

WORKSHOP WITH MST TEENAGERS: PREJUDICE AND SOCIAL COEXISTENCE

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ABSTRACT. Despite all the achievements of social movements in rural education, the children and youth of the Landless Workers' Movement (MST) experience situations of prejudice because of their belonging when they study in schools not linked to the movement, experiences that profoundly mark them. The prejudice for belonging to the MST that comes to be added to several other, was demanded as a theme to be worked on our extension project, developed in a technical school of agroecology, which is a result of a partnership between the MST and the Federal Technological Institute of Paraná (ITFPR). The participants of the project were teenagers and young people, ages ranging between 15 and 24 years, 7 are women and 23 are men; all of them were from camps and settlements of agrarian reform. The methodology adopted in the work was performing workshops about the main theme "prejudice and social coexistence" and with the following emerged topics: possibilities and limits in face of differences, prejudice and empathy, empathy and communication, racial prejudice and bullying. Eight weekly meetings were held, lasting 2 hours. We concluded that the methodology of the workshops was effective when going beyond the educational/informational aspects, embracing and working with affective meanings, feelings and experiences, providing space for speech, reflection and elaboration, both individual and collective, and also enhancing the favorable context to human formation that the MST has built throughout its existence.

Keywords: Workshop; Teenagers; MST.

OFICINA COM ADOLESCENTES DO MST: PRECONCEITO E CONVIVÊNCIA COLETIVA

RESUMO. Apesar de todas as conquistas dos movimentos sociais no que se refere à educação do campo, as crianças e jovens do Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem-Terra (MST) vivenciam situações de preconceito por sua pertença, quando estudam em escolas não vinculadas ao movimento, vivências que os marcam profundamente. O preconceito pela pertença ao MST que vem a se somar a diversos outros, foi o tema demandado para ser trabalho em nosso projeto de extensão, realizado em uma escola técnica de agroecologia fruto de uma parceria entre o MST e o Instituto Federal Tecnológico do Paraná (ITFPR). Os participantes do projeto foram adolescentes e jovens, com idades que variam entre 15 e 24 anos, sete são do sexo feminino e os demais do sexo masculino, todos oriundos de acampamentos e assentamentos da reforma agrária. A metodologia adotada no trabalho foi a realização de oficinas com o tema principal "preconceito e convivência coletiva" e os seguintes temas geradores: possibilidades e limites frente às diferenças, preconceito e empatia, empatia e comunicação, preconceito racial e bullying. Foram realizados oito encontros semanais, com duração de 2 h. Concluímos que a metodologia das oficinas se mostrou efetiva ao ir além dos aspectos educativos/informativos, abrangendo e trabalhando com os significados afetivos, os sentimentos e as vivências, proporcionando espaço para a fala, a reflexão e a elaboração, tanto individual como coletiva. Além de potencializar o contexto favorável a formação humana que o MST construiu ao longo da sua existência.

Palavras-chave: Oficina; adolescentes; MST.

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TALLER CON ADOLESCENTES DEL MST: PREJUICIO Y CONVIVENCIA COLECTIVA

RESUMEN. A pesar de todas las conquistas de los movimientos sociales en relación a la educación rural, los niños y jóvenes del Movimiento de los Sin Tierra (MST) viven situaciones de prejuicio por su pertenencia cuando estudian en las escuelas no vinculados al movimiento, esas vivencias los marcan profundamente. El perjuicio por pertenecer al MST, que viene a añadirse a muchos otros, fue el tema demandado para el estudio en nuestro proyecto de extensión, realizado en una escuela técnica de agroecología fruto de una asociación entre el MST y el Instituto Tecnológico Federal de Paraná (ITFPR). Los participantes del proyecto son adolescentes y jóvenes, con edades entre 15 y 24 años, 7 son del sexo femenino y los demás, 23, del sexo masculino, todos son oriundos de campamentos y asentamientos de la reforma agraria. La metodología utilizada en el estudio fueron los talleres con el tema principal "los prejuicios y la convivencia" y los siguientes temas generadores: posibilidades y límites frente a las diferencias, al prejuicio y a la empatía; empatía y comunicación; prejuicio racial y bullying. Se realizaron 8 citas semanales, con duración de 2h. La conclusión es que la metodología de los talleres demostró ser eficaz para ir más allá de los aspectos educativos / informativos, incluyendo y trabajando con los significados afectivos, los sentimientos y las experiencias, proporcionando espacio para el habla, la reflexión y el desarrollo, tanto individuales como colectivos. Además de potenciar el entorno favorable a la formación humana que el MST ha construido a lo largo de su existencia.

