


The relevance of music in human and inclusive formation

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ABSTRACT

This work consists of a qualitative approach regarding the relevance of music education in inclusive education, and specifically, directed to individuals diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder or Visual Impairment. The article begins by introducing the problem that triggered this work, followed by the introduction, first, second and third topic, final considerations and references. The bibliography of this TCC was guided by the educational principles of Carla Pereira dos Santos, Isabel Maria Filipe Irra Marques Bernardino, Keith Swanwick, Teca de Alencar Britto, Viviane Louro; among others.

Keywords: Music, Music Education, Inclusive Education, Disability.

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INTRODUCTION

The present work was developed after two important experiments, carried out voluntarily by the author, in order to understand and answer the following question: how can Music, in its scientific or artistic approach, contribute to the development and formation of special individuals? Searching for and reflecting on the resolution of this question, the following hypotheses emerged: 1) music education can contribute to the development of cognitive, motor and social skills of the target audience; 2) when it comes to its artistic understanding, Music can contribute to the subject's self-knowledge, creative abilities and critical sense. The internships were carried out in two non-profit institutions, based in the municipality of Passo Fundo, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil; the first being the *Christian Association of the Disabled - ACD* - and the second the *Association of Blind People - APACE*. The methodological approach employed in ACD was designed to treat children from 8 to 12 years old, diagnosed with *Autism Spectrum Disorder*, and in APACE, it was sought to adapt the individualized teaching of melodic instruments for adolescents and adults diagnosed with partial or total loss of vision. Regarding the pedagogical practice, we sought to deepen the concepts developed by the author *Keith Swanwick* and his method of "Teaching Music Musically", that is, to bring teaching closer to the baggage of musical knowledge brought by the students, because:

We have to be aware of the student's development and autonomy, respect what psychologist Jerome Bruner calls "the natural energies that sustain spontaneous learning": curiosity; desire to be competent; of wanting to imitate others; need to interact socially. We cannot exempt ourselves from understanding all that is involved with these aspects. (SWANWICK, 1999, p. 67).

In total, six classes were applied, in a time of 30 to 40 minutes for the collective classes, and 1 hour for the individual classes. The duration of the classes was planned to the detriment of the students having considerable distances in their age groups.

MUSIC AS A SOCIAL AGENT

According to Swanwick (1999), Music, in all its aspects, encompasses a form of discourse² as old as the human race, a medium in which ideas about ourselves and others are elaborated in sound forms. The author also argues that, as a discourse, music can be socially reinforced or culturally provocative, with its understanding awakened at the moment when it becomes enlightening and rewarding.

² Swanwick (1999), when presenting the definition of Music as discourse, emphasizes the use of this word in a different sense from the technical or usual one, but as an argument or expression of thought, a symbology; which manifests itself in a variety of ways beyond phrases and words (p.18).



As discourse, music significantly promotes and enriches about ourselves and the world. It is no wonder that music is so often intertwined with dance and ceremony, with ritual and healing, and that it plays a central role in life's landmark celebrations: birth, adolescence, marriage, death (SWANWICK, 1999, p.18).

The author also reflects on being considered the most abstract among all the arts, as it has the power to suggest weight, space, time and vital influences. Not one, but various elements of feelings can be configured within a simple musical encounter, giving it enormous significance (SWANWICK, 1999, p. 35). These feelings, argued by the author, go against his reasoning of understanding the musical sphere as a form of thought on several metaphorical levels - kinds of analogies - where various insights or interpretations of experience with a certain music become possible. Aware of this aesthetic understanding of music and, consequently, of music education, several professionals in this niche seek to study and apply different methodologies that meet the student's musical knowledge and daily repertoire (SWANWICK, 1999, p. 46). For Arroyo (2002), the terminology "Music Education" encompasses more than just formal education, as it includes the teaching and informal learning of Music (p.1). Unlike the time that preceded the twentieth century, where music education was, until then, understood as the teaching of European music, it is known from the studies of Ethnomusicology that the music produced in Africa has the logic of culture of this population, and does not need to be based solely on the pattern of the system of tonal music, elaborated by European music theory (ARROYO, 2002, p.3). As argued by Britto (2001), the processes of music education whose objective is the integral formation of the human being, can only happen in realities in which they stimulate students to argue, create, explore, question and, consequently, think (pg.3). Swanwick (1999) also points out that the methods and techniques passed on to the students are of no use if the "making music" is not linked to the individual who is performing a certain music.

