

Art as a tool in socio-educational interventions with migrant women victims of gender-based violence. A proposal

El arte como herramienta en intervenciones socioeducativas con mujeres migrantes víctimas de violencia de género. Una propuesta

A arte como ferramenta em intervenções sócio-educativas com mulheres migrantes vítimas de violência de gênero. Uma proposta

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Abstract

In a context where patriarchy and neoliberal capitalism perpetuate invisibility and marginalization, this article explores how art-based socio-educational interventions, such as dance therapy and body expression, affect migrant women victims of gender-based violence, especially when they intersect with their migratory status, which generates multiple forms of exclusion that affect their emotional and social well-being. This study proposes these interventions as tools for empowerment and identity reconstruction. The method, from a qualitative and socio-critical perspective, is based on a case study with participant observation. Analyzing the results, based on previous findings, it is anticipated and projected that the intervention will facilitate processes of body-mind reconnection, increased self-esteem, greater body awareness, strengthening group bonds, and emotional expression. Regarding the discussion, the proposal aligns with intersectional and feminist frameworks and proposes a participatory strategy that recognizes women as active agents of change. Methodological and ethical challenges are there, and a suggestion to adapt the intervention to diverse cultural contexts, opening up avenues for future applied research. Integrating art into socio-educational interventions with migrant women can represent an effective and necessary way to address structural violence from community-based and emancipatory perspectives.

Keywords: Art, community, community education, girls' education, intercultural education, migration, women, gender violence

Resumen

En un contexto donde el patriarcado y el capitalismo neoliberal perpetúan la invisibilización y la marginación, este artículo explora cómo las intervenciones socioeducativas basadas en el arte, como la danzaterapia y la expresión corporal, afectan a las mujeres migrantes víctimas de violencia de

género, especialmente cuando se entrecruzan con la condición migratoria, que genera múltiples formas de exclusión que afectan al bienestar emocional y social de las mujeres: este estudio plantea, las citadas intervenciones, como herramientas para el empoderamiento y la reconstrucción identitaria. En cuanto al método, se plantea desde un enfoque cualitativo y sociocrítico, basado en un estudio de caso con observación participante. Tratando los resultados, gracias a los previos hallazgos, se anticipa y proyecta que la intervención facilite procesos de reconexión cuerpo-mente, aumento de la autoestima, mayor conciencia corporal, fortalecimiento del vínculo grupal, y expresión emocional. Con relación a la discusión, la propuesta se alinea con marcos interseccionales y feministas, y propone una estrategia participativa que reconoce a las mujeres como agentes activas de cambio. Se identifican desafíos metodológicos y éticos, y se sugiere adaptar la intervención a contextos culturales diversos, abriendo líneas para futuras investigaciones aplicadas. Se concluye, por lo tanto, que integrar el arte en las intervenciones socioeducativas con mujeres migrantes puede representar una vía efectiva y necesaria para abordar la violencia estructural desde enfoques comunitarios y emancipadores.

Palabras clave: Arte, comunidad, educación comunitaria, educación de chicas, educación intercultural, migración, mujer, violencia de género.

Resumo

Num contexto em que o patriarcado e o capitalismo neoliberal perpetuam a invisibilidade e a marginalização, este artigo explora a forma como as intervenções socioeducativas baseadas na arte, como a dançaterapia e a expressão corporal, afetam as mulheres migrantes vítimas de violência de gênero, especialmente quando se cruzam com o seu estatuto migratório, o que gera múltiplas formas de exclusão que afetam o bem-estar emocional e social das mulheres. Este estudo propõe estas intervenções como ferramentas de empoderamento e reconstrução identitária. Quanto ao método, é abordado numa perspectiva qualitativa e sociocrítica, a partir de um estudo de caso com observação participante. Com base nos resultados, fundamentados em descobertas anteriores, espera-se e projeta-se que a intervenção facilite processos de reconexão corpo-mente, aumento da autoestima, maior consciência corporal, fortalecimento dos laços grupais e expressão emocional. Em relação à discussão, a proposta alinha-se com os referenciais interseccionais e feministas e propõe uma estratégia participativa que reconhece as mulheres como agentes ativos de mudança. São identificados desafios metodológicos e éticos, e sugere-se que a intervenção seja adaptada a diversos contextos culturais, abrindo caminhos para futuras pesquisas aplicadas. Conclui-se, assim, que a integração da arte nas intervenções socioeducativas com mulheres migrantes pode representar uma forma eficaz e necessária de abordar a violência estrutural a partir de perspectivas comunitárias e emancipatórias.

Palavras-chave: Arte, comunidade, educação comunitária, educação das raparigas, educação intercultural, migração, mulheres, violência de gênero.

Introduction

Living in a developed society at the height of capitalism boom, it has become normalized to build life around a rigid structure of work and consumption, organized primarily around productivity and income generation. Ulrich Brand and Markus Wissen (2017) describe the "imperial way of life" as a way of life in the global North that is sustained at the expense of the global South, characterized by patterns of consumption and production that perpetuate the exploitation of resources and human beings in developing countries.

After years of manipulation and normalization of the neo-liberal system, capitalist habits are injected into human beings, the majority are made to believe that their interests are those of the ruling classes. As Harvey (2005) states, neoliberalism has succeeded in establishing a model in which individual decisions appear to be autonomous, but in reality are strongly conditioned by the structures of economic and political power.