Palabras-clave: Taller; adolescentes; MST.

Introduction

Historically, in Brazil, the camp workers did not have access to education, or had precarious access to an education that did not correspond to their demands. The rural education appears in Brazilian legislation in the beginning of 20th century, aiming to offer to the field man the "necessary" instruction to their subsistence and to fix him in the countryside. Only in the 1990's, with the struggle of social and educational movements, is that the proposal of education of field that attends the aspirations of these populations gain strength (Coutinho, 2009; Coutinho, Muniz & Nascimento, 2012).

The education targeted by the populations from camp (landless, quilombolas, ribeirinhos, extractive, fisher, artisan, indigenous) is an education on and of the camp, and no longer to the camp, an education that corresponded "... to the history, culture, to the mode of production and organization of peasant peoples" (Coutinho, 2009, p.47). The struggle for an education of the camp found in the Landless Workers' Movement (MST)² one of its main protagonists. The pressure exercised by MST, among other agents, induced the Federal Government, in 1998, to the creation of a specific public policy for the education in areas of agrarian reform, the National Program of Education in Agrarian Reform (PRONERA).

With the support of PRONERA, presently, there are more than 2 thousands public schools built in camping sites and settlements of MST, 2 thousands students in technical and superior courses and more than 100 graduation courses in a partnership between MST and public universities all over the country (MST, 2016b). Recently, the MST graduated 22 pedagogues, in the course of Pedagogy of Camp, accomplished in partnership with the State University of Maringá (MST, 2017).

It was in one of these technical schools, which works with PRONERA resources and product of the partnership between the MST and the Federal Technological Institute of Paraná (ITFPR) that we performed the intervention reported here. The experience is a part of the extension project "Youth of the field: workshops for human formation, work and culture", coordinated by two teachers and with the participation of six academic students of the Psychology course of the State University of Maringá.

The objective of the present article is to report part of the activities of the extension Project "the workshops about prejudices and collective coexistence".

The theme prejudice and collective coexistence was demanded by both the students and the school's political pedagogical accompaniment collective. Besides all the achievements in the educational area, when the children and youth of MST study in schools located at city, they suffer with prejudice because of their belonging to the movement, because the image of the MST transmitted by

² The MST is a movement resulting mainly from expulsion of the camp and expropriation of the peasant. Founded in 1984, its objectives are: "the fight for the land, the fight for the agrarian reform, and social transformation". Throughout these more than 30 years of existence, about 350 thousand families have conquered the land (MST, 2016a).

the media is of a dangerous group to public order (Soares da Silva et al., 2015). However, the fact of being or being a victim of prejudice because he is a member of MST, do not exempt the child and teenager from being also agent of prejudice against another situation, as for example against the homosexuality of a colleague.

The report of intervention presented here is important to give visibility to singularities of the experiences of adolescents in camp, and to their difficulties inherent to their process of social inclusion in schools that are not linked to the movement. We also want to highlight the power of the work in the workshops in elaboration, reflection and coping of prejudice situations experienced by the adolescents, as victims and agents. In addition to all this, we recall the scarcity of literature regarding adolescence in the camp.

Method

Context of intervention

The agroecology technical course is developed in a non-regular school of MST located in the State of Parana. It has as objective to offer middle school articulated with professional formation to young people coming from camping and agrarian reform settlements. It uses as methodology the pedagogy of alternation. The goal of this methodology is to integrate school, work and family and allows that the family to rely on the student's work in certain periods, since there are alternation between periods in school and in family. The students spend, average, about 45 to 70 days in school (time-school) and 60 to 90 days in community (time-community) (Guhur, 2010).

According to Guhur (2010), the agroecology technical course of MST in Parana, as the other formal courses of MST aim to build a "different school" and follows the philosophical principles:

1) education for social transformation; 2) education for work and cooperation; 3) education focused on the various dimensions of the human person; 4) education with/to humanist and socialist values; and 5) education as a permanent process of human formation/transformation. (MST, 1997, quoted by Guhur, 2010, p.89).

