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# How sport and art could be effective in the fields of social, cognitive and emotional learning?

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## Abstract

Mission of education in each country is to strengthen human attitude, promoting its philosophy and developing the individual's ability to live healthy and productive in the society. One of the features in the modern education is special attention to psychological and physical activities that students do at school. Development and enrichment of sports and arts activities, according to fairly centralized approach in curriculum planning and lack of sufficient attention to developing learner's social, emotional and cognitive skills in the teaching-learning process is needed. Thinking in this area makes obvious the emergence of new policy making in the school formal programs.

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## 1. Introduction

The aim of education in all countries is to reinforce the humanistic view, and also to enable people to have a vivid and healthy life. Since the curriculum is quite centralized and does not provide the students with social, emotional and cognitive abilities in teaching-learning process, enrichment and development of artistic and athletic activities can be a response to our agile time (Atash daman, 2010).

Participation in athletic activities helps students to socialize, learn some skills, find friends and communicate in a fine, healthy way. Larson believes that the physical activity is a main system that includes other minor systems. For instance countries like Russia, Germany and some eastern European countries, in order to mention the athletic and physical system use the term “physical culture”.

Through the different eras physical activity has always been part of individual and social life of human beings. It plays a great role in family connections and social activities. Physical activities through entertainment, leisure, and multipurpose ceremonies bring happiness and satisfaction for all family members. Another precious achievement of physical activity is to provide people with social and mental health. There is no doubt that creating a vivid, healthy

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society depends on people's physical and mental health and it demands the endeavors of healthy, efficient and wise people. (Fathi ,2009)

A lot of researches have shown that sport is a precious way to maintain physical health and has a close relationship with mental health and especially prevents mental disorders. Some researches are as follows:

Azarbani, (2004) in his research "Studying the Impact of Sport and Physical education on people's character, self esteem and self consideration" observed the impact of physical activity on mental characteristics and features. Also two prominent athletic figures in Canada have conducted a research about generalization of sport in their own country and the required planning in regard to free times. They observed that through the last two decades many Canadians have become aware of sport effects on health, and the number of people who exercise regularly from 1985 to 2002 has increased by 25%. This advancement is the outcome of endeavors by many sportspersons and governmental figures. Strategies of the sport authority included 5 parts. The first part is to recognize an enthusiastic, efficient group to generalize and propagate sport. The second part is to recognize and provide the needs and facilities required by the issue, because without the required information it is impossible to make a plan. It is necessary to recognize the organizations that can help and participate in this plan. Choosing right people to lead this project is also important. Another important issue is the way different organizations and institutes should cooperate with each other in order to develop sports (Barati Brojny, 2003).

Elkind, (1989) believes that if parents do not let their children play it may cause them anxiety, emotional and mental breakdowns and other disorders. Parents should not use play to create competition, but they should focus on enjoying the play and having fun. Also Kraus, (1990) believes that play provides children with enough time to learn and improve the skills they need in future. And then Ahmadi, (2001) in a research about the role of physical education and play in emotional and social improvement of children concludes that physical activities and play truly improve children's emotional and social characteristics. Children, who participate in physical education classes, improve their own social characteristics, while those who do not participate in these classes show no sign of improvement in this regard (Narrated by Zudras, 1992).

## **2. Education and the Classification of its Objectives**

Art training is vital way for the reformation of education system. This kind of training is valuable and should not be mistaken by just an extracurricular training. In reformation of education system, art training has a power and capacity that cannot be seen in other trainings. It contains four different learning zones such as: a) cognitive skills, b) creative skills, c) work environment skills and education methods, and d) the intrinsic value of art.

*2.1. Cognitive skills:* researches show that all kinds of art along with critical thinking that deals with problem solving, analysis and composition provoke and reinforce evaluation and decision making.

*2.2. Creative skills:* art education has a critical role in developing creativity and also training the imagination.

*2.3. Skills dealing with the recognition of work environment and the benefits of education:* since the art education develops cognitive abilities it helps teachers to train the body and soul of the learner besides teaching the subjects.