To look at an effective music teacher at work (rather than a "coach" or an "instructor") is to observe this strong sense of musical intent related to educational purposes: techniques are used for musical purposes, knowledge of facts informs musical understanding. The history of music and the sociology of music are seen as accessible only through doors and windows in specific musical encounters. It is only in these encounters that the possibilities exist to transform sounds into melodies, melodies into forms, and forms into meaningful life events. (SWANWICK, 1999, p.58).

The author's argument also goes against one of the ideas of the one who is considered the patron of Brazilian education, Paulo Freire, who comments on learning being carried out only when there is a meaning for the subject who apprehends it.

MUSIC AND MENTAL HEALTH

For Kardeck (1857), the definition of greater rationality regarding the word "soul" is to understand it as an immaterial and individual being that resides in us, surviving the body (p.08).



Regardless of the scientific or religious point of view, the fact is that Music has accompanied man since his beginnings, and even with the advancement of science, the understanding of how it acts on human beings still remains a challenge and mystery to be studied by science (ALVES, C., C., S., S., F., 2016, p.2). It is known that music can also be used for therapeutic purposes, such as in the treatment of chemical dependence, depression, stress and disorders such as ASD itself. Science also shows, according to Alves (2016), that the effects caused by listening to a musical work become increasingly evident, such as: changes in blood pressure, changes in heart rate and respiratory rates, acceleration of metabolism, muscle relaxation, reduction of sensory stimuli such as pain and others.

The movement of sound vibrations in the resonance cavities of the brain and in the cerebrospinal fluid produces a type of sonic massage that, depending on the quality of the sound, triggers beneficial or non-beneficial effects to the biopsyoenergetic system. (ALVES, C., C., S., S., F., 2016, p.6).

The respective authors also argue that, in the context of nursing, a song can be used by nurses at different times and for different purposes in the treatment of their patients, such as: relaxing, socializing, and retrieving memories of past events. In cases of patients with incurable diseases, it is found that the use of music "can relieve the discomfort and anxiety of patients who experience terminality, as well as promote a more pleasant environment for family members who participate in care" (ALVES, C., C., S., S., F., 2016, p.7). It also cheers the listener and is usually preferable to silence in the case of people in pain, as silence can expand their awareness of discomfort. The study by Alves (2016) and other authors deals with the influence that musical genres and styles, both popular and erudite, can cause in a subject, such as: the frequency of an individual's heartbeat, their mood state through the tempo in which the respective song is, the sensations of joy, happiness or melancholy, caused by the key in which the music was found.

MUSIC AND SOCIAL PROJECTS

When dealing with education and music education, it is worth remembering that we are located in a country where the majority of the population survives receiving less than one minimum wage, that is, access to classes in Music, Visual Arts, Theater, and among many other areas of knowledge, becomes complex. Aware of the reality, Dos Santos (2007) emphasizes the importance that social projects have taken on in society, since they seek to supply the deficient social initiatives adopted by the government, "causing impact and interacting directly with society, by contributing positively to the recovery of the educational and cultural action of children with low income" (p.2). It is also argued by the author that the social proposals of the projects act together with the communities as agents that provide individual and sociocultural development, taking part in the process of integral education and enabling the achievement of citizenship of these individuals as critical and



participatory people inserted in society. As for musical education in social projects, Dos Santos (2007) agrees that it has the function of promoting in the individual the understanding and awareness of himself and the world in a greater scope, as well as of the aspects that are not common in his daily life, resulting in a reliable and ultimately creative look at his reality. The author also reflects on the way in which music education, unfortunately, is understood by a large part of organizations, that is: as a form of leisure or social integration, which devalues its educational potential.

In these cases, what occurs is a distorted interpretation of what should be the valorization and approximation of the students' sociocultural context. Assured of this erroneous view, with a discourse focused on the global development of individuals and social inclusion, many projects are maintained, based on a repertoire massified and disseminated by radio and television, without being able to use it as a bridge for the gradual aesthetic and musical development, by creatively exploring its richness and musical possibilities. (DOS SANTOS, 2007, p.3).

