

Motivation for Effectiveness of an Art Education Program

Dr. Fjoralba Satka

“Aleksander Moisiu” University, Durrës, Albania

Email: fjoralba_s@yahoo.com

Abstract: The article is based on my investigation in three directions revealing the main reasons for a contemporary art education program: the state of Albanian art education program in school, my research through an initial art project for children and teenagers with disabilities, and my program of art education for students in Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education, “Aleksandër Moisiu” University, Durrës, Albania. By focusing on the informative value of art and its role for psychological, mental and cognitive development of personality, the analyses have the purpose to prove that Albanian art education is a case for change. Albanian school has need of appropriately educated and trained teachers. The effective theoretical and practical assistance of eligible art educators can play a key role in educating children and teenagers in competencies and skills in arts by which they can form their voice to express their particular experiences in variety of human conditions. This logically results in the university education program in arts for students in pedagogy as future school teachers. The conclusions convincingly emphasize the chances for success in quality of contemporary arts education. Improving its effectiveness through a more flexible between the theory and practice pedagogy should be the base for an education project with long-term investment.

Key words: Education effectiveness, Albanian art education program, school educators in art, children and teenagers with disabilities, high school students, students in pedagogy.

The main motifs to write the article source from the results of three studies made on education of art in three interdependent educational spaces: 1) in 34 different Albanian schools in elementary and secondary grade, 2) in the Special School for disabled children in Durres and 3) and in Aleksander Moisiu University, Durres (UAMD), with students of the Faculty of Education. The cog, which connects the three studies, is the prospective students who, at the University, they study as pedagogy so art. Art Academy students compared to university graduates take a degree as artists, but do not have the status of teachers. They couldn't be able to teach. This is the key, which makes the art program at UAMD specific in content, connected functionally with pedagogical and psychological disciplines and extremely responsible for preparing future teachers with the right quality.

Holding on the three above mentioned studies, I prop up the thesis suggesting the necessity for a *valuable theoretic and practical content and the favour of the duration program at the university, to make possible to integrating knowledge and simultaneously differentiate pedagogical approaches, topics, tasks and goals in the teaching of pupils in schools on the one hand, and children and teenagers with special educational needs, on the other.*

The orientation on academic program is not involved as a mandatory lesson but is taught as an elective subject only for one semester, for 3 hours per week or total of 45 hours in a term. This study testifies that such amount of hours is extremely inadequate for the educational necessities of students and openly belittles its significance.

This study is based on important researches and results from Europe and USA in terms of increasing the quality of art education in two directions: teachers and pupils. In the first place we will mention the general program of the British John Swift & John Steers *A manifest for art in schools*¹. In it, authors offer three principles from which are to be led teaching art and evaluation and the results are:

¹ John Swift, John Steers, 'A manifesto for Art in Schools'. In: *Journal of Art & Design Education*, Volume 18, Issue 1, 13 Feb 1999, pp. 7-13.

difference, plurality, and independent thought. Viewing of a number of general studies for Art Education and its status in England, we have the results and meditation's researcher Jeff Adams in his editorial *The Degradation of the Arts in Education*². Special attention deserves to have Prof. Jana Rasheva-Merxhanova of the University of Sofia 'St. Kliment Ohridski' *Optimization of transformation in education through the spiritual level*³, in which emphasis is placed on personal spiritual transformation as the goal of education. The study presented by Kaori Iwa in a very important forum of UNESCO⁴ focuses on the great contribution of the arts in the lives of children. Researcher as A.L.Cole and J.G.Knowles pay special attention to teachers and their professionalism as trainers⁵. Other authors take in consideration various factors: the importance of the external world to the internal construction of reality as the main task of the painter⁶, usage of the fantasy and the dreams in the creative process⁷, the role of consciousness and subconscious mind in creativity⁸, the reaching of children toward modern painting for beside to adults⁹ etc.

A special range of issues reveals the education of children with special educational needs. Magazines *Visual Arts, Guidelines for teachers of students with Mild (medium, heavy) General Learning Disabilities* of NCCA provides enhanced treatments and accurate approaches and methods, classroom management and school of art education¹⁰. Pursued in therapeutic's depth aspects of art education¹¹, style's symbolism due to the art as therapy¹², - the triple bond between Art-Therapy - spirituality - disease, which underlines the importance of Art-therapy as a diagnosis on the one hand, and as an extension for development of spirituality on the other¹³.

