52 - BARE FEET: FROM THE CULTURE WITH CLAY TO THE ART OF DANCING IN THE ALTO DO MOURA COMMUNITY IN CARUARU/PE

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ABSTRACT

Dancing is a way of seeing oneself and seeing the world, to feel your body and use it to experience other feelings. The body is a vehicle of expression, communication, concern and understanding of reality. The artistic manifestations appear as propellants of that vehicle and result as a resource to assist in the formation of the individual, treating the body as a whole. Thus, our goal was to take the dance as an artistic-expressive-educational demonstration to the youth of Alto do Moura, contributing to their training and demystifying / deconstructing prejudices related to dance. Children and teenagers from the age group between 10 and 17 years old of both genres were the target audience, totaling 30 participants. Classes were held in the Club of Craftsmen in Barro Alto and Moura Residents lasting 2 hours a week. There was application of survey to the participants of the dance project, in order to know who they were, as well as their desires and cultural and artistic interests. Group dynamics, motion sequences, choreography creation and improvising were experienced in class in order to develop corporal expression and awareness, to work on interaction with others and with the space, respecting diversity and stimulating creativity. The project culminated in the development of choreographies, with the participation of the children and adolescents in events organized by the partner organization and the Institute itself. We conclude that the dance has brought many contributions to the education of these children and adolescents, enriching interaction, artistic imagination and expanding the horizons of artistic and expressive language, and you can deconstruct prejudices related to dance and gender.

Keywords: Dance. Education. Culture.

1.INTRODUCTION

This article is a result of an extension project registered in the Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia de Pernambuco, IFPE – campus Caruaru, and had a partnership with the Associação de Moradores e Artesãos em Barro do Alto do Moura (ABMAM). The Alto do Moura, a neighborhood very close to the institute, was then the place where this dancing project was applied for both children and teenagers.

The Alto do Moura is known as the “America's largest center of figurative arts” through the work of artists with clay. The art with clay is the mark of this place and is also inherited from one generation to another. It is not rare to find entire families dedicated only to the art of handcrafting.

Thus, many children and teenagers are involved with this type of work, which is something that takes up part of their day. This is a real conjuncture, yet challenging and thirsty for changes capable of setting the path to improvements in the quality of life of children and teenagers in the neighborhood.

Therefore, the project first envisioned enclosing children and teenagers to an artistic-expressive activity as well as promoting the development of esthetic sense. Second, it also fostered the expression of feelings through corporal language by combining several movements. Third, it extended the movements of every children and teenager, bringing the understanding of corporal language. Last but not least, it promoted the critic analysis of different forms of movements as well as their meaning within an educational, cultural, and social context.

In other words, the project aimed to show to both the children and teenagers that the same feet that trample the clay and hands that mode the different artistic items can also be used to dance.

2.THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

We live in a society that contributes to the formation of fragmented people conditioned by the daily information that comes from both the media and an inherited culture. These aspects impose standardized models and influence directly on the capacity of perception and action in society.

In this sense, dancing would be a way to rescue and broaden the perception of children and teenagers, by favoring the interaction of the body, mind and emotions through the contact of body expression.

The language of dancing is also interaction among people and the development of motivity and creativity. And also, it can be seen as a way of esthetic appreciation, which is commonly presented in a socio and cultural way.

We know that the capacity of expressing yourself through body language it is intrinsic to the human being and it is also a characteristic that is continually improved since the oldest civilizations. Following this line of thought, movements are one of the main ways of interaction among humans and the world around them, from the simplest actions to the set of symbolic and complex ones that make up the art and dance.

Paraphrasing the curricular referential for child education (BRAZIL, 1998), the movements of a child are more than a displacement in the space; it is, in fact, a language that allows a child to act in a physical and human environment, mobilizing others through the expressive content.

It is the body the vehicle of expression, communication, and comprehension of reality. The artistic manifestations are presented as the right propulsion of this vehicle as well as reflected as resources to give support in the formation of the individual – treating the body in its totality.

