

Effect of Integration of Arts on Achievement of Learners in Social Science

Asha K.V.D. Kamath*

ABSTRACT

Social science is one of the school subjects and is a content loaded subject which is hardly integrated by the teachers. Students find it not only heavy but also boring. Making a social science class interesting and participatory and reducing the energy consumed for understanding the content is a challenge for the teachers. While discussing about approach to pedagogy, NCF-2005 states that teaching of social science must adopt methods that promote creativity, aesthetics and critical perspectives. Art Education which covers four main streams namely, music, dance, visual arts and theatre is one such subject that when integrated with any other subject, makes the class lively, participatory and creative. NCF-2005 emphasises that learning of any of these arts would enrich the lives of our young citizens, not only in their school years but also throughout their lives. It further says that dramatisation is one of the under-explored strategies that could be employed. that Art Education improves academic study, communication and cognitive skills, impacting achievement in other areas. Therefore, the researcher felt the need to make social science class interesting, participatory, creative and to go beyond the textbook giving primacy to learners' experiences. As normally students are interested in Arts, the researcher attempted to study the effect of two of the streams of Arts i.e., Drama and Visual Arts on achievement in social science.

It was a two group pre-test post-test experimental study. The sample was two sections of Class VIII of a school following CBSE syllabus. While in one section learning process was mainly Dramatisation, in another section it was through Visual Arts. The findings of the study were: there is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of both the groups which learnt the content by Dramatisation and Visual Arts. There is no significant difference in the

*Associate Professor, RIE, Ajmer, Rajasthan

achievement of the two groups who were exposed to Dramatisation and Visual Arts when comparing their gain scores. There is significant difference in terms of gain scores in the achievement of girls and boys who were exposed to Visual Arts. There is no significant difference in terms of gain scores in the achievement of girls and boys who were exposed to Dramatisation.

Introduction

School education is one of the important stages of education which aims at all-round development of an individual and cultivation of qualities of responsible citizens of a country. Students learn several subjects which are compulsory at school level. One of them is Social Science, which lays the base for a just and peaceful society. Because the social sciences tend to be considered non-utility subjects and are given less importance than the natural sciences, it is necessary to emphasise that they provide the social, cultural and analytical skills required to adjust to an increasingly interdependent world, and to deal with political and economic realities (NCF-2005).

As social science is a content loaded subject which is hardly dealt with an integrated manner by the teachers, students find it not only heavy but also boring. Making a social science class interesting and participatory and reducing the energy consumed for understanding the content is a challenge to the teachers. While discussing about approach to pedagogy, NCF-2005 states that social science teaching needs to be revitalised for helping the learner acquire knowledge and skills in an

interactive environment. Teaching of social science must adopt methods that promote creativity, aesthetics and critical perspectives. Further Prof Yashpal (1993) emphasised on developing concepts and ability to analyse socio-political realities rather than retention of information.

Art Education which covers four main streams namely, music, dance, visual arts and theatre, is one such subject that when integrated with any other subject, makes the class lively, participatory and creative. In relation to Art Education, NCF-2005 states that music, dance and theatre all contribute to the development of the self, both cognitive and social. It emphasises that learning of any of these arts would enrich the lives of our young citizens, not only in their school years but also throughout their lives. It must become both a tool and a subject taught in every school as a compulsory subject up to Class X. It, further says that dramatisation is one of the under-explored strategies that could be employed.

Though many studies have been conducted in the area of art education, only those that related to effects of drama and visual arts on students have been reviewed by the researcher.

With regard to effect of Art Education in schools, the report of US Department of Education on 10 years of Art Integration states that in the past ten years the Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination and Professional Development for Art Education grant programme have unleashed the creative minds of students and deepened their learning experiences in core academic subjects through arts integration. There are studies (art educators.org) which show that Art Education improves academic study, communication and cognitive skills, impacting achievement in other areas. Welch (1995) states that 920 Elementary school students in 52 classrooms in Boston, Cambridge and Los Angeles who were given Visual and Performing Arts lessons for three years outscored non-programme students earning significantly higher report card grades in the core subject areas of language, arts, math reading and social studies.

According to Kelner (1993), creating and encouraging students for not memorising, allows them to synthesise and to translate various educational concepts into personally meaningful form. Neil and Lambert (2012) have said that as students find more opportunities for using the language in French language classes where drama activities are conducted compared to conventional language classes, their verbal skills such as expression, recognition, explanation, reasoning, convincing, planning, anticipation and decision-making are more developed.

