

Art as a pedagogical strategy for the improvement of academic achievement

El arte como estrategia pedagógica para el mejoramiento del rendimiento académico



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Abstract

This research analyzed art as a possible pedagogical strategy that allows the improvement of academic performance, especially in those students who tend to demonstrate certain attitudes that harm their academic performance and in turn are unfocused and unmotivated, it is important to note that there are factors that contribute to these difficulties, such as the family environment, For this reason, the main objective of this research is to strengthen the academic performance of 6th grade students through art as a pedagogical strategy, using it as a tool for them to express feelings and at the same time understand other areas of knowledge from a cross-cutting perspective. Therefore, the aforementioned objective was addressed to a group of seventeen (17) sixth grade students,

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between 13 and 15 years old; this research had a qualitative approach by which the information was collected through three instruments; the first one; the semi-structured interview to students and teachers, this allowed the collection of data in a spontaneous and sincere way, followed by direct observation and focus groups, which allowed the group analysis; The conclusion was that students can learn in a playful way when they are presented with an activity rich in creativity and innovation, involving handicrafts and something as interesting as the life of a plant, they learned that from art they can understand science and love what they learn.

Keywords: Art, Academic Performance, Pedagogical Strategy.

Resumen

Esta investigación analizó el arte como una posible estrategia pedagógica que permita el mejoramiento del rendimiento académico, especialmente en aquellos estudiantes que tienden a demostrar ciertas actitudes que perjudican su desempeño académico y a su vez se muestran desconcentrados y desmotivados, es importante tener en cuenta que existen factores que contribuyen a estas dificultades, como son el entorno familiar, la situación económica e incluso el contexto que rodea a los estudiantes, por esta razón esta investigación tiene como objetivo principal fortalecer el rendimiento académico de los estudiantes de grado 6º, a través del arte como estrategia pedagógica, utilizándola como una herramienta para que puedan expresar sentimientos al mismo tiempo comprender otras áreas del conocimiento desde la transversalidad. Por tanto, se direccionó el objetivo mencionado anteriormente, a un grupo conformado por diecisiete (17) estudiantes de sexto grado, entre los 13 y 15 años; esta investigación tuvo un enfoque cualitativo por la cual se recogió la información mediante tres instrumentos; el primero; la entrevista semiestructurada a estudiantes y docentes, esta permitió la recolección de los datos de manera espontánea y sincera seguidamente la observación directa y los grupos focales, los cuales accedieron el análisis en grupo; esto género como conclusión que los estudiantes pueden aprender de manera lúdica

cuando se les presenta una actividad rica en creatividad e innovadora, donde se involucran manualidades y algo tan interesante como la vida de una planta, aprendieron que desde el arte se puede entender las ciencias y se puede amar lo que se aprende.

Palabras clave: Arte, Rendimiento Académico, Estrategia Pedagógica.

Introduction

Students who for one reason or another present academic difficulties and all the negative consequences that this brings for them in the future, mainly in their self-esteem and their integral development. It is clear that the teacher's exercise and commitment is to be in constant self-reflection in order to improve their pedagogical practices, thus providing strategies to help improve the difficult situations they see in the classroom. According to Muñoz and Novoa (2020) one of the teacher's missions in their daily practice is to try to prevent students from experiencing school frustration. Motivational processes during the educational process allow establishing significant learning in their academic performance (Cardena et al. 2020, p. 57).

Based on a qualitative analysis of the visible reality, it is pertinent to present a pedagogical strategy that contributes to the educational commitment and constant motivation from art and such practice or learned habits can be used in any subject they need, in order to improve the difficulties experienced through the contextualization of their learning making it reflective, coherent but above all attractive, putting into practice the transversality between the artistic area and the other subjects, for this reason, Cabrera (2017) states that the dialectical approach of action research is a circular process that aims to join or complement research with development and suggests that through this action it is possible to propose action plans, analysis and reflections, involving theory with practice, conducting surveys and establishing dialogues between the students themselves, thus helping to compare data, for this reason with the qualitative method, Hernandez and Mendoza (2020) suggest that the researcher begins