Companies and multinationals, conscientiously manipulating our needs to their whim, have left personal development outside the logic of the market. As Martinez (2023) points out, the market is not at the service of our requirements, but in charge of shaping them.

In this sense, Chomsky (1999) also argues that neoliberalism has created an "elite consensus" where ideological diversity has no place, and life decisions, both personal and social, coincide with corporate interests. The author mentions that "democracy under neoliberalism is not an authentic democracy, but rather a system in which the elites maintain control of political and economic decisions, while the masses believe they are exercising their freedom" (p. 54).

Since we have left our choices and tastes at the mercy of the consumer system, realities where there is room for passion for, among other things, beauty and art, without an end beyond the mere satisfaction of creating, have relegated to the background.

Throughout history, art has been used, in its essence, as a form of free and transcendental human expression; however, with the impact of the neoliberal system, art has been reduced to a mere commodity that must be profitable to be considered valuable. Art that generates immediate economic benefit is privileged, while the most critical or experimental artistic expressions struggle against all odds not to be marginalized.

The undervaluing of art and beauty in the consumerist society has meant a great change in the way we understand the value of creativity, sensitivity and aesthetics. On the other hand, by encouraging passive and controlled leisure, the possibilities for critical reflection are silenced by providing products designed for superficial entertainment, which generate a sense of instant gratification (and therefore reinforce the

disconnection with social reality). Society becomes is trapped in a cycle of consumption of empty cultural products, while artistic expressions that seek to question the established order struggle to avoid being forced into the shadows.

Since the beginning of human history, art has played a fundamental role as an element of expression, cultural manifestation and social consolation. The earliest known artistic manifestations, being cave paintings, not only served as a form of visual communication, but also as a means to make sense of the unknown. For example, in the Fuente del Trucho cave in Aragon, paintings have been found dating back more than 31,000 years evidencing the early human need for artistic expression (Hoffmann et al., 2017). Primitive societies already used art as a symbolic tool to narrate their beliefs, myths and connections to the social and emotional reality they experienced.

Without making a complete review of the historical journey of humanity, and jumping to the preceding centuries, art was diversifying and taking various forms, especially with the arrival of modernity. After the ecclesiastical domination experienced especially in the Middle Ages where art served as a tool of control, movements such as Romanticism, Impressionism and Surrealism sought not only to break with established norms, but also to express the internal and social tensions that were born as a result of a world in constant change. As Holly (2025) points out, in these periods, art became a form of rebellion against power structures, a way to address the deepest human emotions, and a refuge from the difficulties of everyday life.

Returning to the present day, the globalized consumer society has caused art to become highly commercialized. However, in spite of everything, it remains a powerful tool for resistance, denunciation and critical reflection. Contemporary artists, whether through visual arts, dance, music, film or theatre, continue to challenge power structures, creating spaces where social and political injustices are the subject of discussion, questioning and reflection.

Patriarchy in the consumer society. The role of women and their relationship with art.

Patriarchy is a concept considerable coupled with consumer society, since both are part of a whole in which traditional structures of male domination are intertwined with capitalism, perpetuating gender inequality. In this context, the consumer system not only reproduces traditional gender roles, but also consolidates patriarchal hegemony under a market logic.

On the other hand, the current role of women continues to face a double burden: on the one hand, the demand to be sufficiently productive in the professional sphere under the comparative gaze of the male leadership role and, on the other, the pressure to maintain the traditional role as caregivers within the home. "While most couples report sharing household chores, women -including those with and without children- who consider household chores a moral imperative, report experiencing more systematic

stress than men" (Yao et al., 2025, p. 6). The capitalist system has been able to benefit from this situation, as many women must balance workdays with unpaid domestic responsibilities, which limits their opportunities for personal and professional development.

Although the presence of women in the workplace and in decision-making spaces has increased in recent decades, they are still seen primarily as consumers or objects within the capitalist machinery, which limits their real autonomy. Many of the supposed advances towards equality are taking place in spaces that, in reality, reinforce traditional roles. Even in the public sphere, women continue to be associated with tasks of care and delivery, as is the case in professions such as education, nursing or psychology. According to the CYD 2021/2022 Report of CYD Foundation, in the 2020-2021 academic year, 60% of people graduating in education were women, while they were only 13.5% in computer science, 20% in engineering degrees -according to the Engineering Observatory of Spain (2023)-....

Feminist voices continue to question this logic from social and artistic levels, proposing alternatives that not only challenge gender inequalities within the market, but also question the economic structures that maintain the oppression of women.

Considering the relevance of art as a tool of resistance, it is important to question the role of women in today's art world. Although there have been advances towards equality, women continue to be little visible, often objectified, and with little presence in positions of power or leadership in the artistic field. They are often limited to the role of muses, models or spectators, while the artistic production of men has historically been celebrated, valued and preserved.

In contemporary art spaces, women artists often face a constant struggle for visibility and recognition. For example, in the visual arts, according to the National Museum of Women in the Arts (2025), less than 5% of the artworks exhibited in major art institutions worldwide are created by women. This disparity reflects not only unequal access to resources and opportunities, but also structural discrimination in the artistic field, where women continue to be underrepresented in renowned spaces.

