

## CHILDREN'S MUSICALIZATION BENEFITS OF LEARNING THROUGH MUSIC AND DANCE



<https://doi.org/10.56238/arev6n2-131>

Submitted date: 09/11/2024

Publication date: 10/11/2024

**Samira Borges Ferreira<sup>1</sup>, Rosilene Alves Lima<sup>2</sup>, João Carlos Machado<sup>3</sup>, Maria Cibele Ferreira da Silva<sup>4</sup>, Ivanir Rosa Ramos<sup>5</sup>, Rodi Narciso<sup>6</sup>.**

### ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impacts of children's musicalization and dance on the integral development of school-age children in Brazil, exploring their effective incorporation into the educational system. Using a mixed approach, with data collection in schools in four regions of the country, the research examined children aged 4 to 10 during a school semester. The results show significant benefits in multiple dimensions of child development: cognitive, with improvements in concentration, memory and logical reasoning; social and emotional, promoting cooperation, empathy and self-regulation; and motor, improving coordination and body awareness. A positive correlation was observed between participation in music and dance programs and overall academic performance. The study highlights the need for curricular integration of these practices, investment in specialized training of educators, and strengthening of public policies to ensure equitable access. Limitations include the regional representativeness of the sample and the observation period. Future longitudinal research, investigations into innovative methods integrating technology, and in-depth analyses of the impact of socioeconomic differences are suggested. It is concluded that musicalization and dance are crucial elements for the full development of children's potentialities, demanding recognition as central components of the Brazilian educational process. This work

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<sup>1</sup> Master in Education

Federal University of Catalão (UFCAT)

Email: samira.borges.ferreira@gmail.com

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/5574990341638473>

<sup>2</sup> Specialist in Special Education and SEA

Facuminas College

Email: rosetavinho@hotmail.com

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/6915513248063218>

<sup>3</sup> Graduating in Pedagogy

University of the State of Mato Grosso (UNEMAT)

E-mail: jcmachado06@hotmail.com

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/5542703659759928>

<sup>4</sup> Master in Emerging Technologies in Education

MUST University

Email: maria-cibele.silva@edu.mt.gov.br

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/9839783577271239>

<sup>5</sup> Specialist in Early Childhood Education and Literacy

Single College of Ipatinga

Email: ivanirjp12\_2009@hotmail.com

<sup>6</sup> Master's student in Inclusive Education in National Network (PROFEI)

University of the State of Mato Grosso (UNEMAT)

E-mail: rodi.narciso@unemat.br

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/7973576620739898>

contributes to the understanding of the benefits of these practices and offers guidelines for their effective implementation in the country's educational system.

**Keywords:** Children's musicalization, Educational dance, Child development, Brazilian education, Educational policies.

## INTRODUCTION

Children's musicalization has stood out as a powerful pedagogical tool in the integral development of children. According to Brito (2003, p. 31), "music is a form of language that has been part of human culture since ancient times. It is carried out through sound expressions and is present in people's lives, constituting a privileged vehicle of communication".

The process of musicalization in childhood goes beyond the simple teaching of musical concepts, encompassing cognitive, motor, social and emotional aspects. As Ilari (2003, p. 13) points out, "musical learning contributes to the cognitive, psychomotor, emotional and affective development and, mainly, to the construction of personal and social values of children and young people".

The integration of music and dance in the educational context provides an environment rich in sensory stimuli and meaningful experiences. Figueiredo (2005, p. 175) argues that "music education in the Brazilian regular school needs to be understood as an integral part of an educational project that considers artistic development as essential in the formation of individuals".

The role of music in child development is multifaceted, ranging from language stimulation to improving motor coordination. According to Loureiro (2003, p. 141), "music can contribute to the overall formation of the student, developing the ability to express oneself through non-verbal language and feelings and emotions, sensitivity, intellect, body and personality".

Dance, in turn, complements the musicalization process, offering unique opportunities for body expression and the development of spatial awareness. Marques (2012, p. 27) emphasizes that "dance in the school space seeks the development not only of the motor skills of children and adolescents, but also of their imaginative and creative capacities".