the process by examining the facts themselves and reviewing previous studies, both actions simultaneously, in order to generate a theory that is consistent with what he is observing happening (p. 46). The art will capture the attention and motivation of 6th grade students in order to solve the problem they are presenting, it is also necessary to involve all teachers and especially parents in the integral development of the child, education being one of the pillars in the life of every human being is here then where parents have and must remove the false idea that once the children pass from primary school to high school is no longer necessary to help them, because they are starting a new cycle both academically and in their physical and psychological development in which they not only need help at school level but also emotionally, this evidenced that the big winners will be all the agents involved (and mainly the inspiring subjects of this research). According to Hernández (2014) the concepts and hypotheses are formulated throughout the research itself (p. 189). Grasso (2020) posits that when education as it is known today began to be structured, its objective was to train the working class towards particular economic interests of the nascent nation-states. Thus, the idea of performance in this area was related to the fulfillment of certain standards within the framework of a system of indoctrination. In summary, it is of great importance nowadays to address this issue of underachievement in children and young people and even more so within a student population, since it is part of the integral development of the subject and its attention guarantees better results for both the student and the educational institution of which they are a part, What will be reflected in the student is a better self-esteem, better interpersonal relationships both at institutional and family level and even with the environment, greater effort, since seeing the improvement in their academic performance as a result of their work will be much more motivated to take on new challenges, which will lead them to set new and greater goals.

Therefore, at the José Manuel Rodríguez Torices- INEM Educational Institution, located in the city of Cartagena in the department of Bolívar, some 6th grade students show poor academic performance, lack of interest, intermittent attendance, non-compliance with homework and school supplies, apathy, little

participation in class and inappropriate behavior such as: foul language, physical and verbal aggression, where it is evident that some students are at an age not in accordance with the grade they are in, thus hindering the school environment. Taking into account this problem, it is necessary from the art to deploy in the students, the interest, as well as a formation in values, to develop different strategies that promote emotional bonds, teamwork and self-confidence in order to improve academic performance. All this situation prompted the researchers to deepen the problems experienced in the classroom from the following question: How to strengthen the academic performance of 6th grade students of the José Manuel Rodríguez Torices INEM Educational Institution through art as a pedagogical strategy?

For this reason, we highlight the general objective which seeks to strengthen the academic performance of 6th grade students through art as a pedagogical strategy and to comply with what is expressed in this, we focus on the following specific objectives such as identifying the factors related to the academic performance of 6th grade students, design an artistic pedagogical strategy to strengthen the academic performance of 6th grade students, implement an artistic pedagogical strategy for the analysis and improvement of the academic performance of 6th grade students, and evaluate the impact of the artistic pedagogical strategy implemented for the improvement of the academic performance of 6th grade students of the José Manuel Rodríguez Torices INEM educational institution. Montoya et al. (2019) in their article state that artistic skills favor expressive thinking due to the rigor and constancy that the individual needs for its elaboration and in turn forms or develops a methodical thinking and According to Aluma (2018) Creativity is essential for the understanding of who we are.

This research was born from the desire to identify the reasons for the low academic performance of 6th grade students, the difficulties presented in the different subjects reported by the teachers who teach in these grades, as well as the strategies proposed by the institution and by the teachers to deal with this type of situations and, based on the results obtained, to carry out an intervention. This will make it possible to provide useful information to teachers and students of the

grade in question, to improve teaching and learning practices. According to Carvalho et al (2021) creativity can be a good tool in the resolution of global, personal and daily life problems and implementing it in the school context could be the solution to different difficulties related to low academic performance, lack of motivation and low self-esteem.

For this reason, it is intended to strengthen some gaps from art and creative thinking, since this is a tool that favors the improvement of academic performance thanks to the benefits it generates in the individual such as the development of cognitive, social and emotional skills, the manual work that enriches and strengthens concentration, exercises that some students who present this opportunity for improvement lack. The following authors state that: Creativity, in turn, favors cognitive development in children because it provides opportunities for the creation of innovative ideas and allows them to experience novel ways of conceiving and solving problems (Llorente and Carmona (2021, p. 25). In the same line, it is related that in this way, there will be creative, original, flexible, expressive, reflective, competent, innovative people who will strengthen the ability to find creative solutions (Vásquez 2021, p. 114).

