

IDENTITY, AUTONOMY AND INCOME GENERATION THROUGH FASHION AND MANUFACTURE FOR COMMUNITIES OF THE AMAZON RIVER. CASE STUDY: *ALINHAVANDO O FUTURO** PROJECT

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Abstract

For two weeks, residents of the communities of Sustainable Development Reserve of Rio Negro in Amazon River through Project, Alinhavando o Futuro, received educational training and workshops of cloth manufacturing and fashion design with the view to preparing them as future creators of their own pieces. The Project Alinhavando o Futuro developed an educational methodology based on the technical knowledge for production for fashion products associated with cultural, artistic and humanistic comprehension providing the involvement between the technical with and practical knowledge using the local and cultural expression as a value differentiator for vision for entrepreneurial that strength and promote social transformation. To stimulate Social and Cultural development, the creativity is the key ingredient for job creation, innovation and business, contributing for social inclusion, cultural intelligence and sustainability (UNCTAD, 2010). Based on human growth and an educational that search different spaces and pathways to enable the project to serve in a relevant manner the various interests involved: the institutional, the people (students and teachers), the market production, and social (for the society and the local community) that could lead changes in the future. In 2012 the UN created the International Year of Cooperatives where the Project Alinhavando o Futuro was able to work the guide lines proposed. Systematize and study the process in which the project was created and developed will allow its replication, growth and scale to other communities in different involvement levels in order to focus on a smart social network and creative economy.

Keywords: Education, Sustainable Development, Fashion, Amazon River.

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"Alinhavando o futuro" can be loosely translated as "Weaving the future"

Through the *Alinhavando o Futuro* Project, the residents of the riverside communities of the Sustainable Development Reserve of Rio Negro – Amazonas, received training over a period of two weeks in the field of fashion confection, with a focus on preparing them to be future makers and creators of their own pieces of clothing.

On the world stage, in 2000, the United Nations promoted and organized meetings, conferences and gatherings about the Millennium Development Goals. Representatives of the 189 countries present, set eight goals to be achieved by 2015. Four of them were directly related to the development of the *Alinhavando o Futuro* Project focused on the textile and clothing industry: Eradicating hunger and extreme poverty; Promoting gender equality and empowering women; Developing a global partnership for development; and ensuring environmental sustainability. In 2012, the UN proposed the International Year of Cooperatives, was coincidentally also the year the *Alinhavando o Futuro* project was implemented in the community of Tumbira /AM.

The project adapted and developed educational processes based on the field of fashion with technology and methods used in the production of clothing associated with cultural training, comprehensive and humanist art, using the local cultural expression as a differentiating value and also as a driving and manufacturing force, providing the maximum involvement of people in the construction of knowledge within an entrepreneurial vision.

The involvement with the world of fashion, in particular through confection, allows the participants to develop their personal growth and self-esteem, critical view, ability to discern, analyze and decide. The project deals with human development, and is focused on training and innovation for people to be able to evolve, adapt to a world in constant change and, in the future, cause and seek change.

Since the beginning of time, man has used clothing to overcome his feelings of inferiority and to achieve the conviction of his superiority over the rest of creation, including over the members of his own family and tribe and to provoke admiration and ensure that he belongs. (LURIE, 1997).

Registering and studying the process with which the project was established will allow for replication, expansion and adaptation to other communities that are in the same or in a close degree of development, focusing on the future of an intelligent network of creative economy.

The proposed Project values the involvement of students to understand the importance of creating fashion through the articulation of experience acquired with practice and theory in the development of shirts with prints and local Amazonian inspirations.

Besides learning to tailor and sew (reading the sketches, scratching out, cutting and sewing), the training introduces participants the access to the culture of fashion, textile technology, creativity, sustainability and customization with a view for product differentiation with an own identity of the forest and the environment in which they live.

Practical and in-person classes with a focus on production allow the participants to develop each stage of production faster and without dispersion of knowledge, aiming to develop skills and acquisition of knowledge.

The experience was structured in making workshops, creative workshops and workshops with information/knowledge. These guided the first steps for the insertion of the individual in making fashion, through knowledge and "know-how" focused on organizational activities, creation, development and manufacturing of clothing products.

Teaching structured by "doing" is focused on groups/communities where the experience of the day-to-day is the main factor by which learning takes place, because many people in this community have difficulties in literacy and in continuing their studies. These difficulties were circumvented by the construction of knowledge in other forms of understanding, combining formal and informal education where transmission of knowledge is through practice and local knowledge.

Stimulate this experience considering the local resources in a creative and experiential environment, both theoretical and practical, becomes

a strategy to incorporate the knowledge acquired even faster. These are the premises for teaching by doing consolidating the learning, making immediate assimilations. To experience the "learning by doing" the bridge to exchange local knowledge/wisdom with new knowledge makes the experimentation a knowledge building path.

