

The Effect of Drama Classes on the Educational Progress and Social Skills of Female Second Grade Elementary School Pupils in Tehran

Abstract

Recently, more emphasis has been placed on the category of education through drama and this has gradually progressed in diverse societies. Most of the age group attracted to this spectacle are children and adolescents. Considering the importance of issue in terms of education and building skills, examining this category in elementary school pupils can reveal significant points. This research, compiled via a descriptive and analytical method and based on quantitative data, follows a quasi-experimental methodology. The statistical population of 361 pupils was selected by staged random sampling using Morgan's table and Gresham and Elliott (1999) social skills questionnaire. Then they were replaced by simple random in two groups of 180 people in two experimental (non-government schools) and control (government schools) groups. The experimental group was trained in the art class (drama and performance) during four useful 45-minute sessions in one month, while the control group followed their daily schedule and did not receive any educational intervention. After the implementation of the training program, the questionnaire was again administered to both groups. Data analysis using covariance analysis revealed that participation in drama classes was significantly effective in improving pupils' educational progress. These results show that the demonstration had a positive and significant effect on social skills in the dimensions of cooperation, self-expression, restraint and empathy.

Research aims:

1. Investigating the effect of participation in drama classes on the educational progress of female elementary pupils in Tehran.
2. Studying the skill level of pupils in elementary school.

Research questions:

1. What is the effect of participating in drama classes on the educational progress and social skills of female elementary pupils in Tehran?

2. What effect does the age of elementary school pupils have on their skill level?

Keywords: drama class, educational achievement, social skill, elementary school pupils

Introduction

One of the stages of childhood is the ability to acquire social skills in the environment surrounding the child. Ethical principles, which are part of social skills, motivate people to perform good deeds, guarantee integrity and dismiss immoral actions. Entering elementary school is one of the most special and sensitive stages of a child's growth and adaptation. At this stage, the child should learn social relations with their age group along with reading, writing and math education; and this concern will effect their overall adaptability. It is necessary to acquaint pupils with artistic experiences, visual thoughts and principles, aesthetics and its effect in the teaching and learning process of schools. Consequently, many thinkers recognize art education as the fourth dimension of skill. This dimension has a distinct place among the other three dimensions of education that is reading, writing and speaking. A number of researchers and thinkers emphasize that the education educational capacities of other courses and units should be complied for better teaching of art classes as best as possible. Four factors play an imperative part in art education that include: a motivated teacher, an enthused learner, an appropriate educational content, and a didactic setting. According to the mentioned materials, this research is an attempt to analyze whether drama classes have an effect on the educational progress and social skills of elementary school children or not.

Regarding the background of the current research, it should be said that so far no independent work with this title has been published so far, however, several works have discussed the effect of drama on education. Sohaili et al. (2018) in an article entitled "Effect of education through storytelling, reading books and displaying movies on children's motivation and interest in studying" which was a quasi-experimental study with a pre-test, post-test and follow-up. The results of the research exposed that all three methods of storytelling, reading books and showing movies can be effective methods to increase the motivation and interest of children aged 7 to 11 to study. Ghafari (2017) in an article entitled "Study of the playwriting process for children in the contemporary era based on Albert Bandura's social learning theory" in which by following a semi-experimental research method with a pre-test, post-test with a control group; Ghafari found that according to Bandura's

point of view, children learn many behaviors by observing the behavior of others; therefore, children and adolescents are highly influenced by the imitative art of drama, and they have been instilled with it as infants and through their childhood playtime, hence, teaching cultural principles and values through the art of drama is effective. Shariat-Madari and Nik-Pour (2017) in an article titled "Effect of Social-Communication Skills Training on Pupils' Responsibility and Adaptability", found that teaching social-communication skills significantly increases pupils' responsibility and adaptation to school. Nowrozi Masir, Rahmani (2015) conducted a research titled "Comparison of scores of secondary school pupils with and without extracurricular activities in Matson's social skills development test" and the results showed that between pupils of schools with extracurricular activities and pupils of schools without extracurricular activities in the average of the entire scale was a statistically significant difference; and components including appropriate social skills, antisocial behaviors, aggression and impulsive behaviors, pride and self-conceit, and communication and interaction with peers was different in both study groups.

In the present research, in order to investigate the function of the art class, especially, drama training and emphasis on the educational progress and social skills of pupils, an experimental design was carried out on the second grade pupils of a girls' elementary school in the 20th district of Tehran. The pupils were tested individually and in groups with a fixed subject, and the sample was determined based on the systematic axis.

Conclusion

The results obtained from the comparison of the experimental group compared to the control group can be concluded that the pupils who participated in the drama classes had better educational progress and social skills than the pupils who did not participate. The educational progress of pupils is one of the important indicators in the overall evaluation of education and all the efforts and determinations of this system are essentially made to cover this issue. In explaining and analyzing the findings related to the first hypothesis of the research, it can be acknowledged that there are many factors that directly and indirectly have an undeniable effect on the educational progress of the pupils.

One of the factors that can be confirmed from the results of this research is the importance of drama classes. According to the investigation of the influences affecting educational progress,

most of the theorists' opinion was that art is an undeniable feature. A stern attention to art has made the school experience more enjoyable in general, and pupils show more enthusiasm and desire to learn other subjects (Florida, 2004); As a result, it can be concluded that mainly studies have focused on the effects of their drama classes as an educational strategy for learning science. Other studies have also focused on the effects of drama on educational achievement and scientific and artistic attitudes. This showed that drama has significant positive effects on educational progress, creativity, critical thinking skills, social skills, emotional domain and attitude. Hence, in order for pupils to achieve educational progress, education systems should consider artistic activities in the school curriculum.

The current research also indicates that children and adolescents find their way into their peer group and form the basis of social life through the acquisition of social skills such as cooperation, compromise, communication and making friends (Stewart and Sandin, 1995). In explaining and analyzing the findings related to the second hypothesis of the research, it can be acknowledged that many features affect the social skills of pupils. The first are artistic activities; art education is considered as one of the basic and important functions of the educational system. For educational systems to be successful in educating moral performers with cognitive, rational, emotional and emotional intelligence, artistic education should be included in the school curriculum and the benefits of aesthetic experience should be taken into advantage. It appears that the teaching of values through the expression of art is guaranteed. To implement drama in the process of educational progress and social skills in all elementary schools, the following should be considered:

- 1) Collective participation in elementary schools is needed so that all teaching staff can learn. Regarding the use of drama as a method in schools, in addition to teachers, administrative staff, managers, inspectors and subject specialists should be trained in the same drama courses.
- 2) In the educational periodicals, the topic of drama, playwriting and drama teaching methods should be discussed and become available to teachers. Also, teachers should gain necessary information in the field of display and its offshoots.
- 3) The Association of Contemporary Dramas, universities, educational faculties in particular and the Ministry of Education should hold seminars, workshops or conferences about the benefits and methods of using drama and playwriting in order to better implement an appropriate teaching

curriculum in elementary schools. Among the limitations of this research, it can be mentioned that the results of the current research cannot be generalized to all male and female pupils of all educational courses; since in this study girl pupils of the second year of elementary school in Tehran have been examined and if there is a need to generalize to all pupils, this should be done with caution and sufficient knowledge.

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