A study into the effects of art education on children at the socialisation process

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Abstract

While the education of art aims at making children people with creative minds, researchers, with self-esteem, productive and with developed aesthetic perception and taste, it is likely to see that the effort of creating a modern and social community has the same purpose. The stages of individuals’ attaining the values, behaviours and knowledge of the community they belong to define the process of socialization. In this process, the child puts every experience he sees and acquires in his life. The fact that children have an education of art to improve their personality and nurture them with aesthetic values of the future life will contribute their professional and social lives to become more successful and systematic. It is clear that children having an education of art improve self-esteem and the self-respect due to the feeling of success and satisfaction they get. A child being able to express himself through art is able to develop healthy features of personality, participating in the social life actively and becoming beneficial. In the research, the behavioural changes which the art education helped to improve at children in terms of adaptation to their environment was investigated.

Keywords: Art education, children, social adaptation.

1. Introduction

Art has been a significant phenomenon of the social and cultural environment where it grows and an important instrument to go beyond itself. Art could provide people with unity and solidarity and lead to the awareness at social issues, directly or indirectly. Art can explain the religious, political, economical and technological sides of culture (Dixon & Chalmers 1990).

Regarding art as a necessity in order that human being can be aware of it and change it, Fischer (1990) puts an emphasis on art in making human being understand the facts and make them resistible. The most natural and powerful necessity of human idea is the effort of him to put things and events in an order aesthetically. Disorder guides human idea to seek a solution for the related problems. On the other, order and composition is the prerequisite for the human being to understand himself. In this respect, art is a phenomenon of order and intuition. Individual is in a versatile, detailed, complex and intensive communication with the environment that is composed of natural, social and cultural components where he lives. It is expected that this

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interaction between the individual and his environment should be more healthy, balanced and ordered, more effective and efficient through education (Uçan 1995). Education is the most effective process in forming, growing, developing, guiding and preparing healthy individuals and the community made up of them for the future. However this expectation is firmly related to the quality of the education which is planned and practiced. It is fact that artistic and cultural education of individuals and communities is a reality.

Art education is a part of common education and includes intra and extra school artistic education. In general sense, it includes the education given in educational institutions regarding all the fields of fine arts and art education out of institutions (painting, sculpture, architecture, visual communication, photography, cinema, music, dance, theatre, literature, designing etc.). In a narrow sense, it includes the courses related to the field given at schools (painting, three dimensional work, graphic, music, art education, designing) (San 2004). Individuals in modern communities have to be equipped with necessary and adequate knowledge in the fields of science, art and technique. In the absence or lack of one of these fields, it will not be so easy for the individual to live a healthy, balanced and satisfied life in line with the life conditions he is in.

In the basis of art education is human being, a biological, social and cultural existence. Human being is a whole in his cognitive, affective and kinetic sides. The knowledge of human being with a whole starts with the observation of the nature and improves with memory. With the classification of the creatures and events, knowledge called science is established. It is possible to train individuals being able to understand the community they live in, communicate with the environment and come up with solutions by means of creative education (Buyurgan 1996). Therefore, in the preschool period when the basis of creativity is formed and in the basic educational systems following it, art education is of great importance. These are the years when human being starts to know the nature and his personality is formed and the most intensive teaching environment is school. A true meaningful communication to be made between the educator and the person education both in terms of knowledge regarding theoretical field and in practical fields will accelerate development. The most important purpose of this developmental process is to grow up productive, creative, consistent and balanced healthy individuals (Ünver 2002)

Art education within education aims at putting child directly in artistic forming by experiencing the art and wants him to be active in it. The child is provided to reach the forms by making emotional and mental processes of him active. Observation, research, discovery, practice, trial, supervision and finalizing, which are all the processes of basic art education prepare the child and the young for the scientific and technological world of our age since they are mostly the same as scientific researches. Improvement and change within the social construction in the present time require training balanced, consistent and creative people with self-esteem, who can criticize, know what to do instead of those who are passive and receptive things as they are without questioning social cases and phenomena. In order to reach the targets, it is important for children to get to know art in their early ages. In particular, when it comes to preparation for the future and formation of the life in the future, nurturing personality with aesthetic values, training it in the young adulthood period when features of personality starts to be formed will make them successful both professionally and in their social life, allow them to be neat and sensible. In this sense, art education will help adolescents to get know themselves, live a more adaptive childhood period, become more creative and productive, have a healthy personality with a large perspective that is attained through art education. The child bringing his ability and creativity to the fore freely with art education will both have a personal satisfaction and participate in the community creatively and efficiently. A modern society will only maintain its development and improvement when it is made up of people with satisfaction, happiness and healthy way of life (Etike 1995).

