

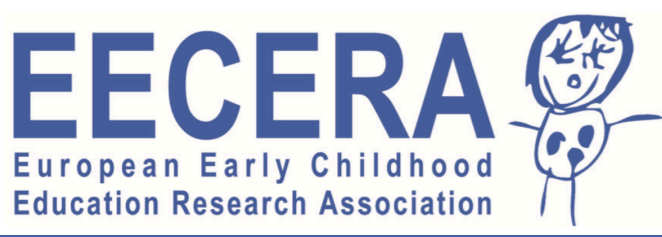
Studies on quality in early-childhood education: a systematic literature review



Cristina Mesquita¹, Catarina Vasques¹, Maria José Rodrigues¹, Rui Pedro Lopes²

¹Research Centre on Basic Education, Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, Portugal

²Research Center on Digitalization and Intelligent Robotics, Instituto Politécnico de Bragança, Portugal



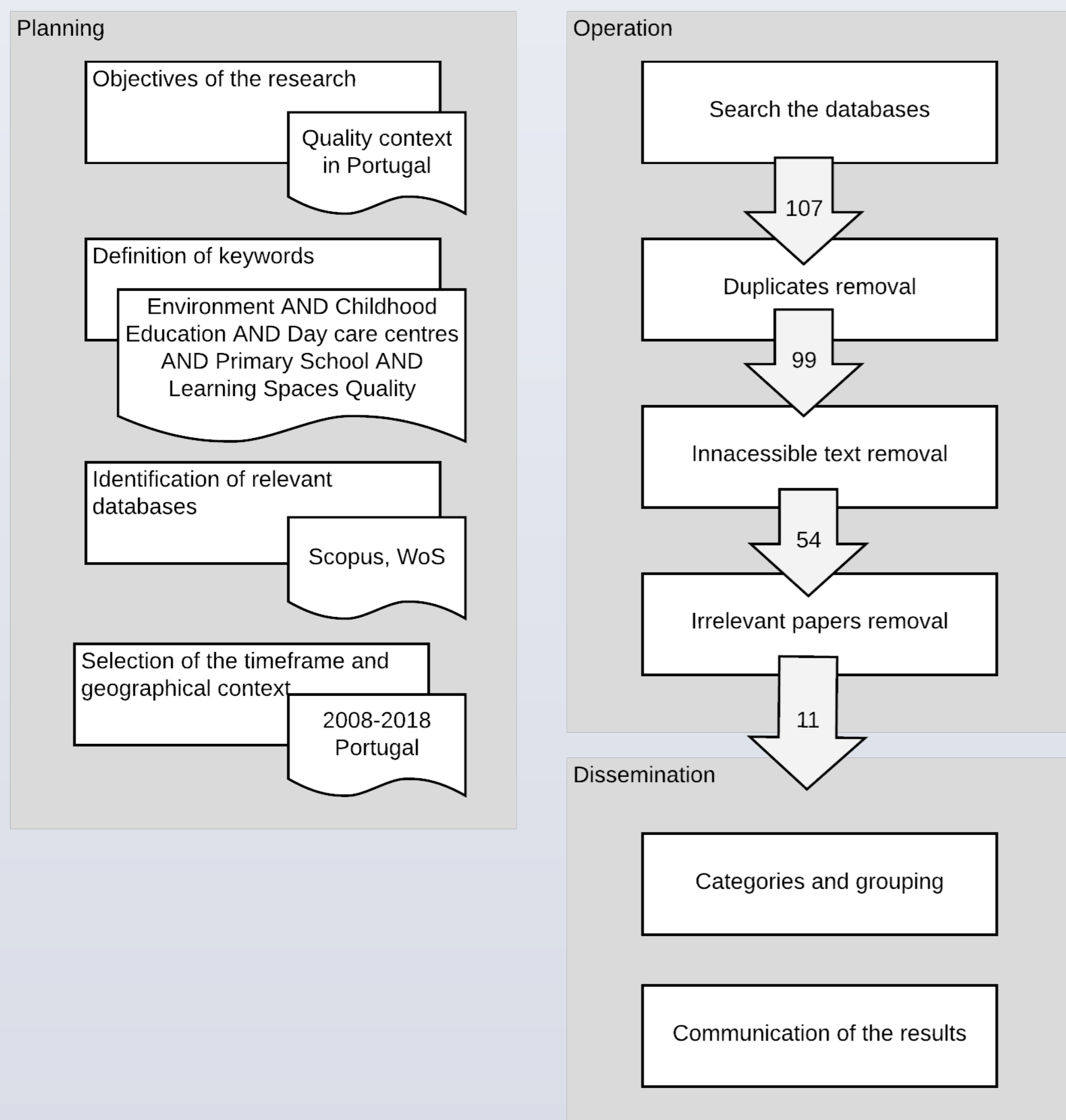
FRAMEWORK AND OBJECTIVES

Quality is a simultaneously polysemic concept (Pascal and Bertram, 1999; Moss and Pence, 1994) and controversial, as it includes several views, and it is not possible to find in the literature a proposition that can finally define this term. Quality is, according to Oliveira-Formosinho (2001), a constructed concept of a subjective nature, referring to values, beliefs and interests and not an objective and universal reality.

