DEMETRA
Alimentação, Nutrição & Saúde

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Popular Education and University Outreach in Food and Nutrition Security and the Human Right to Adequate and Healthy Food: a possible methodological path

Educação Popular e Extensão Universitária em Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional e Direito Humano à Alimentação Adequada e Saudável: um caminho metodológico possível

Abstract

Introduction: The theme of food and nutrition security and the human right to adequate and healthy food became a political issue in Brazil, from 2003 to 2016. However, the task of maintaining social rights was not completed and today it is politically threatened, demanding the awareness and mobilization of segments of civil society for an understanding of reality and the resumption of the construction of possible paths for the enforceability of the law and guarantee of food and nutritional security. *Objective:* This work sought to report the experience and highlight the pedagogical expressions of the principles of popular education throughout the teaching-learning process of the 2018 edition of the course, held in the municipality of Colinas do Sul, Goiás. *Methods:* At the University of Brasília, in 2018, an Outreach Program, MultiplicaSAN, was instituted. Among its activities, there was a course to promote the culture of rights aiming at the formation of civil society in the themes of food and nutritional security and the human right to adequate and healthy food, using Freire's pedagogy and the principles of Popular Education Policy. *Results:* The experience of the outreach program provided an in-depth look at popular education, showing the wealth of knowledge construction together with a community of female workers. *Conclusion:* It also revealed the transformative potential of an educational process based on the principles of popular education: lovingness, dialogicity, awareness, construction of knowledge, based on concrete reality, transformation of the world and systematization of knowledge in the teaching-learning process of educators and students.

Keywords: Popular education. Food and nutrition security. Human Right to Adequate Food. University Outreach.

Resumo

Introdução: A temática da segurança alimentar e nutricional e do direito humano à alimentação adequada e saudável tornou-se uma questão política no Brasil, no período de 2003 a 2016. No entanto, a tarefa de manutenção de direitos sociais não estava concluída e hoje encontra-se politicamente ameaçada, demandando a conscientização e mobilização de segmentos da sociedade civil para a compreensão crítica da realidade e a retomada da construção de caminhos possíveis para a exigibilidade do direito e garantia da segurança alimentar e nutricional. *Objetivo:* Este

trabalho buscou relatar a experiência e evidenciar as expressões pedagógicas dos princípios da educação popular ao longo do processo de ensino-aprendizagem da edição de 2018 do curso, realizado no município de Colinas do Sul, Goiás. *Métodos:* Na Universidade de Brasília, em 2018, instituiu-se um Programa de Extensão e Ação Continuada, o MultiplicaSAN. Dentre suas atividades, estava a realização de um curso de formação e promoção da cultura de direitos visando à formação da sociedade civil nas temáticas de segurança alimentar e nutricional e direito humano à alimentação adequada e saudável, utilizando como referência a pedagogia freireana e os princípios da Política de Educação Popular. *Resultados:* A experiência do projeto de extensão proporcionou aprofundamento sobre a educação popular, mostrando a riqueza da construção do conhecimento junto com uma comunidade de trabalhadoras. *Conclusão:* Revelou, ainda, o potencial transformador de um processo educativo pautado nos princípios da educação popular: amorosidade, dialogicidade, conscientização, construção do conhecimento, a partir da realidade concreta, transformação do mundo e sistematização do conhecimento na formação de educadoras e educandas

Palavras-chave: Educação popular. Segurança Alimentar e Nutricional. Direito Humano à Alimentação Adequada. Extensão Universitária.

INTRODUCTION

Food and nutrition security (SAN), defined by the Organic Law for Food and Nutritional Security[1] (LOSAN), "consists in realizing the right of everyone to regular and permanent access to quality food, in sufficient quantity, without compromising access to other basic needs, based on health-promoting food practices that respect cultural diversity and that are environmentally, culturally, economically and socially sustainable". Along with the human right to adequate and healthy food (DHAAS), SAN became a political issue in Brazil, from 2003 to 2016,[2] in a democratic context of guaranteeing rights and social participation in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and public policy evaluation. However, the task of maintaining social rights was not completed and today it is politically threatened, demanding the need to raise consciousness and mobilize segments of civil society to raise consciousness, understand reality and to resume the construction of possible paths for the enforceability of DHAAS and SAN guarantee.

