

129 - THE DANCE AND ITS INFLUENCE OVER THE CHILD'S SOCIAL ABILITIES AT SCHOOL AGE

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INTRODUCTION

The dance develops in the individual who practices it the improvement of motor¹, cognitive and social² processes, by providing a wide body culture experience, acts, therefore, in the integral formation of the human being³.

According to the aware acting of the professional who will apply the dance to school-age children, it will be possible to make emerge and form an individual with knowledge of their true bodily-expressive possibilities⁴.

The dance, besides a "form of knowledge, of aesthetic experience and expression of human beings" acts as an element of social education of the individual, in search of a critical, thinking and transformer being, upon their needs and social-cultural experiences.

This research will focus on the social aspect and aims at seeking knowledge of the extent to which the dance, consciously worked, influences or assists in the development of social skills of children in school age.

Such skills are behaviors needed for a successful interpersonal relationship and may include the behaviors of starting, maintaining and ending conversations; asking for help; making and answering questions; making and refusing requests; defending yourself; expressing feelings, satisfaction and dissatisfaction; asking for change in the behavior of others; dealing with criticism and praise; admitting mistakes and apologizing and listening empathically, among others⁵.

The dance fits perfectly in the seizure of social skills. By having the characteristic of being a playful and collective activity, the dance can be a powerful instrument of facilitation in interpersonal relationships, in the development of self-esteem, self-confidence and sense of responsibility⁶. Children have the opportunity to learn, by the body's own experiences, to act freely in the space in which they live, interact with people that surround them, express feelings and thoughts through different forms of body communication, in addition to understand their personal and collective actions in time/space where they act⁶.

We know the importance of stimulating these skills because teenagers with high probability of presenting risk behaviors (use of drugs, cigarettes, alcohol, sex without protection etc.) and are the ones who enter the adolescence with few social skills and therefore less alternative ways to achieve their social and personal goals⁷.

The use of drugs constitutes a serious public health problem, with serious consequences in personal and social future of young people and the whole society⁸. In Brazil in 2008, for example, it was estimated about 600 thousand users, or 0.5% of the population between 12-65 years⁹.

Other risky behavior is the practice of unprotected sex, which can result in unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. In 2004, a nationwide survey estimated that in Brazil about 593 thousand people, between 15 and 49 years of age, live with HIV and AIDS¹⁰.

Regarding the use of tobacco, in Brazil it is estimated 200,000 deaths/year¹¹ and the combined use of alcohol and tobacco further increases the risk of cancer. Besides causative agent of cirrhosis in interaction with other risk factors such as hepatitis B, alcoholism is related to 2-4% of deaths by cancer¹¹.

In addition to risk behavior, there is growing evidence that the deficit of social skills correlate with poor academic performance¹² and long-term marital crises, delinquency, and varied emotional disorders such as anxiety^{5, 7}.

The Social skills of a child in school age child.

The child begins to establish social relationships at the beginning of their lives, usually their first social relationship is with the mother, then with the father, brothers, grandparents¹³. Depending on how these social relations were discussed in childhood, they will arrive in school age as popular or unpopular children, which is subdivided into rejection and negligence⁷.

The most important ingredient in popularity is the social skill. Popular children are more skilled in establishing social interactions with other children, in communication and integraion¹⁴. Generally, they have a good school performance, are able to control the expression of inner emotions, take into account the desire of the companions, are available and friendly and have leadership skills. Consequently, they form more intimate and reciprocal friendships. The formation of friendships is very important for the school-age children. At this stage they are more critical with friends than with unknown ones and, when conflicts occur, children care for solving the problems of the disagreements with non-friends, so they learn to deal with conflicts. Thus the popular child has more opportunities to practice important social skills⁷.

The dance for the child popular has the effect of the maintenance and improvement of social skills. The unpopular child refers to the child rejected in its group, with a high number of negative appointments and low number of positive appointments¹⁵. It is that one whose companions don't like playing with, for example, they have a greater tendency to develop behavioral problems, becoming excessively antisocial and aggressive, which can be both physical or psychic and is directed to another person or to themselves¹⁶. These children are also those belonging to the group of risk of juvenile delinquency, low academic performance and truancy, they tend to abandon school between two to eight times more than the popular ones¹⁷.

The dance has in its essence the playful characteristic. For the rejected child, the practice is taken as one way of dealing with aggressiveness and improves their ability to relate with others. It makes possible for the child to express symbolically what was repressed, expand accumulated feelings of tension, insecurity, frustration and aggression, allowing awareness in a natural way, fluent and without guilt¹⁸.

The neglected child is that individual who has no friends and rarely is chosen as the preferred by the companions. This child generally achieves good school performance, but is more susceptible to depression and loneliness. Being virtually ignored by colleagues, they also have an unfavorable emotional prognostic competence in their development¹⁹.

Dance for the neglected child will be fundamental, providing constructive practices and actions by encouraging understanding for action and stimulation at making decision and also thinking about the results of their actions, thus enhancing self-esteem, self image, self confidence and self concept²⁰.

