

Violence in the eye of adolescents: education intervention with Culture Circles

Violência sob o olhar de adolescentes: intervenção educativa com Círculos de Cultura
Violencia bajo la mirada de los adolescentes: intervención educativa con el Círculos de Cultura

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ABSTRACT

Objective: to apply the methodology of Culture Circles on adolescents as a strategy for health education of nurses in the construction of the collective knowledge of the thematic violence. **Method:** action research type and qualitative study. Participants were 11 adolescents from a public school in Recife, PE, Brazil. Data production in Culture Circles included the participant observation with field diary, photographic recording and filming, as well as the photovoice technique. The analysis was performed by triangulating data in dialogue with the literature. **Results:** it was shown that the problematizing action provided by the Culture Circle made possible to create situations in which adolescents felt invited to critically reflect on the phenomenon of violence in all its complexity. **Conclusion:** the health education intervention, performed by Culture Circles, added learning and mutual growth subsidizing nursing care actions that excel at leadership and autonomy of adolescents.

Key words: Adolescent; Violence; Health Education; Health Promotion; School Nursing.

RESUMO

Objetivo: aplicar a metodologia de Círculos de Cultura junto a adolescentes escolares como estratégia de educação em saúde da enfermeira na construção do conhecimento coletivo da temática violência. **Método:** estudo qualitativo do tipo pesquisa-ação em que participaram 11 adolescentes de uma escola pública estadual de Recife-PE. A produção dos dados no Círculo de Cultura abrangeu a observação participante com diário de campo, registro fotográfico e filmagem, além da técnica *photovoice*. A análise foi realizada pela triangulação de dados em diálogo com a literatura. **Resultados:** foi evidenciado que a ação problematizadora proporcionada pelo Círculo de Cultura possibilitou criar situações nas quais os adolescentes sentiam-se convidados a refletir criticamente sobre o fenômeno da violência em sua complexidade. **Conclusão:** a intervenção de educação em saúde, realizada por meio de Círculos de Cultura, agregou aprendizado e crescimento mútuo subsidiando ações de cuidado em enfermagem que primem pelo protagonismo e autonomia dos adolescentes.

Descritores: Adolescente; Violência; Educação em Saúde; Promoção da Saúde; Serviços de Enfermagem Escolar.

RESUMEN

Objetivo: aplicar la metodología de Círculos de Cultura con adolescentes escolares como estrategia de educación en salud de la enfermera en la construcción del conocimiento colectivo de la temática violencia. **Método:** estudio cualitativo del tipo investigación-acción que participaron 11 adolescentes de una escuela pública estadual de Recife-PE. La producción de los datos en el Círculo de Cultura abarcó la observación participante con diario de campo, registro fotográfico y filmación, además de la técnica *photovoice*. El análisis fue realizado por la triangulación de datos en diálogo con la literatura. **Resultados:** fue evidenciado que la acción problematizadora proporcionada por el Círculo de Cultura permitió crear situaciones en las cuales los adolescentes se sentían convidados a reflexionar críticamente sobre el fenómeno de la violencia en su complejidad. **Conclusión:** la intervención de educación en salud, realizada por medio de Círculos de Cultura, añadió aprendizaje y crecimiento mutuo proporcionando acciones de cuidado en enfermería que primen el protagonismo y autonomía de los adolescentes.

Palabras clave: Adolescente; Violencia; Educación en Salud; Promoción de la Salud; Servicios de Enfermería Escolar.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is the period of life that spans the ages between 10 to 19 and has been considered a strategic group for promoting health policies and confronting vulnerable experiences, such as violence⁽¹⁾. However, the extent to which this phenomenon victimizes children and teenagers demonstrates the necessity for intersectoral public policies, and human resource training in health that is committed to the comprehensive care and protection of these subjects from an integrative perspective of individual and social rights.

