



Learning: The Role and Significance of Art and Aesthetic Education In Schools

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ABSTRACT

Art and aesthetic values are not extrinsic instead it lies in every student. It is not necessary that every child is capable to understand his potential in the field of art. So, it becomes the responsibility of the school to identify and bring out the best in the child. Over the last few decades, the proportion of student receiving art and aesthetic education has shrunk drastically. Book oriented education has gained the most prestigious position in society. Because of expansion of standardized tests in schools, student's only focus on the basic subjects like maths, science and it affects the art and aesthetic education. The present day educational system caters to the needs of the conscious and ignores the unconscious. The purpose of the article is to highlight the significance of aesthetic education in the development of the personality as a whole, to shed light on the aims of aesthetic education, to define the aesthetic dimension of experience and to ascertain the reasons for the neglect of aesthetic education in theory and practice. Learning through art and aesthetics develops creativity, expressions and individuality. Educators may create opportunities for change through engaging in aesthetic experiences in their own daily lives and practices. Aesthetic experiences and aesthetic education foster independent thinking in students and encourages them to be more mindful of their feelings, surroundings, and expressions. Young minds should be educated to be inquisitive, to critique, and become open to possibilities and experiences they may have not considered, which transforms learning from passive to active.

Keywords

Aesthetic education, aesthetic experiences, art education, learning

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I. Introduction

From the dawn of civilization, men and women have used music, dance, and the visual arts to transmit the heritage of a people and express human joys and sorrows. They are the means by which civilization can be measured. Students study the arts to discover how human beings use non-verbal symbols and communicate not only with words but also through music, dance and the visual arts. Art today is seen as necessary element for the development of the child's personality. It has been added as a subject of school curriculum. The objective of the art education is not only to train the hands to be able to make attractive objects. It also aims at the holistic growth of the individual.

Although the aesthetic comprises a wide range of notions and features from nature and social reality, art remains the most important means of aesthetic education expressed in terms of visual representations, movements, sounds, verbal expression, etc. Art participates not only in the development of the child's sensitivity but also in the integral development of the child's personality (cognitive, emotional, social and psychomotor), which should be separated from education in the artistic fields, which are narrowly professional in character and aimed merely toward developing artistic abilities.

Art and Aesthetic value are not extrinsic instead it lies in every child. "Art is not possession of the few who are recognized writers, painters, musicians; it is the authentic expression of any and all individuality" (John Dewey). In fact it is present in every nook and corner of the child. It is not necessary that every child is capable to understand his potential in the field of art. So, it becomes the heavy responsibility of the school to identify and bring out the best in the child. Then only the children understand their capabilities and what they can do in the field of art and aesthetic. Identification of abilities motivates the students to great extent and they start to explore and achieve the great success in the field of art.

Inculcating Art and Aesthetic value among students it is the responsibility of curriculum framers and teachers. So, they should do their best. When Art and Aesthetic value are developed in the child, they can bring

a positive change in themselves as well as they can do a lot for their society. An understanding of the art and aesthetic can give secondary students the ability to appreciate the richness and variety of artistic traditions as well as make them liberal, creative thinkers and good citizens of the nation.

II. Aesthetic Education

The most important aims and goals of aesthetic education can be described as the following: developing the aesthetic sense for the beautiful and a sense of proportion; developing aesthetic perception; experience, creating, evaluating and expressing the beautiful; developing a relationship toward nature and toward the beautiful in interpersonal relationships. Modern pedagogy teaches that each child should have the opportunity to develop his abilities to observe, experience, evaluate and create that which is beautiful. This can only be achieved if we offer children a healthy living environment and an active artistic education; in other words, curricula designed to include all of the above mentioned.

The following should be developed in children and young people:

1) The ability to perceive aesthetic qualities—in order for the child to be able to appreciate natural wonders, shapes, shades and pictures, they must be able to first notice them. This is why the development of the ability to notice the beautiful is the primary task of aesthetic education. Beauty can be found all around us, although it does not impose itself upon us, despite the fact that it exists objectively. Each noticing demands a particular level in the development of this ability. The child is incapable of noticing particular shapes if his/her ability to notice objects and forms is undeveloped. The aesthetic relationship begins with the noticing of aesthetic qualities.

This ability to recognise does not simply include emotional recognition but also a rational one—mental capacities and particular types of knowledge. If our ability to recognise aesthetic qualities is not developed, we also cannot experience them.

2) The ability to experience aesthetic qualities—aesthetic qualities have to be experienced. This means that they induce feelings of excitement, joy and optimism. Such emotional states ennoble the individual and encourage him/her to also produce art themselves. The ability to experience aesthetically must also be developed and nurtured.