Between researchers and experts, the understanding of the criteria that define and constitute a quality service varies, because it depends on values and beliefs about the subject, so if we extend the issue to professionals, parents, politicians, the community and other agents who linked to early childhood education, there is a greater diversity of criteria on what quality is and its definition becomes even more diverse. In this context, we wanted to know the perspectives that stand out in the studies conducted on the Portuguese context. This presentation shows a systematic review of the literature produced on the quality of early childhood contexts between 2008 and 2018.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The systematic literature review was performed according to the following workflow



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The number of papers published per year reveal several years without references (2008, 2009, 2010, 2013 and 2018). The higher concentration of paper happens in 2015, followed by 2012, 2016 (Figure 1).

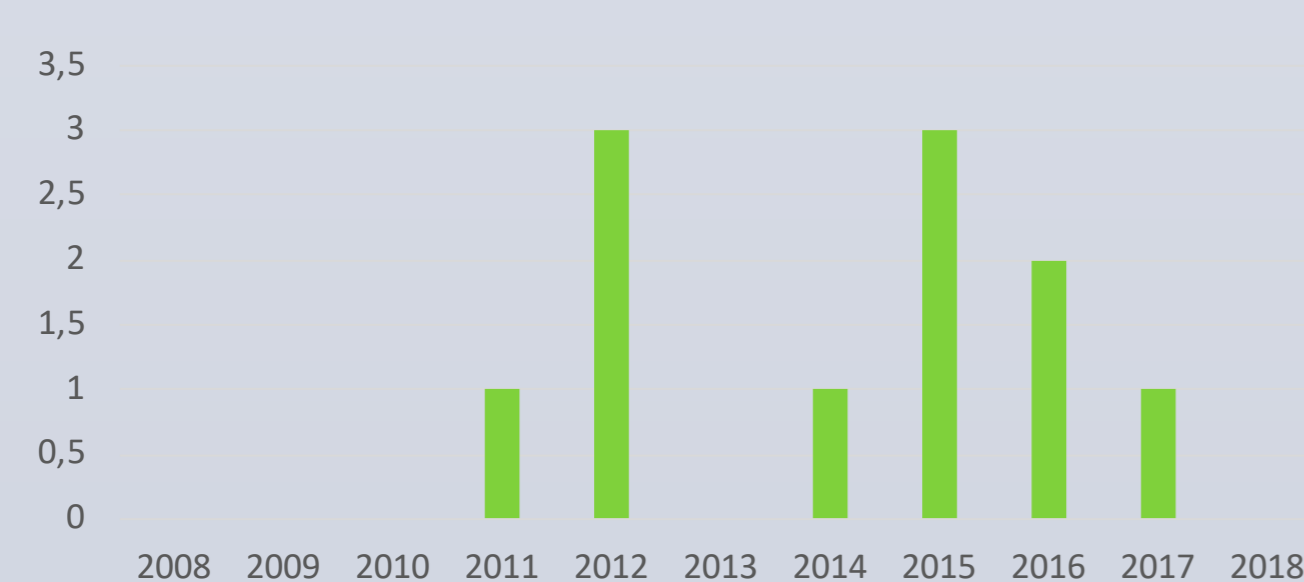


Figure 1 – Papers published per year.