Numerous authors concentrate on various details such as: success and effectiveness as a result of disable children's education by professional artists¹⁴, on the teacher, who serves as an incentive for the child in his research on the expression and self exploration¹⁵, the effective role of art to identify differences in

² Jeff ADAMS, 'The Degradation of the Arts in Education'. In: *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, Volume 30, Issue 2, Jun 2011, pp. 156-160.

³ Яна Рашева-Мерджанова, „Оптимизация на образованието чрез трансформации на духовно равнище“ (с. 19-29). – В: сб. Юбилейна национална конференция с международно участие „Хуманизъм и прагматизъм в образованието на 21 век, Булвест 2000, 2010, 320 с.// Yana Rasheva-Merdzhanova. 'Education Optimization Through Transformations on Spiritual Level'. In: *Humanism and Pragmatism in Education of 21 Century*, Sofia: Bulvest 2000, 2010, 19-29.

⁴ Kaori Iwa. 'The Contribution of Arts Education to Children's Live'. Paper presented at the UNESCO Regional Meeting on Arts Education in the European Countries, Canada and the United States of America, Finland, 2003.

http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/files/40522/12669211823contribution_AE.pdf/contribution%2BAE.pdf

⁵ A. L. Cole, J. G. Knowles. *Researching teaching: Exploring teacher development through reflexive inquiry*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.

⁶ Segal. 'Art and the Inner World'. *Times Literary Supplement*, (July 18, 1975).

⁷ Hannah Segal. *Dream, Phantasy and Art*. London: Routledge, 1991.

⁸ Anton Ehrenzweig. *The Hidden Order of Art. A Study in the Psychology of Artistic Imagination*. Paperback Edition. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1993.

⁹ Elias Katz. *Children's Preference for Traditional and Modern Painting*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944.

¹⁰ *Visual Arts, Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild (Moderate or Severe) General Learning Disabilities*. [http://www.VisualArts.org/GuidelinesforTeachersofStudentswithMild\(ModerateorSevere\)GeneralLearningDisabilities](http://www.VisualArts.org/GuidelinesforTeachersofStudentswithMild(ModerateorSevere)GeneralLearningDisabilities).

¹¹ Viktor Lowenfeld. 'Therapeutic Aspects of Art Education'. In: *American Journal of Art Therapy*, v. 25, 4, May 1987, p. 112-146.

¹² Rita Simion. *The symbolism of style: Art as Therapy*. London: Routledge, 1992.

¹³ Петър Цанев. *Психологията на изкуството*. София: Национална Художествена Академия, 2008// Peter Tsanev. *Psychology of Arts*. Sofia: National Academy of Arts, 2008

¹⁴ Andy Mortimer. 'Opportunity Not Sympathy'. In: *Journal of Art & Design Education*, Volume 13, Issue 3, October 1994, 221-233; Fjoralba Satka. 'Painting in aid of health teaching children and teenagers with disabilities'. In: *Development problems of Childhood and adolescence in transitional societies*, The IInd International Scientific Conference, Conference Proceedings, 2-3 December 2011, Durres, Albania, pp. 386-392.

¹⁵ Ambera Duka. *Probleme të punës mësimore me fëmijët me nevoja të veçanta*. Durrës: Mediaprint, 2010 // *Problems of Educative Work with Children with Disabilities*. Durrës, Media Print, 2010.

identity and recognition of values and integrating¹⁶, the importance of satisfaction in the margins of official teaching program control¹⁷ and many others. A large number of authors as P. Fuller and J. Henderson do research over the relationship toward psychoanalysis and identify various pathological conditions and creative expression. D. Kuspit talks about the role of schizophrenia in the development of abstract art¹⁸ etc.

Based on our analysis is the idea that *education is a dynamic process and its optimization is continuous updating and coordination between its constituent parts: the object of study, methodology, teacher and student*. Regarding social aspects, their problems are in dialogue with *difference, tolerance, partnership, care*, and in professional aspect with *reform, optimization, efficiency, spiritual improvement* concepts. They work actively in the cultural European area where the Albanian education system must coordinate its development in accordance with them, keeping properly considered their significance.