Participants

The participants of the project are adolescents and young people, coming from camping and settlements of agrarian reform, with ages that vary from 15 to 24 years; 7 are female and the rest are male.

Workshops

For the elaboration of the workshop, we were guided by the book "Workshops in group dynamics in the health area" of Afonso (2003). The author defines the workshop as a structured work with a group around a central issue, a theme that the group proposes to elaborate. The propose of workshop, as idealized by Afonso, beyond rational aspects, considers the subjects integrally, their way of thinking, feeling and acting involving the affective meanings and related experiences.

The meetings of the workshop were performed weekly, during the school-time, lasting approximately 2 hours and completing the course load which foresees in its proposed pedagogical policy the accomplishment of this kind of activity.

We highlight that the workshop also is one of the methodologies recommended by the "Technical References to the Practice of Psychologists in Land Matters" (CFP, 2013) to the performance to the field population. According to the CFP (2013), the workshop must be elaborated in function of the demand of a group and for its realization is fundamental a survey of the themes of interest and knowledge of participants, as the creation of a climate of trust, autonomy and solidarity among all.

The demand of the students and the school coordination to the beginning of work in 2016 was "prejudice and collective coexistence". Once the general theme was defined, the next step is defining

the “generating themes”. Afonso (2013) approaches the generating themes with the generating words of Paulo Freire, highlighting that both mobilizes the group because relies on its experiences, bringing feelings and possibilities, facilitating the participation of all.

According to Freire (2012), it is indispensable to consider the interaction between men and their reality when defining the generating themes. The author says: “... it seems to us that the realization of the “generating theme”, as an embodiment, is something that we reach not only through existential experience itself, but also through a critical reflection on the relations between men and the world and men-men, implicit in the first reflection” (p. 95). The generating themes, however, must have a concrete meaning for the participants, besides making possible render problematic of reality, through reflection not only individual, but also collective.

The defined generating themes for the workshop were: possibilities and limits in front of differences, prejudice and empathy, empathy and communication, racial prejudice and bullying.

Each meeting was coordinated by an academic under the supervision of the teacher in loco. The academics that are not coordinating in that day also participate actively in the workshops, leading discussions in small groups and after every meeting, making the record in field diary. In the diaries, the events of every meeting are noted, the speeches referent to the theme that caught more attention, as well as the impressions of each one on the activities developed. The participants are aware of the notes and secrecy of their names; the data is used for the systematic follow-up of the activities, evaluation, planning, survey research problems and knowledge production.

The meetings

The workshop about “prejudice and collective coexistence” was performed in eight meetings that are described in the sequence.

First meeting: The aim of the first meeting was to present the theme “prejudice and collective coexistence”. We showed the short film “For the birds” (Eggleston, 2000) that shows a bunch of small birds that unite to expel another, which is bigger and different. After watch the movie together, the students were divided in smaller groups, denominated by us as small groups. This strategy was adopted because of an earlier experience, in which was verified that in smaller groups the students participate more and the discussion is richer, facilitating subjective and personal speeches. All the small groups discussed the same orientation questions: “What led the bird to be expelled?” “What leads someone to be expelled?” “What to do in these situations?”

Second and third meeting: The objective was to discuss how to live and live together in the collective along the differences and limits of each person. In the second meeting, we exhibited the movie “The Belier Family” (Lartigau, 2014) that narrates the story of a French teenager that faces dramas specific for her age, and that was the only one capable of hearing in a family of deaf. In the third meeting, it was discussed the resemblances and difference between the students. Among other questions, they also discussed in small groups what generates prejudice: sexuality, appearance, way of talking, way of dressing, social class, religion and race.

Fourth and fifth meeting: In these meetings we worked with themes of prejudice and empathy. In the fourth meeting, it was exhibited the documentary “Blue Eyes” (Bertram, 1996) that presents an experiment in which the individuals with blue eyes were separated and received a discriminatory and offensive treatment, similar to the ones that black people experience in United States.