Art produced by women is often still marginalized to specific themes that revolve around femininity, romanticism and/or motherhood, pigeonholing them into a limited scope that does not reflect the diversity of talents and perspectives. According to Nochlin (2021), the history of art has been marked by an exclusion of women artists, often relegating them to subject matter considered "feminine" or "decorative," which limits their expression and recognition of their ability in broader artistic areas. This, in addition to reducing the opportunity to move into a wide range of subjects, also fosters the idea that their contributions are less universal than those of men.

Today, many feminist artists have turned art into a space for resistance and denunciation of patriarchal violence and gender inequalities. Through their works, they address issues such as economic

differences, control over the female body, exclusion of women in spaces of power or gender violence. In this way, women's art is no longer seen solely as an aesthetic medium, but as a vehicle for awareness, criticism and social transformation.

The photographic and pictorial exhibition *Somnyama Ngonyama*, by Zanele Muholi (Bernardi, 2023; Mussai, 2023), on the identity of black and gay women in South Africa; music, such as *Til It Happens To You*, by Lady Gaga (2015), which deals with sexual abuse and violence on American college campuses, or *Labour*, by Paris Paloma (2024), about unpaid work at home, historically devalued or considered the "natural duty" of women; or expressions within contemporary dance, such as Alicia Soto's pieces in *La mujer rota* (2019), inspired by texts by Simone de Beauvoir, about the social invisibilization of women and the symbolic violence they suffer in everyday life.... art that not only denounces, but also makes visible the ability of women to reinterpret the history of art from a critical perspective, incorporating their own experiences and memories.

Gender violence. The perpetuation of inequality

The real inclusion of women in art cannot be limited only to their presence or representation. Art must also be a tool to support, give voice to and accompany women who have suffered injustice, oppression or violence. We speak specifically of gender violence (Ebert and Steinert, 2025), whose effects deeply harm women physically, emotionally, psychologically and economically, is one of the most brutal and visual manifestations of gender inequality. According to Cerdán-Torregrosa et al. (2025), violence against women (VAW), perpetrated by men, is a major global public health problem that negatively affects society as a whole. Gender relations revolve around a hegemonic masculinity, which has been linked to emotional control, risk taking, competitiveness, homophobia... thus leading to the acceptance of this type of violence.

Women who have suffered gender-based violence often face a double burden: on the one hand, the emotional, psychological and/or physical violence inflicted by their aggressors and their environment, and on the other, the invisibility of their voices in the social spaces where they decide about politics and culture. As Valero et al. (2025) state, patriarchal structures, understood as social, cultural and economic systems that sustain gender inequality, exclude women and their experiences from spaces of power. In this context, emotions such as anger, instability or impulsivity in women are raised as problematic symptoms, regardless of their structural origin.

One of the most widespread ideas is the image of the victim as "passive" or "weak", which reinforces the idea of having no capacity to react or make decisions about their own lives. As mentioned in her book Marcela Lagarde y de los Ríos (2017), this myth makes invisible and ignores the multiple factors that condition the permanence of a person in a toxic or violent relationship, and delegitimizes the experience of those women who survive violence with strategies of resistance and survival. Along the

same lines, there is a tendency to blame the victims, questioning their decisions and attitudes with judgments that place the responsibility on the women, instead of pointing the finger at the aggressor, or at the system that perpetuates the inequality of power. Even the institutions themselves educate in values of protection, prevention and identification from the victim's point of view, but rarely do they propose socio-educational interventions that prevent and educate potential aggressors directly, thus preventing them from attacking the root of the problem.

Another common prejudice is to consider that gender violence only affects women from certain social or educational contexts. At the legal level, obviously those women who belong to privileged social classes are closer to achieving some kind of legal solution, as they can count on private legal advice, immediate psychological support and even social or family networks to accompany their process. However, even in these cases, the judicial process can be an arduous and exhausting journey. The experience of many women who report situations of gender-based violence shows that protocols are often useless.

In testimonies, institutions doubt the victim's word, demanding evidence that is impossible to provide in situations that, by their very nature, usually take place in privacy. Their credibility is questioned, their testimonies are infantilized, or they are held responsible for the way they act in their personal situation.

"The one that is really gender violence (would be when) she comes scared, self-conscious, afraid, even wanting everything to happen as soon as possible and forget about it, [...] this is what we see very . Most of time the two come hand in hand, loving each other very much, and saying that they do not want to testify, the reason for the complaint is no longer known..." (EP13). (Bodelón, 2014, p. 143).

On many occasions, the victim only seeks the granting of a protection measure, such as restraining orders, and even this alternative remains limited, being occasionally denied despite the existence of high risks.

"I never denounced him because I had been denounced for other reasons, and the policemen had come to bring the complaint to my house. So, I thought 'if I report this man, the policeman will come, he will bring the report, and my son and I... I don't know if he will live, but my son and I will surely be dead, but very dead...". In other words, I had the perception that what a report meant was that they would bring it to your house". (ND11) (Bodelón, 2014, p. 145).

As Young (2024) points out, judicial protection measures, although essential, continue to be rejected or minimized by the authorities, despite evidence of the risks to victims. The extreme bureaucratization of the judicial process slows down the proceedings infinitely, subjecting women to constant re-victimization over time. Each statement, each medical test requested, each judicial hearing, becomes a process of

reliving the nightmare over and over again.