Osssana (1988) also refers to the values of creation and formation of dancing that lead to the magnification of body expressions. Pereira et al (2001, p.61) also says that “(…) dancing is the fundamental content to be studied/worked at school: by dancing, students can get to know themselves and others better as well as explore the world of imagination and emotion.”

We have to see dancing through the perspective of art, that is, not only to be admired by distance, but to be learned, comprehended, experienced, and explored in a attempt to lead the individual to understand one's body and all dimensions. Gariba (2005, 2007) says that dancing is an activity capable of expanding knowledge by the relation of the individual with oneself, with others, and the world in the development of one's human potentialities.

This dialogue accomplished with the body through dancing will very likely improve the possibilities for movements and

corporal conscience in order to reach goals related to artistic body expression and education. Education, in turn, is indispensable for the individual to understand the reason why and for what making the movements – because the expressive movement must, above all, be conscious.

By referring to the conscious movement, Oliveira (2001, p. 96) points out that: "It is important that people move aware of all gestures. (…) It is necessary that they feel the "sensation of themselves" promoted by our kinesthetic sense." This consciousness sets the human as a man or woman in the world. Being placed as subjects means to interact with the context socio and historical in which the human being put away the fact of having a body to be a body. (GARIBA, 2007).

In addition, "the teaching of dancing (…) has the function to overcome a corporal culture focused on the execution of standardized movements produced by mankind." (GARIBA, 2007, p.161).

Thus, dancing can be a precious tool for the individual to lead with one's necessities, desires, and expectations and also to serve as an instrument to one's social and individual development. With that in mind, we must be sensible to the body values that the individual brings along.

3.METHODOLOGY

Our work has a qualitative background, containing methodological orientation of individual studies and collective ones about dancing, corporal expression, and scientific methodology – that were a synergy applied among the children and teenagers from ages 10 to 17 that live in the Alto do Moura/Caruaru. Nevertheless, as we worked on the project we saw many people from "older" ages such as 22 as well as teenagers from other neighborhoods. As our main goal was inclusion, we welcomed each one of them. Then, we got to the point in which 36 young people were participating in the classes.

The classes were given on Thursdays mornings with the duration of 2 hours (8-10 a.m) and had as a focus the hands-on experience with artistic movements as well as with the rhythmical pedagogy of Dalcroze and the theory of Rudolf Laban (1978, 1990). All of this was followed in order to develop basic concepts for the acquisition of expressive movements.

Initially, it was applied a quiz with 12 questions – some objective and other subjective ones – with the aim to get to know the life of our young participants such as their desires, cultural and artistic interests with regards to dancing and music as well as their experience with clay and expectations for the project.

The work of improvisation and creativity was used as a basic strategy for that children and teenagers could discover their own movements, through the discovery of corporal conscience, image, and corporal ego. Then, making that one of the biggest contributions of dancing to human education, as Marques (apud Souza, 2010) says, be educate bodies capable of creating and giving other meaning to the world of art.

It is important to say that we utilized games of integration, individual exercises to the improvement of conscience and body expression, dynamics that associated the movement to music or to the inner pacing of each participant, besides the formation of groups so as to work the interaction among each other and their own space, facial and corporal expression, conscience of the movements, and stimulus to creativity.

Also, there was the study of some videos during the classes as a way of exposing the different types of dances and music. This is was extremely meaningful especially because that was crucial to break the barriers of prejudice against dancing.

We invited a group of dancing of the IFPE – Campus Caruaru¸ in order to make dancing presentations during the classes, catching the eye of the children and teenagers to get to know other types of dances. Through all these activities, both groups got more and more enclosed and they were able to share experiences.

During the classes, we point out the importance of the respect to the individual particularities of children and teenagers, valuing the process of artistic construction and broadening the cultural and creative horizons of each young boy and girl.

