

Alternation and its 50 years: a training possibility of Countryside Education

Janinha Gerke¹, Silvanete Pereira dos Santos²

^{1, 2} Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo - UFES. Departamento de Educação, Política e Sociedade (DEPS). Avenida Fernando Ferrari, 514, Goiabeiras, Vitória - ES. Brasil.

Author for correspondence: professorajaninhaufes@gmail.com

ABSTRACT. This article presents the partial results of a research about the main theoretical and practical aspects of the alternation and its formative possibility in the education of the countryside. It is based on the reflections of the Pedagogy of Alternation and Field Education Working Group discussed at the International Seminar held in October 2018. On the occasion, the 50th anniversary of the Espírito Santo Promotional Education Movement (MEPES), the pioneering organization in Latin America, was celebrated, with the discussion on networks of emancipatory cooperation in integral formation and sustainable development. It makes theoretical interlocutions with Gimonet (2002, 2007); Garcia-Marirrodriaga (2002); Puig-Calvó (2002); Caliarì (2002); Molina (2010) and Antunes-Rocha (2010). Methodologically, the study made use of a focus group (Gatti, 2012), showing results regarding the importance of alternation in the training of peasants, the relevance of Training Centers for Alternation (CEFFAs) to strengthen family farming and the organicity of the assumptions of training in alternation with the Countryside Education Movement, especially regarding the relationship with the demands for integral formation and sustainability.

Keywords: Alternate Training, Countryside Education, Integral Training and Sustainable Development.

Alternância e seus 50 anos: Uma possibilidade formativa da Educação do Campo

RESUMO. Este artigo apresenta os resultados parciais de uma pesquisa sobre os principais aspectos teórico-práticos da alternância e sua potencialidade formativa na educação do campo. Embasa-se nas reflexões do Grupo de Trabalho Pedagogia da Alternância e Educação do Campo discutidas no Seminário Internacional realizado em outubro de 2018. Na ocasião, foram comemorados os 50 anos do Movimento de Educação Promocional do Espírito Santo (Mepes), entidade pioneira na formação por alternância na América Latina, com a abordagem sobre as Redes de cooperação emancipatórias na formação integral e desenvolvimento sustentável. Faz interlocuções teóricas com Gimonet (2002, 2007), Garcia-Marirrodriaga (2002); Puig-Calvó (2002); Caliari (2002); Molina (2010) e Antunes-Rocha (2010). Metodologicamente, o estudo faz uso do grupo focal (Gatti, 2012) e evidencia resultados atinentes à importância da alternância na formação dos camponeses. Além disso, enfatiza a relevância dos Centros de Formação por Alternância (CEFFAs) para o fortalecimento da agricultura familiar e a organicidade dos pressupostos da formação por alternância com o Movimento da Educação do Campo, no que tange à relação com as pautas reivindicatórias de formação integral e sustentabilidade.

Palavras-chave: Formação por Alternância, Educação do Campo, Formação Integral e Desenvolvimento Sustentável.

La Alternancia y sus 50 años: Una posibilidad de la formación en la Educación Campesina

RESUMEN. Este artículo presenta los resultados parciales de una investigación sobre los principales aspectos teóricos y prácticos de la alternancia y su capacidad formativa en la educación del campo. Se basa en las reflexiones que se produjeron en el Grupo de trabajo Pedagogía de la alternancia y la educación del Campo discutido en el Seminario internacional celebrado en octubre de 2018. En la ocasión, se celebró la conmemoración del 50° aniversario del Movimiento de Educación Promocional de Espírito Santo (Mepes), una organización pionera en la formación por alternancia en América Latina, con el debate sobre las redes de cooperación emancipadora en formación integral y desarrollo sostenible. Hace interlocuciones teóricas con Gimonet (2002, 2007); Garcia-Marirrodriaga (2002); Puig-Calvó (2002); Caliari (2002); Molina (2010) y Antunes-Rocha (2010). Metodológicamente, el estudio utiliza el grupo focal (Gatti, 2012), que muestra resultados sobre la importancia de la alternancia en la formación de campesinos. Además, enfatiza la relevancia de los Centros de Capacitación para la Alternancia (CEFFA) para fortalecer la agricultura familiar y la organicidad de los supuestos de la formación por alternancia con el Movimiento de Educación del Campo, especialmente con respecto a la relación con las demandas de formación integral y sostenibilidad.

Palabras clave: Formación por Alternancia, Educación del Campo, Formación Integral y Desarrollo Sostenible.

Introduction

In October 2018, the Espírito Santo Promotional Education Movement (MEPES) held an international seminar in commemoration of its 50 years of work. MEPES is a non-profit institution, which was created in 1968, located in Anchieta, Espírito Santo, with the objective of fully promoting the individual in the areas of health, education and community action. Among the educational initiatives, the pioneering work with the Alternation System of Education stands out, through the creation of the first Agricultural Family School in Olivânia, a rural community in Anchieta-ES, which, in turn, constitutes a milestone for the Alternation System of Education in Latin America.