As a facilitator for learning social skills, the practice of dance can stimulate the development of communication between the participants, with properties to develop interpersonal relations, skills and new interests, related or not to everyday

tasks, offered by cultural, physical activities and leisure that are based on the interests of individuals and increase the overall level of understanding of the physical and social reality²¹.

Dance allows us to create conditions to establish relationships with people and with the world²⁰.

METHODOLOGY

The research, of qualitative feature, is composed of two steps, first for literary revision, and the second step refers to an exploratory research.

In the first step, the selected sources, primary and secondary ones, are from the library of Universidade Positivo, and articles published in magazines and journals. Based upon completion of this step, a questionnaire was prepared with two questions. The first refers to behavior detected in female students at the beginning of dance classes and the second question concerns the behaviors changed by Dance. The two questions have in common a listing of behaviors that indicate the level of social skills.

In the second step, of exploratory nature, the research was developed at the Universidade Positivo, which contained in its structure the project "Initiation to Sports – Dance – 2009", offered to the community. The project began in March 2009 and ended in December/2009. The classes lasted fifty minutes, twice per week.

16 schoolgirls, seven to eleven years old were selected to participate in the project, the ones with the attendance above. The questionnaire was delivered to the parents of students in December/2010, for signaling according to their own perceptions, the behaviors observed in their daughters. It was also clarified, the purpose of the research and the possibility to indicate as many items as necessary. The term of free consent was signed at the time of registration. Through the students, the questionnaires were handed in at the following class, for being studied.

The collected data were analyzed by the frequency that the items were marked by the parents of students.

RESULTS AND ARGUMENTS

In chart 1, the values obtained are presented on the first question "what was detected at the beginning of dance classes". This question was to investigate the level of social skills that the children presented submitted at the beginning of the course..

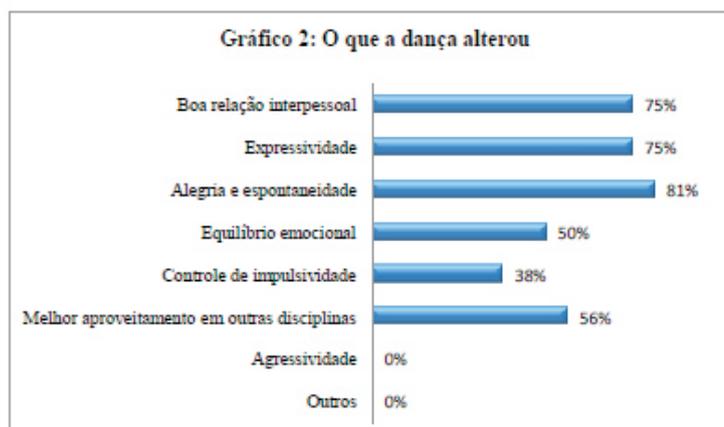


The item "Ease to lead groups (25%) is a characteristic typical of children who join the schoolchildren with well-developed social skills, so direct to children of popular stamp.

The items "Ease to activities in groups" (75%) and "ease of learning new dance steps" (56%), common data of the popular child and unpopular neglected.

"Difficulties to make friends" (25%), "obey rules" (6.3%) and "aggressiveness" (0%), point to children being unpopular, being that those who have difficulties to obey rules and aggressiveness belong to unpopular rejected class.

Chart 2 presents the results for the question "What was changed by Dance". The purpose of this question is to investigate the probability of dance being factor modifier of social skills, according to what parents noticed in their daughters.



The greatest indicator corresponds to the "joy and spontaneity" (81%), important factor for the unpopular neglected children, which tend to depression and loneliness. Now, the lowest indicator is about "aggressiveness" (0%). The practice of

dance has not increased levels of aggressiveness in none of the children; however, it becomes necessary more specific researches about the influence of dance in decreasing aggressiveness, since in the chart 1, the sample does not provide children with aggressive behaviors at the beginning of classes.

"Good interpersonal relationship" (75%) is an extremely important factor about social skills both for popular and unpopular children. The increased ability to ensure a good interpersonal relationship encompasses more opportunities to practice important social skills. The increase in the level of "expressiveness" (75%) becomes essential in particular for the unpopular rejected child, to express symbolically what was repressed, however, does not relieve its importance to the other children.

The popular and unpopular neglected children have in common the good school performance, however, the item "better use in other disciplines" (56%) of the chart 2 had the same frequency as compared to the item "ease in learning new dance steps" (56%) of the chart 1. The data show that the practice of dance does not lower the performance in school and has the effect of maintaining the same. As well as the aggressiveness, it becomes clear that more research is needed for a better discussion of this item.