3) Creative capabilities—it is essential to allow children to participate in activities that will develop his/her creative abilities. This is not so much about creating aesthetic abilities in the sense of training artists, but instead about creativity which serves the general aesthetic culture, in the creation of aesthetic values in everyday life, in the environment, in the workplace. We are not simply born with creative abilities; they have to be developed. As Wallbaum (1996) claims, aesthetic perception is dependent on the relationship between the child and art, in which one's own production is much more important than being exposed to artworks and their interpretations, if this production is, of course, carried out according to aesthetic criteria.

III. Aesthetic Experiences

Aesthetic experience is defined as understanding the content and forms of art and emotions, which is the most important aspect of aesthetic experience.

Reimer (1998) in his analysis of the arguments in defence of art mentions aesthetic education, which rests on the hypothesis that "the aesthetic dimension of experience is a special area within cognition; it has to be understood and valued according to its intrinsic characteristics and taught in an appropriate manner".

Dewey (1934) and Reid (1986) claim that experience in music, fine arts and dancing as well as mathematics, history and other subjects include the aesthetic component. Indeed, in the narrower sense, the aesthetic is usually associated merely with the arts.

Phenix (1964) claims that different types of art together constitute an independent area of aesthetic experience, a special category of comprehension which is of major significance in the development of human consciousness.

The various interpretations of the aesthetic-educational field have resulted in challenges in the resolving of these professional and philosophical problems and also contributed to the development of lesson planning in art subjects.

IV. Art Education

Art is usually referred to as the visual arts, where a piece of work is judged through the aesthetics in which it creates. Art refers to dance, drawing, music, role-play, drama, visual-art, painting and aesthetic examines the nature of art. In present study, art and aesthetic refers to develop student's learning process through different activities conducted by the teacher in the classroom. Young minds must be educated to be inquisitive, to critique, and become open to possibilities and experiences they may have not considered (Greene, 2001; Uhrmacher, 2009). Through aesthetic education, and social imagination, educators not only expose students to

art and everyday experiences, but also to texts about art, which adds a sense of dimensionality to verbal and visual meanings.

V. Learning Through Art and Aesthetic Education

Aesthetic education is a way of regaining touch with the process of learning something new, of being introduced to a medium never known in a particular way before. It is the incorporation of the arts across the curriculum in a way that fosters a heightened awareness of and appreciation for all that touches our lives.

Aesthetic quality is concentrated in the arts, the study of music, dance, drama and the visual arts most directly develops aesthetic awareness. It is a trail for learning. It provides a new way of looking at life that helps an individual to become more about the environment i.e, his neighbourhood, social characters and his community programmes. Art and artistic expressions are symbolic in character, express human feelings for the sake of contemplation, establishes art as not 'signific' or 'symptomatic', but symbolic presentationally, not discursively like the human language that follows the laws of syntax (Langer 1957).

Creative and aesthetic modes of expression and learning form in drama enable student's to engage as active participants in their own learning processes. This strengthens and improves the learning environment and learning process for all student's, but requires teacher's with professional competence in drama, pedagogy and the subject matter content.

Drawing, drama, music, dance, paintings, theatre stimulates and provokes the child's imagination, concentration, expression modes and intelligence to help them grow as an independent and self-confident being. When a child draws, paints or creates, it is an expression of the total self, where a child expresses directly without fear. Children become so engrossed in the work that the product shows depth of her thinking and feelings. Thus, the art of each child reflects her process of development: cognitive, psychomotor and emotional development.

The student express themselves interactively during the learning process which brings them to learn instead of perform. Through this process, children receive an aesthetic experience and develop their cognition and knowledge. Self-esteem and pride progressively increase throughout the learning. (<http://www.preservearticles.com/psychology/meaningoflearningprocess/5260>).

VI. Conclusion

Aesthetic pedagogy offers educators and students a sense of intellectual autonomy, and may also facilitate alternative ways of seeking and generating meaning. It is not enough to philosophize or advocate for possibilities of change; educators must create opportunities for change through open-ended discussions and practices. This process of learning to use social imagination as a way of seeing, is in itself a way to become flexible and more receptive to others and their experiences. It is important for educators to explore all possible methods of approaching education, to practice, and to adopt flexible teaching methods that actively transform how students approach the process of learning. Education should allow the individual the possibility of a responsible, independent and meaningfully complete existence, so that they can contribute, as a member of it, to a free and democratic community. As art in schools still enjoys a precarious position, education system reforms will also be required in the future.

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