The event was attended by institutions (networks) that work with education through alternation in several Brazilian states, such as: Espírito Santo, Bahia, Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, Maranhão, Rondonia, Pará, Amapá, Piauí. At the international level, countries such as Angola, Mozambique, Cameroon, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Honduras, Guatemala, Peru, Canada, Uruguay and Argentina.

The seminar addressed the theme of *emancipatory cooperation networks in integrated education and sustainable development*, discussed in seven thematic

groups: I- Families and associative participation; II- the Alternation system of Education and rural education; III- Integrated education; IV- Sustainable development, supporting economy and agroecology; V- Integrative health practices; VI- Financing and public policies; VII- Recollections and images of the 50 years of Mepes.

The discussions in Working Group II utilized the ongoing research on the main theoretical and practical aspects of alternation and its creative solutions in the field of rural education. We sought to reflect on the traditional path and on the challenges and possible improvements related to the theme.

From this perspective, the group's objective was to bring together individuals with different educational experiences with alternation, to debate the topic of *The Educational System of Alternation and Rural Education*; The assumption is that this type of training is theoretically, practically and methodologically possible which has been adopted by the National Movement of Rural Education as educational practice for rural populations.

Moreover, this text brings together some of the contributions of the discussion groups with the bibliographical research on the Alternation system of Education and rural education, set up at the research stage

at the Federal University of Espírito Santo. To this end, it initially places the creation of alternation in the context of its 50 years; Then, it addresses the main theoretical, practical and methodological aspects linked to the commitments of integrated education and sustainability; Finally, it establishes the relationship between alternation and rural education, in conjunction with the issues brought up in the seminar, whose challenges, contributions and proposals may signal the strengthening and / or the invention and reinvention of the practice in question in different contexts.

Contextualizing Mepes and its practice through Education through Alternation

The creation of education through alternation has its foundation in Brazil in 1968, in the city of Anchieta, Espírito Santo, on the initiative of Father Humberto Pietrogrande in conjunction with organized farmers and political leaders. Since then, the Espírito Santo Promotional Education Movement and the first Family Farming Schools (EFAs) in Olivânia, Alfredo Chaves and Rio Novo do Sul were founded.

The motives that drove its creation in Brazil are similar to European motives. According to Silva (2010), they had a direct relationship with the following

factors: the absence of educational processes in the countryside; the agricultural economy based on subsistence production; the lack of technical knowledge for environmental conservation and preservation; the rapid process of deforestation; the intensive use of pesticides; the low use of conservation practices in fertile areas; the predominance of monoculture; the migratory stream that forced out farmers, especially young people, from the countryside due to the lack of opportunities and precarious working conditions. In addition to this, the cultural prejudice towards the rural populations and the advance of urban capitalism. As Caliarí (2002) states:

... the use of the Alternation System of Education in Espírito Santo came up against a development project implemented by the post 1964 Techno-Military State. The proposals for the agricultural sector foresaw their integration into the development and expansion of international capitalism by incorporating the concepts of the “Green Revolution” with regard to chemiculture and monoculture production for export. The model followed the logic of rejecting the “cultural and technological backwardness” of the countryside, maintained by a traditional mentality, employing inefficient and rudimentary agricultural techniques in the face of new agricultural technical standards. (Caliari, 2002, p. 86).

Therefore, education through alternation was born from the concerns of

religious and political leaders that mobilized the farmers for a chance to provide young people with training and their integration into their work. Therefore, it is configured through practice that breaks with the logic instituted by the capitalist hegemonic model and institutes resistance as a propeller for creative solutions and permanence in the countryside.

Currently, MEPES brings together 18 schools of alternation, with the offer of elementary and vocational high schools, in the southern regions, Serrana and northern regions of the state of Espírito Santo, in the following municipalities: Anchieta, Alfredo Chaves, Rio Novo do Sul, Cachoeiro, Mimoso, Castle, Ibitirama, Santa Maria de Jetibá, Marilandia, Bananal River, Jaguaré, Sao Gabriel da Palha, Sao Mateus, New Venecia, Boa Esperança, Pinheiros e Montanha.

In the wake of its 50-year history, it can be argued that MEPES has made a major impact on the expansion of Family Alternation Training Centers (CEFFAs), reaching all parts of Brazil. Education through alternation today produces a diversity of educational experiences for the Landless Workers Movement (MST), as well as Rural Community Schools, Rural Family Schools, Rural Family Homes, Rural Education Degrees, among others.

All these experiences imply the common struggle for public policies that recognize the specific educational needs of alternation, its pillars and, above all, its maintenance through the general population and the associative management of the rural populations.