*2.4. The intrinsic value of art:* creation and studying art is valuable on its own. Thus the development of our culture depends on art. Because we gain our cultural identity through art. Art training is necessary to communicate with others and comprehend them and even ourselves.

Education has different types. Therefore we can classify different issues of life in different groups; each group will have a different type and educational objective. The most famous classification in this regard is Bloom's classification. In Bloom's classification educational objectives are divided in to three main groups; cognitive, emotional and mental, and each group has some subgroups. Talking about social learning, Albert Bandura, 1977

states that neither internal forces nor the environment effects people's behavior; psychological factors rather are shaped through a mutual cooperation between the individual and environmental determinants (Narrated by Saif, 2007). The important learning strategies which are asserted by this theory are: attention, individualism, retention, reproduction, verbal and visual reproduction, recognition of result, correction and motivation (Nezafati Khamaneh, 2010).

### **3. The relationship between sport and learning**

We can study the relationship between sport and learning from two views:

*3.1. Play is the best way to teach children.* For instance Froebel believed that play is the best way to teach children because children love to play and playing is compatible with their nature. For example you can easily teach them the function of traffic light through playing.

*3.2. Play prepares children for learning because it gives them happiness, esprit and energy.*

In England Oliver studied mentally retarded adolescents. He divided them in two groups. In one group the education was based on play and in the other group it was based on traditional methods, the results showed that students in the test group in which education was based on play were more successful in learning and doing their homework, and they scored higher in different intelligence tests. Therefore we can relate most of the educational defects to the lack of environmental stimulus in individual's life (Valipour, 2010).

Researches show that as the improvement of health and nutritional condition can be effective on physical growth, the improvement of environmental condition can develop intelligence. In other words enriched environment, intelligence, play and physical activity help adolescents to communicate and cooperate with others, and therefore they can experience, think and develop their senses, and also gain cognitive and emotional development. Piaget insists on great effect of sport on brain, he believes that physical activities can improve the function of the central nervous system and therefore it can result in development and improvement. Physical activity also can lessen the damaged part of the brain. However, we should also consider that children and teenagers need their parents and teacher's help in order to choose the type of sport, and only choosing mild sports can bring them tranquillity (Valipour, 2010).

### **4. Art education**

If we want to have a real definition of art, we should not consider it as an object of pleasure, but as one of the factors of human life. Art is necessary for human life and his journey toward wisdom and humane society, because human beings are connected to one another through similar emotions. What art does is to make the vague notions of logic and intellection comprehensible and accessible for all (Pour Asadollah, 2008).

All human beings have the ability and sense of aesthetics. Education must prosper and develop aesthetic senses. Aesthetic sense means to develop perception of beauty in children. Cognitive psychologists believe that art is the mirror of wisdom and contemplation. The symbolic aspect of art encourages thinking and cognitive development. Psychologists believe: from emotional perspective, art can decrease, rage, hatred and aggression in children and reinforce his self esteem. Performance and theatrical play have a great role in social and cognitive development of the child. One of the important aspects of art which is also one of the education objectives is to make children appreciate others. According to the cognitive theory art is the mirror of wisdom and contemplation. Children can produce knowledge through art education. In pre-school period art is pleasant for children therefore it must be extended and considered as one the main objectives of pre-school education (Navazesh, 2011).

### **5. Role of music in learning**

Recent research has proven that music affects the body. It appears to massage organs, entrain biorhythms alter hormone levels, reduce stress and increase learning. Music carries with it more than just feelings; it can be a powerful vehicle for information. Music acts as a premium signal carrier whose rhythms, patterns, contrasts and

varying tonalities encode new information. The use of music as a partner can be a powerful way to carry a large volume of content. In fact, music can do 60% of the teaching work in about 5% of the time!

### 5.1. How does music do this?

It activates more than just the right brain, for both sides of the brain are used in processing music. It elicits emotional responses, receptive or aggressive states and stimulates the limbic system which, along with the sub-cortical regions, is involved in engaging musical and emotional responses. More importantly, research has proven that the limbic part of the brain is responsible for long-term memory. This means that when information is imbued with music, there's a greater likelihood that the brain will encode it in long-term memory (Paget, 2006).

