, as were the participants’ autonomy and freedom.

After the initial contacts, we started distributing the questionnaires to the students involved. The “Develop +” programme lasted twelve sessions (two more sessions were used to the pretest and to the post-test) on a 45 minutes weekly session basis.

The activities and tasks that were presented were directed to the students’ training in the following areas: self-esteem and self-concept, self-knowledge, communication and expression, emotional self-regulation in social interaction behaviours, the improvement of their future time perspective, school motivation, the construction of a life and moral development project.

To collect the data we used the Portuguese version of the ASEBA battery (*AchenbachSystemofEmpiricallyBasedAssessment*–Achenbach, 1991; Achenbach & Rescorla, 2001) which assesses the emotional and behavioural problems in children aged between 6 and 18. The ASEBA battery- for school age period- includes evaluation tests to be completed by the parents: the *ChildBehaviorChecklist* - ages 6-18 (CBCL 6-18; a 118 item and 3 open-ended questions questionnaire; it includes items that will provide socio-demographic and other contexts data about the child/teenager's behaviour), by the teachers - the *Teacher'sReportForm* (TRF; a 112 item and open-ended questions questionnaire) and by the child/teen himself- the *Youth Self Report* (YSR; a 112 item and 3 open-ended questions questionnaire; it includes items about how they perceive their own behaviours, skills and problems, as well as some socio-demographic information).

3-Results

In the results analysis we will consider the scale total values since they are those which will give us the overall indication about all kinds of behaviours. We should stress out that the decrease in the values of the scale results when we compare the first and the second evaluation indicates a behavioural improvement. By contrast, an increase in those values suggests the existence of worse behaviours.

As we can conclude from table 1 analysis, student A shows positive changes in his overall behaviour, changes that were perceived by the teachers as well as by the youngster himself. In the parent/tutor's initial perception, the youngster showed no behavioural problems. However, in the second evaluation some changes were detected in certain dimension which led to an improvement of the final results. In none of the questionnaires did student A exceed the values which are considered suitable.

Table 1- Distribution of Student A evaluations.

	INTERNALIZING			EXTERNALIZING		OTHER PROBLEMS				TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	
CBCL-1	E1	E2	E3	E7	E8	E4	E5	E6	OP	INTER 1+2+3(A)	EXTER 7+8(B)	4+5+6+OP (C)	SCALE (A+B+C)	
	6	5	4	8	12	5	4	10		10	13		38-39	CUT-OFF POINT
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
CBCL-2	3	1	2	1	0	0	1	5	2	6	1	8	15	
TRF-1	7	6	2	6	11-12	4	3	29-30		8	8-9		42-43	CUT-OFF POINT
	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	8	0	8	16	
TRF-2	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	9	0	2	4	9	15	
YRS-1	8	6	6	9	12	7	8	9		13	16		48-50	CUT-OFF POINT
	2	2	1	3	2	1	1	4	3	5	5	9	17	
YRS-2	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	2	4	2	4	10	

After analyzing the results from Table 2, we can see that student B presents initial values which are above the cut-off point, which suggests the existence of behaviour problems perceived by the parent/tutor, by the teacher and by the student herself. Later, the parent/tutor seems to perceive a positive change in her behaviour, while the teacher perceives a negative change in her behaviour. The student isn't aware of any significant change.

Table 2- Distribution of Student B evaluations.

	INTERNALIZING			EXTERNALIZING		OTHER PROBLEMS				TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	
	E1	E2	E3	E7	E8	E4	E5	E6	OP	INTER 1+2+3(A)	EXTER 7+8(B)	4+5+6+OP (C)	SCALE (A+B+C)	
CBCL-1	7	5	4	6	11	5	4	7		11	11		35	CUT-OFF POINT
	8	6	10	5	14	8	7	9	6	24	19	30	73	
CBCL-2	5	6	4	1	2	0	0	7	3	15	3	10	28	
TRF-1	7	5	2	4	8	4	2	18		8	5		25-27	CUT-OFF POINT
	2	6	0	3	0	1	0	15	0	8	3	16	27	
TRF-2	4	6	0	5	14	3	0	17	1	10	19	21	50	
	8	6	6	9	12	7	8	9		13	16		48-50	CUT-OFF POINT
YRS-1	7	5	5	4	11	3	5	7	6	17	15	21	53	
	10	6	3	4	14	7	2	8	4	19	18	21	58	

In student C's case, we could conclude that both the parent/tutor and the student admit that there was an increase in suitable behaviours. The teacher's perception is the only one which gets worse in the second evaluation, in other words, the student obtains values which are above the cut-off point for both internalizing and externalizing behavioural results (Table 3).