Understanding the violence that permeates the lives of adolescents and young people requires the effort of society as a whole because, as a social phenomenon, violence takes different form in terms of its expression in different contexts which make it worse. Thus, proposals for the comprehensive care health of adolescents should look towards intervening through actions that involve listening to them, meeting their needs and allowing them to develop skills and abilities, while extrapolating simple welfarism, making them part of social networks whose focus is to confront and minimize vulnerability factors⁽²⁾. The connection between the concept of vulnerability and the phenomenon of violence seeks to examine the dynamics of social, cultural and individual processes that define the susceptibility of adolescents in the context of violence.

Schools constitute an excellent setting for developing health-promoting actions, because it is in these places that adolescents and young people develop and build their view of autonomy, subjectivity and the world. Thus, it becomes imperative that the nursing profession, who are the individuals who are closest to the reality of Brazilian adolescents within the *SUS* (Brazilian Unified Health System), is based on breaking silence and the environment in which violence against this demographic exists⁽³⁾. In this context, educational activities based on humanist, liberating and pedagogical references are highlighted, such as any practice capable of promoting empowerment in adolescents and stimulating their role for collective action and exercising citizenship.

Keeping this idea in mind, one can highlight the Culture Circles methodology proposed by Freire, regarding youth and adult literacy as a fundamental idea to develop an educational action, such as recreating or reinventing meanings. The guiding principle of this method is reflective practice that aims at liberation, not only in the cognitive field, but essentially in the social and political fields⁽⁴⁾. In the nursing field, the epistemological constructs of the thinker Paulo Freire have pushed research forward, such as those by Monteiro and Vieira⁽⁵⁾, as a proposal of health education by means of Culture Circles along with community groups, which is a fruitful way to produce new ideas for nursing care that are committed to autonomy and the critical conscience of reality.

The aim of this study was to build knowledge in the area of adolescent health, strengthening the role of the nurse as

a mediator of educative activities that are in tune with the idea of youth protagonism and emancipation. Such strategies are clearly important due to the fact that even teenagers and young people establish themselves as vulnerable subjects, they are also potentially capable of developing and giving new meaning to protective situations⁽⁶⁾.

There are some factors that motivated the researchers involved in this study, namely: the insignificant role of health professionals in the school environment, a lack of knowledge regarding the importance of active methodologies in discussions on complex social issues and the need to increase efforts to train adolescents as actors working on change in order to tackle community problems. Based on the aforementioned, the following research problem was proposed: does implementing the Culture Circles model, as an educational intervention in nursing with adolescent students, enable reflection, strengthening and mobilization for understanding the problem of violence? To answer this question, the objective of this study was to apply the Culture Circles methodology to adolescent students as a health education strategy by nurses in the construction of the collective knowledge of violence.

METHOD

This study was action-research in nature with a qualitative approach, which made use of the Culture Circle as proposed by Monteiro and Vieira⁽⁵⁾. The choice for developing a Culture Circle was aimed at leading to a participatory experience with emphasis on dialog, which is a useful field for reflective practice in collectively developing a systematic proposal for an educational undertaking of emancipatory nursing⁽⁵⁾.

This research was conducted during a period from August to December in 2011, at a state public school in the city of Recife, capital of Pernambuco, Brazil. The study subjects were 11 adolescents in their first or second grade of high school, aged between 15 and 19 years, with 6 subjects being female and 5 male, all were residents in the same community where the school is located. The community is characterized by frequent violent events that are related to gangs fighting for territory to sell drugs.

In order to gather the sample, information regarding the educational intervention was released in the high school's classrooms, including directions for the students to fill out a registration form containing personal data and the following question: why you want to participate? The requirement of talking with their parents or guardians, regarding the need for the students to get permission to participate in the study, was highlighted. Thus, the chosen participants had to conform with the following criteria: be enrolled and currently attending the pedagogical activities on a regular basis, complete a registration form, be interested in participating in the study and hand in their formal consent, as was the requirement for the parent or guardian, by signing a Term of Free and Informed Consent.