That said, over the years there has been a transformation in the educational proposition of alternation, instituted by Jesuits and political leaders, being appropriated and reinvented by rural workers and educators in the National Movement of Rural Education, which produced a heterogeneous practice through the historical and cultural diversity of its people, by territorial occupation and by the construction of assumptions based on dialectical historical materialism.

Therefore, when thinking about education through alternation in this historical context, we seek to recognize that the specificity produces the diversity of knowledge and practices of the Brazilian countryside and that because it is made this way, enables the meeting with human creativity.

Theoretical, practical and methodological aspects of Education through Alternation

Thinking about education through alternation in rural education, as seen, consists in putting in place a theoretical,

practical and methodological perspective that, 50 years ago, in Brazil, and 84 in France, emerged as a solution for education of rural people, with connections to their living and working conditions, glimpsing other and new ways of living and / or surviving in the countryside.

In this sense, alternation celebrates in recent years its transgressive and innovative potential in the educational processes, expanding its practice from elementary school to higher education, particularly in the training of educator-monitors and teachers of the countryside. Among those potentials, *sustainability and integrated education*, stand out as possible horizons that transgress the perspective of schooling, training for the labor market and development in the stock of capital.

Thus, the theoretical discussions of studies about education through alternation (Puig-Calvó, 2002; Gimonet, 2007 & Caliari 2002) consider sustainability and integrated education as pillars that oppose the market and competitive training of the capitalist world, understanding it as integral and integrated into the lives of the people in education.

When we talk about integrated education of the individual, emphasis is placed on the contrast with specific, strictly professional education, where, depending on the educational systems and programs, one tries to train mechanical specialists, farmers or electricians,

forgetting that there is a person, a human being, a member of a society at any given time, with a culture, values, a family, a religion, a belief, a determined and concrete socio-economic situation. (Puig-Calvó, 2002, p. 130).

In view of the above, education through alternation is configured as a time and space of resistance and perseverance. It arises from non-conformism and restlessness in the search for an educational process that reconciles the learning of historically accumulated knowledge to work, to their daily needs, building in young people the sense of belonging to their historical, cultural and economic roots, produced in dealing with the earth and the harvest of their fruits.

It is worth noting that, in the midst of a 50-year-old Brazilian journey, alternation, organized in the CEFFAS movement, has been undertaking profound reflections on new appropriations in the face of: contemporary challenges of the countryside's professional diversity, of rural and city relations, expansion of this practice to other places and educational age groups, which are not merely characterized by the physical alternation of territories (Antunes-Rocha *et al.*, 2010 & Molina, 2010), but by the commitment to an education that transforms people and society, with harsh criticism of the capitalist paradigm of production.

It appears that alternation brings together in its theoretical, practical and methodological assumptions a concept that materializes in its completeness, when produced organically and articulated with the pillars of CEFFA, namely: the integrated education of the rural population and the sustainable development of the environment as objectives as well as alternation and community association as resources to achieve their goals.

As for its theoretical and practical aspects, it is worth emphasizing that alternation has gained a significant space as a solution in the education of young people from the countryside by the diversity of their didactic-pedagogical mediations (Gerke de Jesus, 2011).

However, it should be noted that these fail to fulfill their function when they become mere instruments of doing and / or exercises to fulfill the workload intended for partner, family, community or professional time. In other words, alternation does not really materialize if the didactic-pedagogical mediations are empty of reflection and, above all, of its political purpose and transformative topics and realities.

Therefore, what arises here is that education through alternation takes place at the meeting points of its objectives (integrated training and sustainable

development) and its means (alternation as a theoretical-practical-methodological assumption), as well as in the association of rural populations as protagonists of processes.

Furthermore, alternation is established as such when it effectively produces the integration between its theoretical assumptions and its didactic-pedagogical mediations in the field of practice, for example: the study plan, the professional plan for the youth, the internships, the observation sheets, the journal, the accompanying notebook, visits and study trips, and these must be used as measures of the knowledge and practices of the socio-family-professional environment and of CEFFA and/or the university.

From the perspective of the theoretical, practical and methodological debate, alternation in Brazil carries with it the marks of educational practices guided by the point of view of the generating themes - the teaching from Freire that seeks to establish the dialogic intertwining between the areas and educational disciplines within the reality of the students.

Therefore, the generating theme is the fuel of the syllabus, as subthemes also derived from the reality of the students, constituting as a starting point for the

investigation of their realities with theoretical deepening areas/disciplines of knowledge

In view of this, it can be argued that the educational temporalities coined by alternation enable different possibilities of learning and teaching in the most diverse contexts of the countryside and in the different dimensions of individual, because school is not the only place of learning, but nor is it focal point of contempt.