Seyedeh and others (2013) in their study on Iranian *EFL* learners have found out that the group taught by 10 sessions of drama activities has received higher score when compared with the control group. The study also revealed that oral proficiency of male and female is the same regarding the implementation of dramatisation in English classes. These studies show that a focus on drama has resulted in positive effect on the learners in strengthening their linguistic skills and translation of educational concepts in a meaningful form.

Therefore, the researcher felt the need to make social science class interesting, participatory, creative and to go beyond the textbook giving primacy to learners' experiences. As normally students are interested in Arts, the researcher attempted at studying the effect of two of the streams of Arts i.e., Drama and Visual Arts on achievement in social science.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- To find the effectiveness of dramatisation and visual arts in achievement in Social Science.
- To compare the effectiveness of dramatisation and visual arts in achievement in Social Science in terms of gain score.
- To compare the effectiveness of dramatisation in the achievement of girls and boys in Social Science in terms of gain score.
- To compare the effectiveness of visual arts in the achievement of

girls and boys in Social Science in terms of gain score.

Methodology

Design of the study: It was a two group pre-test post-test experimental design.

Sample: A sample of the study was two intact groups of students studying in Class VIII in two different sections, following NCERT textbooks. One section learnt the content by Dramatisation and the other section learnt the content through Visual Arts. The class which learnt by Dramatisation had 42 students, out of which 19 were girls and 23 were boys. The class which learnt through Visual Arts had 40 students, out of which 23 were girls and 17 were boys.

Tool: The researcher prepared a post-test for 20 marks on the chapter Judiciary, which was studied by the students through Dramatisation and Visual Arts. It included both written items and performance. The written test had objective type and open-ended questions for 10 marks. The performance of the students in drama and in preparing charts and story boards including the final product was evaluated for 10 marks. Average of the two, out of 10 was considered as post-test scores. The marks considered in the study were out of 10, for pre-test and post-test separately. It was both process and product evaluation which was comprehensive in nature.

Learning Process: The unit on Judiciary (NCERT, 2008), which had two chapters was considered in the study. For both the sections of

Class VIII, the researcher narrated the story of Sudha Goel, given in the textbook. The students were also given opportunities to narrate their experiences. In one of the sections; students were given two days time and to present a drama on Sudha Goel's case. The students were advised not to go for formal script writing but to present the case in the form of a drama in their own words to be understood by all. The students themselves planned the scenes, rehearsed and presented. Using their day-to-day experiences, they went beyond the textbook and included scenes of protests by women organisations and interviews by press persons which were beyond the expectations of the researcher. They created the scenes of hospital and court with the available infrastructure, thus showing their creativity. They used all the judicial terms which appeared in the lesson, during their drama in the right context. This surprised the researcher. Every student of the class participated actively at various stages of the drama, performing one or the other role.

In another section of Class VIII, students were asked to prepare a collage on Civil and Criminal cases using the clippings from newspapers, magazines etc. Students were so creative, one group prepared a base of outline of India and stuck the cut-outs of cases on it. Another group collected to collect news cuttings in various southern languages and stuck them within the boundary of the states. One more group formed

the base of 'Nyaya Devata' or the God of Justice to show justice and stuck civil and criminal cases in two bowl shapes of the balance held in his hand. Other two groups drew series of cartoon pictures to form a story board of Sudha Goel's case. Different sceneries were drawn beautifully and coloured neatly. The skill acquired by the students through Arts class was used here by the researcher.

Pre-test: Marks obtained by the students in Formal Assessment I in Social Science for ten marks was considered as pre-test scores.

Analysis and Interpretation

The researcher analysed the pre-test and post-test scores obtained by the students of both the groups in terms of actual scores as well as gain scores. They are reflected in Table 1 to Table 4.

This shows that Dramatisation has been effective in the achievement of learners in Social Science.

Table 1 also shows that the group which was taught mainly by Visual Arts has obtained a t-value of 5.66. The table value is 2.64 for df 78, for the obtained value to be significant at 0.01 level. As the obtained value is 5.66 which is more than the table value, there is significant difference between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores of the Arts and Crafts group. This shows that Visual Arts has been effective in the achievement of learners in Social Science. In other words both the groups have shown significant difference between their pre-test scores and the post-test scores. Therefore, we can say that both Dramatisation and Visual Arts

Table 1: Mean, SD and t-value of groups – Dramatisation and Visual Arts

Group	N	Pre-test		Post-test		t-value
		M	SD	M	SD	
Dramatisation	42	4.40	2.35	7.8	1.58	5.57*
Visual Arts	40	4.87	2.58	7.7	1.83	5.66*

*Significant

Table 1 shows that the group which was taught mainly by Dramatisation has obtained a t-value of 5.57. The table value is 2.64 for df 82 for the obtained value to be significant at 0.01 level. As the obtained value is 5.57, which is more than the table value, there is significant difference between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores of the Dramatisation group.

have been effective in improving the performance of learners in Social Science.

