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## Resignification of education in community homes in times of COVID 19 Community Homes Vs Covid 19: A Resignification of Socio-educational Work

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### RESUMEN

#### Palabras Clave:

Agentes Educativas, Covid-19, Familia, Teoría Socio Educativa.

El presente artículo desarrolla los resultados de la investigación titulada caracterización de la labor docente de las agentes educativas de los hogares comunitarios del ICBF en tiempos de Covid-19, cuyo objetivo fue caracterizar el rol de las agentes educativas generando una resignificación de su labor socioeducativa, por lo tanto, fue necesario analizarlo bajo un paradigma cualitativo y desde un enfoque hermenéutico el cual permitió hacer un abordaje exhaustivo desde la perspectiva del Trabajo Social, debido a que se realizó la interpretación del conocimiento de la experiencia que los autores le otorgan a su contexto, captando así el verdadero sentido del mensaje, aportándole a la línea de Trabajo Social y acción socioeducativa del GITS (Grupo de Investigación de Trabajo Social).

Teniendo en cuenta los principales resultados siguiendo la teoría socioeducativa, se encontró que las agentes educativas realizaron un acompañamiento y seguimiento a los procesos de formación no solo de los niños y niñas, sino también de sus cuidadores, adquiriendo conocimientos y habilidades que lograron mejorar su calidad de vida, especialmente en situaciones abrumadoras e imprevistas como se presentaron a partir de la pandemia generada por el covid-19, donde se gestaron contextos desfavorables a la hora de desarrollar las distintas actividades educativas que se venían desarrollando en la vida cotidiana de una manera presencial.

En cuanto a una de las conclusiones más relevantes se resaltó la importancia de las agentes educativas (madres comunitarias), ya que estas establecieron estrategias académicas las cuales le permitieron desde su rol colaborar de una manera armónica a mitigar los problemas que se presentan alrededor de la familia de los menores que son beneficiarios de estos hogares comunitarios y lograr que por medio de la virtualidad se realizaran las actividades que se venían desarrollando en la educación inicial resignificando su papel en la sociedad.

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**ABSTRACT**


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**Key Words:**

Educational Agents, Covid-19, Family, Socio-Educational Theory.

This article develops the results of the research entitled characterization of the teaching work of the educational agents of the ICBF community homes in times of Covid-19, whose objective was to characterize the role of the educational agents generating a resignification of their socio-educational work, therefore, it was necessary to analyze it under a qualitative paradigm and from a hermeneutic approach which allowed an exhaustive approach from the perspective of Social Work, due to the fact that the interpretation of the knowledge of the experience that the authors of the research was made, Therefore, it was necessary to analyze it under a qualitative paradigm and from a hermeneutic approach which allowed an exhaustive approach from the perspective of Social Work, due to the interpretation of the knowledge of the experience that the authors give to their context, thus capturing the true meaning of the message, contributing to the line of Social Work and socio-educational action of the GITS (Social Work Research Group).

Taking into account the main results following the socio-educational theory, it was found that the educational agents accompanied and monitored the training processes not only of the children, but also of their caregivers, acquiring knowledge and skills that managed to improve their quality of life, especially in overwhelming and unforeseen situations such as those arising from the pandemic generated by covid-19, where unfavourable contexts were created when developing the different educational activities that were being developed in daily life in a face-to-face manner.

One of the most relevant conclusions was the importance of the educational agents (community mothers), as they established academic strategies that allowed them to collaborate in a harmonious way to mitigate the problems that arise around the families of the children who are beneficiaries of these community homes and to achieve that, through virtuality, the activities that were being developed in early education were carried out, redefining their role in society.

**Introduction.**

This article will be based on the research work carried out in the human settlement of La Esperanza in the municipality of Villa del Rosario, Norte de Santander, which was developed in the first semester of 2020 and where it was possible to collect the necessary information to determine the role of the educational agents in the face of the virtuality caused by covid-19 in relation to the resignification of their socio-educational work in the community homes of the ICBF (Colombian Institute of Family Welfare). The community welfare homes were created in 1986 certified by CONPES under a strategy that addresses the needs of protection, care, nutrition, health, education and psychosocial development of children under six years of age, operating in places close to vulnerable families from the opening in the homes

of community mothers; also, the program is aimed at strengthening family practices to mitigate the risk factors to which they are exposed inside the home, through the generation of formative spaces from the participation of the family and community (ICBF, 2018).

As a result of the transforming process that community mothers have had, now educational agents are the pedagogical practices directed to the evaluation and strengthening of their knowledge, for which they work through community educational pedagogical projects (PPEC) raise strategies that are developed on a daily basis with minors responding to the needs and particularities of the context, so that educational agents, families, communities and institutions participate to promote collective work and guide the work developed in favor of children and

families (ICBF, 2019).

It also showed the modifications made to the pedagogical project so that the children could continue to develop their activities at home. It was also possible to see that not only was work being done at the educational level but also at the level of family welfare, since the activities that would normally be carried out in the community home under the supervision of the educational agents, given the new conditions, are carried out by the parents in such a way that they are replicated in the children, thus showing creativity, commitment and dedication to the socio-educational work.