In short, alternation corresponds to the possible horizon of a new school that is produced by means of its theoretical, practical and methodological aspects, in this way creating another educational environment, led by the rural population - among which teachers are not excluded, spread through life stories, memories, struggles and collective commitments, self-organized, critical, reflective and empowered by the historical knowledge of humanity.

Alternation and Rural Education: possible horizons

In accordance with the legislation for rural education and the reflexive productions of its people, it is understood that alternation, as a creative solution for the rural population, is imbued with a transformative political nature. This is because it is thought from the specificities

and diversities of the local context that builds autonomy and vocal advocacy among rural populations (Freire, 2002, 2006), with respect to the identities of the people.

A daily attempt is made to establish alternation with a relationship between the particular/plural and universal knowledge, as an interdisciplinary practice, searching for movements by it stimulating the place of knowledge production.

On this occasion, alternation questions the positivist perspective, the developmental policy that duplicates the established order, devastating the environment, placing in its discussions the search for scientific knowledge that establish the necessary relationship between production and life, without the elimination of class struggle (Caldart, 2009; Sa & Molina, 2010).

From this perspective, alternation is born as a creative solution for rural populations, with a view to work and schooling procedures, but is not limited to them. Therefore, it grows and develops as a power that combines access for rural people to the right to education, without abandoning the militancy and the struggle for topics that capture the possible utopia of a human life.

Education through work, according to the logic of alternation, aims to create a

dynamic integration in the education process so that the spaces and times of social, community and professional life are brought closer to the spaces and times of school and/or university. It brings certainty to these spaces and times that the conception of work as appropriation of the individual to the world, to life and to the transformations that thought and action produce.

The spaces and times of education by the nature of its dynamics are far from the ways of taking power away from thinking and acting, moving towards a new paradigm that integrates life and education to come together with rural education.

Alternation, according to Molina (2010), is not just a training offer, but an education with a view to transforming realities. In the context of this discussion, it is essential to record the contemporary challenges regarding education through alternation, attempting, amongst other things, sustainability.

Although many fruits are harvested, the rural economy, social and environmental scenario demonstrates serious problems that continue to challenge the educational guidelines of rural populations. In this context, the work organized by Schneider, Ferreira and Alves (2014) argues against the urgent need for changes in the industrial and agricultural

production process. According to the authors, the continental extension of the Brazilian national territory is organized from the diversity of peoples, occupations, use of natural resources, which today results in a wealth of knowledge and action, and the challenge of thinking about the different realities, ways of life, beyond production, with clear definition of the project that guides us and for which we fight.

In this way, we agree with the understanding of Garcia-Marirrodiga (2002) and Caliar (2002), reaffirming in the educational territories of alternation the function of sustainable local development, based on the paradigm that this takes place in life, as an affirmation of the feeling of belonging to the land, social, economic and professional improvement of the populations, valuing and respecting nature. That is, education through alternation integrated with the material nature of life and for life with sustainability and integrated education.

Therefore, alternation is an educational solution to the materialization of rural education. It is intertwined with the assumptions of social movements and the commitment to the production of a new society (Silva, 2010; Antunes-Rocha *et al.*, 2010 & Molina, 2010), which today, more

than ever, is threatened by the setback of achievements in recent years.

The point is celebratory but, above all, it is confrontational. In this sense, the reflections presented below are based on the questions that generate discussions promoted in the seminar's working groups and reflect contributions that bring up issues with the practice of education through alternation, raise its weaknesses and point out possibilities.

Emancipatory cooperation networks in integrated education and sustainable development: reflections for strengthening Education through Alternation

The issues pointed out here came from certain questions, namely: has education through alternation contributed to associative management, integrated education and sustainable development? In what ways? What challenges are present in the day to day of education through alternation? What proposals are made in education through alternation as emancipatory strategies that contribute to integrated education and the development of the environment, in the face of contemporary challenges?

These questions were addressed through focus groups, which consisted of people who had some connection with the education through alternation: teachers

from the MEPES and other regional EFAs in Brazil and representatives of the CEFFA associations. In line with Gatti (2012), research based on the focus group has the possibility of contributing to an understanding of any given reality from different viewpoints.

Regarding the first question: has the theme (the alternation system of education) contributed to associative management, integrated education and/or the development of the environment? In what ways? Focus group participants talked about various elements within this theme. The most repeated points were listed and there was consensus among the participants:

The alternation system of education is a solution that contributes to sustainable development and integrated education; the alternation system of education and rural education are distinct and complementary; alternation schools make it possible to issue the student's vision (thinking); the alternation system of education is based on associative management; critical and reflexive education ... (Focus Group, 2018).

The group's first statement is that alternation has the possibility of contributing to the sustainable development of the environment and to the integrated education of the rural population. On this topic, it should be emphasized that it is in line with the

theoretical contributions of alternation, which reveal that the experience of the alternation system of education has in its essence two purposes. The first is “the integrated education of the individual, the education ..., the orientation and the socio-professional input”. The second is the "contribution to the development of the territory ...". (Gimonet, 2007, p. 28-29).