The first significant territory to discuss is the Albanian school - like the traditional and school for children with special educational needs. Therefore by the two study projects we can see and study the need to reform the educational programs in visual art under *effectiveness* indicators. On the other hand, they reflect the university teacher preparation. The second important territory to be discussed is the Ministry of Education and Science (MES). The study is in line with the official position stated by the Ministry for democratic change in the development of Albanian education, in accordance with the standards of the Bologna process¹⁹.

Learning in and through visual art, needs to be designed by programs and school learning to program in accordance with the university programme with the aim to train the teachers. Weaknesses of the programs can be adjusted periodically and their contents parallel with methods to be actualized. Regarding traditional and unchanging powers of teachers - information, communicating, organizing, controlling and diagnostic, the new experiences ask for to add the expert-consultant, mediator-moderator, socio-intercultural, axiological-educational²⁰. The pupil is the final goal and according to recognized modern knowledge of the XXI century is "the transformation of learners" through "transformation of feeling" that within the evaluation of artistic thinking and metaphor's image goes "beyond the synonymy of language". That way, it performs better for spiritual personality growth.

For the purpose of the study the first project includes 34 schools in 4 cities and 8 schools in rural areas²¹, 150 teachers surveyed in visual art - 120 from classes I to V and 30 from classes VI to VIII, and 450 high school pupils. The second project was conducted with 20 students with special educational needs aged from 10 to 15 years and their teachers.²² Results and summary are presented at the IInd International Scientific Conference, Durres in 2011.²³ The third project studies space of university study in the survey of 127 of potential teachers, studying currently in "Aleksander Moisiu" University.

¹⁶ Margaret Taylor. 'Access and Support in the Development of a Visual Language: arts education and disabled students'. In: *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, Volume 24, Issue 3, October 2005, 325–333.

¹⁷ Steve Herne, Celia Burgess-Macey and Maggie Rogers. 'Carnival in the Curriculum'. In: *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, Vol. 27, Issue 3, 2008, 264–278.

¹⁸ Donald Kuspit. 'A Critical History of 20th-Century Art'. In: *Artnet Magazine*, 2006.

¹⁹ Arritjet kryesore në fushën e arsimit dhe shkencës gjatë vitit 2011 // Main Achievements in the Sphere of Education and Science in 2011. <http://www.mash.gov.al/fjalim.php?id1=13&id=30>

²⁰ Yana Rasheva-Merdzhanova. 'Education Optimization Through Transformations on Spiritual Level'. In: *Humanism and Pragmatism in Education of 21 Century*, Sofia: Bulvest 2000, 2010, pp. 25

²¹ Tiranë - 8, Durrës - 9, Elbasan - 6, Diber - 3, the rural areas of Shijak, Sukth, Vorë, Mollas of Kolonjë etc.

²² "The Special school" in Durres, Albania.

²³ Fjoralba Satka. 'Painting in aid of health teaching children and teenagers with disabilities'. In: *Development problems of Childhood and adolescence in transitional societies*, The IInd International Scientific Conference, Conference Proceedings, 2-3 December 2011, pp. 386-392, Durres, Albania.

SURVEY TEACHERS - 150 persons surveyed

Included 8 questions answered freely. Percentages exceed 100 in total, because each respondent has provided many more than one response

1. *What are your opinions through art education goals?*

Note: Responses are summarized by the parameters formation of personality, knowledge, skill, expression, aesthetic education.

