



Artistic creations by early childhood Children, an act of creative citizenship

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Abstract

The invisibility of children is a reality that hinders their participatory involvement in society and the generation of significant contributions from their potential, however, there are initiatives that promote social impact through educational projects, where early childhood is recognized as empowered interlocutors, able to contribute to their contexts. In view of this situation, the research project "Creative citizenship from the promotion of critical, ethical and creative thinking in early childhood children as social actors and peace builders", funded by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation - MINCIENCIAS, under the leadership of the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios - UNIMINUTO, whose objective is to develop thinking skills in children and exercise as creative citizens in democratic environments to transform their realities, this is materialized in the exhibition ARTE-PENSAMIENTO - CREACIÓN at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Bogota, where twenty-three collective works of art made by children were exhibited to offer solutions to the problems of each context. As theoretical categories, creative citizenship and children's artistic creation are explored in depth. Under this premise, this research project proposes a qualitative design with participatory action research method, where data collection is done through participant action observation with field diary and audiovisual material; of a population of five hundred twenty-five children from five kindergartens in Bogota, which present characteristics of vulnerability, a sample of one hundred twenty-five children is chosen from these children, non-probabilistic, formed by convenience. Taking this into account, the findings are: artistic creation is the manifestation of the exercise of the child's creative citizenship as part of the development of multidimensional thinking, consequently, the child is recognized and acknowledged as a creative citizen. As conclusions, we propose the possibility of rethinking artistic creation as a state of encounter, where children get involved and are able to transform from their feeling, thinking and acting, this links the artistic with the educational to create actions and disruptive social transformations from the intervention in scenarios of artistic dissemination.

Keywords: *Artistic; Artistic creation; Creativity; Civic education; Early Childhood.*

1. Introduction

In countries such as Colombia, the political and civic will to overcome events that tend to make children invisible in their potential for development and civic participation is increasing with greater vehemence every day. This article presents part of the results of a research experience with governmental funding sponsored by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation of Colombia - MINCIENCIAS, carried out under the leadership of Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios - UNIMINUTO. It aims to develop the multidimensional thinking of children, so that they have the thinking skills required to exercise as creative citizens in democratic environments that socially transform their realities. In this sense, the purpose of this article is to delve into the results directly related to the manifestation of creative citizenship through the artistic creations produced by the children participating in the project. Collective productions that besides offering solutions to the concrete problems of each of the contexts they come from, also have the privilege of being exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Bogota, Colombia. Thus, from February 17 to April 29, 2022, the curatorship called "ARTE-PENSAMIENTO-CREACIÓN" will be open to the public, where twenty-three collective works of art made by children from four areas of Bogota and one of its peripheries will be exhibited.

1.1. Creative action towards participatory citizenship

In line with the above, creative citizenship, a project inherited from Philosophy for Children [1] [2], is understood as a participatory practice of citizen commitment, and is therefore "a praxis, a way of living, coexisting, socializing, thinking, knowing, producing and learning" [3]. This proposal is oriented towards educational action and the will of social transformation individually and collectively from early

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childhood with the support of other citizens living together. It is in the daily educational and philosophical practice of the dialogue communities that new approaches and solutions to challenging problems emerge, which are developed in the realization of political micro-projects of creative citizenship [4] [3]. Such social transformations in neighbourhoods and other public spaces arise due to variation and movement of the thinking of the participating children, while they think in an autonomous, reflective, metacognitive, self-corrective way and develop their multidimensional thinking, which encompasses the critical, ethical and creative dimension, which is fostered from the thinking skills in the framework of dialogue communities [1] [3]. These social changes on the part of children recognized as creative citizens generate public happiness, common good and social justice to their contexts, which makes possible not only the creation of circumstantial collective initiatives [5], but also favors a longer-term change that permeates other spaces of interest in which citizens participate.

