For Comprehensive Education - The Need for Theater / Drama and Dance Teachers in School Education of Telangana

Dr. J Vijaykumar ji
Theater Scholar, Hyderabad

Abstract: Time and again the current educational experiences highlighting the importance of arts education have been advocated around the world. Programmes focusing on creativity-building education have attracted a great deal of attention. The movement encouraging arts activities within schools has attempted not only to promote the implementation of arts education in formal and non-formal settings, but also to improve the quality of education, appreciating the role of arts and creativity in school environment as a tool for promoting ethical values. As part of this movement, in November 1999, the Director-General of UNESCO launched an International Appeal for the Promotion of Arts Education and Creativity at School on the occasion of the 30th session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

Keywords: Art Education, Art in Education, Art for Education, Theatre Education, Theatre in Education.

Introduction:
There is an urgent and essential need to reform and reinforce the school system, particularly, basic and primary education in newly formed states like Telangana, giving a special attention to creativity and arts education. All of us are concerned about diminishing moral values and the growing intolerance among communities, castes and groups that make up our great nation. What is depressing is the sad reality that spread of education in the country and the state has made no serious difference in this regard. In fact, there are at least some of us who suspect that the perfunctory education provided through our schools may have, to some extent, contributed to this distressing situation. Our school education relies almost exclusively on predetermined sets of ‘competencies’ to be acquired through rote memorization, thereby denying our children opportunities to exercise their innate thinking capabilities and their individual creativity.

We are bothered about the declining awareness among our children about their own cultural backgrounds. Another cause for concern is the fact that education is looked upon by marginalized sections of the society to get ‘cultured’ in order to ‘get out of the rut’. Literacy, while opening up the entire world to these sections may also alienate them from their basic cultural strengths. We need to ensure that children from these sections recognize the strengths of their own ethos and build upon those. Theatre, music and dance are the three traditional art forms which have been part of human Culture. Traditional media, like theatre command immense credibility and impact. They are the most appropriate channels for changing the traditional Indian mind towards modernization. They inform, educate and entertain the masses. Folk media, in fact can be used to convey the very ideas of the new communication systems and prepare the masses whole-heartedly to accept the electronic media when they are ready to go full stream.

In Ancient Period:
after centuries of oral transmission, ‘Natya Veda’ was finally recorded in writing around the fourth or fifth century A.D. The composition of this ‘Sastra’ was brought about by taking the element of recitation from the Rig Veda, song from the Sama Veda, gestures from the Yajurveda and sentiment from the Atharva Veda. Panini, the Sanskrit grammarian of the 5th century B.C. refers to the class of actors and codifies a manual of acting. Patanjali 2nd century B.C. - makes some references which indicate the existence of dramatic representation.

Schools should be a place where you allow the arts, where you make use of the skills which are already there in children. We need to focus on and work to change two things: first, the very concept of “intelligence”. We are now concerned with the vast number of children who drop out of schools in all the backward areas. This happens because there is a different kind of abstract thinking and information generation that we teach in schools which cannot be handled by a large number of children who live very simply, close to nature. These are the children who fail. If the arts are brought in such as singing, dancing, storytelling, drama enacting and theater, we can be convinced that there would be fewer dropouts because these activities are joyful. Useful and children will gain knowledge thereby increasing their emotional intelligence among them; as there is a bit of these skills and potentials in every child. Words are not instrumental for them, as they may be for adults. Thus, work itself must be projected as joyful; This is because the energy, creativity and expressions for any purpose produce joy, and joy is something that produces knowledge. Many mathematicians, for instance, do mathematics because it gives them immense joy. When the concept of intelligence includes only mathematical and linguistic skills, and only these are assessed at the cost of other intelligences then it is a problem. All other skills should also be assessed as intelligence. This will be a revolution in schools.

There is no point in debating whether the arts should be extracurricular or co-curricular; they must be part of the curriculum. Schools should be a place where you allow the arts, where you make use of the hidden skills which are already there in children.

In trying to improve the quality of education, we must also think about what influences children's minds. Nowadays, most children watch television in place of small village skits or dramas. We must learn to engage them with street plays, mono acting and dramas in our environment. If children don't learn from their environment, they don't learn anything. You will not come across the real intelligence, emotional and cultural depth of this country which lies with the marginalized and repressed groups. We are not...
Role of Dance, Drama, music, Folk arts in Child Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education to children becomes all-inclusive with the addition of ARTs in the education curriculum and having the teachers in place in the government and private schools teaching dance, drama, folklore, music and theater arts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological growth</td>
<td>Psychological growth is linked to various senses associate with children and their environments and the triggers provided by the surroundings. Since the children live for a long time in schools next to families, it would be of great benefit for children to be exposed to skills of music, dance, drama, theater arts as, they would enable the children to learn versatile skills and make them self-reliant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Growth</td>
<td>Physical growth is a very important aspect of child growth and that would be facilitated by the inclusion of arts such as dance into the child’s education. The dance helps children to be more agile, enhances the reflexes, helps in physiological functions such as digestion and etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Health</td>
<td>Social health is sociological aspect of social understanding being dependable. Enacting Dramas and learning theater arts helps the children to be more socially responsible and sensible. Hence we need to think to include the arts such as folklore, drama and theater arts into the children’s education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling Senses and Development</td>
<td>Music and Dance helps the children to control senses and also enhances their development. It helps them to develop their concentration, reflexes, response to thoughts, to be open; more of listening skills will be enhanced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Development</td>
<td>The dance, theater drama, music, folk arts, helps in overall development of the children by enhancing self-confidence, self-reliance, concentration, discipline and focused approach in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Commitments</td>
<td>Social commitments and social responsibility is the role of the every individual. We as students of the arts feel we have social commitment to train and rebuild the future generations of students, we are trained graduates, post graduates, M.Phil and PhD scholars from the field of ART a, drama, theater and music, classical dance forms. We feel the difficulties of children and we can save the children from turning vulnerable with scholastic education and not being developed as responsible children, hence we would strongly advocate for the inclusion of ARTs in schools and also teachers to teach this subjects as they are already available in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Cultural and Traditions</td>
<td>By including arts in the schools and employing trained art students as teachers the legacy of Telangana heritage and culture can be continued and passed on to the future ages to come.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Learning</td>
<td>Recreation and exploratory needs are inbuilt in children. The very inclusion of Dance, Drama, Theater arts, music and classical dance would enhance the child’s artistic skills making them a holistic person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope for livelihood</td>
<td>Last but not the least child with good skills of learnt drama, dance, folk arts, and theater arts are now capable and are being accepted as individuals with skills and are encouraged with remuneration on par with mainstream incomes. In fact the very music directors, directors, dance choreographers are all the best examples for individuals with learnt skills and high remuneration and recognition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambassadors of art</td>
<td>The very talented hero’s, heroines’, art directors, choreographers and comedians, dance troupes, folklore singers, the Rajasthan, Telangana traditional artisters are all examples of the need for continuing our own traditions and culture through promoting more talents and bring in ambassadors of talent in art forms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A course such as ‘Understanding Self’ shall equip the prospective teachers to understand themselves as individuals and professionals. The increasing use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has brought about a sea change in the generation and transmission of knowledge. The curriculums envisaged the use of ICT as a pedagogical tool for all areas of school curriculum at the elementary stage. Art, music, dance, theatre, stories Drama and crafts have immense potential for being used as a medium for the teaching of school curriculum.