## 6. The Importance of Sport and Play During Leisure Time in Preventing Social Harms

Since long times ago, physical activities have played a fundamental role in improving the body and mind of individuals in the society and also keeping the society healthy. From a social pathological point of view, physical activities contribute greatly to keep away minors and youth from social harms like crimes and social corruptions. (Pouyanfard, 2003). Physical education and sports, if used based on an appropriate and regulated plan, can play an important role in satisfying many important needs of the youth, acquiring the knowledge of healthy social life, and also correcting or preventing deviant behaviors.

Needs like:

1. The need for a healthy and powerful body.
2. The need for activity and energy discharge in a beneficial way.
3. The need for emotional balance.
4. The need for resolving personal and family problems.
5. The need to learn principles and rules of social life.
6. The need to understand personal values.
7. The need to attract respect and appreciation.
8. The need to present outward and inward talents.

It also brings up for the youngsters the possibility of removing deviant alternatives to resolve personal and social problems, or removing tensions resulted from their physical and mental needs. Many characteristics of adolescence like instability, impatience, imaginations, sexual excitements and many other symptoms are curable or adjustable by doing sports (Ibid).

Geroye. D. Buter in "Introduction To Community Recreation", mentions that recreation and sports during leisure times plays a constructive role for the society. He believes that the words "play" and "sports" during the leisure times of minors and adolescences is a kind of expression for their mental or emotional states and behavioral habits. (Abedinzadeh, 2001).

Asgarian, (2003) believes that to fill the leisure time of the minors and youngsters, which contribute a great portion of the population, with physical education and sports has an important position. Accordance of these programs with need levels, interests, and physical, mental capabilities can arrange for upheaval, growth and exhilaration in students. (Karimi, 2004).

In sport games, the player tries to achieve criterions along with the group. This is one of the main reasons of admitting the individual in the group. If a ground is prepared for this inward interest, it will lead to personal and collective interests. Because exercise creates power and skills, on the other side it improves spiritual capabilities, self confidence, courage, and etc. (Pouyanfard, 2003). Exercise and play prepares the individual against failures and empowers his self esteem. Physical aspects of exercise and play which form the foundation for mobile activity programs for students, can give discipline to his leisure time in relation to school. (Barati Boroujani, 2003).

### 6.1. *The need to learn the principles and rules of social life and gaining the cultural values*

Sport plays a critical role in acquiring the cultural values. It also bewares the individuals about their profit and loss. Group games and cooperation of group members in order to achieve victory in competitions influence individual's emotional health, and therefore improve society's health (Ibid).

### 6.2. *The need for social approval and respect*

Athletic activities, especially group activities, provide the individual with real communication situations with others, and gradually help them to become accepted by other group members. Success in sport increases the social prestige and popularity of the individual among their peer group (Ibid).

## 7. Conclusion

Current official programs in schools focuses more on nurturing the memory and training mental abilities of students, and do not pay enough attention to the growth of emotional and social aspects of individuals. Most official subjects are far from real life, and then they cannot prepare students for life problems. Special needs and interests of the student, despite the individual differences, are not considered and the opportunity to practice theoretical materials and the understanding of their relationship is missed.

Reflection on this and the efforts to achieve a proper solution, demonstrates the necessity for new policies in order to pay more attention to the subjects of physical education and Arts as complementary activities and extracurricular programs in schools. Human beings in official situations never present themselves as they really are, however in areas with more freedom, we can know them better. Arts and physical education fields, offers this opportunity for teachers to know the student and understand his needs and capabilities. Thus, in order to achieve a multi facade education for individuals and reach to higher borders of cognitive, social and emotional learning of students, it is necessary to have precise plans in those fields. If the teaching learning quality is accompanied with art in its best possible way, it can be concluded that the schools are reformed only when they are in communication with different arts. In other words art becomes a substantial part of school reform plans, and then art will not be a luxurious subject. The position of art education must be recognized in official school programs so that education and its relation to art become improved.

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