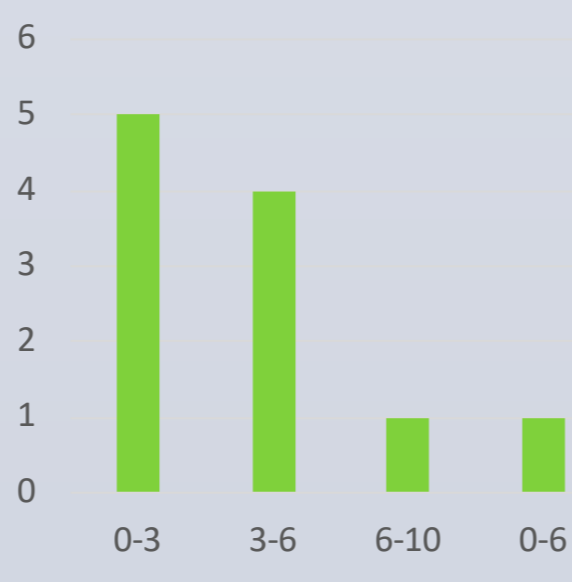
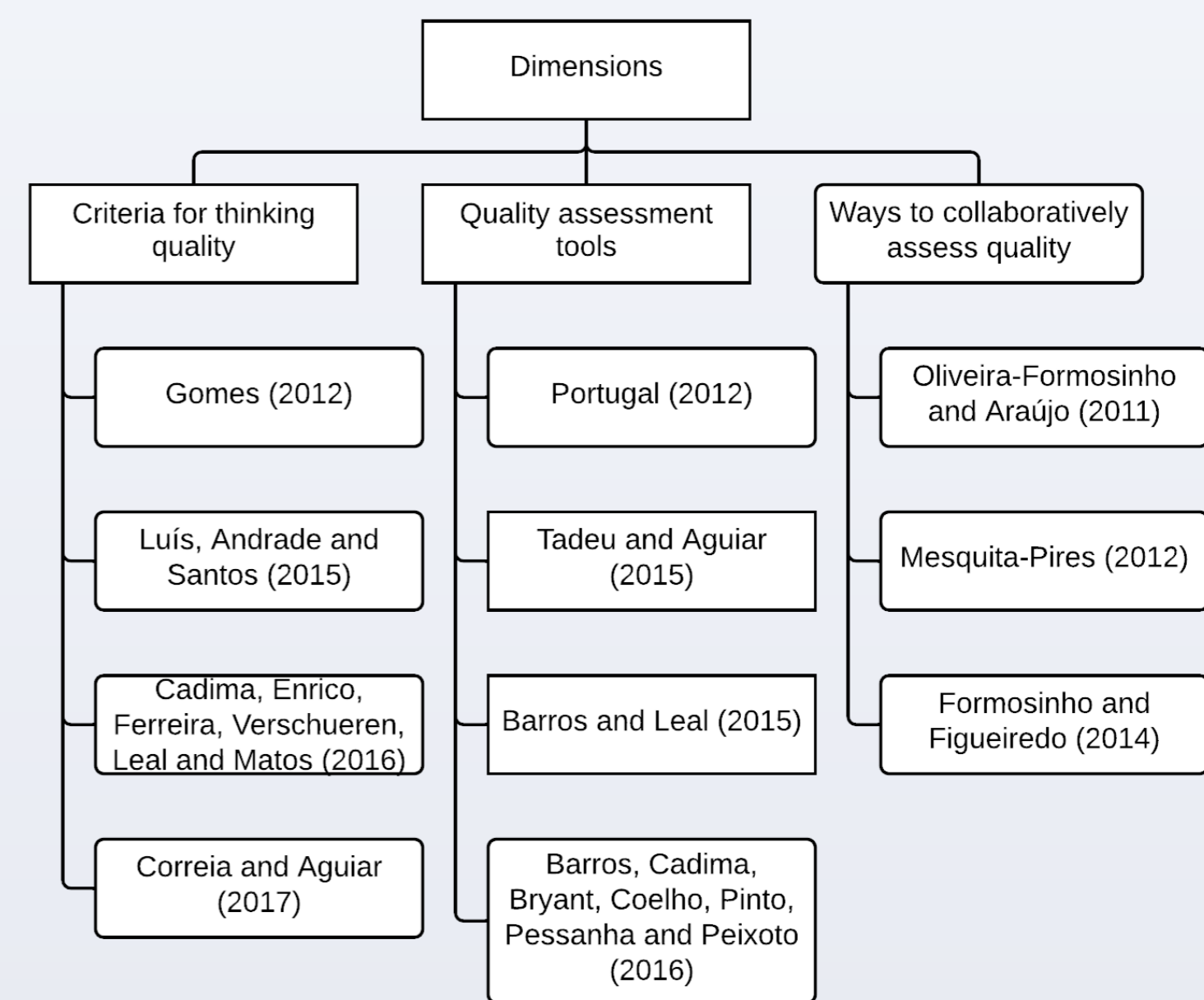


