

## **Communication 3 For a reflexive governance of (home) education: the democratic learning process experienced through the joint inquiry of parents and school supervisors**

**Christine Brabant**

Université de Montréal  
Faculté des sciences de l'éducation  
Département d'administration et fondements de l'éducation  
Professeure adjointe  
[christine.brabant@umontreal.ca](mailto:christine.brabant@umontreal.ca)

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Looking for a different kind of education for their children, with more space for their participation, some parents choose home education (homeschooling). This phenomenon might reflect the school systems' limits or obstacles towards different types of children and educational visions. In this perspective, its regulation is a challenge that, if solved creatively, could renew our understanding of a truly democratic, pragmatic and participatory governance of education.

Difficulties observed in Quebec (Canada) are the limits of the present judicial instruments for regulating a relatively new educational practice like homeschooling, the gap between official norms and applied norms (Protecteur du citoyen, 2015), a symptom of both parents' and school administrators' lack of agreement with these norms (Brabant, 2010, 2015), and the oppositional argumentative dynamics of discourse on the pros and cons of homeschooling (Brabant, 2010).

The Reflexive Governance theory (Lenoble and Maesschalck, 2010) approaches the regulation of public interest questions, such as education, in a practical manner, like a joint problem-solving process. In this framework, democratic learning from all actors (individual, collective, and institutional) should be supported in order to generate systemic reflexivity, in the spirit of organisational learning described by Schön and colleagues (1971, 1978, 1994, 1996). Thus, it aims towards Dewey's (1916, 1927, 1938) democratic ideal through democratic participation, collective action and social inquiry. This theoretical framework suggests that (home) education actors could collectively establish the rules of coexistence.

This research aims: 1) to better understand the democratic learning process necessary for reflexive governance, by describing the learning process experienced through the joint inquiry of parents and supervisors about homeschooling regulation; and since this process might not take place without the researcher's intervention, 2- to accompany these actors in elaborating commonly produced propositions for home education regulation.

In this training-research, a "homeschooling field experts committee" was offered an "accompanied auto-training" program, consisting in a basic problem-solving process.

A case study of the group's learning experience was carried out. Data was collected by participant observation, meetings notes, observation checklists, official and work documents. Discursive data was summarized, and then validated by the participants. Analysis used collective skills grids, theoretical models and a list of stakes derived from previous studies.

Two types of learning occurred: pragmatic learning, consisting in the organization of practical conditions favorable to learning; genetic learning, of the group's auto-

transformation and upgrading to a level of proper capacity for engagement in governance. The subprocesses and the main conditions for success are described, as well as the joint «solution» devised by the committee.

The actors demonstrated a capacity for joint social learning that could be fruitful for home education regulation, as well as other types of “different education”. This concrete and contextualized problem-solving process offers a better understanding of relationships between citizens and institutions, when democratic governance and policy-making are challenged by emergent movements, like homeschooling and different schools.

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