

8. ARTISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS – PERSPECTIVES IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION. A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: *The present article aims to analyze the impact of artistic and educational projects from the perspective of non-formal education. This will be done with the help of a case study that brings forth the aforementioned elements in order to improve the educational standards of the students that participate in these projects. Also, here will be detailed the specific objectives of the projects in this category and the impact imprinted on the target groups as well as the implementation manners of the objectives themselves, by following the factors that stimulate creativity and the degree of young people involvement in this project.*

Key words: *education, project, artistic, study, methods, creativity, design, non formal*

1. Introduction

Starting from the literature that refers to “the methodology of cultivating creativity” through “the organization forms of the teaching process in the differentiated and personalized²⁹⁸ curriculum paradigm”, the present article aims to exemplify through a case study the analysis of an artistic and educational project which describes the non-formal perspective of creativity methodology from the artistic curriculum. The emotional and cognitive development of young people can be nurtured by their innate qualities and resources, which ultimately represents an exceptional creative potential when noticed and valued by the teacher with the aim of developing the thinking and creativity of the participants to the non-formal courses and educational programs. Through the intensification of creativity we aim to extract young people from the formal context and make them feel less inhibited through the removal of cognitive stereotypes acquired in a traditional teaching frame. Thus, the enriched curricula, taught via the non-formal educational projects, represent a “way of further researching the stage of preparation devised for pupils and students with different aptitudes.”²⁹⁹

Starting from the principle that experimentation stands as a valid way of creativity stimulation within the design of launching new ideas and concepts, as well as artistic and educational projects we conceived in an academic environment are set to innovate through new idea experimentation, creativity increase among the participants, saving materials through repurposing,

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²⁹⁸ Constantin Cucoş, “Psihopedagogie pentru examenele de definitivare şi grade didactice”, ediţia II, Iaşi, Polirom, 2009, pag.636, 637,

²⁹⁹ Idem, pag.638.

communication and social involvement, pollution prevention and waste management, fashion sustainability, communication among the young exposers, designers, high-school students and all the other participants.

2. Discussions

In the present article, I will focus on the project entitled “*Arad - The Ecodesign Centre. Social Conscience in Fashion Design.*” This project was completed between 16th-20th of October, 2017, budding from the idea of making young people realize the necessity of the complex subject known as ECODESIGN. The main idea of *ecodesign* is to reduce the impact on the environment throughout the product life cycle. The present project aims to find ways of ecological projection, developing and creatively innovating in a proactive and strategic manner. Environment responsibility is extremely important in the creation and innovation process, leading to improved visibility on the market and effectively impacting creativity as a whole. By this approach, we attempted to determine young participants to develop and create with a higher efficiency and through an ethical approach concerning the norms of environment protection and waste management.

The workshop activities took place in the form of non-formal educational projects and their main purpose was to rethink the product and its functions, reducing material waste and energy in the lifecycle, choosing recyclable materials and rethinking and conceiving the product so as the parts could be used, repaired and the product redesign easily fixed so as to prevent immediate damage.

Aesthetically speaking, the project activities are set to enable pupils and students to acquire the necessary technical, practical and artistic knowledge, in order for them to create ecologically, use ecological dye on natural fibers, manual stitching as well as various ways of treating surface structure. In this way, one can promote the adaptation of ecological norms in the eco-fashion industry, through national strategies of environment protection (1996-2002) as well as through conservation and improvement of health conditions of the people, sustainable development, pollution prevention, biodiversity conservation, cultural and historical inheritance preservation, using the “Polluter Pays” principle, as well as encouraging environment recovery.

Against this backdrop, the clothes and artistic objects designed by the young participants within the event, led to interconnectivity between creativity, design and ecology, offering them the possibility to use imagination in order to transmit a cultural and social message.

In response, eco-fashion gains significant foothold and easily transforms itself into an omnipresent constant in current tendencies. Once sustainable, the fashion industry has created in the last decades a proper environment for mindless consumerism, with a solid support from the marketing and PR branding, which led to a high demand of cheap and low-quality products.

Mass-market brand appearance employs different strategies such as cheap labour, the promotion of ideologies, which need to be eliminated and remodelled in a way that makes young people more responsible through the adoption of an ethical conduct with a positive social impact. This kind of projects are focused on non-formal education and are justified through the mental stimulation of creative students and their support in achieving artistic plenitude through ethical and ecological means.

3. Results

Through the educational activities postulated here, our aim is to integrate the concept of *ecological design* among young people as a way of creative approach as well as encouraging them to develop social abilities, by engaging them in higher numbers in extra-curricular activities, using non-formal expression methods and techniques such as: intercommunication improvement and development among students of the same age, positive thinking stimulation and ecological responsibility, social involvement in a positive and ethical manner, creative abilities development in fashion design, developing teamwork abilities, developing and training the sense of forms, colours, artistic expression, as well as the abilities of active reaction to social involvement etc.



Fig. 1 Images with the event poster



Fig.2 Activities from the analysed educational project as a study case



Fig.3 Images with the exhibition organised at the end of the project



Fig.4 Workart in detail



Fig. 5, 6 Activities during the project

Analyzing the impact of this educational project, it could be easily observed that the participants to the workshop have positively appreciated the organization and unfolding of the event, which meant that the expected purpose of the project, namely the development of non-formal educational activities addressed to young people, the promotion of the *ecodesign* concept, the creation of a proactive attitude and involvement on all the targeted plans, have been accomplished.

4. Conclusions

Through all the above, young people can step up from recognition to action, just as Peter Senge in his book “The teaching school” (2016) was claiming: “systematic child intelligence can be further developed by transitioning to solving models of difficult situations. This is what enables them to analyze and act fully aware of the facts; being aware of recurrent patterns, they will be less predisposed to act in visceral and ineffective ways and less predisposed to understand behaviour patterns. They can use this understanding to correct their own actions, in order to anticipate uninformed behaviour and help others operate more effectively.”³⁰⁰ That is why the non-formal methods, used to promote systematic approaches, stimulate the natural intelligence of pupils and students, by familiarizing them with systematic diagrams aimed at discovering the structural patterns of the subject in discussion, the connections achieved as well as any occurring changes, a dialogue that cognitively stimulates the relationships between the design objects and their structure, recognition of the patterns that compose the systems as well as their analysis in a different way, anticipating unpredictable consequences from the future as well as the introduction of a non-linear behaviour, set to develop creativity.

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