

The Role of Performing Arts in Cultivating Creativity, Critical Thinking, and Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract

Performing arts, encompassing theater, music, dance, and other expressive forms, play a crucial role in fostering creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence. These art forms serve as powerful mediums for self-expression, allowing individuals to explore diverse perspectives, emotions, and ideas. Creativity flourishes through performing arts as individuals engage in imaginative storytelling, improvisation, and artistic interpretation. By encouraging experimentation and risk-taking, the arts nurture original thinking and innovation. Whether composing music, choreographing a dance, or acting in a play, artists develop problem-solving skills and the ability to think outside conventional boundaries. Critical thinking is equally enhanced through performing arts. Actors, musicians, and dancers must analyze scripts, musical scores, and choreographic patterns, making thoughtful decisions about their execution. Through practice and performance, they refine their ability to assess, adapt, and improve their work. The arts also instill a deep understanding of cultural and historical contexts, encouraging performers to think critically about societal issues and human experiences.

Emotional intelligence, an essential life skill, is deeply embedded in the performing arts. Engaging with different characters, emotions, and narratives enhances empathy and social awareness. Performers learn to recognize and express emotions effectively, improving their interpersonal skills. Collaborative performances also foster teamwork, adaptability, and resilience, all of which are vital for personal and professional growth.

In education and beyond, the performing arts offer a holistic approach to intellectual and emotional development. They bridge the gap between analytical reasoning and creative expression, equipping individuals with essential skills for navigating complex challenges. By cultivating creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence, performing arts empower individuals to become innovative thinkers, empathetic leaders, and well-rounded members of society.

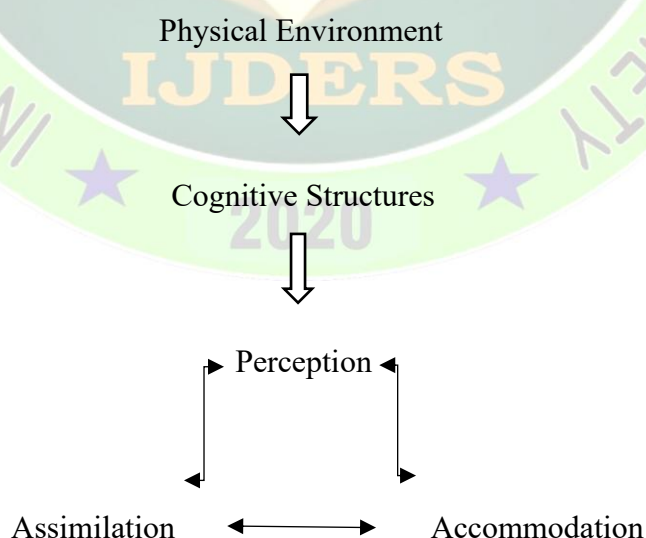
Cognitive Development is the essential or the major phase in the development of a person, whether it is in the form of life skills or the personality development. Cognitive development means how children think, explore, and figure things out. It is the development of knowledge,

skills, problem solving and dispositions which help children to think about and understand the world around them. Brain development is a part of cognitive development. Scientists no longer debate which is most important whether genetics or experience. The brain is built overtime and it is a combination of genes and experience that shape the quality of brain architecture which provides the foundation for all future learning, health and behavior. The major cognitive processes are attention, perception, memory, reasoning, problem solving, decision making and language. Art should be included in the curriculum to benefit children's growth and learning. It can help children learn and practice skills like patterning and cause and effect. It can also practice critical thinking skills by making a mental plan or picturize what they intent to create. Art activities give children a much-needed chance to express their ideas, build observational skills, gain confidence, promote feelings of self-worth and develop their creativity and imagination as well as offering them time to relax. This article reconsiders the association between childhood arts participation and cognitive developmental outcomes. Using data from a large or nationally representative samples with extensive covariables, children are compared according to their participation in arts education (music and performing arts lessons) or vice versa. A broad range of outcomes in adolescence and early childhood like for example self-esteem, college attendants, grades have a direct effect on the outcomes providing no support for the causal associations between arts participation and cognitive outcomes. Arts engagements transcends simplistic distinctions between thoughts and feelings whether rational or irrational which entails a holistic range of cognitive forms. The discussion is on the central role of attention and awareness to cognition, and how arts engagement involves different complimentary ways to attend the world. We consider how the arts may cultivate a wider array of tools to help understand and make sense of the world and tore balance the world views and narratives. We explore how the forms of cognition involved in the arts could contribute to address the complex, systemic, divergent global problem through relational, contextual, holistic understanding and insightful creative approaches that can go beyond linear approximations.