Though both the groups have shown significant difference in their achievement, the researcher wanted to find out whether there is significant difference between the gain scores of the groups which was taught mainly by Dramatisation and Arts and Crafts.

Table 2: Mean, SD and t-value of Dramatisation and Visual Arts groups based on their Gain Scores

Group	N	M	SD	t-value
Dramatisation	42	3.40	1.66	1.54**
Arts and Crafts	40	2.83	1.82	

**Not Significant

Table 3: Mean, SD and t-value of Girls and Boys of Dramatisation group based on their Gain Scores

Group	N	M	SD	t-value
Girls	19	3.15	1.76	0.96**
Boys	23	3.65	1.71	

**Not Significant

Therefore, Mean, SD and t-value of the groups were calculated based on their gain scores as given in Table 2.

As per Table 2, the group which learnt by dramatisation has a higher mean gain i.e., 3.40 when compared with the group which learnt by Visual Arts i.e., 2.83. The obtained t-value is 1.54. For df 80, table value is 1.99 to be significant at 0.05 level. But as the obtained value (1.54) is less than the table value (1.99), it is said that there is no significant difference in the mean gain between the two groups, though there is a mean difference of 0.57. This shows that in terms of gain from the two approaches, both the approaches have been equally effective and there is no much difference between the two groups as far as the achievement of the students in Social Science is concerned.

Later, the Investigator wanted to find out whether there is any difference

between the girls and boys in terms of their gain in the achievement from pre-test to post-test when learnt through Dramatisation and Visual Arts. Tables 3 and 4 give the statistics related to it.

According to Table 3, the difference between gain mean of girls and boys is only 0.50 and the obtained t-value is 0.96. Even though the boys have secured a greater gain mean i.e., 3.65, when compared with the girls, the difference between the means is not significant. For df 40, t-value to be significant at 0.05 level, table value is 2.02. But, as the obtained value (0.96) is less than that, it can be said that there is no significant difference between the girls and boys in their achievement in Social Science when learnt through Dramatization. In other words both girls and boys have been benefitted equally by the Dramatisation approach to learning Social Science.

Table 4: Mean, SD and t-value of Girls and Boys of Visual Arts group based on their Gain Scores

<i>Group</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>
Girls	23	3.60	1.44	3.27*
Boys	17	2.06	1.57	

* Significant

According to Table 4, the difference between gain mean of girls and boys is 1.54 and the obtained t-value is 3.27. The girls have secured a greater gain mean i.e., 3.60, when compared with the boys (2.06). For df 38, t-value to be significant at 0.01 level, table value is 2.71. As the obtained value (3.27) is greater than that, it can be said that there is significant difference between the girls and boys in their achievement in Social Science when learnt through Visual Arts. In other words, girls have been benefitted more by the Visual Arts approach to learning Social Science when compared with the boys.

Findings of the Study

- There is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of both the groups which learnt the content by Dramatisation and Visual Arts.
- There is no significant difference in the achievement of the two groups who were exposed to Dramatisation and Visual Arts when comparing their gain scores.
- There is significant difference in terms of gain scores in the achievement of girls and boys who were exposed to Visual Arts.

- There is no significant difference in terms of gain scores in the achievement of girls and boys who were exposed to Dramatisation.

Educational Implications

The present study as well as other studies has shown that when Drama and Art are integrated in the learning core subjects, students show higher achievement. Therefore, it is recommended that Drama and Visual Arts must be taught in all the schools and teachers who handle other subjects should try their best to integrate them for better result in learning. Hence, the authorities may plan in-service programmes for teachers on integrating Drama and Visual Arts in teaching their subject. Attempts are also required to be made to provide sufficient practice time to the student teachers of pre-service teacher education programmes in integrating Drama and Visual Arts while teaching the core subjects. This not only strengthens the skill in various aspects but also increases the participation of both students and student-teachers, in the process of learning, making learning a joyful educative activity.

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