1.1. Socialization at children and art education

Life is an adaptation process to the conditions where we live to a large extent. Adaptation is a dual process and consists of the fact that individuals within a continual lifelong change and development accept biological, mental, social and emotional changes within themselves and then exhibit behaviors and attitudes in line with these changes, and on the other hand make positive connections with other people around them. The methods individuals face while overcoming the problems do not change so much throughout the life and this case could be explained through the fact that adaptation methods and defense mechanisms are formed in the childhood period and adaptation can be regarded as two dimensions, personal adaptation and social adaptation (Özgüven 1992). Socialization comprises of the relation of the behaviors of an individual at a certain age, gender and social status to the behaviors a community expects. Socialization process is observed in two sides. Parents could be a component of socialization for their children while children could become an element of socialization for their parents.
Socialization could be viewed both as a lifelong process and as a dual process (Dusek 1987, Eshleman 1991). Socialization is based on learning, in particular social learning theory and reflects cultural expectations and cliché judgments.

In order that art education process could be performed in line with its objectives, there is a need for well-planned programs and activities. Introduction of art in the artistic life of an individual will provide him with a neat life and a contribution to become both enthusiastic and free (Erden 2004). Art education affects all the developmental fields. Children learn how to express his ideas depending on their developmental levels and turn the concepts they learn into artistic forms. Such different branches of art as painting, music, dance and drama offer significant opportunities for all the children from different age and skill groups. Art help children express themselves, develop the skills of communication and problem solving. With the participation of various artistic activities, children develop their social skills, their self-respect and self-esteem (Schirrmacher 2002).

Such activities as drama, dance, painting, drawing, cutting and sticking, drama games and finger games; such indoor and outdoor games as climbing, skipping, jumping; playing with manipulative toys, using cardboard, chalk, play dough and clip art are all are the works that require muscle work and are regarded beneficial for both large and small muscle development and for hand-eye coordination.

According to Piaget, mental development mostly depends on physical knowledge and information coming from external objects. Small children learn physically by tasting, smelling, feeling, seeing and hearing through the actions with objects. By improving thesekinds of physical learning, such kind of relations as comparing, classifying, ordering with objects and action can be understood better. As an example, in the work of “making a model out of play dough”, child can both mentally and physically learn the concepts of “soft” and “hard” by touching the dough. After touching the dough, kneading it and producing it by feeling its softness, he will perceive the hardness of the object after it is dried and it will provide him a more permanent learning. Another example will be “collage work”. Here, a lot of pieces can be combined into one and it will allow children to feel different feelings and textures, and some concepts can be taught in this process (Öztürk 2001). Artistic activities are necessary and important instruments in terms of allowing him to express himself so attain the feeling of self-respect. When a child paints a nice picture and shows it to his parents or teachers and friends, he will be praised positively and also have the feeling of succeeding a task and becoming beneficial for others. These feelings will contribute to the child in forming a model of productive and hardworking society (Şenbil 2002).

It will be possible to repair and improve the feeling of self-esteem for the children grown up at conditions with weak emotional developments particularly through artistic environments and related activities. During art education, approaching the child with love, attention and understanding, paying attention and respect to his personal and intragroup features, awarding him when he succeed the activity is the first step in emotional trust and in developing him (Dilmacı 2002). Children mostly start to learn the behaviors in their adulthood from their peers when they are a child. So, while working in a group, they should learn such social skills of how to share things, how to listen to others, how and when to work. With artistic activities, the child learns to finish a work he starts, the taste of working together and feeling respect to the ideas and works of others (Öztürk 2001).

