

Chapter 29

RESCUE: Improving Students' Retention through Successful Relations at School

Alida Favaretto

ITST Andrea Palladio, Italy

Iola De Monte

ITST Andrea Palladio, Italy

Carmela Billotta

ITST Andrea Palladio, Italy

ABSTRACT

The RESCUE project (Retention in Secondary education: a European Network), carried out within the VETPRO mobility action funded by the E.U. Programme "Lifelong Learning," has implemented the school-family alliance under a new European dimension. Parents, headmasters, teachers from two vocational schools in Treviso, psychologists, and a voluntary organization for educational support have been involved in a mobility entailing a visit to some highly reputed European schools. The project has intended to explore innovative practices apt to improve the concept of joint responsibility among all the members of the school community, with a special focus on retention (seen as the contrast to the drop-out problem), namely on the permanence of the students within the training cycles until attainment of adequate educational levels.

INTRODUCTION

School operators only too well know the problem of alienation from studying and maladjustment to the teachers' methodologies on the part of many students.

Teachers don't always respond to the young people learning styles in an updated way and are often unable to meet the juvenile uneasiness and disquiet which become manifest almost daily and quite remarkably in the school context.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-2122-0.ch029

The Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR) and all the educational institutions are voicing such problem unceasingly and during the last few years have been quite determined on the promotion of a strong alliance among all the parties of the school life.

An act of law, introducing a “Joint Educational Agreement” to be signed by all the school members, has been the impulse for a large-scale action which has marked a turning point in all Italian schools. Such change is described by the Italian parents’ association “A.Ge. Onlus” as follows:

the fundamental shift from the formative contract to the joint educational agreement leads to a no longer unilateral but consensual endorsement. The new law provision related to the agreement introduces a radical innovation both as to the formative contract (Charter of Services) dated 1995 and to the pre-existent school regulations, moreover also as regards the collegiate bodies (A.Ge. Onlus, 2011, press release).

Various initiatives following the above-mentioned law provision (identified as DPR n.235, issued on 21.11.07 and enforced into the Italian Educational system on 1st September 2008)¹, have been set up in schools to foster an active participation and dialogue among all the school actors, apt to create a favourable climate to teaching and learning.

The “A.Ge. Onlus” association, interested in a higher school quality, in the enhancement of the educational methods and in successful school/students/parents relations, has urged the teachers for many years:

into working cooperatively, having advanced knowledge in pedagogy as well as psychology (social psychology and related to the age of development) and being able to manage the complexity accompanied by the wear of the daily routine, often repeated. Thus the advisability to assess, in order to admit the teachers to in/training courses,

their relational competences (to be implemented during the formative route) also through aptitude tests (A.Ge. Onlus 2011, ibidem).

More and more, in the recent years, it has become a widespread opinion among all members of the social community that the teacher must have the following qualities: “aptitude for teaching, relational and educational competences, methodological skills”(A.Ge. Onlus 2011, ibidem).

Hence the increased need on the part of the teacher to improve the above professional aspects with adequate preparatory courses and research work, leading him/her to the acquisition and implementation of good practices in the two spheres of relationships and methodology, inseparable in his/her job.

However it is essential that the teacher’s educational action is accompanied by a strong support and qualified sharing of goals on the part of all the school community (parents included), in order to achieve meaningful and durable training outcomes.

The urgency to solve the pressing educational problems arisen to a considerable degree in the years 2007 and 2008 gives the project team of the vocational school “Andrea Palladio,” located in Treviso (Italy), the idea to explore the European educational systems to get acquainted with the scenarios in which the teachers operate in the other countries when facing all the above issues.

The overall project idea is described in the two chapters of this book respectively entitled *RESCUE: improving students’ retention through successful relations at school* and *ROLE TEACHER: teaching/learning competences in a European scenario*.

The chapters refer to two projects implemented within the Lifelong Learning Programme/Leonardo da Vinci (LLP/LdV) funded by the European Union.

The initial goals of analysis and field research in Europe, planned by the project team, subsequently expand on the strength of the inputs coming from

15 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/rescue-improving-students-retention-through/72080

Related Content

Learning IT: where do Lectures Fit?

Tanya McGilland Samantha Bax (2007). *Integrating Information & Communications Technologies Into the Classroom* (pp. 99-111).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/learning-lectures-fit/24034

Problem Solving Processes and Strategies in the Virtual Interactive Student-Oriented Learning Environment

Junjie Shang, Morris Siu Yung Jong, Fong Lok Leeand Jimmy Ho Man Lee (2013). *Cases on E-Learning Management: Development and Implementation* (pp. 223-239).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/problem-solving-processes-strategies-virtual/68102

Machine Translation Systems Athanasios Tryferidis Electrical and Computer Engineer, MLS SA, Greece

Athanasios Tryferidisand Theofanis Korlos (2008). *E-Learning Methodologies and Computer Applications in Archaeology* (pp. 211-220).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/machine-translation-systems-athanasios-tryferidis/9124

Incorporating "World View" into the LMS or CMS is Best

Katherine Watson (2013). *Cases on Cultural Implications and Considerations in Online Learning* (pp. 71-80).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/incorporating-world-view-into-lms/68059

Blended Learning Internationalization from the Commonwealth: An Australian and Canadian Collaborative Case Study

Shelley Kinashand Susan Crichton (2013). *Cases on Cultural Implications and Considerations in Online Learning* (pp. 101-132).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/blended-learning-internationalization-commonwealth/68061