The view of alternation of treating education through the perspective of the whole and the understanding of the necessity of development of the environment brings up the urgency of thinking about the research itself, besides drawing attention to the fact that the student needs to be aware of the surrounding issues at the local and global levels through research.

When thinking about education in an integrated perspective, the second point of the first aspect highlighted by the focus group, and having research as an inherent tool to the production of knowledge, education through alternation proposes an inversion in the current hegemonic model of teaching that prioritizes transmission to the detriment of production. That is, the teaching process must overcome the clientelistic idea of consumption and designate a process for knowledge production. Knowing part of the idea of building and not consuming. Therefore,

research is established as a guiding element of learning.

The group's reflection on education through alternation and rural education recognizes the differences and similarities between them. This is because they found the political, social and transformative commitment of the people and their contexts, as well as in the link between school with life and work. Such an understanding corroborates the third point highlighted by the focus group that alternation schools motivate the student to bring in his or her worldview.

For Gimonet (2007, p. 29), this movement is based on the following principles: “the work and the world of production and its knowledge, the social and economic, environmental and cultural life of the places where it lives. A 'school' with its activities, its cultures and its knowledge”. For this reason, it is believed to be an enhancing element of research as an educational principle.

On the understanding that the alternation system of education is based on associative management, it is appropriate to validate the understanding of associative management, integrated education and development of the environment for the practice of alternation training in the context of CEFFAs, as these ideas form the pillars of CEFFA.

According to Begnami (2006, p. 27), "... association is one of the supports and is classified as a way, a means, an instrument". It has the role of maintainer and manager, and "constitutes a laboratory for learning cooperative and associative principles for both young people and families". For Begnami, the association is a permanent space for construction and reflection on the development of the environment.

The second pillar, the alternation system of education, is one of the means by which CEFFAs are challenged to build paths to achieve their goals. So alternation is the pedagogical option chosen to bring the educational project into reality. It is organized from the permanent discussion of environment, practice and theory, based on work as an educational principle at different times (Begnami, 2006).

Regarding the last point of the focus group's discussion, critical and reflexive education, it affirms the understanding of education through alternation that proposes a specific method of knowledge formation based on the methodology of action, reflection and action from the perspective of social transformation.

The knowledge that emerges from the research methodology and the research as an educational principle give new significance to the reality based on the

theories and the relationship with other spaces and subjects. It therefore contributes to breaking the conventional education structure of subservience.

This methodology reverses the traditional logic that does not allow the concept of the student's daily life as a space for the construction of academic knowledge, since traditional teaching, accustomed to denying any form of manifestation of the working class, is threatened by the idea of granting academic status to the knowledge emerging from rural people. Alternation contributes to reversing this logic.

However, by taking research as an educational principle, education through alternation has presented a path that allows the overcoming of the distance between the student, the school and the production of knowledge. The different educational groups have the pedagogical intention of establishing a continuous dialogue between the school context and community, school and student reality, as well as allowing the construction of differing knowledge from the relationship with the various people of the educational framework.

Regarding the second research question, which deals with the challenges of the theme in its contribution to associative management, integrated education and/or development of the

environment, the focus group participants presented eleven challenges, which were analysed in three blocks, organized as follows: a) relations of CEFFAS, family and community coverage; b) integrated education and sustainable development; and c) the relationship between education and work.

Regarding the first block of the second research question, the relationship between CEFFAS, the families and the community coverage, the group mentioned, among other factors:

Absence of feeling of belonging of some families to the work of CEFFAS;
Family integrated in the education and management processes of CEFFAS;
Appreciation of the belonging of those who fight for alternation;
Partnership: which partners and which partnerships? Who are they? What are they doing? What do they stand for? How do they collaborate with CEFFA?
Appreciation of cultures, diversity and local knowledge. (Focus Group, 2018).

The absence of a sense of belonging to CEFFA from some of the families involved was one of the problems revealed. Given this statement, some families have distanced themselves from CEFFA because they do not recognize themselves as part of the school. In the alternation proposition, the family is one of the educational partners.

In the understanding of Gimonet (2007, p. 137), CEFFAs are “family institutions. They are based on the full responsibility of families for their child's structure and upbringing. The family thus becomes the important place in the life of someone using alternation.”

The author emphasizes that alternation plays the role of building mediations (Gimonet, 2007), providing and provoking the student to live in different spaces, whether in school, family or community, diverse experiences. Thus, building paths that make it possible for the family to come closer to the school, so that it can understand its role in the education of students, is an inexcusable challenge to be overcome in the process of education through alternation, since in this project, the land and family work is an integral part of the curriculum.