For this reason we highlight the following antecedents; Lemus (2021), *Pensar la escuela desde las emociones*. The "artistic process A look at the socio-affectivities of sixth grade students at I.E.D BOSANOVA. In what way does "the artistic process" make it possible to know socio-affectivities in sixth grade students? The behavior and emotional expression of students is a warning to the teacher to start establishing pedagogical strategies that reach to enhance the performance and improvement of students through multiple methods that art provides, such as performance, a strategy for the student to express themselves better or the sound game, which promotes levels of social interaction that prevents them from being self-conscious in class.

In the same line Fontalvo and Solventos (2022) in their project *Art as a pedagogical tool for the strengthening of coexistence in students of the district educational institution Jorge Isaac of the city of Barranquilla*, where the following is exposed: art is found as one of

the categories, which is related to Humanism, which contributes to meaningful learning, which leaves a mark on the person and is integrated with the intellectual, cultural, affective, spiritual and existential of the individual. (p. 62).

Iriarte and Vélez (2022) Art as a didactic strategy for learning and teaching English in the second grade of primary school at the San Cayetano de Cartagena Educational Institute, the artistic one encourages the participation of students, since visual art and/or visual support helps the understanding of the language and its externalization both verbal and written, therefore, the learning of singing and music allow the linguistic development and grammatical structures for the improvement of language learning, while the theater offers a scenario where the interaction and exchange of the language can be better expressed.

Cardenas et al. (2020) Academic performance: a very complex universe for the pedagogical task; this study is necessary because it generates and creates relevant methodological strategies for the acquisition of scientific and technological knowledge; it also aims to stimulate the development of skills, values and the formation of critical and independent thinking.

The current research contributes and provides information about the low academic performance and how art continues to be a very valuable tool, it also generates more interest by demonstrating that emotions go hand in hand with motivation. Finally, to emphasize the contribution in the education of the students of the 6th grade of the Educational Institution José Manuel Rodríguez Torices INEM - Cartagena, the students will have more confidence in themselves, in what they think and say, also it will be possible to create better school environments, which will allow teachers to work better and improve their pedagogical practices.

Materials and methods

This research was qualitative with the method of action research (AR) due to the characteristics of the population to be analyzed, because consulting several authors we conclude that they are the best suited to investigate the need that we have at the moment, some

authors and concepts consulted were: The qualitative approach had its origin in Max Weber, (1864 - 1920) also within the social sciences, this current recognized that, in addition to the description and measurement of social variables should be considered subjective meanings and understanding of the context where the phenomenon occurs. (Vega-Malagón et al. 2014. p.524). López (2011) citing "Taylor and Bogdan (1987) define qualitative methodology in its broadest sense to research that produces descriptive data: people's own words, spoken or written, and observable behavior" (p. 118).

. In the same line, the qualitative method seeks to identify and solve learning barriers, from the context or situation of the problem, in order to arrive at a hypothesis and create strategies that will help to solve it.

The José Manuel Rodríguez Torices Educational Institution - INEM Cartagena, Bolívar, borders the following neighborhoods: Bosque, Almirante Colon, and the Bahía residential complex. As the main site, it has a population that can be classified as strata 1, 2 and 3 of different localities and even nationalities, so that the intercultural criterion can be applied. This population presents different social, economic, cultural, disciplinary and academic difficulties. The project was carried out in the Educational Institution José Manuel Rodríguez Torices - INEM of the city of Cartagena, where there is a population of 5,000 students of which there are 10 sixth grade classrooms between the morning and afternoon sessions, being the latter the one with only two classrooms of this grade, concentrating the great majority in the opposite day, of all this population was selected the grade 6-10 and 17 students were focused.

The instruments used in this research were validated by experts and consisted of semi-structured interviews with students and teachers, direct observation and a focus group.

The semi-structured interview with students contains 7 open-ended questions to find out how they feel about the subject of art, how their academic performance is, the difficulties they have at home, how they would like to articulate art with other subjects, seeking to identify study habits, motivation for their performance and the strengthening of their self-esteem.