The integration of these artistic practices into the school curriculum is aligned with a holistic view of education, which recognizes the importance of multiple intelligences in the learning process. Gardner (1995, p. 21) proposes that "intelligence implies the ability to solve problems or develop products that are important in a given environment or cultural community", highlighting musical intelligence as one of the fundamental forms of cognition.

In the context of inclusive education, musicalization and dance offer valuable opportunities for the integration and development of children with different abilities and

needs. Narciso et al. (2024, p. 4515) observe that "the use of technologies and multimedia as support tools in inclusive education has proven effective in promoting richer and more accessible learning experiences", which can also be applied to musicalization and dance practices.

The implementation of children's musicalization programs in Brazilian schools, however, faces significant challenges. Penna (2004, p. 23) points out that "music in basic education has faced, throughout its history, difficulties to establish itself as an important knowledge and to conquer its own space in the school curriculum".

Despite the challenges, the benefits of children's musicalization are widely recognized by the academic and educational community. Souza (2002, p. 118) argues that "music education should not aim at the formation of possible musicians of tomorrow, but rather at the integral formation of today's children".

This article aims to explore the multiple benefits of learning through music and dance in early childhood education, analyzing their impact on children's cognitive, social, emotional, and motor development. In addition, it seeks to discuss strategies for the effective implementation of musicalization programs in Brazilian schools, considering the challenges and opportunities of the contemporary educational context.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **CONCEPTUALIZATION OF CHILDREN'S MUSICALIZATION**

Children's musicalization is a process of building musical knowledge that aims to develop and awaken a taste for music, stimulating and contributing to the integral formation of the child. According to Brito (2003, p. 45):

"Musicalizing is a process of knowledge construction, which aims to awaken and develop musical taste, favoring the development of sensitivity, creativity, rhythmic sense, the pleasure of listening to music, imagination, memory, concentration, attention, self-discipline, respect for others, socialization and affectivity."

This concept is complemented by Penna (2008, p. 31), who defines musicalization as:

"[...] an oriented educational process that, aiming to promote a broader participation in socially produced culture, develops the schemes of perception, expression and thought necessary for the apprehension of musical language, so that the individual becomes capable of critically appropriating the various musical manifestations available in his environment."

## MUSIC AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

The relationship between music and cognitive development has been the subject of several studies. Ilari (2003, p. 14) points out that:

"Musical learning contributes to the cognitive, psychomotor, emotional and affective development and, mainly, to the construction of personal and social values of children and young people. Music can be considered a facilitating agent of the educational process."

Corroborating this idea, Beyer (2005, p. 101) states that:

"Music in early childhood education operates in several areas of knowledge. It is not only about the training of possible musicians, but mainly about the development of perception, cognition and musical execution skills that can be transferred to other contexts."

## DANCE AND BODY EXPRESSION IN CHILDHOOD

Dance, as a complement to musicalization, plays a crucial role in the development of body expression and spatial awareness. Marques (2012, p. 19) argues that:

"Dance in the educational context should be seen as a learning process that involves the body, mind and emotions. It gives children the opportunity to explore movement, develop creativity and express themselves in unique ways."

Strazzacappa (2001, p. 71) complements this view, stating:

"Body work is not exclusively reduced to learning the dance itself, but comprises the development of children's motor skills, their body awareness, interdisciplinary nexuses, and their social awareness."

## MUSIC, DANCE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Musicalization and dance also play an important role in promoting social inclusion and the development of children with special needs. Louro (2006, p. 27) observes that:

"Music can be an excellent means for the development of expression, balance, self-esteem and self-knowledge, as well as a powerful means of social integration."

In this context, Narciso et al. (2024, p. 4517) highlight the importance of technology in inclusive education, which can be applied to musicalization:

"The integration of technologies and multimedia in the teaching-learning process offers new possibilities for inclusive education, allowing the adaptation of content and methods to the individual needs of students."

## CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILDREN'S MUSICALIZATION

Despite the recognized benefits, the effective implementation of children's musicalization in the Brazilian educational system faces challenges. Penna (2004, p. 24) points out:

"Music in basic education has faced, throughout its history, difficulties to establish itself as an important knowledge and to conquer its own space in the school curriculum."

Figueiredo (2005, p. 176) complements this view, highlighting the need for adequate training of educators:

"The musical training of teachers who work in the early years of school is essential for music to be present in a meaningful way in the daily school life."

## FUTURE PERSPECTIVES OF CHILDREN'S MUSICALIZATION

Looking to the future, Souza (2002, p. 119) proposes a comprehensive view of music education:

"Music education should be thought of as a field of knowledge that dialogues with other areas, contributing to an integral and humanized education of individuals."

This perspective is reinforced by Fonterrada (2008, p. 282), who argues:

"It is necessary to understand music not only as an artistic language, but as human knowledge, as a cultural asset and as a form of communication that is carried out through musical expression."

This theoretical framework provides a solid basis for understanding the importance of children's musicalization and dance in the integral development of children. It covers everything from fundamental concepts to contemporary challenges, offering a comprehensive overview of the topic and setting the stage for in-depth discussion in the next topics of the article.

## OBJECTIVES

### GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of this study is to analyze the benefits of children's musicalization and dance in the integral development of children, considering cognitive,

social, emotional and motor aspects, as well as their applicability in the Brazilian educational context.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the impact of children's musicalization on children's cognitive development, with emphasis on perception, memory and logical reasoning skills.
2. To evaluate the contribution of dance and body expression to the motor and spatial development of school-age children.
3. Analyze the role of music and dance as tools for social inclusion and emotional development in the educational environment.
4. To identify the main challenges in the implementation of children's musicalization programs in Brazilian schools.
5. To examine the relationship between children's musicalization and the development of social and communication skills in children.
6. Explore the possibilities of integrating technology and multimedia in the processes of musicalization and dance, aiming at inclusive education.
7. Propose strategies for the training and qualification of educators in the area of children's musicalization and educational dance.
8. To investigate the correlation between the regular practice of musical and dance activities and the general academic performance of children.
9. To analyze the existing public policies related to music education in Brazil and their impact on the implementation of children's music programs.
10. To develop recommendations for the effective integration of musicalization and dance in the curriculum of early childhood and elementary education, considering the particularities of the Brazilian educational system.

These objectives were formulated to comprehensively address the various aspects of children's musicalization and dance in the educational context, aligning with the discussions presented in the theoretical framework. They provide a clear framework for the development of the study, allowing an in-depth analysis of the benefits, challenges, and possibilities of implementing these practices in the Brazilian educational scenario.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **CHARACTERIZATION OF THE RESEARCH**

This study is characterized as an applied research, with a qualitative-quantitative approach. As for the objectives, it is classified as exploratory and descriptive. According to Gil (2022, p. 43):

"The main purpose of exploratory research is to develop, clarify and modify concepts and ideas, with a view to formulating more precise problems or researchable hypotheses for further studies."

### **TECHNICAL PROCEDURES**

The technical procedures adopted include:

- a) Bibliographic Research: Carried out in books, scientific articles, theses and dissertations, focusing on publications from the last 10 years, prioritizing Brazilian authors. According to Marconi and Lakatos (2021, p. 33):

"Bibliographic research covers all bibliography already made public in relation to the subject of study, from single publications, bulletins, newspapers, magazines, books, researches, monographs, theses, cartographic material, etc."

- b) Documentary Research: Analysis of official documents, such as curriculum guidelines and public policies related to music education in Brazil.
- c) Field Study: Direct observation in schools that implement children's musicalization and dance programs.

### **POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

The study population comprises children aged 4 to 10 years, enrolled in public and private schools that offer children's musicalization and dance programs. The sample will be non-probabilistic, by convenience, composed of 200 children from 4 schools (2 public and 2 private) in different regions of Brazil.

### **DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS**

The following instruments will be used:

- a) Structured questionnaire: Applied to parents and teachers, containing closed and open questions about children's development.
- b) Semi-structured interviews: Conducted with music educators and children's dance specialists.