The option to work with an intentional type non-probabilistic sample is based on a proposal of free and spontaneous participation by adolescents to make a final sample composition. Encouraging the young people to spontaneously and consciously participate is essential for developing Culture Circles, whose dialog and awareness constitute the relevant foundations for this method⁽⁵⁾.

The following data collection techniques were used during the development of the Culture Circle: participant observation with notes taken in a field journal, photographic records and filming of the meetings, in addition to the collective photographic images produced by the teenagers, which is known as photovoice⁽⁷⁾.

The photovoice technique⁽⁷⁾ can be considered a participatory health promotion strategy in which teenagers are motivated to develop their ideas and speak out from pictures taken that portray their reality, enabling a critical and reflective view.

The Culture Circle was used as a data collection instrument and research method that adhered to the following steps: establishing a universal vocabulary, dynamics of awareness and relaxation, situations for brainstorming (work guiding question(s)), theoretical foundation, critical reflection, collective analysis of the responses, summary of what was experienced and evaluation. The circle of culture lasted an average of two hours. After the meeting had finished, the researchers performed a detailed description of all the events and circumstances that occurred during the development process: creating a narrative of the information contained in the field journal, a transcript of the material recorded on film and a photographic record of the experiences from the group activities.

In order to organize and analyze the data, the triangulation technique was used⁽⁸⁾, which allowed the actual reality to be observed from different angles through the increased involvement of researchers, thereby giving the data greater validity. The interpretive summary took the form of conversations, observation, participation, behavior from group activities and meanings of the educational direction from the experiences by the social actors involved. The material was discussed and analyzed while referring to relevant literature on the subject, in a dialectic-critical procedure.

The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Pernambuco, Protocol No. 076/11 and CAAE record: 0062.0.097.000-11. The adolescents' anonymity was protected by using pseudonyms, followed by identification by gender and age. The pseudonyms were chosen by the adolescents that represented their personal characteristics, which was done during the dynamic of presentation and relaxation.

RESULTS

The step to discover the universal vocabulary used by the adolescents took place prior to the Culture Circle being performed, this was done by means of prior contact with the participating individual regarding aspects that involved problems with violence experienced on a daily basis, this process made it possible to extract the words to be worked with at the meeting. In addition, it was possible to explore other views regarding

the planning, which, having still not been finalized, was open to flexibility. According to Freire⁽⁹⁾, it is in the relationship between the teacher-student-object of the knowledge that the dialogic process is based. Looking for programmatic content is essential for establishing an interaction between these three gnoseological categories, because the dialog between them starts before the pedagogical event itself.

Culture Circle: understanding situations of violence for adolescents

In order to develop the methodological-theoretical path for the Culture Circle, a greeting session was proposed, using a group technique, during which the adolescents were asked to choose a strip of paper to glue to their shirts. The strips had written on them names of actors from society, such as: judge, manager, politician, teacher, student, medical professional and family. These strips were subsequently distributed to the participants, as were balloons and a small blank pieces of paper, so that they could write a message about what an adolescent needs for them to be happy. The messages were then placed inside the balloons which, after being blown up, music was played and the balloons were thrown into the air, the students had to be careful not to drop them. As the game progressed the adolescents were removed from the center one by one. When asked what they thought of the game, they responded:

Let us say that this ball has everything we need inside and at any moment anyone can stop being happy [...]. One always has to help the other. (Joy, F, 17 years)

I realized that I was missed [...]. We started as a group but this did not last, we did not keep the balls in the air [...]. (Creativity, M, 18 years)

... I found the issue of choosing a profession interesting, but some of these people are not always there in our lives. (Friendship, M, 15 years)

The goal of this technique was to promote a collective spirit for group work, stimulating commitment to each other while establishing relationships of reciprocity, respect and mobilization in the process of knowledge construction, as well as giving an experience that allowed the adolescents to grow as protagonists in their life stories. During the process of choosing their profession, the adolescents were observed to position themselves to question and charge the presence of certain social actors responsible for ensuring full protection for children and adolescents. At the end of the game, the adolescents burst the balls and read the following messages: hope, God, happiness, love, money, education, leisure, health, peace, friends.