Likewise, the elaboration of artistic products manages to mobilize the thinking of the participating actors [6] and in coherence with this, three fundamental axes of the creative citizenship proposal are articulated, where feeling, thinking and acting are interwoven in favor of values and ethical attitudes that transform education and are linked to artistic disciplines. Accordingly, it should be noted that art from this proposal is understood as a capacity to be developed that all human beings possess, it is not an erudition of artists or geniuses, nor is art conceived as different disciplines isolated from each other or with higher or lower categories. Rather, it encompasses an understanding of the art concept as a processual and collective creation reminiscent of fluxus art, whose objective is to find art itself in everyday life, it is a duration that expands beyond the artistic creation or work of art itself, it has the will to permeate different spaces and environments that question the viewer to generate an encounter with him [7], that is, the creation of aesthetic experience is a detonator of change, and transformation is in turn capable of promoting aesthetic experience.

2. Methodology

The educational action research method [8] of qualitative type [9] is the guiding axis through which the actions of the project developed in the five early childhood educational centers are concretized. The latter instrument is based on the diary model structured by UNIMINUTO, which organizes the record in: a) description of the activity, b) analysis, c) reflections and d) evidence of the implemented session. The population involved is made up of five hundred and twenty-five children from whom a non-probabilistic sample of one hundred and twenty-nine children from the five educational centers was taken for convenience. The selection criteria are regulated under the following parameters: that the selected group does not exceed twenty-five to thirty children, that they are between three and six years old and that they have the possibility of permanently attending the dialogue communities; criteria that meet the didactic requirements of this type of philosophical-educational proposals. The activation of the constituent elements of this methodology is carried out through the execution of twenty-three P4C dialogue communities; in the first three, the aim is to generate trust and affection between facilitators and children, through playful and artistic activities, where literature and the environment are explored. In the following twelve sessions, the methodology of P4C's own dialogue communities is used, together with the Noria Project. This is followed by four more meetings, focused on problematizing the context. The four final sessions give way to the creative and proactive expression of the children, who, based on twenty-three artistic works, propose solutions to the community to mobilize the transformation of the context and participate in the exhibition "ARTE-PENSAMIENTO-CREACIÓN" exhibited at the MAC. In accordance with the interest stated in this article, the information recorded in the diary, videos and photographs, is ordered and analysed based on the categories of creative citizenship and children's artistic creation, for this the data is processed in the Nvivo Software version Release 1.6.1. (1137) with license and Microsoft Excel 2021.

3. Discoveries

After implementing the aforementioned methodology and crossing the categories from the conceptual references addressed, it emerges as a finding that artistic creation is the evidence of the exercise of creative citizenship in which the children participating in the research project develop and strengthen their multidimensional thinking as they recognize themselves and are recognized as creative citizens to the extent that they generate procedural actions with creative value to mobilize initiatives of social transformation from their contexts to change their realities. In this sense, it is evident that early childhood children recognize aesthetic values and generate encounters [7] to favor aesthetic



experiences that go beyond the creative act itself, as they appropriate the initiatives generated by their actions and mobilize the thinking of the actors involved in their community, as shown in the following excerpt:

Each child takes a stone that he/she finds in the park and decorates it freely to join it with his/her plant and beautify the garden. Some stones are decorated with drawings representing children, hearts, names of people, families or trees (Field Diary 3, Kindergarten Alejandria).

As shown, early childhood children are creators of artistic collective processes that contribute to the generation of social transformation, since art is understood as a generator of thought, pleasure, creativity and aesthetics [11], which favors children to create their individual and collective imaginary, as well as "the symbolic universe and the ability to build languages and creative ways of communicating the experience of the surrounding world and the inner world" [12]. In this sense, it is evident that the participating children carry out actions and initiatives such as the following:

With the stones they painted, they placed them next to the plants in the garden, watered them, and then opened a process of contemplation, to generate an aesthetic experience and dialogue about caring for the environment in relation to caring for oneself (Field Diary 4, George Williams Kindergarten).

In this way, the participating children show that they are capable of generating social initiatives that transform society through the creation of exemplary projects.

4. Conclusions

This project expresses the socio-educational commitment assumed by the government and academia in Colombia to contribute to the education of early childhood from its formation with creative citizens in direct correlation with the collective elaboration of creative productions. Sensitized to the realities of childhood, specifically with regard to the violation of their rights, their invisibility as citizens and the precariousness of their development processes; this research bets on P4C as an educational alternative that resorts to artistic creation to transcend these problems and thus, vindicate the potential of early childhood children, so that as they develop their thinking skills, they exercise as participatory citizens who contribute to the improvement of their reality



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