Education Psychology: Psychology is an academic discipline. Education Psychology is professionally oriented and interested in finding out practical solution to educational problems. Music stimulates infant's brain and dance helps develop motor skills, drama teaches emotions and problem solving. Music engagements build spatial reasoning skills, pattern awareness, counting skills. Categorization is an important cognitive skill for young children to develop.

The areas of brain that control memory and skills such as planning and organizing improve with exercise. Dance has added the dimensions of rhythm, balance, music and social setting that enhances the benefits of simple moments and it can be of fun. Dancing is a complex form of physical activity in which it incorporates the cognitive process of learning and remembering choreographic sequences. Music keeps the brain engaged throughout the ageing process, listening to or playing music is a great tool. Listening to music can reduce anxiety, blood pressure, pain as well as it improves sleep quality, mood mental alertness, memory etc. Dance involves nonverbal, spatial and musical intelligence, which means, dance helps in building the capacity to visualize shapes and objects, their spatial relation, and the movements they make to form a new spatial relation, ability to mentally rotate pictures and 3D shapes in mind. The simple and enjoyable act of making music with your child naturally fosters important social and emotional skills such as self-regulation, self-confidence, leadership skills, social skills and socio emotional intelligence. Physical activities can help you think, learn, problem solve and enjoy emotional balance. It can improve memory and reduce risk of cognitive decline including dementia.

Psychology in the basics of Education: According to Piaget, human development of process of continuous interaction between the environment and the organism. Intelligence for Piaget is a dynamic tract which allows an organism to deal effectively with its environment. The intellectual process converts the experience into a form which the individual can use in dealing with new situations. A schema is referred to as an element in the individuals' cognitive structure which will determine his or her response to the physical environment.



The differences between different individuals are noticed in various areas which influence school achievements. Some of the areas are intelligence, personality, interest, attention – span, age, attitude, values, cognitive development, learning style, learning strategies, motivation, perception, previous knowledge, problem solving, ability, creativity, self-concept, self-esteem, social competence, speed of various psycho motor skills etc. They are classified into three main domains. a) Cognitive Domain: It refers to intelligence, aptitude, learning style and cognitive style.

b) Effective Domain: It denotes differences in interest, attitudes, values, self-concept and achievement motivation.

c) Psycho Motor Domain: It covers the differences in speaking, writing, reading, drawing and other arts based on perceptual abilities and skilled movements.

Creativity is not the monopoly of a few. It is universal and is found in different individuals and in different varieties. It can be developed by training and practice.

Factors fostering Creativity:

1. Creativity involves new interpretations and reorganization of experiences. Wider the field of experience, greater will be wealth of ideas and thoughts and greater will be the potential for creative activity.

2. Flexibility of response style is an important aspect in fostering creativity.

3. Creativity thrives in stimulating environment.

4. Creativity and free social climate go together.

5. Healthy personality and independent flexible nature and healthy self-concept co relates positively with creativity.

6. Dynamic and divergent thinking of the individual is favorable for creative expression.

7. Originality is a trait that fosters creativity.

8. Curiosity to know more about new things leads to divergence in perception, thinking and behavior, that is, to new creations.

Mental abilities which are a part of creativity can be categorized as:

a) Fluency – It means to produce a large no of ideas.

b) Flexibility – which means to produce a great variety of ideas or approaches or procedures.

c) Originality – It is to produce an uncommon or a unique response.

d) Redefinition – It is the novelty of ideas or the ability to define or perceive in a way different than usual.

e) Sensitivity to a problem – It is to evaluate implications. The characteristics of a creative person includes self-discipline, independent thinking, bold and adventurous, verbally skillful, intuitive, having a desire to excel, keen to explore, sensitive and ambitious.

Students involved in drama, music or dance develops superior cognitive abilities such as enhanced memory, attention span and reasoning skills.

Creating visual representation of scientific concepts or designing experiments using art promotes critical thinking and creativity. This approach helps students grasp abstract concepts and apply their knowledge in innovative ways.