When beginning the brainstorming session, the young people were asked to organize themselves into groups and develop work by means of a photographic record. The following question was asked in order to guide the photographic record: *which situations of violence can you identify in your community?* The researcher provided four digital cameras, two for each group made up of six adolescents. It was agreed that everyone should participate in the production of ten photos per group.

Each sub-group elected a coordinator for the activity, who was responsible for explaining the photos to the researcher. The photos were distributed in groups so that the adolescents could understand what they represented. At this point it was possible to exclude photos that portrayed the same situation.

Thus, the first group built the following panel (Figure 1):



Figure 1 - Panel of photos regarding what the adolescents thought represented situations of violence, prepared by the first group of adolescents from the Culture Circle

This panel was interpreted by the group as follows:

Here we used photos of some situations of violence in parts of the community where drugs are sold, prostitution happens, locations of robbery, murder [...]. We can see that this is harmful to us, we look and we do not like it; we feel bad, I just want to change ... and this happens near our school, where some walk by on their way home. (Life, F, 16 years)

In some of these parts of the community dead people are found, including a colleague of mine who was murdered at this location, we even heard the shots. (Perfectionist, F, 15 years)

We took the picture of this orange wall, because one day we saw the police approaching some adolescents there [...]. I do not know what the reason was, but I think it was prejudice, based on the way they were dressed ... and it was at

that very moment when the police officer saw me, grabbed my arm strongly and ordered me to delete it. (Creativity, M, 18 years)

We also took a picture of the graffiti on the school that is everywhere, vandalism [...]. In some places where we could glue our work, it is full of graffiti that will not come off anymore. (Dream, M, 16 years)

This other picture here of a 3-year old child gives an idea of how children and young people do housework or work outside the house ... this means children cannot study and drop out of school [...]. (Resilience, F, 19 years)

Here we show a pregnant adolescent [...]. Many of my colleagues have had children at the age of 14. (Hope, F, 17 years)

And in this other situation we have an elderly person working, carrying some bags of cement, this caught our attention [...]. And here is a man looking through garbage to find things of value to sell [...]. It is very sad for this person's son/daughter to see his/her father doing this, he/she will want to help. (Perfectionist, F, 15 years)

The panel made by the second group (Figure 2) was presented as follows:

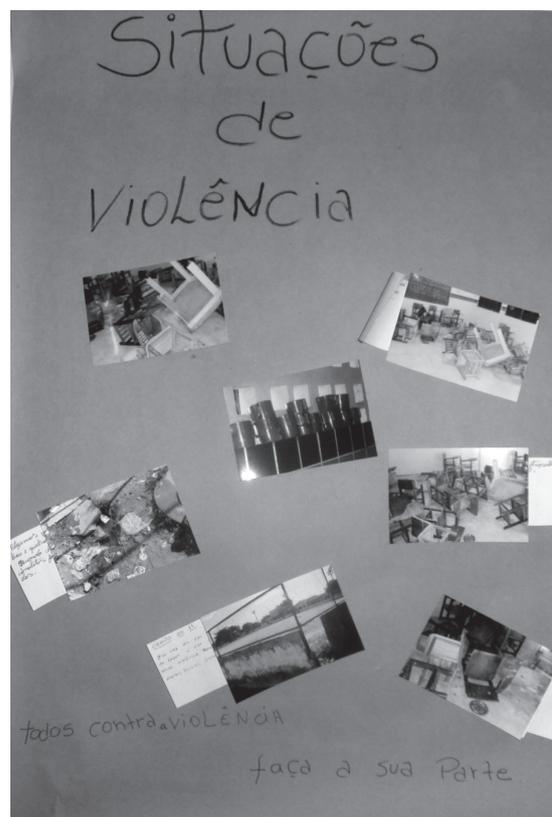


Figure 2 - Panel of photos regarding what the adolescents thought represented situations of violence, prepared by the second group of adolescents from the Culture Circle