Teaching, learning and research deal with these two moments of the gnosiologic cycle: those in which what is taught and learned is the existing knowledge and those in which we work in the production of the not yet existing knowledge (FREIRE, 1996)

This way of building knowledge is also endorsed by constructivist teaching, which has practical activity as one of its pillars. Saviani talks about education and the order changes in teaching learning theory.

The renovating currents had its apex in the form of the New School movement. Currently, given the critical concepts, new versions of learning theories were developed, such as constructivism. Learning moves, therefore, from intellectual understanding to practical activity, from the logical aspect to the psychological, from the cognitive content to methods or processes of learning, from teacher to student, from effort to interest, from discipline to spontaneity, from quantity to quality. (Saviani, 2008).

The project is established in the culture of fashion, where the world of fashion is understood by us as an indicator and promoter of change, as an area of knowledge and wisdom in which the idea of the most immediate future can be seen, rehearsed and performed. And also as behavior that reflects the current paradigms in search of more balance, facing the realities of inclusion, sustainability, ecology and the pursuit of happiness.

"One of the reasons that lead a person to follow fashion is a desire to renew their image, a desire that corresponds with one of the most important cultural imperatives of modernity." (MORA, 2006)

Sewing your clothes and having access to this universe are aspects explored in the project as forms of participation and have the power to mobilize people to realize and act on what is happening now and in

the future. The support of cutting/tailoring methodologies, visual media support and access to fashion information with drawings, photos and information are used as tools to create fashion as well as the possibility to generate income.

The search for unity, in which theory and practice are indissoluble components of praxis, autonomous and dependent, is the establishment of a single whole in an interdependence and reciprocity relationship. The theory no longer governs the practice and practice no longer means the application of theory.
(CANDAU and LELIS, 2008; VAZQUEZ, 2007).

It is essential to understand the relationship between theory and practice as a process by which knowledge is constructed. Both should be worked simultaneously constituting an indispensable unit, because the practice is itself guided action and mediated by theory.
(SOUZA, 2014)

During the training, basic pieces were made and customized during the different activities; pieces such as t-shirts, tank tops, children's cloths, coats and bags in the sewing and product workshops, developing skills and knowledge about the use of the straight sewing machines, coverstitch sewing machines and overlock as well as practical manuals for various types of sewing and finishing. Textile identification, body measurements, customization of clothes and finally deconstructing and building garments, re-creating and transforming them into a new piece of clothing. Creativity and research are reinforced during the classes in a dynamic and playful way.

The purpose of the *Alinhavando o Futuro* Project seeks to be in line with the income generation needs, looking for different spaces and educational pathways to serve in a relevant manner the various interests involved: the institutional interests, the interests of the people (students and teachers), the productive interests (labor and professional market) and social interests (aimed at society in general and the local community itself)

In line with the outlined objectives, the *Alinhavando o Futuro* Project uses "learning by doing" through art, crafts, communication, design

and fashion. The methodology, application and development of the contents are based on the principles: learning to be, learning to do, learning to live together, learning to learn.

About the Specific Objectives and Achievements

- Initiate the professional training in the area of fashion confection, developing skills and abilities to exercise the development and production of fashion products;

Evidence - :: All students produced all the required pieces, developing basic technical knowledge for modeling, cutting, sewing, finishing and customization of the proposed models. The support of the materials in the folder will serve as an aid and for continuity for new products to be generated in the future.

- Empower and create awareness for the student in their autonomy in the process of creation, development and production;

Evidence - :: All students developed their abilities to create and developed by doing and the repetition of doing, increasing their motoric and aesthetics qualities. They managed to enlarge the initial limitations through the synergy of the working group, where they proposed changes and improved the achieved results. The customization, post-production, allowed them a great exercise in authoring, creating differentiation in the product, adding local personal values, strengthening its identity and creating distinction by origin of the product. They were working through the process of "empowerment" in the creation and development of products.

- Awaken the development of entrepreneurship, leadership, social and environmental awareness; strengthening self-esteem.

Evidence - :: Quickly a group was formed and some were helping others spontaneously. As well as teaching what they already knew, showing a lot of curiosity and thirst for more knowledge and learning.

- Develop in the student the interest for research, allowing to awaken the creative ability to propose solutions and the development, implementation and evaluation of projects and fashion products.

Evidence - :: Some students themselves were doing the modeling and reduction of pieces for other sizes of interest. Ex .: female gowns were modeled to fit children.

Expectations

The achieved results came from the appreciation of human beings and social inclusion, such as personal self-esteem, group valuation, acquisition of knowledge through practice, autonomy to make: creating, developing, producing and reproducing, modifying: innovating.

About the Methodology - "Learning by Doing"

"Learning by doing" is a set of techniques and educational practices supported by a triple base - **Visual Information, Practice, Creativity / Playfulness**, developed from the interaction between the tailoring and and sewing methodologies and the expertise In Totum that seeks the interaction using the means of dynamics of involvement necessary to stimulate the exchange of knowledge and wisdom.