Art can inspire creativity through its ability to communicate complex ideas and emotions.

Drama activities promote critical thinking as students analyses characters, scripts and situations. They learn to interpret text, make connection and evaluate choices in their performances.

By the end of 20th century, arts critics had doubted the longevity of art forms as they thought people were losing interest in all these art forms. Despite the prophecies of doom, performing arts have not diminished as experienced as expected but instead are continuing to attract new talent and expertise. There are several reasons why performing arts are still necessary to the modern society.

Self-discovery and expression

The theatre, dance and other performing arts can teach people how to express themselves effectively and can also be a tool through which people with disabilities can communicate. In addition, performing arts help society as a whole in self-knowledge and understanding. Theatre and performing arts teach society about itself, hoping to point out the attitudes and mindsets of current society. It is a tool to educate people about themselves.

Classical theatre, such as Shakespeare and Molliere, help us to understand the people around us and how they might be expected to react in certain situations.

Above everything, performing arts are about being creative. Without a creative voice, a society may become all but dead inside, and a social group without any creativity is likely to be repressive and tyrannical rather than a force for good. The importance of having people in society who can express themselves is a blessing for the society. Biologists have argued that formation of creativity was the important step in human development and society cannot develop itself without creative people.

Engaging imagination and creativity:

Drama and musical theatre provide a platform for children to explore their imagination and creativity. Through role play, improvisation and storytelling, children are encouraged to think outside the box, imagine different scenarios, and develop unique characters. This process stimulates their creative thinking, enabling them to approach problems from multiple perspectives and find innovative solutions.

Collaboration and Communications:

Participating in drama and musical theatre requires teamwork and effective communication. Children learn to work together, listen to others' ideas, and express their thoughts clearly, fostering effective communication skills.

Problem solving and decision making:

Children are given challenges to think critically to overcome obstacles, make choices, resolve conflicts within the context of the performance. This process enhances their analytical thinking, logical reasoning, and ability to make decisions, which are skills that are invaluable in various academic and real-life scenarios.

Empathy and emotional intelligence:

Engaging in drama and musical theatre allows children to explore a range of emotions and perspectives. Children learn to empathize with different characters, understand their motivations, connect emotionally with the stories being portrayed. This cultivates emotional intelligence and empathy, enabling children to consider others feelings and perspectives which is an essential aspect of critical thinking.

Reflections and Self-assessment:

These are skills which are essential for not only academic success but for personal growth and success in the ever-evolving world.

Conclusion:

Because of minimal experimental studies until now, research has not been able to definitively conclude the reliability of a documented cognitive advantage in musicians. The majority of existing music research has used non experimental designs and found that a musician can be advantageous on cognition. Measuring the individuals before and after training allowed calculation of the absolute magnitude of training effects compared with baseline performance. A longer training duration might produce greater benefits.

Performing arts help students build confidence, express ideas clearly, and understand cultural nuances. Helping children examine, observe, and reflect on paintings and other forms of art can enable them to perform a careful analysis when faced with real-life problems.

Integration of art is a robust method of using art in different subjects.

For ex: When teaching mathematics, we can encourage students to use their creative side of the brain to picture the word problem to solve it with ease. Blogging and animation programs provide technical knowledge infused with creative expression so that students can learn to code, program and communicate in a fun way.

Performing a drama enhances critical thinking through character analysis. Students are encouraged to delve deep into the motivations, emotions and behaviors of their characters. The process requires them to think critically about the choices made by their characters and the underlying reasons for those choices. By exploring different perspectives, students learn to evaluate situations from multiple angles, an invaluable skill in both academic and real-world scenarios. Improvisation in drama requires students to respond to unexpected situations, requiring quick-thinking and problem-solving skills. This helps students to gain confidence and approach challenges with confidence and adaptability.

Certain strategies we can consider:

A) Encourage character exploration:

Prompt children to analyse characters in scripts, make choices to deepen their understanding.

B) Promote improvisational Activities:

Engage children in games that encourage quick thinking and adaptability.

C) Incorporate discussion on themes:

Discuss themes and messages within plays or performances, allowing child to evaluate and interpret ideas critically.

D) Acknowledge their efforts:

Thoughtfully appreciate their little efforts which create a massive change in their perspectives.

By encouraging analysis, interpretation, and evaluation, students develop cognitive abilities which benefits them personally and academically

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