Table 3- Distribution of Student C evaluations.

	INTERNALIZING			EXTERNALIZING		OTHER PROBLEMS				TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	
	E1	E2	E3	E7	E8	E4	E5	E6	OP	INTER 1+2+3(A)	EXTER 7+8(B)	4+5+6+OP (C)	SCALE (A+B+C)	
CBCL-1	6	5	4	8	12	5	4	10		10	13		38-39	CUT-OFF POINT
	2	3	1	2	4	3	4	8	3	6	6	18	30	
CBCL-2	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	5	1	3	9	
TRF-1	7	6	2	6	11-12	4	3	29-30		8	8-9		42-43	CUT-OFF POINT
	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	7	0	3	2	7	12	
TRF-2	4	6	0	8	7	2	0	21	4	10	15	27	52	
	8	6	6	9	12	7	8	9		13	16		48-50	CUT-OFF POINT
YRS-1	3	4	4	1	3	1	0	4	1	11	4	6	21	
	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	4	1	1	6	

Regarding student D, we could see that both the parent/tutor and the student himself consider that there was an increase in his suitable behaviours. The teacher's perception is the only one which gets worse in the second evaluation, reaching values which are above the cut-off point for the results obtained for externalizing behaviours and the total scale (Table 4).

Table 4 – Distribution of Student D evaluations.

	INTERNALIZING			EXTERNALIZING		OTHER PROBLEMS				TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	
	E1	E2	E3	E7	E8	E4	E5	E6	OP	INTER 1+2+3(A)	EXTER 7+8(B)	4+5+6+OP (C)	SCALE (A+B+C)	
CBCL-1	6	5	4	8	12	5	4	10		10	13		38-39	CUT-OFF POINT
	3	2	0	5	8	3	4	10	6	5	13	23	41	
CBCL-2	4	6	1	4	5	2	1	9	5	11	9	17	37	
TRF-1	7	6	2	6	11-12	4	3	29-30		8	8-9		42-43	CUT-OFF POINT
	1	2	0	2	8	0	0	23	0	2	10	23	35	
TRF-2	3	2	0	9	20	2	0	33	1	5	29	36	70	

YRS-1	8	6	6	9	12	7	8	9		13	16		48-50	CUT-OFF POINT
	10	4	2	3	13	3	8	13	4	16	16	28	60	
YRS-2	2	6	2	3	6	2	4	5	2	10	9	13	32	

When it comes to student E, Table 5 allows us to observe that all the participants (parents/tutors, teacher, student) consider that there was a decrease in the values obtained in the second evaluation when we compare them to the first. This situation is true for every scale. The student and the teacher's results dropped below the cut-off point.

Table 5- Distribution of Student E evaluations.

	INTERNALIZING			EXTERNALIZING		OTHER PROBLEMS				TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	CUT-OFF POINT
	E1	E2	E3	E7	E8	E4	E5	E6	OP	INTER 1+2+3(A)	EXTER 7+8(B)	4+5+6+OP (C)	SCALE (A+B+C)	
CBCL-1	7	5	4	6	11	5	4	7		11	11		35	CUT-OFF POINT
	10	6	5	5	0	7	4	7	6	19	6	24	49	
CBCL-2	9	5	4	4	0	6	3	7	6	18	4	22	44	
TRF-1	7	5	2	4	8	4	2	18		8	5		25-27	CUT-OFF POINT
	1	9	0	1	3	1	2	14	0	10	4	17	31	
TRF-2	3	5	3	0	2	2	0	8	4	11	2	14	27	
	8	6	6	9	12	7	8	9		13	16		48-50	CUT-OFF POINT
YRS-1	7	6	3	5	11	3	3	11	8	16	16	25	57	
	6	4	1	0	5	2	2	9	6	11	5	19	35	
YRS-2														

In the evaluation carried out by student F's parent/tutor, as we can confirm in Table 6, there was a negative evolution: the behaviour total values have increased and are above the cut-off point. In the teacher and in the student's evaluation there was a decrease in the evaluation values which stand below the cut-off point. This situation indicates that his behavior has improved.

Table 6 - Distribution of Student F evaluations.

