Intercultural education. A project of attention to diversity from the performing arts

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Abstract

This paper has raised the development of an experience in the framework of professional qualification programmes, in their professional workshop modality, which are implemented outside the formal education schools through local authorities. These students are characterized by cultural diversity, as well as a history of failure and / or dropout, looking for an opportunity of social, labor and educational integration in the last chance so far offered to them by the Education Administration. In this context an innovation project has been developed addressing elements of intercultural education with the support of the Performing Arts. Particularly through the figures of the Clown and the social educator, addressing issues related to the level of participation, acceptance of the activity, classroom climate, interaction with classmates and reflection generated during the implementation of these different activities.

Inevitably, results make us reflect on the importance of emotions in the construction of citizenship, and how the feelings of compassion and vulnerability gain importance and allow us to approach "the other" from a life experience, understanding different life projects. Furthermore, this study has allowed us to reconfirm the relationship between ratio profiles of emotional intelligence and social behavior, reaffirming the need of further research that allow us to work on these issues to improve processes of social inclusion.

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1. Introduction

The reason leading us to develop this experience has to do with the possibility of providing opportunities for communication and acceptance of cultural differences among students in initial vocational training programs, taking into account their actual cultural diversity.

This initiative prioritizes the development of educational initiatives, able to boost interculturality and social cohesion, and pose ambitious strategies that have an impact on the daily lives of culturally diverse citizens.

In this sense, our project is developed in professional qualification programs developed by the City of Lorca, whose students in recent years are mostly of foreign origin. This cultural diversity in the classroom is very varied, generating the need for it to be addressed through experiences that allow us to advance in recognition and intercultural exchange.

Such proposals focus on students who left school, and / or failed to promote and obtain the degree in secondary education, strengthening its socio- cultural integration through socio-educational actions based on intercultural education, programs that the current Education Law (LOMCE) is making to disappear, and yet are perceived as essential to address the diversity and reduce levels of early school leaving, currently still rising. And especially in our region of Murcia, whit these levels exceeding by more than 10% the EU average, as recently stated The European Community Statistical Office Eurostat. On the other hand, there is offered an initial vocational training qualification which allows students to obtain a minimal training enabling them to enter the labor market and to develop business practices after completion.

Attention to diversity and the pursuit of quality education for all has a new impetus to the strategic framework for European cooperation "Education and Training 2020", which aim is that all citizens acquire key competencies and all levels of education and training become more attractive and efficient. One way to generate that attraction in these programs is to work through educational strategies that have been developed in the performing arts. In this sense Lopez (2006, p.121) states that "The arts in education, systematic or organized within the curriculum, have much to say about true satisfaction and culture of people".

Here we describe the overall objective of this experience:

Developing a program of socio-educational intervention combining a participatory and inclusive methodology, attending training in cross-cutting themes, more specifically Intercultural Education.

As embodied in the following specific objectives:

- Implementing methodologic resources defined in educational intervention models of Social Education to address intercultural relations
- Promoting intercultural encounter and accepting cultural differences through the figure of the clown
- Developing values of respect and acceptance of cultural differences in the classroom

To achieve these objectives, we believe that the figure of the Clown, along with the figure of the social educator, are key, as they provide a working methodology in the classroom, which allow releasing the emotional tensions present in the classroom. The methodology works in the classroom requires tools like gaming and sense of humor. Each of these, promoting attitudes, values and skills that enhance relationships among students. So we can say this research tries to implement new ways of understanding education that promote intercultural communication as a personal enrichment. In this sense Caride & Vieites (2006, p 95) report quoting Josep Maria Font i (1999, p11):

"Educators need resources to facilitate vicarious learning situations, communication and exchange tools that allow us the educator-person, person-environment relationship. Games and factors of individual and group growth providing us integrative experiences, relational, disinhibiting and constructive reviews but specially social: and is the theater with its broad set of realities and possibilities, which provides strategies, dynamic, excuses, projects ... and objectives related to the field of education or social animation."

Or put another way, clowning, favoring the identification and laughter can become a means of therapeutic intervention (Velázquez, 2015). Laughter brings many benefits not only therapeutically, because "when we laugh, we do at a world (of symbols, ideas, attitudes) and from a world (from a mental outline or a cultural situation)" (Diz, 2011, p.164). Which is why humor has the ability to impact both intellectually and interpersonally. According to Goleman (1996) and William Davis (1973) laughter can help us be more creative, to think more broadly and with perspective, so that makes us freer and less prejudiced when relating each other. The figure of the Clown can also help us work
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