At the same time, it is important to describe the way in which the socio-educational action is modified from the work of the educational agents, taking into account the technical, conceptual and legal referents by which the community mothers are guided to respond to the comprehensive care of the minors, for which, they carry out an accompaniment in the elaboration of the pedagogical proposals, which are structured from the interests and needs of the children and strengthen the elements that constitute their pedagogical practice, being a tool to bring the children and families closer to learning.

The importance of recognizing the role of the educational agents and its recognition by the parents, taking into account the theoretical contributions made by Payne (1995) who points out that a role responds to the behavior of the individual in accordance with the interaction with others, creating expectations and responses in relation to the position he/she occupies in a given context. The above has made this process develop in an adequate and effective way in the face of the different challenges that arose during this period when virtuality was just being implemented as an educational tool for the children of these community homes, it has been possible to collect the characterization of the family and the approach it has regarding the re-signification of the role of the educational agent in the beneficiary homes.

## Materials and methods

For the realization of the materials and methods, a qualitative research paradigm was used to understand the social phenomena explored from the perspectives of the different populations in their daily lives. For Gonzales (2013) qualitative research studies the experience of the subjects from the social processes, from particular characteristics of the people who originate it, analyzing from the dialogue where they express their beliefs, mentalities and feelings, being these aspects those that lead the actions of the subject. The essence of the qualitative is formed in everyday life, and only through an investigative process is it possible to perceive its totality with greater clarity.

It is a way of being in the world and how through our experience we read (interpret) what happens to us, what surrounds us, our interactions with other subjects and if you will, the discourses that through dialogue these other subjects share with us. (p. 5). Thus, it allowed to understand the different manifestations of the educational agents, from the field of action used by the children, their families and the community, obtaining an approximation to the reality that allowed them to present in a better way the different actions or attitudes taken during the unusual context presented by the pandemic and how they were able to adapt in an appropriate way, giving continuity to the development of the activities.

Key informants were selected based on the representation of the properties of the social structure of the content in its singularity (Navarrete, 2000, p.167). Therefore, eight educational agents and eight representatives of parents participated with the following characteristics: time of linkage of no less than five years in the Community Welfare Homes program, caring for a heterogeneous child population and actively participating in the training provided by the ICBF and local institutions. Regarding the parents or caregivers of the children, the selection criteria were that they belonged to the community homes of the selected educational agents, with at least two years of involvement in the community welfare homes program and two parents with a child with special educational needs; in turn, that they actively

participate in the selection process.

### **Data collection instrument and its validation.**

For the collection and validation of the data obtained through the instruments, the information was drafted in a design that allowed an approach to the population under study, taking into account the primary sources that were a level of information that emerged a content through direct contact with the key actors.

According to Diaz, L., Torruco, U, Martinez, M and Varela, M. (2013) the semi-structured interview “Presents a higher degree of flexibility because it starts from planned questions, which can be adjusted to the interviewees, its advantage is the possibility of adapting to the subjects with enormous possibilities to motivate the interlocutor, clarify terms and identify ambiguities” (p.163).

The interview was conducted with the intention of analyzing the impact generated by the educational agents (community mothers) in the development process of the children in their family system and the social recognition they assign to their functions, in turn, the pedagogical model they used in their daily activities with the children was identified, distinguished the current procedure of their work in times of pandemic resignifying education in community homes.

On the other hand, in order to produce interaction among the educational agents, the focus group will be used to discern the importance of group dynamics through shared experiences and knowledge. This is how this technique makes “attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions emerge in the participants; this would not be easy to achieve with other methods. In addition, they allow a multiplicity of views and emotional processes to be obtained within the context of the group”. (Gibb, as cited by Escobar and Bonilla, sf, p. 52). Now, for the processing of information will be carried out from the triangulation process as postulated by Ander-Egg (2011) “Designates the

combined use of data, research, theories and methods in the study of a fact, phenomenon or social process, in order to obtain greater validity and reliability of the data collected” (p.135).

Thus, the research process is also immersed in the implications of the humanitarian crisis COVID-19, so each method was used from the virtual approach from communication resources, which enabled significant information in real time, given the conditions arising from the pandemic, therefore, it is attributed a positive connotation of the situation, giving meaning to something that was not visible, something that did not exist for society, this is intended to show the challenges of research that the subject puts in place to reach a result. (Vanegas, Vélez, and Vidarte, 2010).

### **Discussion.**

In order to analyze the socio-educational practices of the educational agents, the socio-educational action proposed by Méndez (2014) is taken as a theoretical reference point, emphasizing In the elimination of factors that generate social problems through the deepening of knowledge of the individual and group realities of the individual, based on an action plan that promotes the empowerment and capabilities of the subjects to organize, interact and act in their own social transformation to improve their quality of life.