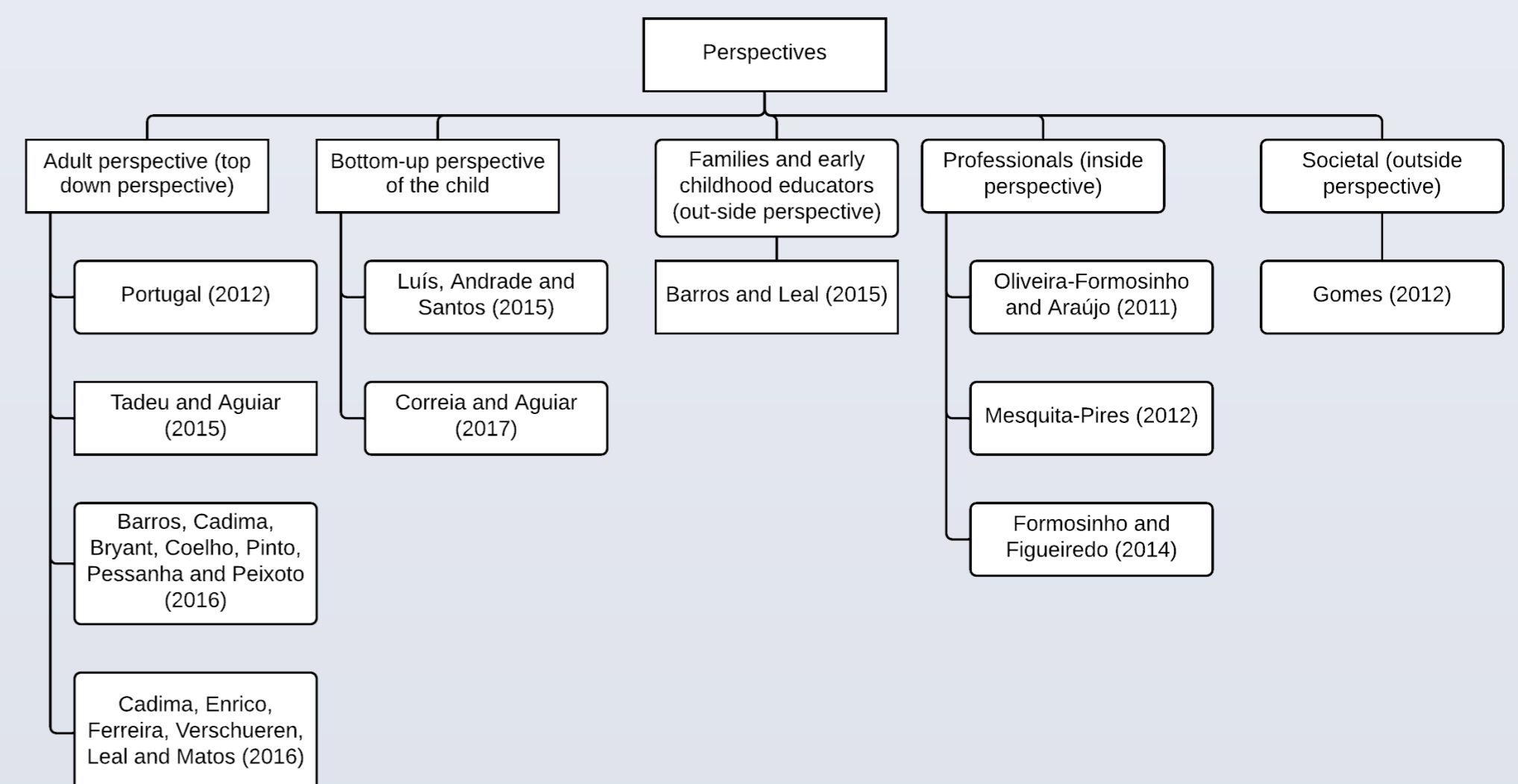
Figure 2 – Papers per context of education.

