ABSTRACT

Democracy, in general terms, can be considered as a set of "fundamental personal rights" (Touraine, 1996, p. 42) that includes individual liberties, human rights, economic development and social justice (Crick, 2002).

It is in the family institution that establishes the first contact on a social level, developing standards, norms and values (Reis, 1996), thus having direct influence in shaping social behavior of young people (Oliveira, 1994; Relvas and Alarcão, 2002, Formiga, 2004), sense of identity (Matheus, 2007; Hall, Lindzey and Campbell, 2000) and political identity (eg Camino, 1996; Kohlberg, 1981).

Framed this issue is relevant to analyze the behavior of young people facing different conceptions of democracy (eg Braga da Cruz, 1984, 1990; Menezes, 2005, Ferreira, 2006) taking into account the parental educational styles.

The present study aimed to examine in what way the educational parenting styles influence the construction and adoption of different conceptions of democracy and democratic values of the students. Thus, we applied three instruments: the Scale of Support Rights of Cultural Minorities (Nata and Menezes, 2007), Scale of conceptions of Democracy and Education Parenting Styles Inventory, and these last two instruments designed specifically for this study.

The study was conducted with a sample of 208 students of the Schools Group Rodrigues de Freitas, aged between 14 and 22 years old.

Factor analysis obtained in the range of conceptions of democracy originated four factors - social dignity, discrimination, political participation and freedom of expression; The inventory of educational parenting styles obtained two factors, corresponding to the dimensions of acceptance and control.

In summary, the results indicated that, on the whole, sociodemographic variables do not appear to contribute to the understanding of the adoption of different conceptions of democracy and support the individual rights of minorities.

Only variables education of students and qualifications of parental figures show have some influence on the dependent variables. Additionally, it is important to note the high percentage of variance explained by the variables discrimination (14%) and
freedom of expression (17.3%), which indicates a strong association with the styles of these educational parenting.

It was found that students who identified parents as having an educational style with greater parental acceptance are students who have less support in the face of positive discrimination of the gipsy minority. As well as students who identified parental figures as having greater acceptance, most found that freedom of expression is an important feature of democracy.

**Keywords:** Parental education styles, conceptions of democracy