Popular education carries out pedagogical practices in an interdisciplinary dialogue that aims at the emancipation of subjects for social transformation. In this pedagogical approach, the educational processes start from reality and, in a dialogued and participatory way, reach discussions about the possibilities of work and construction of alternatives for the development of pedagogical activities that, in turn, propose transformations in the perceived reality.[3]

In the history of Popular Education (PE) in Brazil, its forms of action have been a reality since the first two decades of the twentieth century, in a panorama of urban-industrial development.[4] But only in the 1950s did the foundations of PE show the first signs in an official way.[4] Reinforcing its dynamic character, PE was understood as a measure of literacy of the population for military governments; formation and organization of popular movements, mainly from the 70's to the 80's; formation of organizations and popular movements to demand rights and political participation, in the 90s and 2000s.[5,6] Thus, PE was/is being "defined" through the considerations that life has allowed or demanded.[7]

In 2014, the Reference Framework for Popular Education for Public Policies[5] inserted PE, especially from the Freirean conception, in public policies in Brazil, identifying principles that can, in an understandable way, guide actions in education and construction of participatory public policies focused on the interest of the population.[8,9]

University outreach, under the constitutional principle of inseparability between teaching, research and extension, is an interdisciplinary, educational, cultural, scientific and political process that promotes transformative interaction between the university and other sectors of society.[10]

At the University of Brasilia (UnB), MultiplicaSAN was created, in January 2018, an Extension and Continuing Action Program (PEAC) that promotes a training course for multipliers in SAN/DHAAS, with the objective of contributing for the construction of a culture of rights with society, which attributes social and political meaning to adequate and healthy food.[2] This study aims to report the experience of the multipliers course in SAN/DHAAS held in the municipality of Colinas do Sul, Goiás, highlighting the pedagogical expressions of the principles of popular education throughout the teaching-learning process.

METHODS

This is the theoretical analysis of a university outreach course, through the conception of popular education for multipliers in food and nutrition security (SAN) and the human right to adequate and healthy food (DHAAS).

People

The team that worked on the organization of the course was formed by two professors from UnB, three collaborating nutritionists and four Nutrition undergraduate students, three women and one man. These people were the educators who actively participated in all stages of the course.

Among them, a student, author of the present paper, was responsible for attending some meetings and thinking about the evaluation questionnaire that would be used at the end of the course. Thus, she participated in three of the six meetings of the course (1.5 and 6) and team meetings as an observer-participant in this process.

The course, once confirmed, was published in the city where it would take place; mainly orally, the news reached the municipal school and the group of students was formed by 13 women and one man. The course was publicized by the team of a research professor at the UnB Cerrado Center, Teaching, Research and Extension Center, located in Alto Paraíso de Goiás, managed by the Faculty of Planaltina, which works on the theme related to food sovereignty and security, environmental sustainability and preservation of the biodiversity of the cerrado biome. Thus, interested people showed up on the day and place announced to participate in the course promoted by MultiplicaSAN.

The public was made up of 14 people, 13 women and one man who worked in different areas such as education, health, school feeding, food and administrative production, in the municipalities of Colinas do Sul-GO and Alto Paraíso de Goiás-GO Most of the participants lived in the first municipality. The schooling of the group was predominantly complete elementary school, some had completed high school and one was taking distance postgraduate courses. Most were on average over 30 years of age, except for one who was 17 (being the daughter of one of the women).

Places

The course meetings took place in two places, the first three in Alto Paraíso de Goiás, municipality with 6.885 people, according to the 2010[11] census, and the others in Colinas do Sul (Figure 1). Colinas do Sul has a population of 3.523 people with an average salary of 2.6 minimum wages; 39% of the population has monthly *per capita* income of up to half the minimum wage.[11]

Figure 1. Location of Colinas do Sul in the State of Goiás
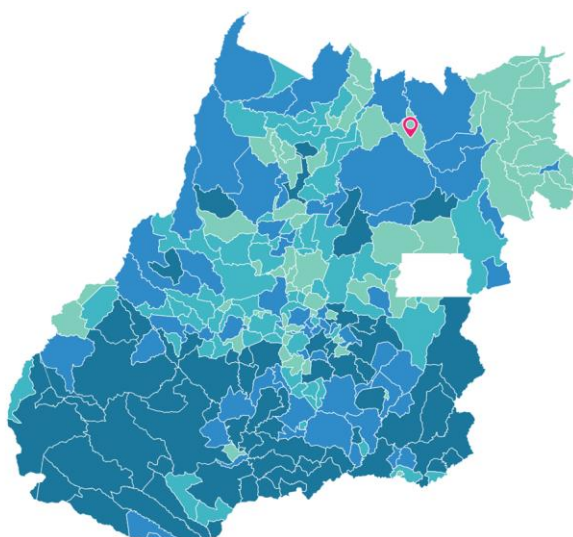
Pedagogical Team Training