From this perspective, families are protagonists of their children's educational actions, accompanying the activities in a participatory and responsible manner, favoring dialogue with the school. In the study plan, they possess practical knowledge of the local situation and are responsible for keeping alive the tradition of family work with their children and their school, through speaking about common knowledge, both in terms of culture and technical matters.

Another issue was the challenge of involving families in the school management process, by acting in the association that is, in the alternation process, responsible for maintaining the institution regarding administrative, financial and pedagogical management. Membership in a CEFFA has the function of:

...be a maintainer and manager of CEFFA. That is, the association has moral, legal, economic and administrative responsibility. There is truly no CEFFA if it is not based on effective and autonomous association with other public or private powers. (Begnami, 2006, p. 27).

Thus, given the challenge, it can be concluded that efforts need to be made to build new relationships with students' families, to strengthen ties between the school and families, in order to help them understand their role as a teacher. For this, it is urgent to think about the families present in the rural area, what are their characteristics and desires, how these families perceive the school and how they can effectively contribute to CEFFA. This leads to one of the challenges pointed out by the group, which corresponds to the appreciation of cultures, diversity and local knowledge.

In this regard, the need to invest in research that can identify local references

regarding the culture and diversity of the countryside in the current context is assimilated. Understanding the demands inherent to these themes is relevant for strengthening CEFFA's relationship with the family. It is imperative to ask whether the school has been able to keep up with the new dynamics of the countryside and its needs.

Regarding the second block, the second research question, which is about integrated education and sustainable development, the group pointed out: "recognition of local potential, association and cooperation for sustainable development-sustainable society". (Focus Group, 2018).

Regarding the recognition of local potential, the assumption that alternation, as pointed out by Zamberlan (1996), unites practical wisdom and theory, deepens everyday issues and values rural culture." What is a priority in the Alternation System of Education is the dignity of the person as an individual and collective subject". (Zamberlan, 1996, p. 13). The whole of the person is taken into account as an individual with history, because the common life in a school seeks to overcome individualism through work and group experiences, as well as the guarantee of an integrated education, through joint

reflections and analysis of the reality that surrounds the students.

It is noteworthy that education through alternation contributes to the construction of knowledge and the development of pedagogical practices aimed at social transformation. Thus, the student develops the ability to formulate problems, raise hypotheses and seek answers. There is direct contact with the object to be worked by observation and research.

Seeking in Freire (1979, p. 19) inspiration to understand the complex reality experienced in this system of education, when he states that "... education is not a valid instrument if it does not establish a dialectical relationship with the context of society in which man is rooted", and therefore must offer challenges to the student so that they can read and interpret the context in which they are put in in order to transform them.

Regarding the role of association and cooperation for sustainable development that can be triggered by the educational process developed at CEFFA, it is worth remembering that integrative alternation plays a significant role in this construction, because by integrating the two times, school time and community time, alternation establishes, in a dialectical movement, the mobilization of a set of

factors, didactic-pedagogical mediations and, above all, people. It is in this capacity to mobilize people that the potential of alternation contributes to sustainable development.

It is understood that the advancement of the countryside is present in the project of society and development defended by the social and trade union movements that make up the rural education in Brazil and is opposed to the hegemonic model of development. The ruling class development paradigm, which conceives of the existence of large estates, is marked by the emptying of the countryside through rural exodus, rural negation, agribusiness growth and expansion, production for export, and extensive use of land. Pesticide and the control of genetically manipulated seeds, among other factors strongly contested by social movements, regarding the hegemonic capitalist view of access to land.

In contrast to this idea, social movements relocate the countryside in the policy scenario, based on a development model and a rural conception, as opposed to the idea based on landlordism and agribusiness. In this sense, Fernandes (2008) defines the concept of the countryside as a whole in which the various dimensions of human existence are developed. Therefore, part of a vision of

territory as a space for the production of life.

The development proposal for the Brazilian countryside requires an educational project in which the school is one of the tools, which will enable its materialization, which goes through the notion discussed by Molina and Jesus (2004), when they mention the characteristics of the countryside from the rural perspective, from which comes the understanding of: polyculture over monoculture; from heterogeneous landscapes to homogeneity of landscapes; the preservation of natural resources and native species; family work as opposed to depletion of natural resources, among other factors.

Given the above, alternation education can greatly contribute to the sustainable development project of the countryside, as it incorporates it into the methodologies, curriculum, issues and contradictions of the Brazilian agrarian context, and put the production of knowledge at the service of confronting such contradictions - by training the population to face them in the political and educational scope, in the strength of their communities, as well as in the national and global level. Therefore, the different educational age groups of alternation will yield significant results if they can, in fact,

be integrative and materialize in the educational practice of the different people in the countryside.