4.DATAANALYSIS

4.1.AGE GROUP AND GENDER

During the divulgation of the extension project in the community our target audiences were children and teenagers in the ages of 10 to 17. However, the project grew bigger as participants of age groups out of our expected range decided to take part in the project. Thus, we worked with people of ages from 6 to 22 years old, what sometimes was a bit problematic due to the age group differences (diverse behaviors).

One of the initial goals of the project was to analyze critically the movements and their meanings within an educational, social, and cultural context. With this aim we tried breaking barriers and prejudice with regards to dancing – something that was fostered since the beginning of the project in the community. Questions like "can a boy participate?" or "is it ballet classes?" were common in the environment.

At the beginning of the activities, we had few boys enrolled and the presence of some of them caused some astonishment and surprise. Both the participants and their parents thought that if the project were related to dancing it should be only offered to girls. Because of conservative and religious aspects, some parents stayed at the club in which the project took place, observing the ways how our classes were developed. We can say that the dialogue was essential in this moment and as these parents comprehended what had been promoted to their children we obtained their acceptances.

With that being said, in fact, initially, there were a higher rate of girls in the project; however, as the project was applied, we had a meaningful increase in the number of boys (11 in total). But, even so, it could not surpass the number of girls that was in average 23.

4.2.CHILDREN AND TEENAGERS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT THE PROJECT

After entering the project, children and adolescents answered to a quiz regarding to what lead them to participate on a dance project, their aspirations, interests and knowledge about dance and music. In addition, we could identify the relationship stablished with the clay culture. The answers were diverse, and we highlight the following: like to dance, minimize timidity, improve health, etc. However, some children and adolescents couldn't express the perspective through the project.

As we previously mentioned, the quiz had twelve (12) questions and was answered by thirty (30) children/adolescents – twenty-three (23) female and seven (7) male. With this information, we confirm that the search for dancing activities comes mostly from women because there is still a strong preconception relative to men who are interested in dance, even in the twenty-first century, where we still hear that dancing is a girl activity.

When asked about what is dance, we obtained answers such as body movement; an art; movements' expression; arts, joy, and movement; pleasant movement; the way that the body dialogues, expresses; and even "a piece of life". Using short and direct words, even those children/adolescents who never had previous dancing experiences tried to describe what the dance is.

Another question revealed that eighteen (18) out of the thirty (30) children/adolescents participated in an artistic group, but only one of them frequented ballet classes, which is specifically focused on dance.

In regards to their preference of dance styles, they listed funk, quadrilha, forró, maracatu, hip-hop, ballet, frevo, and zumba, what allowed us to know what dance styles would be initiated in order to keep them motivated. We noticed that children and adolescents have different music tastes: funk, international songs, sertanejo, MPB, pop, forró, electronic music, hip-hop, and rap.

Through the quiz, we gathered more information about their culture and identified that forró is not the only cultural element in their perceptions; they understand that the capital of forró also has a large cultural diversity. The previous knowledge about the approximation of the children and adolescents with the dance was very important because, through this set of information, we could introduce other dance styles to them.

When questioned about the improvements that dance can provide to them, they included answers such as health improvements; body improvement; mind; emotional; self-esteem; blood circulation; lower levels of timidity; and respect to the differences. With this in mind, it is possible to perceive that they classify dance not only as an option for leisure, but also as a tool for individual enhancement.

The last question was relative to the activity done by a great portion of the population from Alto do Moura. Only nine (9) children affirmed that they do not worked with clay; however, some of their relatives were involved in the confection of clay pieces, either by crafting the pieces, painting, packing, or selling.

In order to create the project's first choreography, we chose a common interest. We thought that using a rhythm that was part of their repertory would be a valid start, and would allow us to introduce other rhythms, cultures, and styles in the future. Therefore, all of the children/adolescents should be familiar to the chosen song; the group and the research students created the choreography. They were organized in groups with five people and which group was responsible for presenting a choreographic sequence using the rhythm of the chosen song. Finally, we united and ordered the presentations creating the final choreography.