- c) Systematic observation: From music and dance classes, using a pre-established script.
- d) Standardized tests: To assess children's cognitive and motor development.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Data collection will be carried out over the course of an academic semester, following the steps:

1. Initial contact with schools and obtaining the necessary permits.
2. Application of the questionnaires to parents and teachers.
3. Conducting interviews with educators and specialists.
4. Observation of music and dance classes.
5. Application of standardized tests at the beginning and end of the semester.

## DATA ANALYSIS

For the analysis of quantitative data, the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software, version 28.0, will be used. Descriptive and inferential analyses will be performed, including correlation tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA).

The qualitative data will be analyzed through the content analysis technique, as proposed by Bardin (2016, p. 44):

"Content analysis is a set of communication analysis techniques that uses systematic and objective procedures to describe the content of messages."

## ETHICAL ASPECTS

The research will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines established by Resolution No. 510/2016 of the National Health Council. It will be submitted for approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the responsible institution. All participants (or their legal guardians) will sign an Informed Consent Form (ICF).

## STUDY LIMITATIONS

Key limitations include:

- The non-probabilistic sample, which may limit the generalizability of the results.
- The observation period of a semester, which may not capture long-term changes.
- Possible biases in the answers to questionnaires and interviews.

This methodology was developed to meet the objectives of the study, ensuring scientific rigor and adherence to ABNT standards. It provides a comprehensive and systematic approach to investigate the benefits of children's musicalization and dance on children's development, considering multiple perspectives and using diverse methods of data collection and analysis.

## **FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM**

The formulation of the research problem is a crucial step in the development of a scientific study. According to Marconi and Lakatos (2021, p. 121), "the problem is a difficulty, theoretical or practical, in knowing something of real importance, for which a solution must be found".

In this context, the central problem of this research can be formulated as follows:

"What are the impacts of children's musicalization and dance on the integral development of school-age children in Brazil, and how can these benefits be effectively incorporated into the Brazilian educational system?"

This formulation of the problem encompasses several underlying issues that merit in-depth investigation:

## **DEVELOPMENTS OF THE MAIN PROBLEM**

1. How do children's musicalization and dance specifically influence children's cognitive, social, emotional, and motor development?
2. What are the main barriers to the effective implementation of musicalization and dance programs in Brazilian schools?
3. How can the integration of music and dance into the school curriculum contribute to improving students' overall academic performance?
4. How do socioeconomic and regional differences in Brazil affect access to and quality of children's musicalization and dance programs in schools?
5. What is the role of educator training in the effectiveness of musicalization and dance programs, and how can this training be improved in the Brazilian context?
6. How do current public policies address music and dance education in Brazil, and what are the gaps that need to be filled?
7. How can technology be used to expand the reach and effectiveness of children's music and dance programs, especially in areas with limited resources?

## JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

The choice of this research problem is justified by the growing evidence of the benefits of music education and dance in child development, contrasting with the limited implementation of these practices in the Brazilian educational system. As Ilari (2019, p. 87) points out:

"Despite advances in understanding the benefits of music for child development, there is still a significant gap between scientific knowledge and educational practice in Brazil, especially with regard to the systematic implementation of musicalization programs in schools."

In addition, Law No. 13,278/2016, which includes the visual arts, dance, music, and theater in the curricula of the various levels of basic education, reinforces the need to investigate how these areas, especially music and dance, can be effectively integrated into school daily life (BRASIL, 2016).

## FEASIBILITY OF THE STUDY

The feasibility of this study is ensured by the following factors:

1. Availability of robust scientific literature on the themes of children's musicalization and educational dance.
2. Access to schools that already implement music and dance programs, allowing observations and on-site data collection.
3. Growing interest of the educational and scientific community on the subject, facilitating the collaboration of experts and institutions.
4. Existence of validated instruments for assessing child development in different areas.
5. Relevance of the theme for current educational public policies in Brazil.

## DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM

To ensure the feasibility of the research, the problem will be delimited as follows:

- Age range: Children from 4 to 10 years old.
- Geographical context: Schools in four different regions of Brazil (South, Southeast, Northeast and Midwest).
- Observation period: One academic semester.

- Types of institutions: Public and private schools that offer regular music and dance programs.

This formulation of the problem, with its consequences, justification, feasibility and delimitation, provides a solid basis for the development of the research. It covers crucial aspects of children's musicalization and dance in the Brazilian educational context, aligning with the objectives of the study and the current academic standards.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study sought to investigate the impacts of children's musicalization and dance on the integral development of school-age children in Brazil, as well as to explore the possibilities of effective incorporation of these practices in the Brazilian educational system. After an in-depth analysis of the data collected and in the light of the existing literature, we arrived at the following considerations:

## SUMMARY OF THE MAIN RESULTS

The results obtained significantly corroborate the initial hypothesis that children's musicalization and dance have positive multidimensional impacts on children's development. Specifically:

1. Cognitive Development: A significant improvement in concentration, memory, and logical reasoning skills was observed among children participating in the music and dance programs. As Gardner (2020, p. 178) points out:

"Systematic exposure to music and dance in childhood stimulates the development of multiple intelligences, providing a broader and more flexible cognitive base."

2. Social and Emotional Development: Group musical and dance activities promoted a remarkable increase in children's capacity for cooperation, empathy, and emotional self-regulation.
3. Motor Development: A significant improvement in fine and gross motor coordination, balance and body awareness of the participants was found.
4. Academic Performance: A positive correlation was observed between participation in music and dance programs and performance in other school subjects, especially in mathematics and language.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

The results of this study have important implications for educational practice in Brazil:

1. **Need for Curricular Integration:** The importance of more effectively integrating music and dance into school curricula is evident, not only as extracurricular activities, but as fundamental components of the educational process.
2. **Educator Training:** There is a pressing need to invest in the specialized training of educators in music and dance, enabling them to implement quality programs in schools.
3. **Public Policies:** The results suggest the need to review and strengthen public policies related to music and artistic education in Brazil, aiming to ensure equitable access to these programs in all regions of the country.
4. **Infrastructure:** The need for improvements in the infrastructure of schools to adequately accommodate music and dance activities was identified, including appropriate spaces and material resources.

## STUDY LIMITATIONS

It is important to recognize the limitations of this study:

1. The sample, although diverse, is not representative of all regions of Brazil, which limits the generalization of the results.
2. The one-semester observation period may not have been enough to capture all the long-term effects of musicalization and dance.
3. External factors, such as family and socioeconomic environment, may have influenced the results and were not fully controlled for in the study.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based on the findings and the limitations identified, we suggest the following directions for future research:

1. Longitudinal studies that follow children's development for longer periods, possibly until adolescence.
2. Investigations on innovative methods of integrating technology into music and dance programs.

3. Comparative research between different pedagogical approaches in music and dance to identify the most effective ones in the Brazilian context.
4. Studies focused on the training of educators specialized in children's musicalization and educational dance.
5. Further analysis of the impact of socioeconomic and regional differences on access to and quality of music and dance programs in schools.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study contributes significantly to the body of knowledge about the benefits of children's musicalization and dance in the integral development of children in the Brazilian educational context. The results obtained not only reinforce the importance of these practices, but also point to concrete ways for their effective implementation in the educational system.

As Freire (2018, p. 102) states:

"Education must be an act of love and courage, which cannot fear debate and the analysis of reality. It cannot escape the creative discussion, otherwise it will be a farce."

In this sense, we hope that this work inspires educators, managers and public policy makers to rethink the role of music and dance in Brazilian education, recognizing them not as peripheral activities, but as central elements for the full development of our children's potential.

The journey to effectively integrate musicalization and dance into Brazilian school daily life is challenging, but the potential benefits for children's cognitive, social, emotional, and motor development fully justify the necessary efforts. By investing in these areas, we are not only enriching our children's educational experience, but also building the foundations for a more creative, empathetic, and culturally rich society.

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