The objective of this stage was to familiarize the team, and especially the students, with the principles of the PE and the themes of SAN and DHAAS. The training was carried out in two days, one of which was in theory, in which the topics of SAN and DHAAS and the principles of PE were studied, presented and discussed, through the reading of guiding texts and conversation circles. On the second day there was the practical part, in which the students tested the structure of a meeting and the realization of active and participatory methodologies, having to elaborate an integration dynamic and another one that prepared the participants for the conversation circle. Finally, an evaluation conversation was held about the activities of the training process.

In Paulo Freire's theory, dialogue is a dialectic-problematizing process, through which it is possible to look at the world and our existence in society as an unfinished and constantly changing reality. Thus, according to Freire, "since its origin, methodology cannot contradict the dialogicity of liberating education. That is why it is also dialogical".[3] Therefore, the conversation circle, chosen as the main method used in the course, was also present in the pedagogical training of the team.

Planning

The course was based on two documents, the "Methodological Notebook for the Training of Multipliers in SAN/DHAAS" and the book of the Brazilian Action for Nutrition and Human Rights (ABRANDH), entitled The Human Right to Adequate Food and the National Food and Nutritional Security System. The first presented a course perspective aimed at advisers and counselors of the Food Security Councils (CONSEA), with a structure of 15 meetings. The second document, on the other hand, was a textbook that addressed, in a deeper way, some of the contents and themes worked on in the course. Thus, the planning aimed to reorganize/adapt the themes, contents and methodologies of six meetings of eight hours each and to the audience that was expected, as well as the organization of the pairs of facilitators for each meeting, dates, travel logistics, necessary materials, etc.

The final plan, then, was to provide the course on alternate Saturdays, starting in April and ending in June 2018, with a total of six meetings of eight hours each. The topics covered were: 1) History of SAN and DHAAS; 2) Intersectoriality and food circuits: knowing the stages of the food system; 3) DHAAS violations and enforceability and the challenges, potential and skills building; 4) Putting DHAAS into practice and basic concepts about public policies, SISAN and its components; 5) Knowing SISAN at the local level, democracy and citizenship; and 6) Role of civil society.

According to Freire's theory, consciousness is the first objective of all education and occurs in the critical development of consciousness, that is, overcoming intransitive consciousness, which is the human being's inability to objectify the reality in which he lives; and the naive, in which the social contradiction is perceived, but is still limited to conformism.[12] Thus, the order of the generative themes presented above was planned with a view to creating a critical conscience (meetings 1 to 5) that at the end made possible the praxis of subjects in their reality (encounter 6), now understood in a critical and gradual way.

An important point to be *darkened*[13] is the denomination that "contents" have in Paulo Freire's theory, in which they are called generative themes. The author explains that generative themes are those that, regardless of the nature of their understanding, or the action caused by them, contain within themselves the possibility of unfolding in other themes, which in turn cause new tasks to be accomplished.[3] This conception favors dialogue to the extent that educators and students do not feel trapped by the content dilemma of traditional education; at the same time, there is confidence in the group so that it generates the reflections

necessary to understand the topic at hand. For this to happen, the team needs to have a real understanding of their intentions with the proposed activity.

Meetings

The logistics of preparation for the meetings took place weekly during the team meetings. The responsible facilitators, in the week before the meeting, presented the proposed activities, the necessary adjustments were made collectively, and the proposal was closed. With the logical thread (Chart 1) agreed, in the week in which the meeting would take place, the necessary materials were separated and prepared for the trip. The first three meetings took place at a municipal school in Alto Paraíso de Goiás, and the last three at a school in Colinas do Sul.