The author also reflects on the way in which music education, unfortunately, is understood by a large part of organizations, that is: as a form of leisure or social integration, which devalues its educational potential. With regard to the repertoires used in the social projects, the influence of Swanwick (1999) is once again perceived by the fact that he used songs widely disseminated in the media, which are close to the musical universe of the students. They can be considered as an excellent motivating element of musical educational practice, when creatively explored by the educator. It is important to highlight that, according to the author, with the significant number of existing social projects, a greater number of professionals qualified to work in these institutions are sought; However, not all of them are capable of carrying out work in the field of inclusive education, as they need an adequate strategy with the communities, with a view to developing a living and creative teaching. (DOS SANTOS, 2007, p.4).

UNDERSTANDING A SPECIAL INDIVIDUAL AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Known as "special" or "disabled", individuals belonging to this category of the population are characterized by the limitation or inability to perform activities considered simple for most people (SECRETARIA DO ESTADO DOS DIREITOS DE PESSOA COM DISABILIDADES, s/d, p.8). In this same category, there are a total of four disability variables, such as: physical, auditory, visual and mental; In addition, there are people who will have more than one of these diagnosed. The *International Classification of Diseases - ICD* - promoted by the World Health Organization - WHO, avoids designating the term "disability" when referring to subjects diagnosed with some disorder, as it is a broad concept, thus adhering to adjectives and a verb in the infinitive, such as incapacity or disadvantage (AMIRALIAN, E. M. I. E. L., 2000, p.3). The terminology used for these adjectives was also the target of many questions, because it represents people, thinking subjects, who most of the time have difficulties in accepting their conditions.



He pointed out that this discussion has generated a civic and social awareness of the importance of linguistic precision, producing beneficial effects, such as a unification of the terms used in legislative and normative texts. (VISO apud AMIRALIAN, E. M. I. E. L., 2000, p. 4).

This difficulty in accepting the term is also due to the fact that people, especially children, diagnosed with some type of disability, experience various experiences of prejudice, whether at home, in schools, in social interactions; due to the fact that they are not understood by other people in view of their form of communication (BERNARDINO, 2013, p.9). Understanding this fact, it is also important for the school to adapt its teaching methodologies to include these individuals, in order to become independent and able to survive in society.

Inclusive Education can emphasize meaningful learning, socialization, training for the exercise of citizenship and prepare for insertion in the labor market. (STATE SECRETARIAT FOR THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, s/d, p.5).

It is also deduced that the process of dialogue between family, school and society will facilitate the strategies designed to solve the problems of inclusive education, since such debates allow a reflection on how to act in relation to difference (AMIRALIAN, E. M. I. E. L., 2000, p.6).

WHAT IS AUTISM?

The word "autism" has its origin in the Greek word "autos", which means "of oneself". Named by the DSM-5 as *Autism Spectrum Disorder - ASD* - it is also one of the chronic pathologies of greater complexity and variability in relation to cognitive, behavioral, sensory, psychomotor and language aspects (LORO, 2021, p.21). It can be deduced that the standard of diagnostic criteria for this disorder is still very recent, these came after autism entered the WHO catalog of the *International Classification of Diseases - the ICD* - in 1979, gaining a separate category only in 1993 (LORO, 2021, p.24). In 2013, autism began to be classified by the levels of intensity in an individual, from level 1 (mild) to level 3 (severe) and also no longer had a specific age for the onset of symptoms.

The DSM-5 delineates autism as significant problems in social communication and interactions (verbal and nonverbal), as well as repetitive pattern of interest (motor, verbal, routines, rituals, restricted interests, and unusual sensory behaviors). (LORO, 2021, p.24).

The author also describes the symptoms noticeable at each level of autism intensity, such as: persistent deficits in communication and social interaction in diverse contexts, deficits in socio-emotional reciprocity, restricted and repetitive patterns of behaviors. It is known that individuals diagnosed with ASD have a considerable difference in their auditory processing, as brain enlargement can hyperdevelop certain regions of the brain, such as the temporal and frontal lobe. Due to this fact,



the hearing of these individuals may function above average to certain stimuli, which would justify the surprising musical abilities that these subjects have, based on the neuroscientific view (LORO, 2021, p.37). Other differences are related to aspects of language, psychomotor development, social integration and stereotypies. As for the treatment of ASD, it is usually carried out individually and applied by a multidisciplinary team, which may come to mix therapeutic approaches, diets, and pharmacological interventions (LORO, 2021, p.43).