If no legal solution, effective protection or real alternatives are granted, the complaint is nothing more than an empty formality that can aggravate the woman's situation, leaving her exposed to violence, with the threat of retaliation or increased harassment and violence by the aggressor, who feels unpunished in the absence of legal consequences. How are women going to report if the very system that should defend them is indifferent or incapable of providing them with security and justice?

Data from the Spanish Instituto Nacional de Estadística (2024) reveal that, in 2023, the number of women victims of gender violence increased by 12.1% over the previous year, with 36,582 cases. This statistic underlines the persistence and seriousness of the problem, emphasizing the need for a judicial system that is more efficient and sensitive to the needs of the victims.

In other words, the Spanish justice system is completely ineffective in the face of gender crimes; without the existence of the murder itself, complaints can end in provisional files or acquittals. The aggressors remain free and unpunished, facing no real consequences. This lack of effective responses not only means that women avoid justice at all costs, but also reinforces a devastating social message: reporting does not always save lives, and the state continues to fail in its responsibility to protect them.

The "migrant" factor as a victim of gender violence

Gender-based violence is a global problem that affects women of all social classes, races and cultures. However, when it intersects with migration status, situations of violence are aggravated, and migrant victims face additional vulnerabilities that hinder access to protection, justice and social support. As indicated in the World Health Organization report (2021), violence against women is a serious violation of human rights and a global public health problem, affecting hundreds of millions of women, with this form of violence being greater against women living with intersectional forms of discrimination (e.g., women with disabilities, migrants, indigenous and/or transgender women).

Therefore, when we speak of migrant women who suffer or have suffered gender-based violence, the situation is even more complex, since the double discrimination they suffer as women and as outsiders to the country's culture places them in a particularly exposed position, where gender-based violence is intertwined with dynamics of exclusion, xenophobia and economic precariousness. According to González (2020), the combination of male violence with social exclusion and xenophobia creates a breeding ground of vulnerability for migrant women, which hinders their access justice and support services.

We start from the concept of "migrants" and not "immigrants," since the migration phenomenon is bilateral, involving both those who migrate and those who leave behind, and must be understood within

a global context that affects individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Many of these women have been victims of violence in their country of origin, and migrate in search of safety, only to encounter new contexts of abuse in the host country. Lack of knowledge about their rights and fear of deportation, added to the difficulty of language barriers, are highly potential factors that prevent them from reporting their aggressors. As indicated by Fuentes-Pumarola et al. (2025), legal and economic dependence on their partner (especially when the migratory status is linked to marriage) traps them violent relationships. Some of them have already suffered abusive and violent situations in their countries of origin, which constitute the so-called spiral of violence as they continue in the new place.

In the workplace, immigrant women are often exposed to informal or poorly paid jobs (domestic service, caregiving, cleaning, etc.), sectors that have been historically feminized and that lack labour rights:

In 2023, more than 90% of the people affiliated to this regime were women, reflecting the feminization of these professions and tasks (...). The sector is characterized by clearly discriminatory wage and working conditions, as well as high levels of informal employment (Parella et al., 2024, pp. 5-6).

In addition, many of them face legal obstacles added to those experienced by native women to regularize their status, which exposes them to a position of economic and social dependence that can make them more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Patriarchy, in this sense, operates at different levels: from the structural violence that forces these women to leave their countries, to discrimination and lack of protection at the destination.

Breaking with these dynamics requires public policies that guarantee their access to rights, protection against violence and real opportunities for social and labour integration. As indicated by the IOM, International Organization for Migration (2023), one of the main factors that increases the vulnerability of migrant women is administrative dependency. Many of them depend on their aggressor to maintain their legal status in the host country, a factor that the aggressor uses as a tool of control and threat: if they denounce, they may be expelled or lose custody of their children. This situation often forces them to remain in violent environments for fear of deportation or loss of basic rights.

In addition, language and cultural barriers are an obstacle to accessing protection or psychological support services:

Minority groups and people originating from certain localities around the world may be at risk of having worse health profiles compared to majority populations if they are not able to effectively communicate their needs in health facilities. (Babalola et al., 2024, p. 2).

On the other hand, gender and ethnic stereotypes contribute to the invisibility of their suffering. Like native women, migrant women are sometimes pigeon-holed as helpless, passive and even hypersexualized victims, which favours stigmatizing, infantilizing and paternalistic attitudes, contributing to their testimonies being questioned and minimized in institutions, which should be seen as providing comprehensive support and assistance.

Addressing gender-based violence with migrant women requires an intersectional approach that takes into account the multiple forms of discrimination they suffer. It is necessary to guarantee access to adequate and adapted resources, and to break with migration policies that perpetuate dependency and control, thus offering real paths towards their autonomy and freedom.

Art as a tool for intervention

As previously mentioned, patriarchy, as a system that sustains the oppression of women, intersects with neoliberal capitalism by consolidating structures of exclusion that affect migrant women more severely. Precarious labour conditions, exploitation in feminized sectors, and lack of protection against violence are some of the realities that face many women who have had to leave their countries in search of better opportunities. According to Paredes (2023), neoliberalism has contributed to the feminization of poverty and labour exploitation, disproportionately affecting migrant women, who are trapped in precarious and unprotected jobs.