Focus group with students: we worked with a representative group of the sample (17 sixth grade students), and 7 questions were asked orally, which they had to answer as they considered, the questions are the following: How do you feel when you practice any artistic activity, Do you experience any kind of distraction or difficulty to concentrate during classes, What is your current level of academic performance, Do you think that art classes help you to be a better student, Why? In which classes would you like to include more art activities for homework? Why? Do you concentrate when doing an art activity? Yes ___ No ___ Little ___ Explain your answer, Do you think there are any external factors that negatively affect your academic performance? (Example: family problems, lack of resources, health problems, etc.); Seeking to identify each of the perceptions and conceptions of the students regarding the subject of art.

Stage 1: Informed consent, a formal letter was drafted addressed to the rector of the institution where permission and space was requested to develop a research project aimed at 6th grade students, said permission had the full name of the research, objectives and purpose; which the rector approved and signed. Afterwards, a socialization was carried out with the parents of the students individually to inform them about the project and explain the benefits of the same, these consents were signed to start the activities.

Stage 2: Design and validation of instruments, followed by the design of the instruments based on the objectives and their validation by three experts, thus obtaining the approval of the instruments.

Stage 3: Daily work, after the instruments were validated, the semi-structured interviews were applied to students and teachers in person, this practice was interrupted by the two weeks of vacation.

Stage 4: Systematization, in this part the responses from the interviews, direct observation and focus groups were analyzed.

Results

The analysis of results based on the objectives and the research categories: arts, academic performance and pedagogical strategies, results:

To identify the factors related to the academic performance of 6th grade students of the José Manuel Rodríguez Torices INEM educational institution.

Category Analysis: Pedagogical Strategies.

This analysis responds to the first specific objective: To identify the factors related to the academic performance of the 6th grade students of the José Manuel Rodríguez Torices INEM educational institution.

Table 3 and Figure 1 show the categories found:

Table 3. *Didactic Strategies category, subcategories and codes*

Category	Subcategories	Compilations
Didactic Strategies.	Creativity	Experiences
		Feelings
		Concussions
		Friendships
		Satisfaction
		Love
		Compassion
	Motivation	Independence
		Enthusiasts
		Achievement.
		Incentives
		Commitment
		Self-analysis

Table 3. Category Didactic Strategies, subcategories and codes -
 Source: Own

Figure 1. Mind Map of the Didactic Strategy Category, subcategories and codes.



Subcategory Creativity.

In the analysis of the subcategory Creativity, the following elements were evidenced: experiences, feelings, commotions, friendships, satisfaction, love, compassion, showing that when the children are in contact with stimuli that motivate their creativity, their mood improves, their school environment improves, and they socialize and treat each other with a lot of tranquility and kindness with their classmates.

Direct observation made it possible to collect pertinent information for the following analysis:

Table 2 *Process analysis of the Pedagogical Strategies Category: Creativity Subcategory.*

Instrument	Question No.	Compilations
Direct Observation	1, 2, 6	Enthusiastic, full of confidence and collaborative work. It is emphasized that drawing is one of the artistic skills that allows students to show and bring out feelings (joy, surprise, nostalgia).

Interview	4, 5	They carry out activities of observation, drawing, tracing and annotation, expression of feelings and emotions such as: happy, joy and surprise because they felt they were doing something new.
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Recurrence analysis of the Pedagogical Strategies Category: Creativity Subcategory. - Source: Own

Subcategory Motivation

The analysis of the subcategory Motivation shows independence, enthusiasm, achievement, incentives, commitment, self-analysis, thus demonstrating that when children perform activities that generate satisfaction, they tend to feel satisfied with themselves for the achievements obtained, as shown in Table 5.

Table 3. *Didactic Strategy Category Process Analysis: Motivation Subcategory*

<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Question no.</i>	<i>Compilations</i>
<i>Direct Observation</i>	1,2. 6	Compliance was observed throughout the activity; they maintained an active and orderly participation.
<i>Interview</i>	4,5	At the beginning of the activity they were very calm and expectant, but as the activity ended they asked for more things to do.
	5	

Few students expressed that their favorite subjects are natural, social, Spanish and mathematics, because they are somewhat monotonous.

Analysis of Didactic Strategy Category: Motivation Subcategory.

Source: Own

During the interview in question 1, it is evident that students like art classes, but the opposite happens with natural, mathematics and social studies; in question 5, the vast majority of students state that they would like to learn through art, concepts related to natural science, mathematics and English classes.