	INTERNALIZING			EXTERNALIZING		OTHER PROBLEMS				TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	CUT-OFF POINT
	E1	E2	E3	E7	E8	E4	E5	E6	OP	INTER 1+2+3(A)	EXTER 7+8(B)	4+5+6+OP (C)	SCALE (A+B+C)	
CBCL-1	6	5	4	8	12	5	4	10		10	13		38-39	CUT-OFF POINT
	2	5	0	5	5	2	0	10	1	7	10	13	30	
CBCL-2	8	6	2	5	7	6	1	8	5	16	12	20	48	
TRF-1	7	6	2	6	11-12	4	3	29-30		8	8-9		42-43	CUT-OFF POINT
	1	5	0	7	9	2	1	35	2	6	16	40	62	
TRF-2	4	5	1	2	4	0	0	23	1	10	6	24	40	
	8	6	6	9	12	7	8	9		13	16		48-50	CUT-OFF POINT
YRS-1	7	3	0	4	4	4	3	5	2	10	8	14	32	
	3	2	0	5	4	3	0	4	3	5	9	10	24	
YRS-2														

In Table 7, we present a summary of the results obtained by all the students who have participated in the intervention. We could confirm that, as far as the parent/tutor's perception was concerned, only two of them had identified a worsening of the students' behaviour. On the other hand, both teachers and students perceived positive changes. Teachers referred that three of the students have improved their behaviour, while the behaviour of the other three got worse. During self-evaluation, only one of the students referred that nothing had changed in her behaviour, while the other five reported a significant improvement in their behaviours. Those values were below the cut-off point.

Table 7- Summary of the students' evaluations.

	STUDENT 1				STUDENT 2				STUDENT 3				STUDENT 4				STUDENT 5				STUDENT 6				
	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	TOT AL	
CBCL-1	INT ER 1+2 +3(A)	EX TE R 7+8 (B)	4+5 +6+ OP (C)	SC AL E (A+ B+ C)	INT ER 1+2 +3(A)	EX TE R 7+8 (B)	4+5 +6+ OP (C)	SC AL E (A+ B+ C)	INT ER 1+2 +3(A)	EX TE R 7+8 (B)	4+5 +6+ OP (C)	SC AL E (A+ B+ C)	INT ER 1+2 +3(A)	EX TE R 7+8 (B)	4+5 +6+ OP (C)	SC AL E (A+ B+ C)	INT ER 1+2 +3(A)	EX TE R 7+8 (B)	4+5 +6+ OP (C)	SC AL E (A+ B+ C)	INT ER 1+2 +3(A)	EX TE R 7+8 (B)	4+5 +6+ OP (C)	SCALE (A+B+C)	CUT- OFF POIN T
	10	13		38-39	11	11		35	10	13		38-39	10	13		38-39	11	11		35	10	13		38-39	
	0	0	0	0	24	19	30	73	6	6	18	30	5	13	23	41	19	6	24	49	7	10	13	30	
CBCL-2	6	1	8	15	15	3	10	28	5	1	3	9	11	9	17	37	18	4	22	44	16	12	20	48	
	8	8-9		42-43	8	5		25-27	8	8-9		42-43	8	8-9		42-43	8	5		25-27	8	8-9		42-43	CUT- OFF POIN T
TRF-1	8	0	8	16	8	3	16	27	3	2	7	12	2	10	23	35	10	4	17	31	6	16	40	62	
	2	4	9	15	10	19	21	50	10	15	27	52	5	29	36	70	11	2	14	27	10	6	24	40	
YRS-1	13	16		48-50	13	16		48-50	13	16		48-50	13	16		48-50	13	16		48-50	13	16		48-50	CUT- OFF POIN T
	5	5	9	17	17	15	21	53	11	4	6	21	16	16	28	60	16	16	25	57	10	8	14	32	
YRS-2	4	2	4	10	19	18	21	58	4	1	1	6	10	9	13	32	11	5	19	35	5	9	10	24	

4-Discussion and conclusion.

The results we got highlighted the positive contribution of a social skills development, EI and motivation for school learning programme applied to students who show disruptive behaviours. A programme that would deal with the perception that parents/tutors, teachers and students have about the changes in the teenager's behaviours. Five of the students perceive very significant changes in their behaviours and one only didn't feel any change in the way she has been behaving.

Those results are in agreement with what is mentioned by Lopes and Salovey (2004) in the theoretical review of several programmes they had carried out and which had an impact on students' social, emotional and practical skills and that, in general, point out that the teachers' perception improved in some of the behavioural dimensions that were assessed, both in the internalizing and externalizing behaviours and in the total scale.

The results are also consistent with those found by Esturgó-Deu and Sala-Roca (2010) in the study they conducted on EI and on the disruptive behaviours of students attending basic education schools. The main conclusions mention gender, stating that boys experience more disruptive behaviours than girls, and that there is a significant relationship between disruptive behaviours and EI general rates. In this pilot study this association was also referred.

A possible explanation is suggested by MacCann (2011), when he was investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence, copying styles and school results. According to this study, the copying variables influence, significantly, the relationship between how people are able to manage their emotions and school success. It is also suggested that people may achieve better school results when they outline what skills they want to attain, skills that will be associated with the management of emotions and with copying strategies.