Sixth meeting: For this meeting, we invited the black people collective Yalodê-Badá to approach the racial prejudice theme. Initially, in small groups, the students discussed about the black identity and become black in the Brazilian context, debating the questions: “What is racism?” “Black people can be racist?” “Are we all equal?” In sequence, they did a group dynamics denominated “game of privileges”, in which were read phrases portraying situations of prejudice and exclusion because of race and each participant should take steps back in case they have experienced that situation. By the end, it was discussed how black people (especially black women) are in exclusion and prejudice situations, which was a result also portrayed by the dynamics.

Seventh meeting: The theme approached was bullying. It was delivered small stories involving different situations of bullying to render problematic in the small groups. In every group, the students

affirmed to have both suffered and practiced bullying. Some of the participants reported that the theme is approached in schools, in activities for informational purposes, such as speeches or movies, but without a space for discussion as the one occurring in the workshops. Listen the experiences of the colleagues, be able to talk about yours, not only as victims but also practitioners of bullying and the emotional mobilization generated, resulted, according to them, reflections about their own attitudes and the exercise of put yourself in the other's shoes.

Eight meeting: the theme was collective coexistence. Initially, each one received a paper in which they should draw: a head, a hearth, a hand and a foot; after drawing, write in the head a difficulty related to collective coexistence, in the hearth, a feeling related to coexistence, in the hand, what they have to offer to the group (a quality) and in the foot what meant the path in the agro ecology course until now. After sharing in small groups their drawings and writing, they elaborated a set of rules of collective coexistence to be followed in school.

Discussion

The prejudice and the schools

When we introduced a new theme, the starting point is always to survey what the youth know about it. When we say that the theme to be worked would be prejudice, one of them said "we know it very well". And they really know, because situations of prejudice with black children (Cavalleiro, 2005) and belonging to MST (Domingues & Rosa, 2014; Soares da Silva et al., 2015) are common in schools.

According to Slavutzky (1999), "the mark of slavery in the Brazilian history is deep and let trace elements in all of us" (p. 143), such as memory marks, unconscious marks that make us who we are, constitutes our identity of, at the same time, victim and tormentor. Marks that also stayed in our speech, music, dance, food and also in our relationship employer-employee, in which a great part of the current violence against poor people is related to this long history of aggression and humiliation.

In the course of activities and discussions, in different occasions the students presented situations in which suffered prejudice in schools, mostly in the ones located outside the camping or settlements. There were episodes remembered and related with doses of suffering and distress, many times told after a great reluctance in do it in the group, proving the subjective marks that it let in their lives. It brought to the surface the sad realization that the schools, instead of being constituted in spaces of combat of prejudice, "don't do anything" and many times, beyond the students, the teachers themselves disseminate biased practices.

Similar situations of prejudice and humiliation were also reported in the research of Domingues e Rosa (2014) with young militants of MST, also students of the agroecology technical course.

In school, social humiliation starts soon, in childhood. The sense of inequality also. The school lent books for some child, for others, no, for the landless, no: "they dirty". Separated classes are also destined to them. A school that segregates is an "example" of conduct for the ones in formation and should not see as a problem the fact of children humiliating other children because of their landless condition (Domingues & Rosa, 2014, p. 120).

Leite (1997), when approaching the interpersonal relationships and education, helps us to understand the impact of these experiences. The author defends the need for education does not disregard the relevance of interpersonal relationships in the educational process. The image we built of ourselves does not occur outside the relationship with others. The images that others provide about ourselves help us to know who we are.

According to Leite (1997), the relationships between students are not discussed in a conscious level in school environment, except when moral preaching is done to exalt or condemn an action. This author alerts us that the knowledge of teachers about the consequences more or less permanent of this kind of situation, for all involved, would be capable to modify this kind of relationship in classroom.

In this sense, Moreira (2005), quoted by Cordeiro e Buendgens (2012), highlights that many teachers are not prepared to perform a criticism of their own practices and "realize how much their 'simple' looks, disapproving or approving, are actions that also form subjects and help promote social

classifications, legitimizing and reaffirming essentialist ways of explaining relationships between people” (pp. 51-52).