PARTIAL OR TOTAL LOSS OF VISION

Also named with the terminology "Visual Impairment", it deals with the approach of individuals with partial or total loss of vision, whether congenital or acquired. The level of visual acuity can vary, determined in two groups: blind people and people with low vision³ (TUDISSAKI, 2014, p.45). Individuals with blindness have a total loss of vision or a small ability to see, which indirectly forces them to use the braille language for reading and writing; These use the remaining senses for the perception, analysis and understanding of the environment, which are: hearing, taste and smell. Some authors classify the types of blindness into three categories: 1) Partial Blindness; 2) Close to total blindness; 3) Total blindness or amaurosis; the third presupposes complete loss of vision. In relation to low vision or low vision, the person has visual impairment even after treatment or optical correction, because each one sees differently according to the changes that may occur.

Both terms are correct: low vision or low vision. However, the first is more recent and more common – used even in specialized institutions and in the specific literature. The use of the term low vision was recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) at a meeting held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1992. (TUDISSAKI, 2014, p.46).

As for the age at which it can manifest itself, visual impairment can be congenital: from gestation or immediately after birth; or acquired. Both lead to distinct characteristics for an individual's development process (TUDISSAKI, 2014, p.5).

OF THE EXPERIENCES LIVED IN THE INSTITUTIONS

There is often a dialogue about the importance of teaching music and, in other areas of education, developing methodologies that include in their teaching all types of people, regardless of whether or not they have some type of disorder or disability. When researching about musical educational practices directed to individuals diagnosed with ASD or other disorder, the author realized that a large majority of these do not explore beyond the basic principles of musical theory

³ According to Tudissaki (2014), the term "low vision" is attributed to a person who has visual impairment regardless of surgery or optical correction. Subjects with low vision do not have a pattern, according to the alterations, they may acquire impairments: in visual acuity, color vision, etc. (p.45).



and practice. Therefore, in order to respond to the hypotheses formulated in the project of this work, activities commonly used in music classes were considered, but with their methodology adapted according to the class of students, for example: in classes with autistic children, visual resources, activities that stimulate the pronunciation of words, and activities that develop motor coordination and social skills were used; Students with partial or total vision loss were used to use tangible materials, sound resources, and activities that develop motor coordination and fine motor skills. As for the repertoire, it was built adhering to the suggestions of the students based on their preferred musical genres/styles, as well as songs from Brazilian popular folklore. It is noteworthy that the objectives of the classes were not to make the students professionals in the area of Music, but to make subjects capable of acting and making a difference in society. Therefore, the evaluation method used in relation to the students was the participatory one, that is, the one that evaluates the participation, interest and effort of the student in carrying out the activities and tasks proposed by the discipline. Of the many lessons learned in these experiences, one in particular that caught the author's attention is related to the appreciation of Music by special individuals, because they understand it as something essential in their lives, and because they also demonstrate a certain ease to understand the concepts directed to the same area. Another interesting aspect, witnessed in both experiences, is the therapeutic and spiritual connection of Music with individuals, because, indirectly, while performing practices that worked and at the same time challenged motor coordination or fine motor skills, aspects such as self-esteem, self-confidence, self-love, teamwork were reflected.

EPILOGUE OR FINAL THOUGHTS

At the end of the work developed in these institutions, it was possible to conclude that the hypotheses raised in the conception of this project were correct and, consequently, answer the initial question raised in the introduction of this article. In the scientific part, Music contributes in the sense of clarifying individuals, in a theoretical and practical way, about an important knowledge for society. As for the artistic approach, in addition to helping the individual to know himself better, Music also develops the creative capacity at the moment when he enjoys its elements - rhythm, melody, harmony and counterpoint - and also, the capacity for critical thinking, based on the assumption that to elaborate a song, it is necessary to pay attention to everything that happened and happens in society. Therefore, the main message that I sought to share with the students during the internship, besides that, just as all musical elements are important in the elaboration of a beautiful song, it is also with society, where all subjects, regardless of profession, religion, color, ethnicity, become important agents in the construction of a more just and harmonious society.



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