Thus, the educational agents enhance the knowledge of the different subjects; the beneficiary children and parents, making visible their conditions and protagonism in their pedagogical process. In this regard, they refer that “At the beginning of the year we make a characterization of the children and based on that we make the pedagogical project, we have our objective, intentionality” (AE02) “The ICBF gives us some guidelines and then we must start from the needs of each home” (AE03) “we have a meeting with the users and we train them” (AE08).

In this sense, given the conditions arising from the current COVID-19 situation and the self-care

measures for non-spreading, the educational agents established collaborative learning as a new teaching method that consists of a reassignment of roles by parents. In this way, García et al. (2012) point out that: The union and exchange of efforts among the members of a group takes place in such a way that the common and group objective pursued produces, at the end of the process, an individual benefit in each and every one of the participants (p.63).

On the other hand, according to the speeches of the educational agents “Now, as we worked this year, it was virtual, it was up to us with the parents, they called each other and explained how to do the activity, the activity of the week” (AE01).

Thus, given the interest in considering the influence of the different systems in the child’s well-being, the systemic family theory used by Ponce de León and Fernández (2010) is integrated in which the complex interactions in this unit are described, providing a function that, from the above, provided a broader understanding of each member of the family and their performance in carrying out the activities through virtual media in compliance with the pedagogical plan by the educational agents for this atypical situation.

This made it possible to evidence the role in initiating changes in the measurement system where the participation of the following levels of development and in the development of the children who are beneficiaries of the community home program takes place. Given this Martiniello (1999, cited in Pizarro, et al., 2013) raises the participation of parents from four dimensions:

Parental responsibility in parenting practices, care and protection of their children, develops the basic conditions for the child to attend an educational center. Parents as teachers, are actively involved in the work done in the educational center, supervising and supporting the continuity of their tasks from home.

Parents as support agents make their contribution to the improvement of the service, from donations, materials, time and participation and accompaniment in the activities. Parents with decision-making

power by playing roles that may affect or benefit the objectives and intention of the center, including being part of committees or representatives.

As a reference to this, the correspondence of these dimensions and what each of the homes represent was expressed by the participants. In parental responsibility, two comments made by parents stand out: “the help of us as parents is to take the evidence of the tasks, fulfilling the work sent to us weekly, as a mother I think that parents should be committed to the project” (PF04) “Pay immediate attention to the guidelines indicated to make it more bearable” (PF06).

However, the new modality of community homes has evidenced the weakness of the guardians as the main educators in terms of unwillingness and disobedience to be guided by their parents “Learning with them is not the same now because of the virtuality, because they pay attention to you, but not to the parents, the work was mostly done by them, but only the older children do it as such, while with me they work, so it is very difficult because they do not work the same as with me” (AE06).

A very important dimension in the re-signification of socio-educational work refers to psychosocial strategies; educational agents in their practices cannot ignore the psychosocial aspects of children that emerge from their reality, so the more complex it is, the greater the demand to attend to them, Therefore, the influence of adults is notable to the extent that their mediation drives the development and learning of children, as pointed out by (Salas, 2001) children’s learning is carried out through the intervention of adults and even children with more life experience.

## **Conclusions.**

The beneficiary households of the association of parents community homes human settlement La Esperanza de Villa del Rosario allowed to propose strategies that strengthened their role as a result of the understanding of the recognition of their work at present. It is conceived as agents of social transformation in those families that are

in a situation of vulnerability to the extent that it enables the cognitive-linguistic and socio-affective development that is determined by the interaction in the educational and family context in which the infant is, therefore, a toolbox will be designed as support material for intervention directed to the educational agents with the purpose of strengthening their work in the acquisition of knowledge from the theoretical-conceptual as shown in the research process by the educational agents and the beneficiary parents.

The role of the educational agents from the actors' point of view is represented in seven subcategories: leader, empowerment, caregiver, professional performance, professional profile, professional qualification, inter-institutional management. Their role is built on the basis of the change in the family and individual scenario of the child, which from their subjectivity do not contemplate a specific role, but are constantly changing in response to the specific needs and characteristics of the children. This diversity of roles adopted by the educational agents has configured their active role in the life of the children and their family group.

The work of the educational agents re-signified in front of Covid 19, focuses on the socio-educational capacity to observe mainly the child from its particularities, which allows the education received by the minors to be comprehensive; Therefore, it is essential the connection between the main caregivers of the children, in this case, between the educational agent and the parents, being so, the participants incorporate playful learning as the main tool, which through virtuality has represented a challenge for the educational agents and has generated the need to modify the practices they previously developed; on the other hand, for the parents it represents a new way of educating their children from activities that they did not previously apply.

Finally, we recognize the meaning that the families of the beneficiary households of the association of parents community homes in the human settlement of La Esperanza de Villa del Rosario have about the role of the educational agents as an integral and indispensable person in the development process of

their children and the strengthening of the family unit by instilling care and upbringing practices that they unconsciously applied in a negative way and also recognizing the need that they have as representatives to be an active part of the formation of their children, In this way, the community welfare homes program is essential to comply with the activities that parents must carry out to provide their children with welfare and, at the same time, to have solid trust in the security under which they will be in a community home, especially this vision is strengthened by the image of protection and love that the educational agent reflects.

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