Despite these difficulties, many women have found in art a tool for denunciation and empowerment. Collectives of refugee and migrant women have promoted artistic initiatives that make their experiences visible and vindicate their right to live a life free of violence. Through music, community theatre, photography and poetry, among other disciplines, they transform their pain into stories of resistance and dignity.

Some of the women who have managed to emerge alive from the situation of abuse have found through their works the key to narrate their experiences, heal their wounds and question the patriarchal structures that perpetuate inequality and oppression. According to Díaz (Fanjul, 2025), artistic creation offers a space for personal healing, as well as a means to challenge patriarchal structures and the system of oppression in which they live. Many women artists have used art as a cathartic process that allows them to process pain and trauma, turning personal experience into a collective message that challenges society.

In this way, art can function on many occasions as a form of denunciation, as it has a transformative potential, but for this to happen, it is crucial that they are able to participate fully in the processes of artistic creation. Parity in artistic representation, therefore, becomes fundamental to ensure that women have a voice, allowing those who have been victims of violence to share their stories without being

stigmatized or reduced to a role of passive victim. In this sense, the inclusion of their voices in art not only enriches cultural production, but also offers a space for healing and resistance where they can rethink and reinforce their identity, heal traumas and re-signify their experiences.

Some of the ways in which art contributes in these contexts include emotional expression, the creation of safe spaces in which to share experiences and find mutual support, autonomy and empowerment, as well as personal reconstruction by allowing for the reformulation identity lost due to uprooting, violence and forced migration.

Art therapy can be effective in patients who would otherwise not receive treatment or who would receive long-term treatment without results ... Externalizing their emotions and memories in the form of artwork can also help patients express them in words. Ultimately, all of this allows them to process and integrate traumatic experiences (Heijman et al., 2024, pp. 2-3)

On the other hand, in a more external and social way, visibility and denunciation, where art can be a political and social tool to make visible gender violence and the challenges faced migrant women.

In addition, at the community level, art facilitates the creation of shared spaces and support networks, promoting social integration and collective empowerment. According to Morales (2020), the community arts initiatives have a healing and cohesive power, creating supportive ties that contribute to strengthening collective resilience. Speaking of networking, I am not limiting myself to dealing only with the professional bond between experts in the social field, but to fostering a link between workers from all kinds of fields and backgrounds, favouring community relationship and multidisciplinary enrichment at a global level.

Proposing actions that take into account the artistic level is essential for the richness and evolution of the professional field of social education. It is a highly undervalued tool that is often relegated to the background because it is not seen as a concrete, scientific or productive tool, which, however, when used in the necessary sense, can be of great efficiency to generate significant changes in the results of socio-educational interventions. As Gutiérrez (2020) points out, art in social education allows a multidimensional approach that, by integrating emotional, cognitive and social aspects, facilitates transformative and sustainable processes. It not only fosters emotional expression and communication, but also acts as a universal language capable of transcending linguistic, cultural or social barriers. This makes it a brilliant tool to generate effective processes with people from different cultures, generating profound changes at the individual and community level through active participation.

We start from the premise that socio-educational interventions should work from a humanistic approach, with a focus on action with the collective and not for or on it. This implies recognizing that the people

and communities themselves are the true experts of their situation and context, and that intervention processes should be built in a horizontal and participatory manner, encouraging active listening, co-creation and respect for their knowledge and experiences. In this framework, art becomes a privileged vehicle to facilitate these processes, since, properly directed, it offers a safe and free space where identities, stories and emotions can be explored. As Martínez (2021) explains, art allows the creation of an environment where personal and collective experiences are shared in a non-verbal way, which facilitates the expression of complex experiences and the creation of bonds between participants. Incorporating art from this approach is not a superficial addition, but an ideal educational strategy to promote social justice and the integral development of the people and communities with whom we work. As Ortega (2020) emphasizes, art not only enriches the educational process, but also aligns with the principles of social justice and equity, which are fundamental for intervention in vulnerable contexts.

Methodology. Proposal for a socio-educational intervention based on art: dance therapy, body awareness and expression.

Speaking of injustices and repressed groups we could deal with infinite casuistry, however, in this study, we will focus on one of the most invisible groups today, migrant women victims of gender violence. That is why we will seek to answer the following research question: How can art contribute to the reconstruction of identity and emotional empowerment of migrant women victims of gender violence in socio-educational community contexts?

The main objective is to present a model of intervention that is theoretically grounded, ethically sensitive and methodologically transferable, making a previous review, as has been done, of all the spheres and levels on which the axis of male violence in the migratory factor is based. Likewise, we sought to dialogue with previous experiences in the field, as well as with current debates in critical pedagogy, feminist studies and decolonial approaches.

This intervention proposes to use art, specifically corporal expression and dance therapy, as tools for empowerment and emotional recovery for women victims of gender-based violence, in organizations that serve women in vulnerable situations, offering a safe space where they can explore emotions, strengthen self-esteem and rebuild their identity through movement.

Gender-based violence especially affects immigrant women, who also face discrimination, language barriers and economic precariousness. This double vulnerability impacts on their emotional well-being, hindering the processes of healing and autonomy. In this context, dance therapy emerges as a useful tool to connect body and mind, process repressed emotions and release tensions. According to the American Dance Therapy Association (2020), 85% participants in these programs reported significant improvements in their emotional health and stress management.