This panel was verbally presented by the group as follows:

We thought that the garbage that is thrown on the streets represents violence towards the world, the environment and the people themselves who could become sick, because the world responds harmfully when we damage it [...]. (Joy, F, 17 years)

Here we wanted to show a community soccer field, which should be an area for leisure ... in fact it is used to sell and use drugs, hide weapons, "erase" people, there has already been a lot of murdered people found here [...]. (Love, F, 18 years)

This drug problem is serious, because it is through drugs that all violence is generated ... there are many consequences for children and we adolescents, because the drug dealers use us for selling these things ... it is very common to see these people here in the community ... in this world drugs can only lead to two ends: prison and mainly death. (Friendship, M, 15 years)

... last year I saw a colleague at the school with a gun in her bag [...]. (Studios, F, 18 years)

One day at school there was a lot of trouble, at lunch time the boys starting turning and breaking the chairs in the room, throwing the glasses and dishes full of food ... we were kind of scared, it did not seem as if we were at school ... this is a form of violence that jeopardizes even our education. (Courage, M, 15 years)

The text "Where is the violence?" was provided for the reading session, which was adapted from UNESCO editions⁽¹⁰⁾. By using this text a dialog was established between the literature and what was revealed based on the knowledge from the adolescents:

What caught my eye in the text was that hitting and attacking were not the only kinds of violence, but humiliating one another is also violence [...]. (Perfectionist, F, 15 years)

When you hit a person and leave a physical mark it goes away, but if such a mark is left in the heart or mind it will stay there forever [...]. Fear will grow in this person and she will become withdrawn, she will not make friends [...]. (Joy, F, 17 years)

Based on the depth with which the teenagers expressed their understanding of the theme of violence, it was noticed that the text provided additional information to the understanding that the group already had on the phenomenon. Therefore, these teenagers evidently developed a definition of violence that was not only referring to the results of physical harm, injury or death which leave a more visible mark, but a veiled form of violence that humiliates, excludes and treats people with indifference that can leave psychological scars that affect their social life.

The idea of the summary session was to review the main points covered during the Culture Circle, where keywords came up from the discussions and reflections from the center

of the circle. Thus, the adolescents highlighted the fact that they constantly live with violence, either in the neighborhood, at school, in the family environment or in areas that should be used by the community for leisure. The teenagers also showed that the violence is seen as being normal and expected, especially among peripheral individuals, which ends up portraying a stereotype of young people, thereby limiting their access to social goods and services that are important to achieving autonomy and exercising citizenship. Finally, the group highlighted that violence is not only the use of force, but is also a common feature in current social relationships, and that public assets should be treated with the utmost care as violence against these affects everybody.

During the discussions in this session the adolescent referred to as 'Life' gave the following statement:

It is when we stop to look that we realize what is happening around us [...]. (Life, F, 16 years)

This critical view regarding the lived social context refers to one of the foundations of "Freirean" thought: awareness, the principle of which is to grasp reality, move away from this and produce your own demythologization, i.e. the most critical way to look at reality is to break it down and understand it⁽⁹⁾.

Every Culture Circle features evaluation in its final step, which is not mediated by a classificatory or punctual model, but by a self-evaluation one that looks at what has been experienced during the learning-teaching process, focusing not only on the role of the subject, but also of the animator-researcher in Culture Circles. For this evaluation session, the group was asked to reflect on the Circle, reporting what it was like discovering new knowledge from the theme generated in the Culture Circle. The desire to speak was noticed in the eyes of every adolescent who then revealed the following:

When we were taking the photos, I thought: How are we going to work with this? And when we started working with the photos it was all flowing, we got the hang of it, this way of learning was very interesting [...]. (Perfectionist, F, 15 years)

... learning through reality. (Courage, M, 15 years)

... being alerted to the problems in our community. (Creativity, M, 18 years)

It was clear that the brainstorming session provided by the Culture Circle made it possible to create situations in which adolescents see themselves invited to examine critically their everyday actions and opinions as a form of intervention in the world.