The analyzed papers highlight the quality issues considering the education of children from 0 to 10 years of age. Four focus on educational contexts for children from 0 to 3 years old, four in contexts that integrate children from 3 to 6 years old, one developed in an institution for children from 0 to 6 years and one in the age from 6 to 10 years old (Figure 2).

Analysis according to the categorization by Oliveira-Formosinho and Barros Araújo (2004)



Analysis according to the categorization by Katz (1998)



CONCLUSIONS

From the analysis, it is clear that there is still a focus on the definition of the criteria for quality and on the instruments necessary to assess it. A lower number of studies focus on the quality as an ongoing process, that involves all the dimensions (instruments, criteria and processes) and the integration of the perspectives of all the actors, described by Katz (1998).

This study is limited by the reduces number of papers that resulted from the search process. There are many papers that do not have accessible text and that were not considered. To mitigate this issue, we are now preparing the inclusion of the papers, thesis and dissertations available in institutional repositories.

REFERENCES

- Barros, S., Cadima, J., Bryant, D. M., Coelho, V., Pinto, A. I., Pessanha, M., & Peixoto, C. (2016). Infant child care quality in Portugal: Associations with structural characteristics. *EARLY CHILDHOOD RESEARCH QUARTERLY*, 37, 118–130. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2016.05.003>
- Barros, S., & Leal, T. B. (2015). Parents' and teachers' perceptions of quality in Portuguese childcare classrooms. *EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION*, 30(2), 209–226. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-014-0235-4>
- Cadima, J., Enrico, M., Ferreira, T., Verschueren, K., Leal, T., & Matos, P. M. (2016). Self-regulation in early childhood: The interplay between family risk, temperament and teacher-child interactions. *EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY*, 13(3), 341–360. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17405629.2016.1161506>
- Correia, N., & Aguiar, C. (2017). Choosing classrooms: A structured interview on children's right to participate. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 82, 54–62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2017.01.004>
- De Freitas Luis, J., Andrade, S., & Santos, P. C. (2015). The attitude of the early childhood educator and child participation as benchmarks of quality in education [A atitude do educador de infância e a participação da criança como referenciais de qualidade em educação]. *Revista Brasileira de Educacao*, 20(61), 521–541. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782015206112>
- Formosinho, J., & Figueiredo, I. (2014). Promoting equity in an early years context: The role of participatory educational teams. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 22(3), 397–411. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2014.912902>
- Katz, L. (1998). Cinco perspectivas sobre qualidade. In ME-DEB - Núcleo de Educação Pré-escolar (1998). *Qualidade e Projecto na Educação Pré-escolar*, (3), (pp.15-40) Lisboa: ME.
- Mesquita-Pires, C. (2012). Children and professionals rights to participation: A case study. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 20(4), 565–576. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2012.737242>
- Moss, P., & Pence, A. (Eds.) (1994). *Valuing quality in early childhood services – New Approaches to defining quality*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Oliveira-Formosinho, J. (2001). A visão da qualidade da associação Criança: contributos para uma definição. In J. Oliveira-Formosinho, & J. Formosinho, (Orgs.). *Associação Criança: um contexto de formação em contexto*. Braga: Livraria Minho.
- Oliveira-Formosinho, J., & Araújo, S. B. (2011). Early education for diversity: Starting from birth. *EUROPEAN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION RESEARCH JOURNAL*, 19(2, SI), 223–235. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2011.574410>
- Pascal, C., & Bertram, T. (1999). *Desenvolvendo Qualidade em parcerias: nove estudos de caso*. Porto: Porto Editora.
- Portugal, G. (2012). Proposal of an alternative and 'authentic' assessment in early childhood education: Children follow-up instrument [Uma proposta de avaliação alternativa e 'autêntica' em educação pré-escolar: O sistema de acompanhamento das crianças (SAC)]. *Revista Brasileira de Educacao*, 17(51), 593–744. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-24782012000300006>
- Tadeu, B., & Aguiar, C. (2016). The quality of center-based child care and education for infants [A qualidade observada em salas de berçário]. *Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa*, 32(4). <https://doi.org/10.1590/0102-3772e32426>
- Xavier Gomes, E. (2012). The (Un)bearable Educational Lightness of Common Practices: On the Use of Urban Spaces by Schoolchildren. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 31(3), 289–302. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11217-012-9289-4>

Acknowledgments

This paper is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union under the project Teaching Learning Space from Early Childhood Education – TELESPA (Ref. No. 2018-1-RO01-KA201-049545). The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the National Agency and Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