The main objective of this intervention is to create a safe and creative space where these women can express themselves freely and work on their emotional recovery. The proposal combines artistic and therapeutic elements adapted to the particular needs of each woman, promoting self-knowledge and resilience. Group interaction also builds support networks and generates collective empowerment. As Heather Harrington (2020) points out, group activities encourage active participation and the sharing of difficult experiences in a safe and transformative way.

The sessions want to provide tools that can be used effectively by each of the women for the rest of their lives in the face of possible future and present situations of adversity. Through movement exercises, relaxation and individual and group reflection, participants will have the opportunity to reconnect with their bodies and their essence, moving towards an integral improvement of their wellbeing. This project not only seeks to address the consequences of violence, but also to empower each participant to become an active agent of her own change.

In short, this intervention represents a commitment to inclusion, art and social welfare, offering a possible alternative and not so common response to a complex problem. It is hoped that this initiative will serve as a model for future socio-educational interventions both inside and outside of homes, associations... being mobile of a further step towards the construction of a society based on awareness and respect.

Diagnosis - Reality analysis

Through personal participant observation in the workshops and activities of a women's support group carried out for migrant integration in Andalusia, it was identified that migrant women participants who have experienced gender-based violence face social isolation and discrimination. This situation causes a disconnection between body and mind that can hinder the recovery process, especially when there is physical trauma.

Since there is also a lack of interventions that combine psychoemotional support with creative expression, this proposal is a participatory and effective alternative. The CEPAIM Foundation (2020) highlights that migrant women have difficulties in accessing adequate psychosocial resources, which requires innovative approaches. Along these lines, Jones et al. (2018) demonstrated that 80% of women who participated in programs integrating art and emotional support improved in stress management and identity reconstruction.

Justification

Body expression and dance therapy, although effective, remain under-explored tools for addressing trauma and promoting emotional well-being. The proposed workshops thus respond to an urgent need

to incorporate innovative approaches that transcend traditional methods, providing accessible, creative and culturally sensitive tools.

Dance therapy, as an art therapy modality that uses movement and artistic expression for therapeutic purposes, has aroused growing interest in psychosocial and feminist contexts. However, its application continues to be the subject of debate, especially with regard to its efficacy, scientific validity and professionalization. Being located between the artistic, the therapeutic and the educational, this practice is not to the taste of more institutionalized disciplines, such as clinical psychology, for its lack of standardization in protocols, training and replicable evidence. In the face of this, research such as that of Peral Jiménez (2021) defends its value from a qualitative and feminist perspective, focused on the subjective experience and the symbolic transformation of trauma.

Another axis of discussion focuses on the recognition of the body as a way of knowledge. From constructivist and phenomenological approaches, corporeality is claimed as a means to affective memories that escape verbal language (Peral, 2021). This approach challenges the biomedical paradigm centered on verbal intervention, and has encountered resistance in traditional health systems.

In contexts of gender violence, Vera-Esteban and Cardona-Moltó (2022) highlight the potential of contemporary dance to contribute to the reconstruction of self-concept, self-esteem and emotional well-being in battered women. However, they highlight the need to consider the cultural and structural factors that especially affect migrant women or women in situations of intersectional vulnerability.

From a critical point of view, it has also been pointed out that there is a risk of reifying art exclusively for therapeutic purposes, without taking into account its symbolic, political and expressive dimension.. Therefore, the importance of preserving the autonomy of the creative process is important, avoiding a functionalist vision of art as a mere tool.

Likewise, challenges persist regarding the professional recognition of the discipline. Although there is regulated training in art therapy and dance therapy, its inclusion in public health systems or social services is still limited, hindering the financing and sustainability of the programs (Arana).

Psychocorporal practices such as dance therapy can address both the psychological effects of trauma and the social dynamics that affect participants. In addition to its emotional dimension, body movement has physiological effects that help regulate the nervous system and release accumulated tensions, promoting a balance between body and mind. From a psychobiological perspective, the body in movement allows the release of repressed emotions and facilitates integral healing processes.

Data support this effectiveness: Tomić et al. (2020) observed that 75% of participants in dance therapy programs showed significant improvements in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and anxiety

symptoms. Other practitioners reach analogous conclusions (Tomaszewski et al., 2023).

The impact of these interventions transcends the individual. This proposal seeks to make visible the need for culturally sensitive artistic interventions in the face of issues such as gender violence and migration. By offering a safe, inclusive and transformative space, the project has the potential for replication in other contexts, contributing to greater social justice and the recovery of the dignity, body and voice of immigrant women.

Design Objectives and Methodology

The general objective of this intervention is promoting the emotional well-being and empowerment of immigrant women victims of gender violence through corporal expression and dance therapy. The specific objectives concern:

1. Facilitate a safe space for emotional expression and exploration.
2. Improve self-esteem and mind-body connection.
3. Strengthen the support network among participants.
4. Develop self-care and resilience tools.

For an effective implementation, a participatory methodology focused on the needs of each participant is basic. Therefore, the sessions would combine free movement dynamics, relaxation and breathing techniques, learning movements and techniques related to dance, individual and personal reflection exercises as well as group and shared reflection exercises and, finally, the joint creation of artistic manifestations.

Methodological principles have their foundation on the code of ethics of social education (Asedes, 2007), guaranteeing an ethical process based on confidentiality, ensuring that all personal, social or family information shared by the participants would be treated with absolute discretion and not disclosed without their express consent, thus protecting their privacy and well-being.