- general formation of personality	76	51%
-knowledges	68	45%
- aesthetic education	60	40%
- development of certain skills	57	38%
-expression	38	25%

2. *What would you ask more from the art school programs or curricula?*

Note: 1 respondent did not respond

- the most appropriate programs	101	68%
- programs critical topics	41	28%
- increase the number of hours	43	29%
- more trips, outdoor work, competitions, exhibitions, galleries, meetings with painters	8	5%
- book of methods for teachers, book and notebook for students	42	28%
- the teacher to be a painter	3	2%
- base material	31	21%
- satisfied with the programs	8	5%

3. *Who and how should care for the actualization of your education in visual art?*

Note: 10 respondents did not answer

- institutes	46	33%
- painters, specialist	67	48%
- courses, seminars, internships	71	51%
- additional literature and self preparation	24	17%
- the teacher to be a painter	7	5%
- no need for qualifications	2	1-2%

4. *How do you rationalize and motivate the visual art education which you offer to the pupils?*

<u>Note:</u> 31 respondents did not answer		21%
- with illustrative material	54	45%
- through integration with other disciplines and life	36	30%
- through competition (ratings, competitions etc.)	50	42%
- through discussion, analysis, descriptions, explanations	22	18%
- through visual ideas, imagination	14	12%
- work only with different talents and techniques	3	2-3%
- psychological therapy, games, entertainment	5	4%

5. What kinds of choices do you offer to the pupils and are these choices informative ones?

<u>Note:</u> 31 respondents did not answer		21%
- choice of themes, images, artwork, color, background, materials, techniques, workmanship, working instruments through information	119	100%
- no free choice, they are programmed	18	15%
- offered as a choice of different solutions available	14	12%
- the choices are not always informative	4	3-4%

6. Do schools kill creativity? If "yes", how and in which way does it act?

<u>Note:</u> 7 respondents did not answer		5%
- do not kill creativity!	97	68%
- conditional response – "no, but" "no, if"	14	10%
- kills creativity!	42	29%

7. Do you use the subjectivity to develop students' creativity?

<u>Note:</u> 24 respondents did not answer		16%
- yes	99	79%
- "rarely", "partially", "certain issues"	16	13%
- no	9	7%

8. What stress in art education and what you want to learn: creativity and / or implementation?

<u>Note:</u> 13 respondents did not answer		9%
- creativity and implementation	97	71%
- creativity	31	23%
- implementation	11	8%

Summary of results Over half of the respondents fully understand *main purpose art for the formation of full personality* listing of the various development aspects of it - intellectual, mental, imagination, creative talent, skills, interpretation and evaluation, identification of positive and negative aspects of society, communicative vocabulary with artistic concepts. It demonstrates *knowledge, education aesthetic* the development of practical *skills* and the capability to non-verbal *expression*. Also the moity criticize various drawbacks in the program. They desired *increase in hours* from 1 in 2-3 hours/week, while 1/3 require detailed *methodologies* for teachers, *textbooks* and *notebooks* for students work.

To *update* their knowledge and skills in visual art, more than 80% cite as responsible - Ministry of Education and Science, School District (SD), National Inspectorate of Education (NIE), etc... More than half want organizing *courses, seminars* and *practice*, where the lecturer may be a painter, specialist, professor. Unfortunately, a large number have lost their trust and rely on *self-training*, (quote) "because the state (that is to say MES) offers nothing besides planning". More disappointing is the demonstration of confidence by some teachers who do not need training, because completion of the Pedagogical Institute and the School of Art are fully sufficient education and "actual".

It set a record for silence regarding for the methodical work of art at which noted that 1 in every 5 teachers do not know how to rationalize and motivate his classes. Troubling indicator is what stresses *self-motivation* of students as fully sufficient. Nearly half motivate with different *kind of illustrate materials*, lesser use grade *competition*, competitions and exhibitions. Fortunately, about 1/3 *integrate* art with other subjects and the environment and the methodical approaches are the *conversations, discussions, analyzes, descriptions and explanations*.

The issue of *choice* and if it is *informative choice* preserves the previous record with 31 other subjects silent. This shows that is not justified nexus between information and free choice. But "Excellent teacher", are more than half. To achieve an *informed choice*, they draw *information* from different sources. However, 15% claim no free choice because they are *programmed*.

The problem of *creativity* is involved in 3 questions. Two-thirds say that the school did not kill creativity, while under a third thought the opposite. Many respondents were so categorical in using *subjectivity of the students to develop creativity*. The professional understandings support the arguments that "the creativity is in the center", "the focus is the student". Unfortunately, there are a lot of them, who underestimate or reject the subjectivity of students. Indicator problem is that even here 24 people were in despair.