The factor "emotional balance" (50%) and "control of impulsiveness" (38%) are capabilities to control the expression of inner emotions. Taking into consideration that they are features of the popular child and that in the chart 1, at the beginning of classes 25% of the sample was classified as popular, it becomes possible to say that besides maintenance and improvement of social skills, dance provides conditions for the unpopular child to develop socially to become or approach the characteristics of a popular child.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

It is important that the dance instructor investigates how children reach the school age, to learn which procedures to perform watching not to increase the degree of rejection or negligence, or decreasing the level of social skills, providing methodologies to increase the possibilities for the student to experience these skills and know to fit according to the parameters established by their culture, in a context of socially accepted.

Thus, with the literary revision and exploratory research, we can say that the dance can be used as a powerful tool in improving the relationships of students, since it involves actions directed to the social dimension of the individual.

The dance develops and enhances social skills, thus avoiding, the probability of these school children reach the adolescence with risk behavior in the short and long term, may cause irreparable harm to their lives.

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THE DANCE AND ITS INFLUENCE OVER THE CHILD'S SOCIAL ABILITIES AT SCHOOL AGE

ABSTRACT

This study, of a qualitative nature, has the purpose of deepening the knowledge about the relationship between dance, an art, and its possible influences over the development of social skills of children in school age. The study was composed of two steps, first for literary revision and the second concerning an exploratory research, developed through a survey applied to parents of students who participated in the study, 16 girls from 7 to 11 years, who had frequency exceeding 70% in Universidade Positivo project "Initiation to Sports – Dances – 2009". From the analysis of literary revision and parents awareness about their daughters, we found that the dance at school age is a powerful instrument to develop or enhance social skills, thereby, lowering the chances of those children present behaviors of risk in adolescence and therefore causing irreparable harm throughout their lives..

KEY WORDS : Dance, Social Development, School Age.

RÉSUMÉ

Le présent étude s'agit d'une étude qualitative et a l'objectif de approfondir la connaissance sur la relation qui exist entre la danse et les influences sur le développement de las habilités sociaux des enfants qui sont en âge scolaire. L'étude a été réalisée en deux parties, la première partie s'agit d'une révision littéraire et la deuxième partie une recherche exploratoire, cette recherche a été réalisée en utilisant un questionnaire appliqué chez des parents de les élèves qui avaient participé de l'étude, 16 jeunes filles de 7 à 11 ans qui avaient une fréquence de participation supérieure à 70% au projet de La Universidad Positivo, a Curitiba-Paraná- Brésil, "Initiation sportif" – danses dans l'année de 2009. La conclusion c'est que la danse en âge scolaire est un instrument puissant pour développer ou perfectionner les habilités sociaux, en diminuant les probabilités de ces jeunes filles présenter comportement de risque au début de l'adolescence, et, causer dommages pendant leur vies.

MOTS-CLÉS: Danse, Développement social, âge scolaire.

RESUMEN

El presente estudio, de naturaleza cualitativa, tiene el objetivo de profundizar el conocimiento sobre la relación existente entre la danza, un arte, y las posibles influencias en el desarrollo de las habilidades sociales del niño en la edad escolar. El estudio fue compuesto por dos etapas, siendo la primera referente a una revisión literaria y la segunda relativa a una investigación exploratoria, desarrollada por medio de un cuestionario aplicado a los padres de las alumnas que participaron del estudio, 16 niñas de 7 a 11 años, que tuvieron frecuencia superior a 70% en el proyecto de la Universidad Positivo "Iniciación Esportiva – Danças – 2009". A partir del análisis de la revisión literaria y de la percepción de los padres sobre sus hijas, concluimos que la danza en la edad escolar es un instrumento poderoso para desarrollar o perfeccionar las habilidades sociales, disminuyendo así, las probabilidades de que estos niños presenten comportamientos de riesgo al ingresar en la adolescencia y, por consiguiente, daños irreparables a lo largo de sus vidas.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Danza, Desarrollo Social, Edad Escolar.

ADANÇA E SUA INFLUÊNCIA SOBRE AS HABILIDADES SOCIAIS DA CRIANÇA NA IDADE ESCOLAR

RESUMO

O presente estudo, de natureza qualitativa, tem o objetivo de aprofundar o conhecimento sobre a relação existente entre a dança, uma arte, e as possíveis influências no desenvolvimento das habilidades sociais da criança na idade escolar. O estudo foi composto por duas etapas, sendo a primeira referente a uma revisão literária e a segunda relativa a uma pesquisa exploratória, desenvolvida por meio de um questionário aplicado aos pais das alunas que participaram do estudo, 16 meninas de 7 a 11 anos, que tiveram frequência superior a 70% no projeto da Universidade Positivo "Inicição Esportiva – Danças – 2009". A partir da análise da revisão literária e da percepção dos pais sobre suas filhas, concluímos que a dança na idade escolar é um instrumento poderoso para desenvolver ou aperfeiçoar as habilidades sociais, diminuindo assim, as probabilidades dessas crianças apresentarem comportamentos de riscos ao ingressarem na adolescência e, por conseguinte, danos irreparáveis ao longo de suas vidas.

PALAVRAS CHAVES: Dança, Desenvolvimento Social, Idade Escolar.