Regarding the third block of the second research question, alluding to the relationship between education and work in alternation, the group stated:

Maintenance of alternation and the education by work for the world of work, facing the current scenario; Sustainable diversified vocational training as a possibility for sustainable development of the environment. Rural education in a changing field - we need to understand what are the new contexts, what are the diversities and how does CEFFA stand in the face of this new reality, how will it be made and maintained. (Focus Group, 2018).

The concern about the relationship between work and education in education through alternation, pointed out by the group, addresses the need to understand the working world in the face of changes in production relations in discussion with education through alternation, prompting a glimpse of work in this context.

To understand the role of alternation in the relationship between education and work, we use Gimonet's (2007) contributions on the four purposes of alternation, namely: the first - orientation - the learner in contact with the socio-professional means so that it guides them in choosing a more focused profession;

The second - adaptation to work - is a means of guaranteeing the interrelationship between theory and practice for a good technical qualification, besides knowing the necessary requirements for a specific professional area; The third refers to *qualification and professional identity* and understands that the exercise of a profession requires much more than the set of theories provided in the curriculum of a particular course. Direct contact with the work of each professional area, according to Gimonet (2007, p. 119), is necessary beyond the theoretical apparatus, "... to build a lasting professional identity". The fourth purpose refers to the general education or global education of the person, referring to the process of integrated education in which education is more than schooling, since it must enable the human being to produce itself as a social subject. Thus, knowledge and knowledge must be "... used as building elements of humanity". (Silva, 2007, p. 51).

Understanding work as an educational principle necessarily involves understanding that it is also a way of producing knowledge and the construction of knowledge is the objective of the educational field, therefore, the responsibility of the school. By this logic, it is necessary to overcome the

understanding that knowledge construction takes place primarily through research centers. About this issue, Demo (2002) stresses the importance of dealing with it also in basic education, understanding that research is a technique that will enhance learning.

Therefore, the value of the relationship between work and education, between theory and practice, is emphasized in the process of investigation and awareness of oneself and the reality in which the individual is inserted. The need to understand the student's context is a starting point in the process of knowing, so that the individual can establish connections between their community, the national and global context, perceive the influence of different scenarios in the construction and definition of their reality of themselves, as a social subject.

Given the above, in rural education, the relationship between education and work as an educational principle speaks to some of the fundamentals of alternation, taking into account its origin and its development, proposing: the concept of school for the working class, which denies in its essence the dualist school, that is, the existence of a school of humanistic education for the rich and a vocational school for the poor, in order to maintain their subordination to the dictates of

capital, which fights for the establishment of a single school of work based on Gramsci (2001); the understanding of work as an educational principle in the educational organization of the school for the rural working class; the conception of education understood as omnilateral human education (Frigotto, 2012); and education through alternation as a educational proposal for rural schools, among other elements.

On the third research question, which intends to know what the proposals about emancipatory strategies are to increase the contribution in the integrated education and the development of the environment, several possibilities were indicated. For a didactic organization of speech analysis, they were grouped into: a) CEFFAs and rural education; b) the strengthening of the alternation system of education; c) the education of collective people.

Regarding the first grouping, referring to the third research question, the CEFFA and rural education, the following proposals were suggested: “CEFFA and the commitment to a new project for society; continue the work of the alternation system of education towards the guarantee of the right of rural education in the countryside”. (Focus Group, 2018).

Concern with the construction of a new social order is present in the context

of the formation of CEFFAs, as Caldart (2009) points out, since rural education rejects the concept of education that does not question the established order, in which workers are out of the production process. The author emphasizes that rural schooling and its educational project aims at the transformation of society, so that the population can emancipate themselves, overcoming the process of expropriation.

Given this reality, the members of CEFFAS understand that it is necessary to locate such centers and the alternation system of education within the scope of the right of rural workers to have access to a school and to an educational project that is relevant in the countryside and for the people who live there in the construction and production of knowledge.

Regarding the strengthening of the alternation system of education, the following proposals were established: “to transform the experiences into productive forces of the alternation system of education and rural education; continually fight for public policies for the recognition of alternation education and its maintenance ... ”. (Focus Group, 2018). Regarding this topic, the group asserts that it is necessary to reflect on the pedagogical experience of the CEFFAS, in order to transform them into causes that can strengthen the alternation system of

education and rural education. One issue worth noting is the difference between rural education and the education of the countryside:

... arose at a certain time and in a historical context and cannot be understood in itself, or only from the world of education or from the theoretical parameters of education. It is a real movement to combat the status quo: practical movement, of objective or practical purpose, of practical tools, which expresses and produces theoretical concepts, criticism of certain views of education, education policy, projects of the countryside and the country, but which are interpretations of reality constructed in order to guide concrete actions / struggles. (Caldart, 2009, p. 40).

The struggle for specific educational systems that speak to rural needs can lead to debate about the importance of instituting CEFFAs in rural communities and the alternation system of education as proposals that fit the educational needs of rural people, ie, it is not any school, any educational system that may contribute to the development of the countryside. For this reason, fighting for the maintenance of the rural population, family farming, the sovereignty of food and the preservation of species of fauna and flora is a tool of resistance for the continuity of the lives of people and the planet.