Chart 1. Example of Logical Thread

MEETING I				
CLASS 01: FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY HISTORY				
SCHEDULE	MOMENT/CONTENT	WHAT HAPPENS	MATERIAL/ ENVIRONMENT	OBSERVATION
08:00h	WELCOME PREPARATION	Create ambiance with music and a clothesline of stimuli Cordially receive participants	Strings, images, clothes pins Strings, images, clothes pins	Music and images should be chosen by the facilitator with local references Music starts at least ten minutes before Encourage the participant to interact with the venue before starting the event
08:10h	CREATE CONTEXT	Introduce yourself and present the objectives of the training process (10 min.)	Seats arranged in a circle	
08:20h	PRESENTATIONS	Ask everyone to walk and choose an image, phrase or poetry to "pick" from the clothesline Guide participants to talk in three rounds • What does this image/phrase reveal about you? (20 min) • Name three facts on your path that make you pride/emotional (15 min) • If there were no people working with SAN, what would the world lose? (15 min)		Subgroups of up to 5 people

All the meetings followed a basic structure that consisted of having breakfast on arrival and an interaction dynamic; discussion and debate on theme 1; lunch; recovery dynamics; discussion and debate on theme 2 and closing dynamics. For each meeting, there were two facilitators responsible for coordinating the activities and the students who were supposed to plan the dynamics of integration and return of lunch, in addition to the support.

Assessment

Analytical Framework

The National University Extension Policy brings the concept of extension:

> University Extension, under the constitutional principle of indissociability between teaching, research and extension, is an interdisciplinary educational, cultural, scientific and political process that promotes the transformative interaction between university and other sectors of society.[10]

The given course is one of PEAC's actions, and in addition to encompassing the concept of extension, it adds popular education as a pedagogical-methodological axis in all its stages. Therefore, for the analysis and discussion of the course from the perspective of PE, the Reference Framework for Popular Education for Public Policies[5] was used as it is an institutional document where the bases for inserting PE in public policies are defined. It presents as principles: lovingness, dialogicity, consciousness, starting from concrete reality, transformation of the world and reality, construction of knowledge, and systematization of knowledge. The activities carried out within the scope of the training course were analyzed and discussed according to these principles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Lovingness and dialogicity

Lovingness, which permeates all of Paulo Freire's works, materializes in affection, which using the prefix *with-* strengthens the idea of commitment to oneself and to the other. For the educator, "the act of love is commitment to their cause. The cause of liberation. And this commitment, because it is loving, is dialogical".[3,14] Hence the (in)difference between Freire's concepts of lovingness and dialogicity – one cannot happen without the other and the other is not possible without the one.

In this perspective, the *With-deal* activity, carried out at the first meeting of the course, directly intended to show that the educators were committing themselves to the demands and needs of the students. The Contract (Figure 2) was produced through a dialogue between all those present, so that the rules of coexistence of the group could be defined. In the collective document, there was a clear need for students to have space for speech and listening, and that these rules could be changed during the meetings if the group wished.

Figure 2. With -Deal

WITH-DEAL

    I.   AVOID EXCESSIVE NOISE AND PARALLEL CONVERSATION
    II.   HAVE A VOICE AND KNOW HOW TO LISTEN
    III.   HOURS FROM 8AM TO 16PM, WITH POSSIBILITIES OF ADJUSTMENTS
    IV.   ROTATING COMMUNITY SNACK
    V.   MOMENTS TO MOVE THE BODY
    VI.   SELF-MANAGEMENT OF MOBILE PHONES IN SILENT MODE, WITH RESPECT TO THE GROUP
    VII. MEETING DATES: APRIL 07, 14 AND 28, MAY 12 AND 26, JUNE 09.
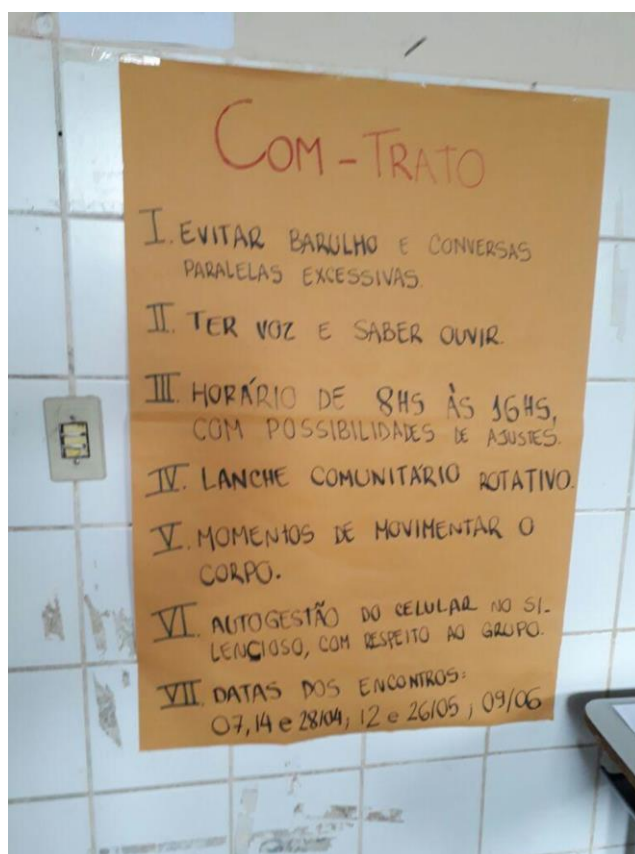
For dialogue to take place, love is one of the necessary conditions.[15] Therefore, the beginning of all meetings was marked by a shared breakfast.