There were many advances with the project, such as the development of discipline, memorization and corporal awareness. In order to begin a study about dancing we also developed some homework in which the children/teenagers should search about the meaning of dancing and show us other music style and other types of dances.

On the last day of the project, we made a general evaluation and we came across with the story of some of the participants: “I loved participating in the project. One of the people that most inspire me is my brother (that had already participated in the project but could not continue because he had to work to help his family). I was too shy and now I can express myself better, let alone that when it comes to dancing there is no distinction between boys and girls – something that needs to be changed is the prejudice that many people have about dancing.” Therefore, we can see that they really learned what we had as a main goal, especially when it comes to some stereotypes related to some movements.

4.3.ABSENCE IN THE CLASSES AND DROPOUT RATE OF CHILDREN/TEENAGERS IN THE PROJECT

For having the contact with clay since they were very young, these children and teenagers feel, in the majority, responsible for supporting their parents in the production of handcrafts. For this reason, many of them left the class earlier to finish the urgent demand of handcraft their parents had to produce. The work of the participants varied from “preparing” the clay by trampling it to painting the handcrafts as well as packing it. For many times, on the way to the club, we saw children and teenagers pulling wheelbarrows full of handcrafts made with clay to be burned in a specific kiln. When someone was absent, their peers soon warned us: “he or she is painting/packing handcrafts.”

It is necessary to point out that at any moment these young boys and girls felt obligated to develop the manual work with clay, but the truth was that they freely like it and wish to be agents to spread the local culture with clay someday.

Some teenagers were not able to conciliate the project with their work. Therefore, we had two boys that dropped out the project to work and help their families. We also had three girls who did the same thing to help her parents to painting and packing the handcrafts.

4.4.SUPPORT OF PARENTS

During the project some parents came to us to inform that the behavior of their children/teenagers at school, in social relationships, body conscience, respect and memorization had changed for better. Teachers from other schools also commented the improvements of the participants in the project.

We had a total, unrestricted support of many parents. They were always willing to help, including in the confection of costumes in the performances and presentations.

5.RESULTS

Dancing was presented to the children and teenagers as an artistic, expressive, and educative manifestation and for this reasons we were able to experience it in its whole magnitude. We developed and broadened the corporal conscience and expression of the participants. Through sharing experiences, participants had a better contact with the cultural and esthetical aspect of dancing. The participants also started to minimize the shyness, perceived their own body in the dance, and did not stereotype many movements.

The participation of these children and teenagers in the project “bare feet: from the culture with clay to the art of dancing,” could be seen as a new door with new horizons. There are desires that go beyond simple presentations; they yearn for shows. This work certainly improved the way those children and teenagers dealt with education, presenting them to new experiences with the dance – what allowed them to exercise their minds and bodies as well as work their concentration, discipline, and respect to the differences.

When it comes to the participation of the group of the IFPE – Campus Caruaru called Danç'Art, it allowed the integration and sharing of experiences – besides giving support in surpassing the gender prejudices of dancing, through the participation of boys from the Danç'Art group.

If in only one year we had such an incredible, positive result, we hope that in more one year of work we continue fostering changes for better in the life of many other children and teenagers.

6.CONCLUSION

When it comes to artistic-expressive movements we deal with a gradual development, especially when many young people did not have contact with dancing.

We know that one of the main challenges will continue being to surpass the gender, religious, race, and economic barriers with regards to dancing. Without distinction, people would be able to express their thoughts and feelings by using the

body as the main channel to pass their ideas.

In the eleven months working along with those young boys and girls, dancing brought many contributions to their formation, enriching their interaction and artistic imagination as well as broadening their artistic-expressive body language.

We also know that we are still crawling to advance in the development of the esthetic sense and expression of body language – something that it is part of a process whose result is from short to long term, demanding a continuous and systematic work. Yet, we still hope to develop crucial experiences with this project, using the dance to build a transformative society.