Therefore, guiding the field of public policies to create laws, guidelines and

norms that help strengthen CEFFAs and alternation may be one of the ways to assist in the construction and reconstruction of the Brazilian rural space.

Another increasingly relevant battle is the expansion and publicity of alternation. For this reason, a good strategy may be to intensify the dialogue with universities, institutions responsible for teacher education, so that the modality of the rural education and the alternation system of education are included in the course subjects.

Regarding the *education of collective peoples*, point three of the third research question, what is emphasized is the need to build understanding of the collective in the struggle for land and maintenance of the rural population in the current confrontation of the aggressive development of agribusiness. So, we seek in the theoretical foundations of the alternation system of education elements that help to understand the relevance of the collective.

On this occasion, some points about the common placement are listed, one of the mediations of the alternation system of education that presents the potential creator of the idea of collectivity, by making possible:

... sharing the gains gained, discoveries and questions within the group, all commonality makes each

alternate “teacher” to his peers. Each offers others materials to learn. It gives him power through the knowledge that they alone possess. Each one can receive from others, notions, technological, professional, human reflections ... their learning is also being stimulated by the confrontation of ideas and the way of analysis and synthesis that is being operated. The pedagogical value of shared and opposing experiences is much stronger than those of information accumulated in books or given by the monitor during “classes”. It is an education of sharing and cooperation that works in common, an education of action, implication and accountability. (Gimonet, 2007, p. 45).

Therefore, it can be noted that the education of collective peoples appears in the context of education through alternation as an element linked to the proposal of this kind of education, as well as the rural education movement. Moreover, it is essential to note that forming the idea of collectives is something that is born from the nature and constitution of the rural population in Brazil, marked in its beginning by the expropriation of land.

The organization of collectives appears in this context as a viable alternative to the confrontation of agrarian capital that, over the years, has expelled the rural population from the rural space.

Final considerations

The research used was organized through a reflection about the CEFFAs and the alternation system of education from the associative management, integrated education, the alternation system of education and the development of the environment.

As partial results, the research demonstrated the importance of the alternation system of education and the CEFFAs for the education of rural people, the strengthening of rural agriculture, the production of knowledge in and of the countryside, for the education of collective peoples and the recognition of the bond between the assumptions of education through alternation and the National Rural Education Movement. This has contributed to the latter choosing the alternation system of education as an educational solution for the rural population, giving new significance in the wake of Brazilian history.

The research subjects are clear that the struggle of rural education for the emancipation of workers has in the research an educational principle, a pedagogical support capable of enhancing the educational process and contributing to the education of self made intellectuals of the working class. This education comes from the insertion of the student in their reality, the use of the dialectical method of

knowledge production, the development of critical capacity, questioning and knowledge of the problems and potential of a given reality.

From this perspective, education through alternation is essential for the materialization of this conception of research and knowledge production. In view of this, the discussions produced in this research strengthen the idea that alternation contributes and will contribute to sustainable development, the strengthening of rural agriculture and the education of collective peoples, overcoming the listed challenges, building and rebuilding practice driving change for life.

It is understood that the development of the countryside is present in the project of society and development defended by the social and trade union movements that make up the rural education movement in Brazil, which is opposed to the hegemonic model of development. However, the understanding of alternation in the integrative conception, in the assertive practice of its theoretical and practical elements may, in fact, favor and trigger transformations in the school and in the communities, when conceiving the education from the perspective of human emancipation.

Finally, it can be argued that education through alternation is an efficient educational system in deepening the relationship between education and work, as an educational principle and enhancer of the sustainable development of the countryside; that is if there is coherence between all the components of education and a close relationship between the purposes, the objectives, the didactic-pedagogical mediations and the emancipatory intentionality of the educational project.

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Article Information

Received on July 29th, 2019
Accepted on October 29th, 2019
Published on December, 19th, 2019

Author Contributions: The author were responsible for the designing, delineating, analyzing and interpreting the data, production of the manuscript, critical revision of the content and approval of the final version published.

Conflict of Interest: None reported.

Orcid

Janinha Gerke

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6903-8125>

Silvanete Pereira dos Santos

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9814-1781>

How to cite this article

APA

Gerke, J., & Santos, S. P. (2019). Alternation and its 50 years: a training possibility of Countryside Education. *Rev. Bras. Educ. Camp.*, 4, e7292. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20873/uft.rbec.e7292>

ABNT

GERKE, J.; SANTOS, S. P. Alternation and its 50 years: a training possibility of Countryside Education. **Rev. Bras. Educ. Camp.**, Tocantinópolis, v. 4, e7292, 2019. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20873/uft.rbec.e7292>