Approaching the social discrimination, Cavalleiro (2005) says that it may be more difficult to identify when it comes together with other discriminations, such as of gender and social condition. The author presents a study about the prejudice and racial discrimination forms present in the educational practices and in the routine of urban schools and notes that it is full of discriminatory and racist situations, resulting in a “school routine that is harmful to the emotional and cognitive development of all children and teenagers, especially the ones considered different – with a highlight for the ones belonging to the black population” (p. 68). However, are veiled practices, not assumed by those who practice them. There is a denial of racism, non-recognition of the harmful effects of blacks and whites, and do not seek practices of positive participation of the black child in schools.

During the meetings, it was clear that the marks let by prejudice coming from many places, with several faces, and a school reality that, as opposed to fight them, becomes a place of reproduction of them.

The prejudice and the school of MST

The agroecology school of MST in which we performed the workshop is not immune to the existence of excluding practices in its interior. An example of this is that the coordination of the school presented as a demand the theme bullying. However, the difference that we saw between this and other schools not linked to the movement in which the students reported having studied is the concern of the school in overcome these practices, that reflects the actions of MST that aim not only the agrarian reform, but also provide experiences of egalitarian relationships and the combat of exclusion. We realized the need of the students of having a space to talk and reflect about prejudice and bullying. Some of them even reported that the schools in which they have previously studied had approached the theme bullying, but only superficially, without a space to discuss as the space occurring in the workshops. One of the students reported many occasions in which he suffered bullying, said that everything he wanted was having activities like these in the schools he had previously attended, because he believe that his life would be better. Different of “play a movie” or “give a lecture”, the workshops aim to work in an integrated form the clinical (personal elaboration of the experienced prejudice) and educational (reflection about their acts and awareness) dimensions.

In turn, when the MST turns not only to the conquest of land, but also for the emancipation of people and constitutes “as a favorable political and cultural environment” that allows its members a new and positive autocorrelation. The integrity of every human being depends on his being recognized. The refuse of recognition is harmful to the subject not only because it is unfair and causes damages, but also because interferes in the positive comprehension that the subject has of himself and that need to be constantly confirmed in the relationship with others (Honneth, 2009).

Without access to rights the subject cannot build self-respect, which is “...the possibility of referring positively about himself...” (Honneth, 2009, p. 197). The rights only become a matter for the subject in a negative way when it is missing. In turn, the relation between absence of rights and the constitution of self-respect is not evident, because one thing is feeling the deprivation, other is realize and comprehend its amplitude and its psychic consequences; however, the perception of this relation can be facilitated when the groups impaired by the right’s deprivation discuss this question.

It was a space of discussion and reflection that we aimed to offer to the students, where they could not only comprehend the breadth of prejudice they are victim of, but also reflect about their own prejudice and exercise empathy. This space reached to potentiate the favorable context to human formation that the MST built during its existence.

The evaluation of the workshops, made by the students and the schools’ coordination, was very positive. However, we found difficulties in evaluate the results of the workshops beyond the schools. What we have is some indicators of the effects produced by the intervention and the spontaneous speeches about how the workshops helped to reflect about prejudice practiced and contributed for them to become better persons and better technician. Also in the change of attitude of a student that reports have suffered bullying in all his school trajectory (including the school of MST in which we performed

the intervention) and, different of the beginning of the workshops, when he was quiet and isolated, he changes his posture, and starts to present the discussions in his small group and becomes an active participant of the discussions.

Final considerations

Approaching the theme of prejudice and collective coexistence with adolescents and young people from field, belonging to MST and that had their lives marked by situations in which they were victims of many types of prejudice was, at the same time, necessary and challenging. The using of the workshops showed effective for the context because it was not an isolated practice and it agrees with what happens in school and in the movement itself.

The workshop's methodology, in this scenario, showed adequate in its reach, once it proposes to go beyond the educational/informative aspects, encompassing and working with affective meanings, feelings and experiences provided by the space to talk, the reflection and elaboration, both individual and collective practice. Thus, the workshop showed powerful tool to work with groups in which it is aimed individual and social transformations.

One of the limits perceived was the difficult to evaluate the impact of these transformations in other contexts, beyond the classroom, once the contact with the young was limited to this space.

Finally, we highlight the importance of disseminate results of practices resulting from university extension activities, because we believe that other works in the same direction should have been done, but unlike research, these do not have channels of dissemination so efficient and valued. The theory and practice division still seems to prevail, resulting in the non-disclosure of many practices, making it difficult to exchange knowledge and improve the work done.

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