In terms of priority between creativity and / or implementation about three-quarters of them feel as equal, while one quarter only requires *creativity*, which expresses the current mentality. The alarming effect is that few teachers focus only to *the implementation aspect*.

SURVEY FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Through 450 college students questioned from X, XI class to XII class is studied the teaching area of high school, where is learned the general discipline of Art History. The survey includes three questions with multiple answers.

Note: Percentages are rounded to integer approximate.

1. Do you want to learn visual art in high school?

Note: 3 respondents did not answer

a. yes	185	41-42%
b. more are positive	39	9%
c. average	55	12%
d. a little	68	15%
e. not	92	21%

f. I do not know	8	2%
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2. *Would art help the growth and formation of your personality?*

Note: 1 respondent does not respond

a. yes	194	43%
b. more are positive	40	9%
c. average	86	19%
d. a little	44	10%
e. not nnn	50	11%
f. I do not know	35	8%

3. *How do you define the role of art in your life?*

a. it plays an important role	68	15%
b. most affects to some extent	214	48%
c. it sometimes attract my attention	49	11%
d. it plays no role	51	11%
e. I don't have any idea	68	15%

Summary results High school pupils are well oriented in their preferences. More than half *want to learn* and believe that *visual art aids in enhancing the personality development*. Those who don't want are just over a fifth, who slashed in half in terms of formative influence of art, but remain alert for indications of insufficiency: insufficient marketing information.

The total percentage, considering *the positive role of art to be* significantly increases. One-tenth is those who seek visual art "occasionally" or deny its role. Serious negative indicator is the number of students "without thinking" insufficiently.

From the project "Children and adolescents with special educational needs" and surveys with their teachers was issued the main conclusion that art-therapy is a healthy element for the education of these children and should be presented more extensively in their program regular for the following reasons:

1. brings spiritual revival, activates perceptions, develops cognitive skills in order for aesthetic and play, enthusiasts and engages positive emotional and physical behavior;
2. is preferable from a lot of pupils, something which guarantees its success;
3. should be addressed by painters prepared in pedagogy;
4. the artistic products contribute in the social integration of children and have cognitive function of different social groups - family, school, teachers, scientific researchers, society.

SURVEY FOR STUDENTS - 127 persons surveyed

Via this project is closed the professional-academic space between pupils-student-teacher. Students are considered as the intermediate contingent, in which are faced the educational, scholar and university problems. The 7 questions involved are from survey of teachers but student-oriented situation, where free response is required. Overall rates exceed 100 because respondents provided more than one answer.

1. What about your opinion, are the goals of art education at the university?

- diverse knowledges	110	87%
- preparation as a teacher by mastering the methodology	58	46%
- to gain practical skills	40	32%
- the importance of art in life	10	8%
- just for relaxation	6	5%

2. What would you like to benefit from the program of art in the university curriculum?

<u>Note:</u> 11 respondents did not answer		8-9%
- more hours over 2 semesters education and development of practical skills	90	77%
- more detailed knowledges	52	45%
- exhibitions of student work, visit the gallery	17	15%
- no requests for the program	15	13%
- just for fun	4	3%

3. Who and how should take care of your education in the process of updating of visual art after you have finished university, when you start work as a teacher?

<u>Note:</u> 17 respondents did not answer		13%
- rely on their individual	54	49%
- relevant institutions	30	27%
- seminars and trainings in specialized programs and literature	25	23%
- visual art to be taught in class IX	2	2%
- want to continue their education at university	24	22%

4. How will it help you in your work as a teacher, your knowledge in visual art?

<u>Note:</u> 16 respondents did not answer		13%
- in the educational goals and method	42	38%
- acquired knowledge and practical skills	39	35%
- criteria for evaluation received effective and competent explanation	15	13 to 14%
- the aid is limited due to insufficient time, must be multiplied the hours	6	5% -6%

5. What place occupies the choice in the work of visual art? What does "informed choice" means?

<u>Note:</u> 40 respondents did not answer		31%
- the choice is important	23	26%
- is connected with the object, materials, time, position, freedom for talent	24	28%
- "informed choice" is appropriate, based on clear ideas as a result of information for materials, means of expression, work on details of the task	44	51%