The exceptional role of the arts in education, and arguably in increasing school attractiveness, has been a proposition since the beginning of public schooling. In this respect the “Aesthetic Letters” of Friedrich Schiller from 1793 have been of particular significance and continue to feed the pedagogical discussion up to today. While ‘learning through the arts’ might involve artistic
and creative methods in making a range of other subject areas more attractive through, for example, a more practical approach, greater use of visualization, enhanced motivation, increased attentiveness and improved communication and critical reflection (amongst a range of positive benefits of more art-rich pedagogy). Learning through the arts can promote the development of other competences like intercultural understanding, entrepreneurship or, put simply, learning to learn. (Bamford: The Wow Factor, 2006). The UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education (2006) suggests a responsibility for all governments to promote and activate a vision of arts and cultural education ‘for all’. This vision is for a sustained engagement with high arts experiences, as audiences, participants, creators and leaders. The Road Map (and subsequent Seoul Agenda, 2010) is in keeping with international and national research and is premised on the evidence that suggests that participation in high quality cultural experiences has beneficial impacts on children and young people’s skills, knowledge and behaviors. From the outset, it was acknowledged that not all children and young people have equal access to cultural provisions nor is the quality and distribution of arts and cultural opportunities conducive to having equal effects for all children.

All quality programmes are (or should be) built around the notion of inclusivity and arts-rich education for all. This means that all children, regardless of artistic skills and abilities, initial motivation, behavior, economic status or other entering attribute, should be entitled to receive high standard arts provisions, both within the various art forms and using creative and artistic approaches within other areas of the curriculum. This is a particularly important point in relation to initiatives to provide education for all and to look at greater inclusion of a variety of marginalized groups within general education. To meet a baseline in terms of quality arts education, education providers need to ensure that there are arts programmes for ALL children. Providing classes for talented or interested students only cannot be considered as providing a comprehensive education for all.

**There is strong evidence to suggest that:**
1) Including the arts and culture in a sustained, high quality manner promotes a more ‘liberal’ and broad curriculum and this leads to improved academic attainment which can increase school attractiveness to parents and policy makers.
2) The arts improve the social climate of the school and reduce negative social interactions and anti-social behavior. This directly improves pupils’ perceptions of school and increases the likelihood of the school being seen as being and attractive place by the pupils and teachers.
3) The inclusion of the arts in the school day provides opportunities from communication and emotional development not generally part of other school subjects. An improved emotional connection between pupils and teachers is shown to improve school attractiveness and liking for education to pupils.

There is some evidence to suggest that an arts rich school may have:
1) Improved quality of teaching and leadership (including cultural sensitivities)
2) More effective practice for working with pupils with special educational needs

Already the CBSE Schools, the UNESCO supported programmes; the National policies have endorsed the need and have included the arts into the schools curriculums. We with abundant human resources available in the state of Telangana need to include and promote the life of artistic professionals by promoting them as teachers in schools and also save the children with monotonous educations systems.

**Conclusion:**
The main objective of this request and initiative is to enable a gain in positive behavioral intentions and improved psychosocial competence in children. To accomplish progress of children through augmentation of creativity, emotional understanding and development, improved self-esteem and a notion of the joy of autonomy to enable the students to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life and reduce crime and anti-social behaviors among children and youth. The main objective of this advocacy note is to enhance the child’s abilities by including the teachers and curriculum of Dance, theater, Classical dance, music and folk arts in the schools of Telangana state.

**Reference Books:**
1. Fundamentals of Special Education: Dr. R.A. Sharma
2. Foundation of Education: Prof. Ramesh Ghanta, B.N Dasu
3. Theory / Theatre - An introduction: Mark Fortier
4. An Actor Prepares: Constantin Stanislavski
5. The Actor’s Art & Craft: William Esper Damon Dima
6. Vidya Aaddhaaralu (Telugu): Dr. A.S. Rama Krishna
7. Patashala Nirvahana Mariyu Vidya Vyavasthalu (Telugu): Dr. A.S. RamaKrisha