Socialisation is an essential tool for inclusion, and active participation in the community, favouring positive social bonds, and avoiding situations of isolation; equity and social justice, equal and respectful treatment, always taking into account the particularities, needs and rights of each person; honesty and trust, transparency, active listening, and the recognition of each person as a subject of rights.

Meaningful and relevant learning, orienting actions towards the acquisition of knowledge and experiences, useful and applicable to the daily lives of the participants, based on their interests, previous knowledge and real needs, so that learning makes sense, favours reflection and contributes to a

substantial improvement in their quality of life.

Participation as a cross-cutting principle that runs through the entire process, from the detection of needs to the evaluation of results, encouraging the real and significant involvement of the beneficiaries in the planning and development of the actions, promoting their co-responsibility and strengthening their capacity to influence.

Empowerment, seeking to enhance the capabilities, strengths and personal and collective resources of the participants, favouring their autonomy, self-esteem and control over their own lives. Finally, from a constructivist conception, people are active agents in their process of change, enabling and equipping them with tools, skills and resources that allow them to autonomously face their difficulties, solve complex situations and participate in their social environment an active and responsible way. This methodology promotes the leading role of people in decision-making and in the construction of their own personal and social itinerary.

Results. Activities and timing of a proposal.

The project would develop over the course of a month, that is, in two weekly sessions of two hours each. The purpose of this plan is to offer a space for corporal, emotional and creative work, which participants can reconnect with their bodies, process experiences and promote their empowerment through art and movement.

Week 1: Body awareness workshops

In the first session, the focus would be on becoming aware of one's own body as a starting point for the process of personal and collective work. The activity begins with a writing exercise in which each participant will express how they feel in relation to their body at that moment: if they perceive connection or disconnection, if there are sensations of pain, tension or other physical discomfort. This will allow establishing an initial record that will serve as a reference at the end of the session.

Subsequently, the knowledge and practice of different types of breathing is a content, explaining their cycles, functions and benefits for stress management and improved well-being. Once the breathing exercises have been completed, a guided body awareness tour will take place, with eyes closed, to encourage a deeper connection with one's own body.

In the second session, once an atmosphere of trust and comfort had been created among the participants (who will probably already have a stable and comfortable relationship with each other at the time of this intervention if they already formed a specific support group), a dynamic in pairs would be proposed. In this, they would learn about the muscles and tissues that accumulate the most stress, and

basic massage techniques would be taught, which they can apply in their daily lives to relieve tension.

At the end of the second session, a group reflection is relevant, and the initial writing exercise would be repeated, contrasting how they feel after having worked on body awareness, in order to evidence possible changes and progress.

Week 2: Dance Therapy Workshops

In the second week, a couple of dance therapy workshops would be held, in which movement would be used as a means of expression. We would begin with a series of basic stretches, fundamental to avoid injuries and facilitate physical wellbeing, as well as to prepare the body for the subsequent work.

As a second activity, each person should write or say a series of concepts in four categories: First, a word related to what they feel the most or is most on each one's mind on a daily basis; second, another word linked to difficult moments they have overcome or are facing; third, another word reflecting moments in which they have encouraged, reflecting overcoming their own difficult situations (things they said to themselves to get through, things they would have liked to hear at the time, things they would say to people who are going through that situation, etc.). Finally, the concept should be related to their personal future goals, a word that visualizes the future they want to build for themselves.

During the fourth session, after a short warm-up and a brief meditation, the basic movements of classical, ethnic and/or modern dance would be used, combined with the personal movements that each participant would like to contribute, thus giving a corporal response to the conceptual terms and creating a joint artistic vision of their personal stories. Thus, a joint artistic vision would be generated, where each individual story would be integrated into a collective expression.

Week 3: Body expression workshops

The third week is about consolidating and concluding the work done during the previous sessions. After an initial warm-up, using the ideas from the previous session, we would work on giving coherence and connection to these movements, putting them together in a small choreography that symbolically represents their personal trajectories and resilience processes.

Finally, we would focus the movements, giving them connection, artistic and visual coherence, and form, to give rise to a kind of small choreography, as stated in the previous paragraph. Time would be spent reviewing and finalizing the collective choreography, making sure that all participants feel comfortable and represented.

Week 4: Recording workshops

Having made sure that all the members of the group agree with the recording by signing a consent and image release form, during this last week we would start recording the final choreography. In this step the networking with professionals from the audio-visual world, with the support of a communication team, comes into play.

This record could become the image of a campaign to raise awareness and denounce gender violence, making visible their processes of empowerment and resilience through art and movement, allowing in turn the dissemination of such interventions, and giving more visibility to people who have experienced gender violence. This initiative can slightly take the participants out of their comfort zone after the work done throughout the month, promoting a space where they can exploit and enhance their autonomy, usefulness and self-realization by actively and directly contributing to awareness and social evolution.

The recording should work with the concepts of contrast, shadows, fabrics and other resources that allow the message to be transmitted while maintaining the anonymity of each of the women, unless they explicitly express that they wish to appear in the video showing their own identity.

At the end of the intervention, a safe space for reflection and debate is there, in which experiences, conclusions and lessons learned from the process are shared. This closure seeks to reinforce the sense of community, promote self-awareness and open paths for future interventions that continue to promote the integral wellbeing of the participants.