Participating in group works by means artistic activities allow the child to learn to helping and social concept, benefit from earlier experience by passing through the processes of searching, trying, discovering and getting to know and attain enjoyable hobbies (Birsun 1993). Children talk to each other or adults about the painting or a sculpture while working on an artistic activity. They learn to share the materials and the table they work on and give positive feedback to each other. They stories about the symbols and sculptures they produce. They learn to listen to a song, accompany to it and tap slowly or fast. They discover how music produced from a group of musical instruments sound good or disturbing. Through a drama game, they try new roles and learn to compromise to carry on the game. They share their ideas through this game and express their ideas about what the world means for them with the help of their imagination (Shirrmacher 2002). Getting rid of the energy accumulation in the child in this way will prevent him to become a naughty child harming others and behaving badly.

It is necessary that a person improve his aesthetic environment consciousness in order that he has an influence in the environment he is in and make his environment a maintainable surrounding. Giving a child the education of art will make him attain the ability to approach his surrounding with an objective and critical behavior, to know historical relations, improve his ideas and tolerate the ideas of others. In this way, the child will be able to perceive his surrounding consciously, organize his personal surrounding and reach a position where he can evaluate visual phenomena objectively and critically (Buyurğan 1996). Starting from the early ages, the individual taking an art education will be able to improve his talents and reach an aesthetic level, and also attain the skill of choosing good, true and nice. According to Ataman (1995), the most critical age group in
developing creativity is five – six. With the start of school age, creativity stops at the period when he gets to know authority and rules. An art education with a good infrastructure will lead to success at other courses. Many researches show that children are more attentive in the courses which are combined with art. A study carried out into brain show that music has an impact on brain development and that reading contributes to other issues (Weinberger 1998).

2. Result and conclusion

Environment is a part of human being. It is formed, grown and improved together with him. Just as human creates environment, environment has an important part in the formation of human behaviors as well. The fact that people have different personalities leads to perceptive differences. Environment which is made up of differences, contrasts and similarities will form a community when it is regarded as a whole. No matter how social environment of a child and his features differ and are various, the effects of the environment will stay neutral unless there is perception and awareness. However, it will be meaningful when it is perceived that it offers significant sources in the development of environment. Awareness of social environment starts with family and goes on with education. In that way, individual improves his skill to make a comment and make things meaningful thanks to the perception he has. Visual perception of individuals comes with artistic development. Therefore, students will be given examples from their surrounding at the education in their development process and it provides them with vital affinity. The course can be made more concrete and individual can be made to put a connection between art and environment.

A teacher in an environment of a suitable art education is in the position of an organizer, a person teaching how to use the materials, speaking to them about what is being done, arranging the art education such as exhibiting and preserving things, following the application and guiding when necessary. Therefore, it is necessary that educational process in art education should be student centered not teacher centered. Children exhibit their creativity by working any of the materials they choose which are prepared specifically for them. Teacher should be deal with how children carry out their activities, what they feel while doing them, not in what way they do it and should plan the education based on this idea. Children should be made to work on original ideas at art education as much as possible. On the other hand, children should sometimes be able to carry out some specific works related to their life. Before starting such kind of art works, children should have some ideas to express their feelings, ideas and experience. Lack of experience could lead children to draw same figures and cartoon and commercial objects. Therefore, teachers should provide children with learning by doing in natural environment.

Taking children to exhibitions, museums, showing them slides, film and photographs, making them talk about pictures, introducing them painters, arranging field works such as visiting nearby bus stations, ports, markets, winter sports centers, farms, holidays lives will help children attain new experience in these fields. Making children attain experience through artistic activities depends on the guidance of adults in their development and learning process. Teacher’s lack of knowledge, experience and pedagogy in terms of art education could lead to some problems in practice. The most important problem is that teachers focus on the product rather than the process of the work produced. The educator should focus on the activities, not on color, shape, lines etc. The second problem is that art is not regarded as a discipline. Children should be able to participate in any activity regarding art. Activities should be designed in a way that children can look at each other’s works, understand it and talk to each other. At the end of the artistic activity, children can talk about why their works are different from each other even though they use the same paper and materials by looking at each other’s works. Children should talk about other works of art other than their works. Bringing paintings into classroom from time to time and making children examine them will enable them to comment on these works. While preparing course plan for art courses, teachers should pay attention to the developmental levels of children. Such activities that will raise the interests of students, those which they can manage and enable children to concentrate and put them in a process to produce creative things should be determined. In addition, theoretical and practical issues should be well-organized in order to create a permanent perception at art courses.

References