DISCUSSION

During the brainstorming session it was possible to generate dialog, knowledge exchange, with an emphasis on respecting popular knowledge, on the experiences and particular ways of dealing with issues that involve daily human life in their biopsychosociocultural relationships. Thus, the adolescents engaged

themselves in the process of encoding and decoding the limit situations that cover the problem of violence and its many forms and representations, which are assumed in the life of each individual. Given the complexity of the phenomenon of violence and the need to conduct a creative and inviting educational activity, using cameras was proposed in order to give voices to groups, such as adolescents, in vulnerable situations, which allowed them to express aspects of their life while condemning situations of violence present in their community that might not otherwise be visible in any other way, the goal of which being to build plans for change. Photography was used as a way to generate knowledge, as a way to stimulate the group to search for new aspects, enabling them to get closer to their reality and to being responsible for raising socially relevant aspects⁽¹¹⁾.

While analyzing the photos from the first group's panel, the adolescents' statements revealed their great vulnerability in their community, the different violence generating situations that they are exposed to, such as: living with crime and drug dealing, prostitution, murders being committed near their homes and school shootings as a result of conflicts and disputes between the gang "bosses". These are situations that adolescents routinely live with; but even so, they did not appear to accept these situations, they appear to be disgusted and anxious in respect to this reality, which deprives people of the right to exercise their citizenship.

The climate of insecurity at school and the fear to walk home from school was condemned by the adolescents referred to as "Life" and "Perfectionist", this was because these are areas of the community in which violence take its most brutal form and is constantly surrounding their access to school. The 2012 Brazilian National Adolescent School-based Health Survey found that adolescents left home for school worried about their safety, which was a feeling that continued when at the school itself. This research also showed that issues regarding security were mostly reported in public schools, which possibly reflects the social inequalities and unequal distribution of violence, with different exposures and risks⁽¹²⁾.

Based on the large number of reported events, it is possible to see how violence is a part of life for this age group, which therefore results in situations of violence involving children and adolescents in Brazil becoming an everyday and commonplace occurrence. There are numerous data that have shown that these subjects are more vulnerable to violence, which is considered a serious public health problem in Brazil and is the leading cause of death in adolescents⁽¹³⁾.

In the statement given by the adolescent referred to as "Creativity" there was descriptive evidence regarding the community areas, where police generally perform searches of the "*adolescente suspeito*" (suspicious adolescent) by force. Common stereotypes regarding the young people who live in the peripheral neighborhoods are the reasons behind such a situation, such as: physical appearance, style of clothes, being identified as individuals that defy social rules, race and ethnic background, among others.

The graffiti and vandalism evident at the school were also highlighted by the adolescent, referred to as "Dream", as situations of violence. This reinforces the idea that violence in

society begins in schools, which adds to or amplifies the conflicts that potentially or visibly exist there⁽¹⁴⁾.

The statements given by the adolescents referred to as "Resilience", "Hope" and "Perfectionist" warrant highlighting, as they included comments regarding issues of child/adolescent labor, unplanned adolescent pregnancy, manual labor undertaken by the elderly and certain individuals relying on garbage to survive. Child labor is considered to be one of the forms to express structural violence, which is characterized by social disequilibrium and exclusion, and is related to the current governance that exists in social institutions, which restricts access to basic rights that ensure a dignified life⁽¹³⁾.

The adolescents demonstrated that unwanted pregnancy, in addition to the issue of STDs, is due to the increasingly early age that adolescents become sexually active. This reality is understood as a situation of violence during adolescence, as it deprives young people, when faced with the reality insufficient emotional and financial support to deal with this situation, of the possibility of continuing their education, which results in them beginning work too early.