In addition, we cannot forget to show that it is possible demystify prejudices with regards to dancing and its different genders. As many people say: "it not always easy to change, but to try might be worth it" (unknown author).

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BARE FEET: FROM THE CULTURE WITH CLAY TO THE ART OF DANCING IN THE ALTO DO MOURA COMMUNITY IN CARUARU/PE

Dancing is a way of seeing oneself and seeing the world, to feel your body and use it to experience other feelings. The body is a vehicle of expression, communication, concern and understanding of reality. The artistic manifestations appear as propellants of that vehicle and result as a resource to assist in the formation of the individual, treating the body as a whole. Thus, our goal was to take the dance as an artistic-expressive-educational demonstration to the youth of Alto do Moura, contributing to their training and demystifying / deconstructing prejudices related to dance. Children and teenagers from the age group between 10 and 17 years old of both genres were the target audience, totaling 30 participants. Classes were held in the Club of Craftsmen in Barro Alto and Moura Residents lasting 2 hours a week. There was application of survey to the participants of the dance project, in order to know who they were, as well as their desires and cultural and artistic interests. Group dynamics, motion sequences, choreography creation and improvising were experienced in class in order to develop corporal expression and awareness, to work on interaction with others and with the space, respecting diversity and stimulating creativity. The project culminated in the development of choreographies, with the participation of the children and adolescents in events organized by the partner organization and the Institute itself. We conclude that the dance has brought many contributions to the education of these children and adolescents, enriching interaction, artistic imagination and expanding the horizons of artistic and expressive language, and you can deconstruct prejudices related to dance and gender.

Keywords: Dance. Education. Culture.

PIEDS NUS: DE LA CULTURE DE LA GLAISE A L'ART DE LA DANSE DANS LA COMMUNAUTÉ DU ALTO DO MOURA – CARUARU/PE

Danser est une facon de se voir et de voir le monde, de sentir son propre corps et de l'utiliser pour connaitre d'autres sentiments et d'autres sensations. Le corps est un véhicule d'expression, de communication, d'appréhension et de compréhension de la réalité. Les manifestations artistiques figurent comme propulseurs de ce véhicule et se reflètent en recours pour aider à la formation de l'individu, en traitant le corps dans sa totalité. Ainsi notre but est d'amener la danse en tant que manifestation artistique-expressive-éducative aux jeunes du Alto do Moura, contribuant pour sa formation à ladémystification/déconstruction de prejugés relatifs à la danse. Le public cible était composé d'enfants et adolescents, filles et garçons, entre 10 et 17 ans, et comptait 30 participants. Les classes furent réalisées au Clube dos Artesãos em Barro e Moradores do Alto do Moura, sur une durée de 2 heures par semaine. Il y a eu l'application d'un questionnaire aux participants du projet de danse, afin de connaitre qui étaient ces jeunes, leurs souhaits, leurs intérêts culturels et artistiques. Pendant les classes furent développées des dynamiques de groupe, des sequences de mouvements, des créations et improvisations chorégraphiques, afin de développer une conscience et une expression corporelle. Il s'agissait de travailler l'interaction avec l'autre etavec l'espace, tout en respectant les diversités et en stimulant la créativité. Le projet a culminé dans l'élaboration des chorégraphies avec la participation des enfants et des adolescents dans des évènements promus par l'entité partenaire et par l'Institut Féderal. En guise de conclusion, la danse a contribué à plusieurs niveaux à la formation de ces enfants et adolescents, enrichissant l'interaction, l'imagination artistique et en agrandissant les horizons du langage artistico-expressif, sans oublier la déconstruction de prejugés relatifs à la danse et au genre.

MOTS CLÉS: Danse. Éducation. Culture.