> Sharing the eating and the activities involved in this act is a simple and profound way of creating and developing relationships between people [...] It facilitates the integration of groups, increases the sense of belonging. (p.96)[16]

The meals were brought either by the educators or by the students and, at that moment, an atmosphere of warmth was created in each of the meetings, enabling a bond between the teachers and students, as well as a knowledge of the culture and reality of those women.[16,17]

According to Paulo Freire, dialogue takes place in a horizontal relationship,[3] thus the organization of the room in a circle was also an element present in all meetings, since the circle, unlike the organization in rows, for example, allows everyone to look at each other equally and does not presuppose that there is a single person who demands everyone's attention, as he/she is the holder of knowledge, as the structure in rows establishes. Educators and students sitting in the circle, the dialogue went through all of them, who shared the construction of knowledge.

Paulo Freire[3] stipulates three preconditions for dialogue: love for the world and for *men*, humility and faith in *men*. Translating these conditions into words is a difficult agenda, but it follows an attempt to illustrate them: in the dynamics carried out at the first meeting, after discussing the themes of the history of SAN and Human Rights, the students had to create a scene about a rights violation, and from the reflection on the scenes presented, there were reports of violations suffered by them in the community in which they live. According to Paulo Freire, "it would be a contradiction in terms of dialogue – loving, humble and full of faith – did not produce a climate of mutual trust among their subjects".[3]

But in addition to the conditions that enable dialogue, the methodology must also be aware and provide, at the same time, the apprehension of the generative themes and the consciousness of them.[12]

Knowledge construction

In the educational process, learning and producing knowledge are central moments in the learning cycle capable of articulating theory and practice, between the historical knowledge constructed and the experiences and knowledge of the students. If we take popular education as an assumption, it is worth considering that there is no more or less important knowledge, valid or not, but different knowledge.[5,14] As it is one of the central principles, the construction of knowledge, as well as lovingness and dialogicity, forms a transversal axis in the course, in this way it can be perceived throughout the discussion on the other principles.

Through the methodologies used, the team sought to start from the students' knowledge and worldview on the themes, and to build new knowledge from these exchanges. Some results were, for example, the construction of the public policy tree, the onion theory and the food circuits. Such results can be seen as processes of creation through learning processes,[15] which in Freire are analogous to knowing/knowledge that is "adhered" to people.[12]

For this movement to happen, a belief of the team of educators was that "nobody ignores everything, nobody knows everything".[18] Based on this concept, the valorization of the knowledge intrinsic to the students was a challenge and at the same time a surprise. Each meeting was unique, this cooperative game[19] of knowledge produced new knowledge for the group of educators and students.

Consciousness and Starting from Concrete Reality

The author/teacher/feminist/black activist Bell Hooks[20] recalls that Freire "never spoke of consciousness as an end in itself, but always as it is joined by meaningful praxis". Consciousness implies that we go beyond the spontaneous sphere of apprehension of reality, to reach a critical sphere in which reality occurs as a knowable object and in which man assumes an epistemological position.[5,15] The process of consciousness in this perspective is not merely make the subjects aware of their reality and the relationships that constitute it, but that this consciousness leads to a praxis, to an action to change that perceived reality.