Throughout the discussions, the adolescents were observed to characterize the social and programmatic dimension of vulnerability that involves, respectively, access to information, the possibilities of absorbing them and ability to incorporate them into changes in everyday life activities, as well as the actions that are organized by the public authorities with the aim of allocating resources to protect individuals and confront situations that cause vulnerability^(2,6).

The two adolescent groups were identified to converge regarding the central themes worked during the brainstorming and the content even seemed to complement each other. In the photos from the second group it was possible to make a connection between violence and drugs, sanitary and environmental conditions relevant to health and their forms in the school environment.

The statement made by the adolescent referred to as "Joy" included concern regarding environmental pollution, which pointing to a form of ecological violence, which leads to disease and imbalances in the global ecosystem. This fact was also referenced in other studies, which verified an association between community violence and insufficient garbage collection, pollution and poor infrastructure⁽¹⁵⁾.

In regards to violence against property, which that was raised by the adolescents referred to as "Friendship" and "Courage", highlighted issues involved destruction of school equipment and supplies; graffiti on walls and in classrooms; food waste from meals and dirt left in the schoolyard. This type of violence is classified as a form of violence against the school⁽¹⁶⁾, with includes acts of vandalism and damage to public assets.

Drugs were identified to be a generating element of violence, as was the aspect of abuse through the grooming of children and adolescents in "human trafficking", as was expressed by the adolescent referred to as "Friendship". This reality is associated with the vulnerable situation that this age group finds itself due to their involvement with crime, and consequently with the loss of liberty or an increase in the number of homicides.

It is worth mentioning that the association between adolescence and drugs should not only be perceived as a source of violence generation, but also as a consequence of adolescents being exposed to various factors of social and programmatic vulnerability, such as: lack of opportunities, unemployment, difficulty in accessing education, health services and consumer goods. The complexity of the adolescent-drugs-violence relationship may express a simplistic vision of the phenomenon and the existence of prejudices against young people from economically disadvantaged classes⁽¹⁷⁾. Furthermore, the possibility of adolescents acquiring information, regarding drug use and the complications involved, through dialog and observation, are protective elements when faced with contexts in which the availability of drugs is relevant⁽¹⁸⁾.

The community context, marked by criminality, is configured in a social organizational order with ease of access to certain resources such as firearms, which are also easy to get by adolescents, with the aim of maintaining this order. Being located in a community where there are high violence rates and at sites that are dominated by criminal gangs, the school does not escape the problems of its surroundings, such as weapons being used, which was identified in the statement by the adolescent referred to as "Love".

During the course of the discussions regarding violence in the community, the following statements were highlighted:

The guy (the criminal) said: no one messes with me [...]. When they go through the community no one talks about them or makes fun of them, they do whatever they want [...]. (Studiou, M, 16 years)

This denunciation of the reality in these communities shows that violence is legitimated as a social norm that has a permanent presence, thereby marking the lives of the people, building to their personalities, defining their ways, producing a new cultural order, a new design, a new way to relate to each other – it is violence that is taking the role of the norm and disrupting the interactions, colonizing the world of life⁽¹⁹⁾.

During the group reading session the adolescents commented that the groups addressed situations that were also in the text. The text was found to generate critical reflections and contributed to the collective knowledge, a fact that was highlighted by the adolescents as regards the existence of the symbolic dimension of violence. This awareness can enable strategies for its identification and ways to cope with it. However, the data presented in this study differ from those found in other studies. These studies identified that some of the types of violence that adolescents may be exposed to on a daily basis, such as structural violence, were not recognized. There was a superficial perception of the more intimately veiled forms of violence that are linked to the social context^(17,20).