Youngsters suffering from the condition we have been pointing out use the lack of support from teachers and from their parents and family as an excuse for dropping out of school (Lund, 2014).

Systemic intervention programmes that will involve every educational agents (parents/tutors, teachers and students) may substantially reduce school failure rates. The improvement that was perceived in the behaviour of the students involved in the systemic intervention programme reinforces its importance in the promotion of school success.

5-References

- Achenbach, T. M., & Rescorla, L. A. (2001). *Manual for the ASEBA school age forms & profiles*. Burlington: University of Vermont, Research Centre for Children, Youth, & Families.
- Achenbach, T. M., & Rescorla, L. A. (2002). *Manual for the ASEBA adult forms & profiles*. Burlington: University of Vermont, Research Centre for Children, Youth, & Families.
- Albuquerque, C., Norberto, C., & Campos, S. (2013). Determinants of disruptive behavior in Portuguese adolescents. *European Psychiatry*, 28 (Supplement 1), p.1, ISSN: 0924-9338 (print).
- Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., & Salovey, P. (2011). Emotional intelligence: Implications for personal, social, academic, and Workplace success. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 5 (1), 88–103.
- Cardoso, A.P. (2014). *Inovar com a investigação-ação: Desafios para a formação de professores*. Coimbra: I.U.C. doi.org/10.14195/978-989-26-0666-8
- Castanho, M. G. (2005). *À descoberta da pré-adolescência: O desenvolvimento físico e psicológico e o universo da leitura*. Lisboa: Livros Horizonte.
- Corcoran, R. P., & Tormey, R. (2013). Does emotional intelligence predict student teachers' performance? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 35, 34-42.
- Esturgó-Deu, M., & Sala-Roca, J. (2010). Disruptive behaviour of students in primary education and emotional intelligence. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26 830- 837.
- Fernández-Berrocal, P., & Ruiz, D. (2008). Emotional Intelligence in Education. *Electronic Journal of Research in Education Psychology*, 6 (15) 421-436.
- Fonseca, V. (1999). Insucesso escolar: Abordagem psicopedagógica das dificuldades de aprendizagem. Lisboa: Editora Âncora.
- Goleman, D. (2008). The secret to success. New research says social-emotional learning helps students in every way. *Greater Good magazine*, 5 (1), 8-9.
- Lomas, J., Stough, C., Hansen, K. & Downey, L. (2012). Brief report: Emotional intelligence, victimisation and bullying in adolescents. *Journal of Adolescence*, 35, pp. 207–211.
- Lopes, P. N., & Salovey, P. (2004). Toward a broader education. In H. J. Walberg, M. C. Wang, R. J. E. Zins, & P. Weissberg (Eds.), *Building school success on social and emotional learning* (pp. 79-93). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lund, I. (2014). Dropping out of school as a meaningful action for adolescents with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 14 (2), 96-104 doi: 10.1111/1471-3802.12003
- MacCann, C., Fogarty, G. J., Zeidner, M., & Roberts, R. D. (2011). Coping mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic achievement. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 36, 60-70.
- Noffke, S., & Somekh, B. (2010). *Handbook of Educational Action Research*. London: Sage.
- OECD. (2014) *OECD Economic surveys: Portugal*.; OECD Publishing.
- Palácios, J. & Hidalgo, V. (2007). Desenvolvimento da personalidade dos seis anos até a adolescência. In C. Coll, A. Marchesi, J. Palácios & cols., *Desenvolvimento psicológico e educação. Psicologia Evolutiva* (Vol.1, Cap.13, pp.252-267). Porto Alegre: Artmed.
- Parker, J. D., Summerfeldt, L. J., Hogan, M. J., & Majeski, S. A. (2004). Emotional intelligence and academic success: Examining the transition from high school to university. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36, 163–172.
- Ribeiro, M. (2005). *Ler bem para aprender melhor: um estudo exploratório de intervenção no âmbito da descodificação leitora*. Dissertação de doutoramento não publicada. Braga: Universidade do Minho. Recuperado em 2008, Junho 5, de <http://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/bitstream/1822/2999/1/TESE.pdf>.
- Sánchez, V., Ortega, R. & Menesini, E. (2012). La competencia emocional de agresores y víctimas de *bullying*. *Anales de psicología*, 28(1), pp. 71-82.
- Saarni, C. (1999a). A Skill-Based Model of Emotional Competence: A Developmental Perspective. *Symposium, Emotion Management in Interpersonal Relationships: Converging Evidence and Theoretical Models*. New Mexico.

Acknowledgements

The Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), and the Center for Studies in Education, Technologies and Health (CI&DETS) of the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu.