The Relationship between Musical Skills and Creativity in Children

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ABSTRACT

Developing creativity at school is an essential element in teaching activities. One of the many factors that are crucial for developing creativity, according to much relevant research, is the developed artistic skills among the most prominent and musical skills as determinants for the development of creative thinking and skills.

This study was conducted to determine whether this association of musical skills with levels of creativity is complementary and realistic in elementary schools in Kosovo. Therefore, 106 students aged 7–12 in several elementary schools in Pristina were surveyed through two standard instruments, a protocol for evaluating student achievement in the subject of music education and through the Williams Standard Test of Creative Thinking (WCTT 1994).

The results showed a strong connection between musical skills and students’ creativity, these findings are also complementary in Kosovo, where according to the results we found that there is a significant statistical correlation between musical skills and creative thinking, in other words, students who display higher levels of musical skills also manifest themselves with a higher level of creativity in the educational process and in everyday life, as well as those students with a solid level (many of well) of musical skills have a high level of creative thinking and vice versa.

Keywords: creativity, musical teaching, musical skills.

I. INTRODUCTION

Musical potential as an innate quality in each person is different. The way musical abilities are tested is important in music pedagogy. It is necessary to perceive and discover that potential even in earliest childhood. With appropriate professional procedures (instruments), to measure the degree of development of the sense of intonation and rhythm and organized pedagogical influence through a systematized educational process, the intensity and quality of development among children will be significantly contributed. In order to reach the goal, it is necessary to ensure a serious approach to this problem among the educational staff, the institutions that are responsible for the upbringing and education of children in society, but also the family.

Nowadays there are a number of social dilemmas, a time in which every segment of social life represents an important factor for stabilizing the system, a time in which the basis for the future is being created (Despr’re s et al., 2016).

So that one of the main features of a nation is the musical culture, which affects the development of living conditions and ennobles man. An important factor for the general development of a child’s personality is the early discovery of musicality in children and the pedagogical influence in the development of musicality. The goal of early acquisition of music education is to encourage musical creative abilities in children, to create future lovers of beautiful music - music with artistic value (Hernandez-Torrano & Ibrayeva, 2020).

Most of the scientific research in this field conclude that the activities with music directly and indirectly affect the cognitive and psycho-social development of the individual, where it is worth emphasizing the general achievements such as creativity, emotional balance and social skills. Due to the fact that activities with music are a regular part of the educational process as a separate subject (Hallam, 2010), therefore, music subject plans should be an important goal for the qualitative development of psycho-social features and especially the creativity of students.

According to this, the purpose of this study is the empirical highlighting of the relationship between musical skills and creativity in children, specifically among students from 7-12 years old, where 106 students in elementary schools in Pristina were surveyed.

II. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study is the empirical highlighting of the relationship between musical skills and creativity in children. Based on this goal, two research questions have been posed according to which, with empirical descriptive
and conclusive statistics, in the further part of the study, a clear and concise picture of the connection of musical skills and creative opinion and ability among students is given.

1) Is there a significant statistical relationship between the level of musical skills and creative thinking and ability in children? 
2) Do solid musical skills result in high meaningful creativity in children?

III. METHOD
A. Participants of Study

The population of the research was the children of school age, as the sample of the research are the students from 7–12 years old, where 106 students were surveyed in the primary schools in Pristina.

B. Measures

For the purposes of this study, for the assessment of the musical abilities and skills of the children (students), we used the data base from the educational standard protocol list for assessing the development of the students’ musical-educational competence in musical education, it was used by the teachers themselves in the regularly evaluation process.

For the second variable of the research-creativity thinking, we used the standard instrument of the Williams Creative Thinking Test (WCTT-1994). It was used to measure the level of creativity among children (students). This instrument consists of 50 items that according to Williams (1994) these items assess the four stages of creative thinking, namely: curiosity or research, imagination or fantasy, complexity or intricacy and risk taking or exploration. According to the methodological standards, this instrument is dedicated to children and teenagers aged 6-16, where according to these standards each answer is evaluated from -1 to 2 points.

IV. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND
A. Musical Skills

Music is an essential element in the learning and psycho-motor development of children, music is the art of expressing feelings and thoughts through sounds. Music is an artistic discipline of universal art and language that helps children to understand and connect musical phenomena and phenomena, processes and issues that belong to music, proving their legality, as well as explaining the ways of their interpretation and construction, which is which leads to the realization of a successful music learning process. By expressing musicality through the instrument, children gain self-confidence and joy, and confidence in their own abilities. Familiarity with music is of great value to enable the development of children’s personalities, the development of their abilities to work independently and systematically as well as to think and judge creatively and critically. The overall impact of music on the spiritual and physical development of children is important, because it brings spiritual joy and physical vitality to their lives.

Through music, children learn and interpret songs and musical games through singing techniques, apply rhythmic patterns through familiarity with rhythms, play with instruments, through the application of playing techniques with them, understand the creation of music, through the recognition of phenomena and phenomena outdoor music etc. Musical education and training has a significant impact on the formation of moral feeling in children, as well as on its general positive and cultural formation (Foti, 2020).

Children's musical skills are not only taught in the school environment, but also through private lessons, in specialized schools and summer programs for the performing arts and in gifted arts programs. Teachers who work in these different areas can provide valuable information about appropriate criteria because they evaluate the process of performance improvement and skill development on a daily basis. Tools for the identification of musical skills in children should reflect the research base and be understandable and easy to use for an effective identification process. The musical ability is simply the ability to feel and distinguish the differences in sounds. Individual perceptual capacities are present from birth (Lindblom, 2017).