It is worth mentioning that there are many causes of violence, as there are for the phenomenon of violence itself. Studying violence must include a plural vision, covering aspects that do not restrict themselves to the individuals while contextualizing the sociocultural issues⁽¹⁷⁾. Studying violence during adolescence is important and deserves focus due to its negative

impact on the physical, mental and social health of the adolescent. This impact can compromise their building life projects as they begin to take their early steps in their existence⁽²¹⁾.

The resourcefulness of the adolescents in the Culture Circles highlighted the importance of them acting as protagonists in the discussion scenarios, and in the deliberation of public policies that are of interest to this age group. Thus, the performance of these adolescents shows glimpses of them as real "managers" in institutional bodies so that, finally, social policies become practical strategies that are capable of dealing with the dilemmas and conflicts of contemporary society.

During the Culture Circle evaluation session, the adolescents pointed to the possibility of knowledge construction from the promotion of spaces for interaction, engagement, self-esteem, joy and responsibility, which allowed the problem of violence to be placed in the local community context and stimulate the positioning of adolescents who face the issues of being vulnerable to violence. From this perspective, nursing plays a key role in applying active methodologies that make it possible to explore potentialities, artistic creations and expressions of the adolescents, which are often denied by formative education processes.

Finally, the experience of taking photographic images was an effective educational strategy to gain understanding of the reality that is perceived by adolescents. The opportunity for them to speak out about situations of violence, which permeate the social conviviality in their community, gave them the opportunity to see themselves as protagonists of their own life stories, as well as agents of change, while breaking with conformism and a culture of silence, giving the subject the opportunity to speak, to communicate while taking part in human creation and recreation. Leaving a culture of silence means assuming political decisions and social and cultural reconstruction⁽⁹⁾.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Due to the Culture Circle being a participatory method, there were many challenges inherent to its use given the specifics of being an adolescent, the importance of valuing popular knowledge in this profound theme, and that we always remain vigilant and sensitive regarding the group process to meet the interests and expectations of the participants. The Culture Circle opened countless possibilities for learning and critically reflecting on the reality presented by the adolescents, along with achieving opportunities of discovery, exchanges, constructing bonds and joint responsibilities, which made changes in their perception of social reality possible. From a health promotion perspective, working with these adolescent groups required that the social construction that characterizes them as "complicated", "rebellious" be stripped away, which are inert in any form of positively expressing life. Adolescence must be regarded as a period of opportunities in which favorable conditions are offered for participatory and inclusive work, which can behave as a strategic axis for intersectoral actions that are designed to confront social problems such as violence.

The brainstorming process that involved the collective registry of photographs represented a wealth in knowledge

construction regarding violence, with multiple dimensions being unveiled by adolescents that bridge the problem from the perspective of social exclusion, poverty, discrimination, prejudice, indifference, humiliation, inability to access public policies, neglecting the public heritage and with the environment. Regarding the definition of violence, the adolescents did not limit themselves to speak only of types of violence that leave physical marks or cause bodily damage, which expresses their interest in deepening their knowledge of other hidden symbolic forms of violence that exist in their daily lives, and that entail consequences that are more damaging than only physical.

As a proposal for nursing intervention in health education, the Culture circle made mutual learning and growth possible. The Circle harnessed the participation of adolescents as protagonists to the learning-teaching process, while analyzing their fears and difficulties, with them coming to perceive such as challenges that must be overcome by mobilizing and

collectively constructing "new knowledge". When configured as a technology for community nursing care, the Culture Circle proved itself effective as it favored conditions for recognizing aspects that are involved in the production and reproduction of violence, and for empowering nurses and adolescents in the awareness process.

Limitations of the study include the fact that it was a local intervention that involved a small sample size and included a particular group of adolescents, therefore the results from whom cannot be used to generalize the population. In addition, the question is whether other groups of adolescents share the same opinions and experiences, in view of the strong relationship between violence and social-historical context in which it is produced. Other interventions are recommended that can invest in participatory educational approaches, which also include groups of teachers, school management and the family when constructing strategies for preventing violence.

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