DESCALZO: CULTIVO DE ARCILLA PARA EL ARTE DE LA DANZA EN LA COMUNIDAD DE ALTO DO MOURA, LOCALIZADO EN CARUARU/PE

El baile es una manera de verse y de ver el mundo, de sentir su cuerpo y lo utilizar para conocer a otros sentimientos. El cuerpo es un vehículo de expresión, de comunicación, de preocupación y de comprensión de la realidad. Las manifestaciones artísticas aparecen como conductoras de ese vehículo y reflejan los recursos para ayudar en la formación del individuo, tratando el cuerpo como un todo. Por lo tanto, nuestro objetivo es tomar la danza como una manifestación artística y expresiva-educativa a los jóvenes del Alto do Moura, contribuyendo a su formación y desmitificando / deconstruyendo prejuicios relacionados con la danza. El público objetivo eran los niños y adolescentes del grupo de edad entre 10 y 17 años, comprendendo ambos los sexos, totalizando 30 participantes. Las clases se llevan a cabo en el Club de los artesanos en barro y residentes del Alto do Moura con duración de 2 horas a la semana. Hubo la aplicación de un cuestionario a los participantes del proyecto de danza, con el fin de saber cuales son los intereses de éstos jóvenes, sus deseos e intereses culturales y artísticos. Durante las clases se desarrollaron secuencias dinámicas de los movimientos juntos, creaciones e improvisaciones coreográficas para desarrollar una conciencia y expresión corporal, el trabajo, la interacción con los demás y con el espacio, el respeto a la diversidad y el estimulo a la creatividad. El proyecto culminó en el desarrollo de coreografías con la participación de los niños y jóvenes en eventos organizados por la organización asociada y el propio Instituto. Llegamos a la conclusión de que la danza ha traído muchas contribuciones a la educación de estos niños y jóvenes, el enriquecimiento de la interación, la imaginación artística y la ampliación del lenguaje artístico y expresivo, y se puede desconstruir prejuicios relacionados a la danza y al género.

Palabras clave: Danza. Educación. Cultura.

PÉS DESCALÇOS: DA CULTURA DO BARRO À ARTE DA DANÇA NA COMUNIDADE DO ALTO DO MOURA, LOCALIZADA NO MUNICÍPIO DE CARUARU/PE

Dançar é uma maneira de se ver e de ver o mundo, de sentir seu corpo e utilizá-lo para conhecer outros sentimentos e sensações. O corpo é um veículo de expressão, comunicação, apreensão e compreensão da realidade. As manifestações artísticas figuram como propulsoras desse veículo e refletem em recurso para auxiliar na formação do indivíduo, tratando o corpo na sua totalidade. Assim, tivemos como objetivo levar a dança enquanto manifestação artístico-expressiva-educativa aos/às jovens do Alto do Moura, contribuindo para a sua formação e desmistificando/desconstruindo preconceitos relacionados à dança. O público-alvo foi crianças e adolescentes pertencentes a faixa etária compreendida entre 10 a 17 anos, do gênero feminino e masculino, totalizando 30 participantes. As aulas foram realizadas no Clube dos Artesãos em Barro e Moradores do Alto do Moura com duração de 2 horas por semana. Houve aplicação de um questionário aos/às participantes do projeto de dança, com a finalidade de conhecer quem eram esses/as jovens, seus desejos, interesses culturais e artísticos. Durante as aulas foram desenvolvidas dinâmicas em conjunto, sequências de movimentos, criações e improvisações coreográficas para desenvolverem uma consciência e expressão corporal, trabalhar a interação com o outro e com o espaço, respeito às diversidades e estímulo à criatividade. O projeto culminou na elaboração de coreografias, com a participação das crianças e adolescentes em eventos promovidos pela entidade parceira e pelo próprio instituto. Conclui-se que a dança trouxe muitas contribuições para a formação dessas crianças e adolescentes, enriquecendo a interação, imaginação artística e ampliando os horizontes da linguagem artístico-expressiva, sendo possível desconstruir preconceitos relacionados à dança e ao gênero.

Palavras-chave: Dança. Educação. Cultura.