

1423 E 13th Avenue, Vancouver BC

August 2, 2022

Luisa Graham, Director of Rancho Folclorico Cruz de Cristo

Dear Mrs Graham:

Attached is my report on assessing the feasibility of a new structural and organizational system for Rancho Folclorico Cruz de Cristo. Through research on the current state, as well as potential options for the future of the group, I believe that this report can greatly benefit the group. Thank you for taking the time to review this report.

The group has provided many benefits to the young children in the community, as well as the Portuguese community as a whole, but there are some definite and blatant flaws.

Preparing this analysis was enjoyable and I am happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. Please contact me at 123-456-7890 or briannadiogo2018@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Brianna Diogo

Assessing the Feasibility of a New Structural System for Rancho Folclorico Cruz de Cristo

For:

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Abstract

Organization and strong structural practices are key when managing any group, especially when dealing with a particularly large group of people. In a dance group, not only are there large amounts of dancers, but there are also parents, competition directors, different groups and many instructors and administrative staff that need to be managed and taken into consideration. For the Rancho Folclorico Cruz de Cristo, these organizational tactics are unmanaged and cause a large amount of problems within the group, the largest being the fact that dancers are unclear what is expected of them, leading to a lack of commitment.

Improving these organizational and structural systems requires a combination of tasks and multiple people to get on board in order to make effective change. Therefore, those in leadership positions should consider:

- Introduction of a new digital organizational system
- Mandatory annual contracts for all dancers
- Backlogging of documents and data
- Stronger communication between administrative staff, instructors, dancers and their parents

Introduction

The organization and structure of Rancho Folclorico Cruz de Cristo has been called into question at many times over their last 35 years of operation. These doubts have been brought up in annual meetings, personal conversations, and by members of the dance group in the midst of practices. Not only have the dancers themselves noticed this, but it has also been called into question by parents, competition directors, and outside members of the community that were witness to the events taking place within the group.

Children of all ages are incredibly affected by the structural systems in which they play a part, and when an organization has continuously proven that their system is failing, it is incredibly difficult for children to be successful and to thrive. Children play a part in a variety of different structures, both from their families to their homes, schools and extracurriculars. As adults who deal with children, it is imperative that the system is as manageable as possible in order to ensure that children are able to be in the most ideal environment possible. This is especially true when the group is known as a pillar of a cultural community. In this case, it is all the more important when the group is in the center of community, funded and supported by the members of the community that surround them, making organization and structure so much more crucial.

Background

Over the last four decades, the Rancho Folclorico Crus de Cristo has been known as an incredibly disorganized and dysfunctional Portuguese cultural dancing group. The group operates out of a church basement in East Vancouver, run by three administrators, four instructors, and a variety of parents who volunteer and help the organization run. The group ranges from ages 5-25 and each participate in performances in British Columbia.

Purpose and Scope

Due to the fact that the administration and teaching staff is comprised mostly of volunteers, and class fees go directly to costumes and travel, the organization and formality of the group is lacking. This leads to things like people being moved around groups due to social politics and not receiving milestone awards that they have earned, spectators and parents getting overly involved, rehearsals not being taken seriously, and even having to drop out of multiple performances and competitions last minute due to dancers not showing up. These actions are met with no consequences, and have only escalated over the years. Many people leave the group due to the fact that they feel as if they are not respected and appreciated, and this leads to constant re-organization, meaning that rehearsal times and performances are full of distractions and unprofessionalism. This report aims to present possible solutions to the structural and organizational issues that are evident in the program.

Five topics are covered in this report: what organization systems are most effective for administration; what is the most effective and efficient way of communication between dancers, instructors and administration; what are the most appropriate forms of consequences for conscious ignorance; what are the guidelines and specifics that should be presented in a contract to dancers and their families; how might these changes affect all parties involved.

Methods and Limitations

Seventeen members of the group, including past and current members, responded to a short survey structured to look at their experience within the group, and how it had impacted them. An analysis of these results is important to determine where the areas that were most lacking were and what followed those mistakes. As well, interviews were conducted to gain a better scope on the circumstances in the group, and research was conducted in regards to potential solutions to these problems.

The minimal participation in the survey is a limitation of the survey, as well as the fact that those who chose to participate in the survey were those who were most likely to feel upset or strongly opinionated about their own perspectives.