Musical ability reflects the concepts of her musical talent. There is a whole scientific history of assessing and measuring perceptual capacities. According to this, musical perceptual bases are also distinguished (Navarro & Arostegui, 2020):

- The physical aspect of sound,
- Hearing faculties,
- Imagining music without real sound stimulation,
- Remembering previous musical experiences,
- The intellectual assessment of musical form and appreciation.

Methodological tests and instruments and protocols for musical ability essentially ensure the perceptual discrimination of rhythm, pitch, glasnost, and tonal color or timbre. In simple words, the tests measure the ability to listen attentively. Test runs were developed by Carl Seashore in 1919, followed by the test from the basic to the advanced level of development by Edwin Gordon. With studies spanning over 30 years, Sishor and Gordon found that musical ability stabilizes by age 9 or 10. They emphasize the need to measure and encourage the development of musical skills before this age (Siljamaki & Kanellopoulos, 2020).

B. Creative Thinking

According to the accepted theory, creativity is the mental process of creating new ideas, terms, or solutions, it can be examined from several aspects starting from the aspect of daily behavior of the individual, social psychology, philosophy, history to economics and politics.

The American psychologist, J. P. Guilford, as early as the 19th century stated that “creative/divergent thinking means the creative creation of multiple responses to a given problem.” Likewise, it also contains originality and must be applicable, while it is also considered as an alternative answer to existing solutions or daily problems.

Some scientists consider that creativity is a trait that a person is born with. However, there are also those who claim the opposite. Meanwhile, psychology relates creativity to the right side of brain activity, the so-called latent thinking. So, accordingly, creative ideas are driven by
inspiration, cognitive leaps, and access to intuition, and all of these together are called the creative process.

According to researchers Rodhes (1961), Treffinger et al. (1982) there are four general approaches to the development and definition of creativity.

The experience of the individual and the approach to it is closely related to creativity (Sternberg, 1999); and normally such connection is more influenced by positive experiences (Davis, 2009). So, regardless of the definition of creativity, educational plans and educators should structure and strengthen in their work the stimulation of students’ creativity. According to the researcher Kiehn (2003), early musical activity resulted in a significant difference in the grade level from 2–4 with a significant correlation in artistic creativity. So, engagement and participation in musical activities essentially has positive psycho-social implications and with-it direct impacts on educational achievements (Lasky & Yoon, 2020).

V. RESULTS

After the collection and processing of data from the two instruments provided for this study and the random selection of students in three elementary schools in Pristina, it resulted that 64 or 60.4% of them were female students, while 42 or 39.6% were male students. Also based on the data from the students’ portfolios as well as based on the data from the teachers’ evaluation of the students in the music subject with standard protocols compiled by the Ministry of Education, it resulted that 55.7% or 59 students have average musical skills, 34% or 36 students with partial musical skills and 10.4% or 11 students with solid or very good musical skills (Fig. 1).

While processing the data from the standard instrument of the Williams Creative Thinking Test (WCTT-1994) it resulted that over 46% or 49 students have an average level of creative thinking, then 34% or 36 students with a low level of creative thinking and close to 20% or 21 students with a high level of creative thinking.

Taking into account the fact that the standards of the instruments (Lickert scale) give a numerical overview of the students’ results, therefore the analyzes for the correlation and the strength of the correlation are continuing with the Pearson’s correlation coefficient, as below in Table I:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musical skills</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>0.454**</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

So, according to the coefficient R=0.454 p<0.01, we find that there is a significant statistical correlation between Musical skills and Creative thinking, in other words, students who manifest higher levels of musical skills also manifest with a higher level of creativity in the educational process as well as in everyday life.

So, referring to the first research question 1. Is there a significant statistical relationship between the level of musical skills and creative thinking and ability in children!? We find that there is a significant positive correlation between these two variables. As for the second research question which 2. Do solid musical skills result in high meaningful creativity in children!? So, between which levels of creativity is there a difference!? below in Table II we present the creativity averages for each level of musical skills:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partial</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.72</td>
<td>5.040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>34.80</td>
<td>6.386</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39.55</td>
<td>3.205</td>
<td>11.681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>33.91</td>
<td>6.263</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, according to F=11.681 p<0.01, we find that there is a significant difference between the levels of creativity according to musical skills, even those students with a solid (very good) level of musical skills have a high level of creative thinking and vice versa. So, three special groups are distinguished according to importance, the solid level of musical skills with high level of creative thinking, the level of average musical skills with average level of creative thinking as well as partial musical skills with low level of creative thinking (Fig. 3).

VI. CONCLUSION

So, based on the findings from the relevant research highlighted above, which highlighted a strong connection between musical skills and students’ creativity, these findings are also complementary in Kosovo, where according to the results we found that there is a significant
A statistical correlation between musical skills and creative thinking, in other words, students who display higher levels of musical skills also manifest themselves with a higher level of creativity in the educational process and in everyday life, as well as those students with a solid level (many of well) of musical skills have a high level of creative thinking and vice versa.

Therefore, today educational institutions in their agenda should structure adequate plans for promoting the individual creativity of students as well as the collective one, as it turns out that this segment is essential for the healthy development of young people. The individual development of students is the essential trend in which schools move today, but socio-emotional development should not be overlooked by structuring in their plans and activities healthy relationships in the classroom, healthy non-verbal communications, discussions and exchanges of ideas, to enable the exchange and the application of personal and interpersonal creativity. In other words, individual and collective competences of both educators and students must be developed that enable the overall development of the individual and society.

REFERENCES