This process is only possible if the reality of the subjects is taken as an object of study and the theme that generates the educational process. Thus, another principle of popular education is Starting from Concrete Reality, which supposes to raise both the worldview of the students and the objective data of the context where social practices and educational experiences will take place.[5] That is, the PE seeks to break with a banking education perspective,[21] without a link and relationship with the reality of the subjects involved.

In this sense, of going through the phases/stages of raising consciousness about the themes that generated the course, tools such as videos, case studies, construction of scenes, games and graphic materials, always preceded, permeated and proceeded by the group's dialogue favored the understanding of the reality of the subjects who, by means of distance, look and see the totality of the problems and later look at their subtopics.[3]

As an example, in the third meeting, human rights and DHAAS themes were further worked on. As dynamics of apprehension and practice of the concepts discussed, two case studies of DHAAS violations were used, one on the labeling and identification of transgenic foods and the other on school feeding. After the

presentation of the theme and the group's debate, rights holders and duty bearers were identified in each of the situations, and the obstacles to guaranteeing human rights to the population were also discussed.

Based on this example, it is also possible to demonstrate that from the knowledge of the reality and the situation presented in its entirety, the students understood both the so-called academic concepts such as "enforceability" and "right holders", as well as actions and effective means of charging and enforce your rights. One of the actions listed by the group was the boycott of the consumption of transgenic products and the need to encourage and strengthen family farming in the region, for example.

In *Ethics of Liberation*, Enrique Dussel, professor/philosopher/historian, corroborates the principle of consciousness and argues that critical reason, that is,

> [...] the (self) recognition of the victims of the world-system (dominated: workers, Indians, slaves, etc. and discriminated against: women, the elderly, the disabled, immigrants, etc.), as well as the discovery of their otherness and autonomies, denied by the current world-system, performs a deconstructive critical action (consciousness). (p.98) [22]

This (ethical-liberating) movement goes through the verification of the existence of the oppressed, in his condition of being that has denied the right to life; his recognition as a human being, constituting an ethical duty, critical to the system, points to the need to transform the causes that give rise to social exclusion.[23]

It was possible to verify the convergence of conception between Freire and Dussel, because in this generative theme the debate was not limited to technical questions about human rights, but it raised dialogues and investigated the perception of students about social inequalities and prejudices, which determine who has and who does not have access to the list of rights in society.

Transformation of the world and reality

Following the previous point, the next step in consciousness, according to Freire, is praxis. In this way, Freire's praxis can be understood as "the close relationship that is established between a way of interpreting reality and life and practice that, consequently, arises from this understanding, leading to a transforming action".[14,15] Another point raised in this principle is that an educational process based on popular education will seek to make people subject to rights, protagonists of their destinies and contributors to the transformation,[5] because "In the world of history, culture, politics, I note not to me but to adapt to change".[23]

During the course, the need for actions to change reality was evident, especially in the final meetings, when the themes revolved around social participation, democracy and citizenship. One of the most striking activities for the educators was the final work, in which the students had to identify and analyze a situation of violation of rights in the community and propose an action plan to guarantee this right. At the end, eight papers were presented. For the purposes of this study, two papers were selected for analysis and discussion.

One of them was the case of a worker who received social assistance benefits such as basic food basket and income transfer through *Bolsa Família*. This worker, realizing his need, started a small rice plantation for sale. However, after the neighbors heard about it and a visit from social workers at the residence, the benefit was canceled and the situation of food insecurity for this worker worsened. So, to prevent more people from going through this, the team decided that the action plan would be the creation of a Municipal Council for

Food and Nutrition Security (COMSEA) in Colinas and listed their main representatives in government and civil society bodies, based on local reality.

Another case was about a bridge that made the connection between the urban and rural areas of the municipality, which, due to the high volume of rain, had fallen, making it impossible for farmers to cross to market their products in the city. After identifying the violation of rights, the pair responsible for the work contacted the city hall to understand the delay in rebuilding the bridge and demanding measures from the State. They showed, with the action plan, the need for coordination between the population and the city, that is, the social participation strategy based on the organization of the community to solve the problem.

The above works reveal a qualified understanding of the topics discussed at the meetings, and the ability to develop concrete alternatives for solving problems and/or harmonizing conflicts with/based on the participation of the community, contrary to the previous proposals, focused on the individual and/or philanthropy.

