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CHILDREN EDUCATION: AZOREAN'S MEMORIES OF THEIR CHILDHOOD PLAYING

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Abstract: This study aims at better understanding of people's memories, in the Autonomous Region of the Azores, concerning the importance of childhood play in their education. A few decades ago the people on these islands developed their games and toys from experiences related to some of the traditional local jobs and some aspects of life on the islands. Through the people's memories is possible to learn more about the experiences they went through as children (future-adults) and how they acquired the educational and cultural basis of the group/ society they now belong to. From an analysis of cultural resources of the childhood play of various generations (adults and elderly people) we aim to discover the educational potential of play in relation to children's development and education. Data were collected through a questionnaire that was sent to several people from all Azores islands. Qualitative data was first content analyzed according to a system of categories, which resulted from both, quantitative and qualitative analysis of data collected through. Of all the "best remembered games and play" there is a general preference for traditional games, although there is difference between the people from different islands, and also according to different generations and gender. Old people better remember playing with and enjoying construction toys with their family. In this study we are able to conclude that in general childhood play was important in Azoreans people education "in particular in promoting the development of social and emotional skills.

Keywords: children education, regional culture of childhood, traditional playing