Conclusion

The report concluded that an introduction of a digital organization system and mandatory contracts will benefit all members of the Rancho Folclorico Cruz de Cristo.

Data Section

Sources of Disorganization

When dance groups are being managed and organized, there are a variety of administrative and managerial tasks that must be balanced in order to run a high functioning organization. However, there are many aspects in which the administration can fall short, as outlined below.

Contracts and Legal Obligation.

In many dance groups, contracts are provided to the dancers and/or their guardians to be reviewed and signed. These contracts outline the expectations and guidelines for the dance season, and make the dancers accountable and liable for their commitment to the group.

Document Organization.

When documents are only dealt with in hardcopy, and there is no form of logging or electronic copy, it is very easy for these documents to get lost, misplaced, or damaged. When a group like this one exists for a long amount of time and there is employee turnover, it is incredibly easy for these documents to get misplaced and overlooked. Sometimes these mistakes are minor, but sometimes they lead to much bigger consequences such as awards not being given, performances being forgotten, or registration not being properly completed. This can be devastating, especially when there are already questions being asked or doubts being had about an organization's ability to properly manage themselves.

Outside Influence.

So often when it seems as though there is too much outside influence, it is difficult for administrative leaders to stick to what they believe is best and instead, they are swayed by what they think will make the most people happy. In a group that is heavily influenced and supported by the cultural community around them, this is all the more likely to happen, as things are less likely to change due to “tradition”.

Reasons of Importance for New Structural System

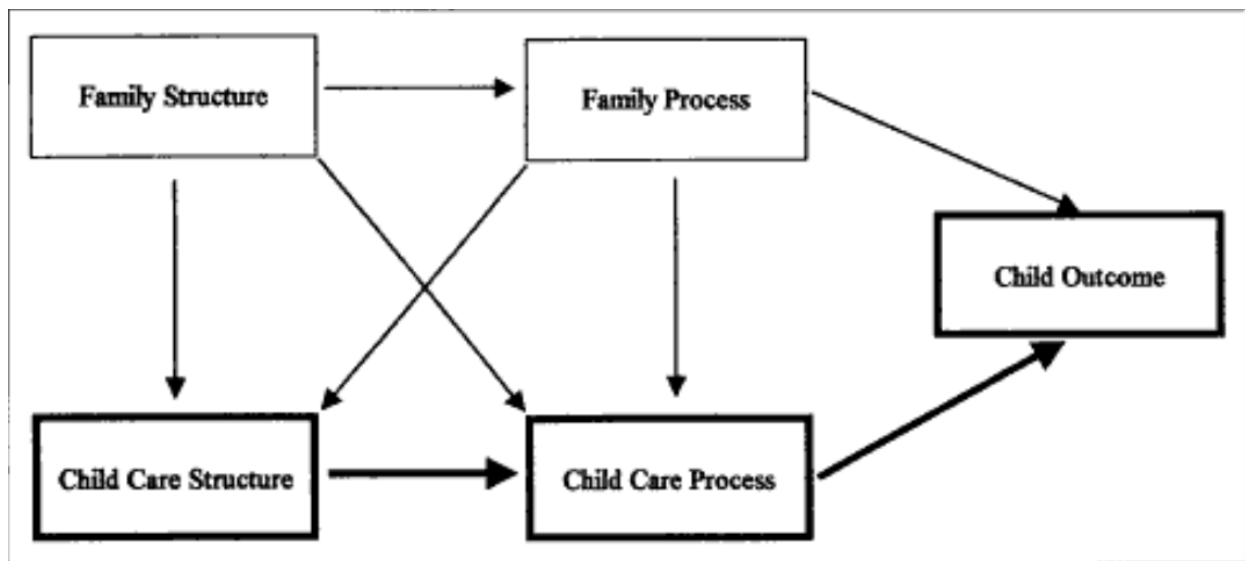


Figure 1: The interwovenness of structures and processes for a child

Children.

Children are a part of a massive variety of structural organizations, from their family, to the education and care systems that they take part in, and finally the extracurriculars that they participate in. These structures play a massive part in who the child becomes (Figure 1). For this reason, it is imperative that these structures are run meticulously, so that children are given multiple opportunities to be successful, without worrying about the small details that should be the responsibility of the leaders within the group. This also means that children need to know what is expected of them, allowing them to also learn how to develop in a properly managed environment, similar to organized structures that they will be a part of for majority of their lives.

Community.