The following is a list of the fulfillment of the objectives:

Design an artistic pedagogical strategy to strengthen the academic performance of 6th grade students and Implement an artistic pedagogical strategy for the analysis and improvement of the academic performance of 6th grade students of the José Manuel Rodríguez Torices INEM Educational Institution.

Didactic Strategy My plant.

The elaboration of the didactic strategy called My plant, was designed taking into account the transversality between art and natural sciences where the main difficulties of the 6th grade students were detected, with this exercise the stages of plant growth were recognized, from the planting of the seed and the design of the planting material, While this process was documented through drawing, the students had to show the stages in an album designed by themselves, visualizing how they wanted their plant to be and at the same time what the plant needed to reach their dreamed future, learning at the same time scientific concepts addressed in science classes from the artistic practice. All this exercise fulfilled the first part of the didactic strategy.

This strategy is based on the previous strategy called My Plant. The purpose of this proposal was for the students, following the guidelines of the previous activity, to imagine how they wanted to see themselves in the future, visualizing themselves physically by

means of a drawing and, as with the plant, to write down the steps they should take to reach that dreamed future.

To evaluate the impact of the artistic pedagogical strategy implemented to improve the academic performance of 6th grade students at the José Manuel Rodríguez Torices INEM educational institution.

The following are the results of the required self-evaluations in relation to the didactic strategy My plant, in the first question; 10 students responded that they learned to plant and take care of a plant 60%, followed by option 2 with 5 students who responded that they improved their drawing technique as a percentage of 40%; In the second question, as the first option, 10 students out of 13 responded that they participated in an active and orderly manner with a percentage of 86%, followed by 2 students out of 15 with a response that they missed one day with a percentage of 13%, in the third question, where they had to respond if they fully complied with the assigned activities; as the first option, we have 13 students who responded yes with a percentage of 86%; In the fourth question, which was related to learning from the activity, 15 students responded that they learned to respect and take care of the environment, in relation to question number 5, what actions did you take to take care of your plant? 10 students responded that they visited it, added water and took care of it, which represents 66%, as a second option 5 of the students responded that they decorated their plant and made sure it was well, which represents 33%, in relation to question number 6, from what you learned in the activity, do you feel that you can contribute to another subject? To which 13 students answered yes (science and environment) for a total of 86%, 1 student answered that he/she did not know, for a percentage of 6%, and 1 student answered that, for the arts class, for a percentage of 6%, 7 students answered that they liked the part where they decorated the materia, the album and the meeting with their classmates (46%), 8 students answered that they liked taking care of the environment, the part of the drawing and taking care of their plant (53%).

In the self-evaluation related to the second didactic strategy My life, 2 questions were asked, resulting in more emotional and reflective answers, in the first question about the elements that should be done

to have a good future, they were asked if they were really fulfilling these commitments, to which 10 answered no because they made a lot of mess or were distracted in class, In the second question, which asked if they were aware that education and discipline are very important to achieve the goals they set in their albums, 100% of the students answered yes.

Discussion

The students felt very comfortable in the art classes, they can feel emotions of joy and enthusiasm, they feel that they can do well in any subject if they practice it with artistic activities. During the practices the students tested their creativity from the elaboration of handicrafts to the point of imagining how they would see themselves in the future, generating this last part a little bit of expectations and doubts, however, they enjoyed and dreamed their own future among laughter with their classmates.

The didactic strategy My plant evidenced the love for nature and interest in their own wellbeing, at the time of starting this activity, it was possible to highlight the appropriation of the plant, to the point of naming it, the desire for life, care, motivation, creativity and the desire to learn more in order to want to do things well. With this activity, significant learning was evidenced, demonstrating awareness of their own knowledge, the interest in discovering new things due to the need to keep the plant alive was visualized.

Drawing represents the exploration and demonstration of art, when feelings are expressed through this artistic technique the individual can perceive his environment in a direct way where he can interact with his surroundings and his own inner self, expressing feelings and desires.

The transversality of art with other areas of knowledge, in this case natural sciences, allows complementing ideas, creatively analyzing the environment and expressing it creatively, generating confidence and interest in meaningful learning. Art as a strategy generates autonomy, providing the possibility of learning in an autonomous way, since it depends on their own ability to express themselves, thus strengthening their creativity and motivation.

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