6. *What place does creativity take at school? How will you develop it to students?*

- creativity is important, effective and should be encouraged	57	45%
- the school is not heeded	9	7%
- encouragement through illustrative materials, assessments, competitions, exhibitions, support, entertainment	22	17%
- through artistic treatment of topics and themes free	18	14%
- by encouraging thought and imagination	16	13%
- through the development of practical skills	16	13%

7. *What would you highlight in art education to students and ask what will learn: creativity and / or implementation?*

<u>Note:</u> 11 respondents did not answer		9%
- Creativity and implementation	59	51%
- Creativity	43	37%
- Implementation	14	12%

Summary of results About half define *the scope of their education* as a teacher preparation methodology, and a third focusing on the *practice*. Many respondents, over half *want the university program* to develop *their practical skills*, the rest directly fixed 2 terms, where in total it makes that more than three-fourth want *full year learning*.

To update their education in fine arts after graduation, over a quarter point at MES, SD and other institutions. About half of them want prospective qualifications, where a quarter highlights a concrete form - *workshops, practice and literature*. Other half relied on *self preparation* based on the academic program, wanting to the set of great responsibility and the need for continuous training.

Regarding the *knowledge role in teacher performance*, more than a third showed the *purpose educational and method* and another third stressed *skills practice*. A considerable number of them underline the accepted criteria for the effective *evaluation*, meanwhile the others underline the idea, they are helpless, because are needed a lot more information and knowledge, even a term more, because the time in disposition is insufficient.

Most difficult was for students regarding *choice* question and what it meant "*informed*" choice. Almost one third did not respond but half of them specify "the informed choice" based on clear ideas as a result of getting the prosperous information. For more than one fourth choices were simply important, without explaining why.

In relation to *creativity in schools* half answer in laconic way, which is important, effective and should be encouraged. On the other hand there are some critics over the importance it has, over the attention they pay

to. The responses how are they going to *develop the creativity among students* are highly differentiated and diffused equally between informative and encouraging forms and practices. Some of them cleverly highlights showed that the students' creativity can go beyond the imagination of teachers and therefore the emphasis is placed on feeling free!

Regarding the relationship between *creativity and/ or implementation* over half of subjects recognize both but some note that precisely balances that makes the subject more interesting. Over a third believe *creativity* as more valuable, some say it is equal to the freedom and "the result is a miracle"! Others far fewer in number are focused on *implementation*, and one of the respondents underscores the criterion "less copying"!

Conclusions

Summarizing the three projects, I sort out a serious motivation to achieve *efficiency* through educational reforms in the professional closed-circuit training of teachers, students and pupils. The main conclusions match the European important criteria for development, reform and assessment in education, which are: *integration, tolerance, democratic transformation* and *European program in support and training for teachers*.

It is essential to highlight some very important conclusions, which relate to the visual art curriculum planning, which reflects the University:

- *effective improvements* are needed in *existing school programmes* according to the weaknesses and the underlined requirements by teachers and students;
- there is clearly a great necessity to build a *permanent annual program to qualify teachers* in visual art after they get the degree from the Faculty of Education;
- it is necessity to satisfy the wishes of most of high school pupils, so that to carry on the practical activities in visual art, due to this goal *will not be interrupted the educational program in ninth grade of the secondary school and to involve practical activities in regular high school curricula orto be structured as optional extra hours*;
- criteria for *integration* and *tolerance* require that children with special educational needs to be involved in *long-lasting projects for Art-therapy led by specialists painters trained as lecturers*;
- *democratic change*, the definition of *effectiveness* in the heart of educational requirements, the demand expressed by teachers for professional preparation, as well as the desires of students, future potential teachers, dictate *that the course at university training to increase by 45 hours in a semester at 90 hours for 2 semesters*. This will enable the enlargement of themes and a thematic program detailed in various degrees taught in school, where theoretical and practical activities are balanced.

With these results we present only the most urgent changes that are happening in the moment of speaking, which only after a few years will be obliged by the European Union requirements. From the concluded research we can find out a lot of conclusions regarding differentiated Albanian education in visual education, which will help not only school teachers but also school psychologists, sociologists, parents' community and society as a whole.

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