In an organization that has a vital presence in its community, it is important that they maintain a good environment, as well as a good reputation, especially if they are asking for their support. However, a key part of a good reputation is to maintain a good public image. The crisis of missing performances due to poor organizational practices is devastating to public image, and calls into question the integrity and skill of those in administrative and management positions. Bringing in a new organizational and structural system does a lot to improve relationships with the outside community as a whole, mostly due to the fact that it allows them to see that organization is being taken seriously in the first place.

Organizational and Structural Systems in the Group

Improving organization in the group can happen in a variety of different ways, depending on what the leaders are willing to do and to implement.

System Options.

One of the most pressing issues is the lack of consistent documentation within the group, due to the fact that there are only hard copies and due to administrative staff turnover, not all of the staff is on the same page with paperwork and organizational specifications.

The simplest option is to use a platform like Google Drive. Google files can be shared across employees, and administrative directors will be able to manage exactly what permissions each employee has, whether they can view, edit or share documents. With this simple online system, it will also be fairly simple for spreadsheets to be created, and documents to be scanned and added to files in order for everyone to have access to the same information.

As for organization within the group, another option is to create a joint calendar and an email list. Although those seem like obvious solutions, those are things that are not a part of the group's operations currently. This allows for all dancers and instructors to have access to the information, as well as a lack of confusion about dates and deadlines.

Finally, one of the most important implementations is a mandatory annual contract for all of the dancers and/or their guardians to sign. The contract will not only lay out everything that will be expected of the dancers in terms of commitment, tasks and loyalty to the group, but will also hold the dancers accountable, explaining in detail the consequences that will happen if there is a breach of contract.

Benefits.

There are a varieties of benefits for Rancho Folclorico Cruz de Cristo, should they choose to implement these new organizational strategies. In the short term, it will ensure that the group begins to improve their reputation, making it clear that they are taking the organization of the group more seriously and that they will be able to move forward in a more direct and satisfactory manner.

In the long term, this will benefit the group as it will majorly minimize the consequences that have been happening and seriously tarnishing the reputation of the group. As well, it will ensure that the communication within the group is much more up to expectations, as well as making it so that the mistakes of the past are able to be fixed, and changes in the future with events, staff and dancers, will not result in major miscommunication and errors that follow.

Cost.

The programs suggested for organization are cost-free, therefore allowing for these changes to make place with a minimal amount of detriment to the funding allocated to the group. However, when it comes to the contract, it is recommended that a lawyer be sought out to provide revision and consultation on the creation of the contract.

That being said, one of the directors of the group has background in the legal industry, and can therefore provide the legal counsel necessary, either at a discounted cost or completely free of charge.

Limitations of Evidence

This report is based on survey data and literature, and each of these sources hold respective limitations. However, data from both of the sources are consistent in their support of the suggestions given to the group.

Survey Data.

The survey was distributed to 30 past and current dancers. The survey received 19 respondents. The survey evaluated the disorganization within dance groups and the standards to which dancers were held, as well as consequences given should those standards fail to be met.

Literature.

The literature provided massive amounts of opinion and data, but it was difficult to find relevant sources that directly matched the scope of research that was being attempted in this report.

Conclusion

Summary and Interpretation of Findings

The research concludes that it is absolutely necessary for a new organizational system to take place immediately. The current system allows for far too many errors and has clearly proven to be ineffective, leading to multiple detrimental consequences.

The annual contract will also prove to be effective, giving members the opportunity to not only sign to ensure their commitment to the group, but to also have a chance to review what is expected of them and to have any conversations or to ask any questions to clarify what they are being asked to do.

Recommendations

My recommendation is that these two new installments be introduced to the group immediately, with the guidance of someone who can take the administrative and instructors through the new digital program that all registration will be run through. As well, I recommend that the administrative staff seek legal counsel quickly so that they can create and review a contract for the dancers and their guardians to sign.

Appendix A: Survey Questions

1. Have you been part of a sports team or dance group in the last ten years?
2. The classes I have attended are: (with choices referencing organization)
3. The commitment levels I have witnessed are:
4. The commitment levels within the coaches, teachers and administrative staff are:
5. Were you asked to sign a contract upon joining the group?
6. Were there active consequences given if contracts were broken?
7. Were there repercussions given if there was lack of commitment to the group?
8. Did you feel satisfied with any changes made to the organization?
9. Are you still a member of said group?

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