Resources

In this intervention, human resources are the priority, with a social educator, as well as an accredited technician with knowledge and training in dance and corporal expression, audio-visual personnel and, as a suitable element, a mediator or translator should be available to minimize the language barrier.

In terms of equipment, you should have a large and safe room free of obstacles, sound equipment, writing material (such as paper, pens and sheets of paper) and, for the final part, add recording material (cameras, lighting or microphones, as indicated by the professionals).

Evaluation and continuity tools

The evaluation of this intervention is a constant, participatory and flexible process, which allows us to assess both individual and collective progress throughout the sessions, as well as to identify possible needs for methodological adaptation according to the evolution of the group. A continuous evaluation would be carried out through direct and participative observation, recording the group dynamics, the involvement of the participants, and their emotional and corporal response to the different proposals. This observation would allow adjusting the contents, rhythms and levels of demand of each session in order to respect the personal processes of each woman.

At the same time, we have a final evaluation through several complementary instruments. On the one hand, an anonymous satisfaction questionnaire would be elaborated to collect evaluations on the contents, methodology, group atmosphere, personal perception of the achievements and usefulness of the proposed activities. On the other hand, a space for group reflection would be provided at the end of the intervention, in which each participant could share their experiences, learning and emotions that arose throughout the process. This space reinforces the sense of belonging, recognize personal and collective progress, and generate an emotionally caring and respectful closure.

In addition, in order to ensure that the women participants can continue to advance their process of recovery and empowerment, once the intervention is over, it would be proposed to provide them with a series of simple, accessible and adaptable continuity tools for their daily lives. These tools would include a practical guide developed specifically for them, containing breathing exercises, stretching, basic body movements, relaxation dynamics, and proposals for emotional expression through the body and art, which they can carry out at home or in safe spaces.

Likewise, the creation of a self-managed support group among the participants is a proposal: they could meet periodically to share experiences, carry out some of the dynamics learned, and continue to generate a network and emotional support. This group could be accompanied by a professional or mediator, especially in the first meetings, to facilitate the transition towards group autonomy.

As a complement, the possibility of getting involved in cultural and community activities in their environment (dance workshops, women's circles, activities of migrant or feminist associations, etc.) so that they can continue to build their identity from spaces of social participation. A list of local social, health and community resources and services would also be provided, which can assist them in case of need and refer them to other specialized resources if necessary.

In this way, the intervention not only aims to offer a specific experience of emotional and corporal improvement, but also to leave installed capacities, networks and resources that allow women to sustain themselves, take care of themselves and continue their process in an autonomous, strengthened and accompanied way.

Conclusions

Among the most significant contributions of this article are the vindication of art as a universal and transformative language, and the construction of support networks among the participants; the promotion of emotional autonomy and bodily empowerment are relevant achievements, as they contribute to partially dismantle the patriarchal and xenophobic structures that oppress them. Also noteworthy is the approach of continuity tools after the end of the project, an aspect that ensures the sustainability of the benefits obtained and prevents re-victimization processes.

From a socio-educational perspective, it is also aligned with a participatory and humanistic approach, where people are not mere observers, but are allowed to take direct action, ceasing to be socially seen as passive victims, and becoming active creators in their transformation processes. In this way, artistic intervention not only addresses the individual aftermath of trauma, but also has an impact on the collective level, challenging hegemonic orders, opening new spaces for social dialogue.

After the elaboration of the socio-educational proposal, based on corporal expression and dance therapy, it can be concluded that the proposed design is internally coherent and responds adequately to the formulated objectives, although since it is a hypothetical proposal (due to reasons beyond the researcher's control, who did wish to develop it), it is not possible to evaluate empirical results. The theoretical and methodological approach allows us to assess its relevance and projection for its future implementation.

However, this project also has limitations: first, it is important to point out the possible initial resistance of some participants to body dynamics, especially in contexts where the body has been a source of trauma, or is loaded with restrictive cultural meanings. This requires a sensitive and intercultural adaptation of the activities, respecting the times, limits and forms of expression of each woman, as well as attending to the cultural, personal and community particularities of each group.

Secondly, the evaluation of the impact of the intervention is a methodological challenge, since subjective transformation processes, such as empowerment or identity reconstruction, are not always easily quantifiable or directly observable. It will be necessary to construct qualitative and situated indicators, which will make it possible to account for emotional, relational or symbolic changes throughout the process.

Third, ethical challenges related to informed consent, the management of emotional exposure, and the safeguarding of privacy in group settings are anticipated. The creation of a safe environment will require clear protocols, active listening and spaces for emotional support for both participants and professional facilitators.

Finally, the innovative nature of the proposal may face institutional resistance or funding difficulties, in contexts where more medicalized or welfare-based approaches are the base. In view of this, we propose, as a future line, the development of a rigorous systematization of the model, which will make it possible to evaluate its transferability, adaptability and sustainability in different social, geographical and cultural contexts.

This paper offers an original and necessary contribution to the debate on new methodologies for socio-educational intervention with migrant women in situations of violence, opening the way for future experiences and applied research. It is not only possible, but urgent, to continue advancing in this line,

expanding the use of artistic resources in vulnerable social contexts, betting on feminist and intersectional approaches, and placing the people themselves as active protagonists of their process of change.

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