At this point, one can see the demythologization of reality.[3,12] Paulo Freire, when talking about literacy, says that "it is a courageous attempt to demythologize reality, an effort through which, in a permanent distance from the reality in which they find themselves more or less immersed, its learners emerge from it to enter themselves into it critically".[21] In the context of the course, the dialogue and the activities carried out promoted demythologization as a result and process during the meetings.

In both cases presented, it is possible to verify different levels of engagement and transformation of reality, which reflect different levels of PE. According to Freire, since "there are popular struggles that are organized, they are union members, they are partisan or regional. There are daily struggles, daily struggles to collect water, struggles that have their own way of teaching and learning how to survive";[7] there are then different levels of popular education, to subsidize and transform different realities.

Systematization of knowledge

The last principle presented by the Reference Framework[5] is that of systematization. Within Freire's theory, this principle can be understood as part of the constant action-reflection-action process, in which to systematize is the appropriation of experience, as well as its "critical interpretation […] that, based on its ordering and reconstruction, discover or explain the logic of the lived process, the factors that intervened in the process, how they related to each other and why they did it that way".[24]

Thus, systematization allows:

> […] *descubrir, a partir de la identificación de los aciertos y errores de los proyectos y de los participantes, los elementos claves que influyeron en la obtención de determinados resultados; y, por tanto, compartir las lecciones que pueden ayudar a mejorar las prácticas de intervención.*(p.11)[25]

In this perspective, this process took place in the writing of this text, which aims to serve as a record of the process of reflection on the experience lived in the first course of the extension project. Sharing the vision of Oscar Jará Holiday[24] on what experience is, "[…] they are dynamic social processes: in permanent change and movement. They are also complex social processes, in which a set of objective and subjective factors are interrelated, in a contradictory way" (p.21).

From the wealth of knowledge generated in the systematization process, some ideas for its use can be outlined: one directly linked to the generation of new knowledge that will serve as an instrument to feed future practices/actions and people inserted in their own experience and in their context; and the other would be linked to communication, as it enables the sharing of knowledge, actions and information between people, groups and institutions, with the potential to influence actors/actresses such as public managers, citizens, etc.[26]

The systematization of this experience fulfills the role of registering the pedagogical-political path in the context of the education of students. In addition, it showed the potential of university extension as a transformative and realizing process of praxis, even with the infrastructure, financial and institutional visibility existing in the institution's scenario.

Limitations observed

In the project, the generative themes were previously planned, without consulting the students, due to the institutional structure that requires prior approval of the extension project. However, flexibility was already foreseen during the meetings, so that adaptations and adjustments could be carried out in permanent dialogue with the students and in accordance with the experienced reality. According to Paulo Freire,[2] the choice of generative themes should be made with and for the community – in this case, the students –, because only from their reality, the present and concrete situation, it is possible to organize the programmatic content of education.

Regarding the praxis/transformation of reality inherent to the theory presented here, it is understood that popular education presents different levels.[7] Considering the limitations of the course's educational process, such as the impossibility of a medium-term follow-up, coupled with the lack of institutional resources sufficient to cover all stages and activities of the project, such as the purchase of materials, transport, accommodation, etc., it was not possible to see concrete changes in the reality of the community.

However, it is equally important to remember that "education does not change the world, education changes people, people change the world".[2] At the end of the course, students were empowered and more aware of the problems of the community, and they had plans on how to face them. The educators were certain that the work in that community was significant and the experience was rewarding.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that the present work has fulfilled its objective of proposing a reflection on the learning process anchored in the principles of PE defined by the Reference Framework for Popular Education for Public Policies.

The experiences described have shown the inseparability and (in)difference of the principles and concepts of the PE, confirming that its theoretical foundation can serve as the basis of the know-how for the how-to, taking the course in the themes of SAN and DHAAS as an example.

The experience provided a deepening of concepts and understandings in popular education, the wealth of knowledge construction together with a community of workers and revealed the power of an educational process based on popular education in building knowledge and causing changes with/for educators and students.

Finally, the paper highlights the role of university outreach programs in democratizing and building knowledge with civil society, seeking to promote a culture of rights through popular educational processes.

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Contributors

Machado BOB worked in the conception and design, analysis and interpretation of data; Oliveira AR worked in the conception and design, review and approval of the final version of the article.

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