There is another kind of language, another form of communication: communication through feelings and images. This is the contact that prevents people from becoming incommunicable and demolishes barriers. Will, feeling, emotion, this is what removes the barriers between people, otherwise they would find themselves on opposite sides of a mirror, on opposite sides in a way. (TARKOVSKY, 1998)

For the transmission of content the project uses practical and visual information where the images like drawing, painting, photography and video become accessible communication tools for participants and transformative learning.

... Through visual thinking the information is transmitted directly. The key feature of the visual language is in its immediacy in his spontaneous understanding. Visually, our perception of the content and form is simultaneous. When properly developed, a visual message goes directly to our brain to be understood without decoding, translation or conscious delays. (DONDIS, 2003)

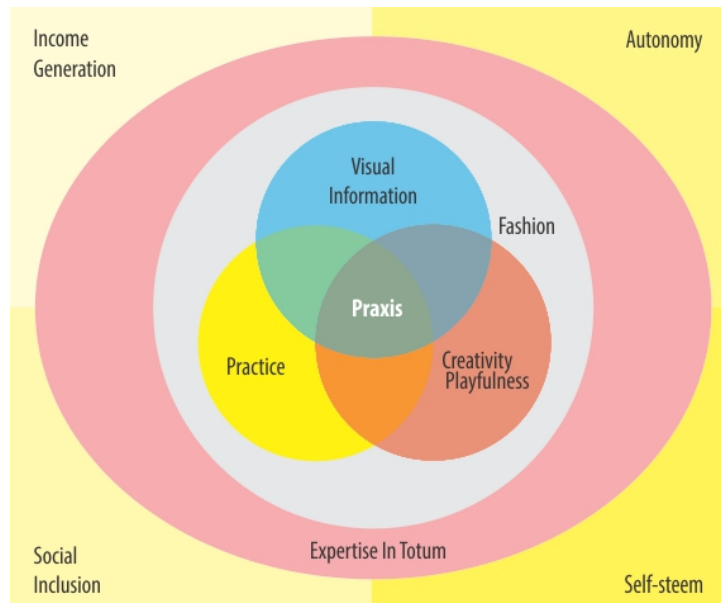


Figure 1 – Illustration about the Methodology

Expertise In Totum | Fashion and Design together with the Communities

A search for the integration of local knowledge and techniques with the activities of Fashion and Design, through projects and workshops of creativity and manual activities, encouraging artisans, associations in their autonomy in the process of generating their own design.

- Integrate knowledge and efforts
- Generate collections of objects with Design and fashion appeal.
- Promote autonomy to create and make, seeking to generate opportunities for personal and intellectual growth, employability, entrepreneurship and income generation.

How the project came about:

- Survey and research: about the possibilities to generate a local identity and the available resources.
- Planning the workshops: development and adaptation of strategies to integrate the workshops, definition of objectives and products.
- Preparation of material: starting material workshops,
- Content Development: Curator of existing knowledge and definition of the theoretical contents substantiating the construction of knowledge.

- Workshops: different, to explore the potential of communities, raw materials, techniques and resources.
- Assessment: the workshops reports with results and suggestions.

Datasheet

2/Jul to 13/Jul 2012

Location: Community of Tumbira

Total hours: 60 hours

Project Management: In Totum SP Produções | www.intotum.com.br

Partner Organization: FAS - Amazonas Sustainable Foundation (Local Partner)

Creators and Advisors: Marco Antonio Andreoni | Ciça Costa

Tailoring & Sewing Teacher: Alice Zompero

Some Statements from Participants

. It has been my dream for a long time to do this course. Because of this it has been very rewarding, a delicious way to learn.

. I am happy to have met you and for this opportunity to learn from you. Thank you for your patience!

. I can only thank all and get on with the work and share the knowledge that I absorbed during the course with those who couldn't join.

. I surprised myself and with the performance of my colleagues, the patience of the teachers is admirable.

. Thank you for everything, for learning, for the patience, the affection. I will forever keep all that I learned from you.

. ... that you may 'weave' the future of many people.



FOR US...

"Customize, Personalize, Recycle, Play, develop knowledge about fashion. Circulate through the possibilities of fashion, in its various and interrelated pathways "

Search for the appreciation of human beings and social inclusion, personal self-esteem, group valuation, acquisition of knowledge through practice is a powerful way towards the autonomy of doing: creating, developing, producing and reproducing for innovation.

To teach is not to transfer knowledge but to create the possibilities for its production or its construction. (FREIRE, 2013)

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Alinhavando o Futuro Fashion Show - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XT6l-pozotc>

Project Completion Report - https://issuu.com/intotum/docs/relatorio_final_alinhavando_o_futuro