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The Contributions of Musical Practices within Social Responsibility Projects on the Social Development of Children

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Abstract

Broadly, education is the whole process that prepares the individual for the social life, providing to gain the required knowledge, skills and behaviors for the development of his personality; in other words, which enables an individual's socialization. Music education, apart from being an educational discipline, has an important role in the socialization of the individual, due to both being a beneficial and convenient educational tool as well as an effective and efficient education method. Because of its importance and role in social life, musical practices applied aside from the school are becoming increasingly common all over the world. Many private and institutional organizations, such as municipalities, universities, schools, foundations and associations, organize these activities on a voluntary basis, under the name of Social Responsibility Projects (SRP), for every child equally regardless of socio-economic status and educational level. The aim is to promote healthy individual and social development through improving the musical ability that every child has in a certain level. It is also about making them happy in their personal and social lives as conscious, creative, productive, sharing, responsible individuals, and provide them the necessary environment and opportunities for this purpose. This study was conducted to investigate and draw attention to the positive role and beneficial impact of the musical practices in the scope of SRP to the social development of the children. The obtained qualitative data through review of literature has been aggregated and presented. This study is expected to lead to furture research and practices on the subject.

Keywords: Children, Music Education, Social Development, Social Responsibility Projects

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Sosyal Sorumluluk Projeleri Kapsamında Yürütülen Müzik Çalışmalarının Çocukların Sosyal Gelişimine Katkısı

Özet

Genel olarak eğitim, bireyi toplumsal yaşama hazırlayan; kişiliğinin gelişimi için gerekli bilgi, beceri ve davranışları kazanmasını sağlayan; bir başka deyişle bireyin sosyalleşmesini sağlayan süreçlerin tümüdür. Müzik eğitimi, bir eğitim alanı olmasının yanı sıra, hem yararlı ve kullanışlı bir eğitim aracı hem de etkili ve verimli bir eğitim yöntemi olması nedeniyle bireyin sosyalleşmesinde önemli bir role sahiptir. Toplumsal yaşamdaki önemi ve rolü nedeniyle, okul dışında uygulanan müzik uygulamaları tüm dünyada giderek yaygınlaşmaktadır. Belediyeler, üniversiteler, okullar, vakıflar ve dernekler gibi birçok özel ve tüzel kurum ve kuruluş, bu faaliyetleri gönüllülük temelinde, Sosyal Sorumluluk Projeleri (SSP) adı altında, sosyo-ekonomik statü ve eğitim düzeyine bakılmaksızın her çocuk için eşit olarak düzenlemektedir. Amaç, her çocuğun, belirli bir düzeyde sahip olduğu müziksel yeteneğini geliştirerek, bireylerin sağlıklı bireysel ve toplumsal gelişimini teşvik etmektir. Bununla birlikte, onları bilinçli, yaratıcı, üretken, paylaşımcı, sorumluluk sahibi bireyler olarak kişisel ve toplumsal yaşamlarında mutlu kılmak ve bu amaçla gerekli ortam ve fırsatları sağlamaktır. Bu çalışma, SSP kapsamındaki müzik uygulamalarının çocukların sosyal gelişimine olan olumlu rolünü ve yararlı etkisini araştırmak ve konuya dikkat çekmek amacı ile yürütülmüştür. Literatür taraması yoluyla elde edilen nitel verilerin bir araya getirilerek sunulduğu bu çalışmanın, konuyla ilgili gelecekteki araştırmalara ve uygulamalara ışık tutacağı düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çocuklar, Müzik Eğitimi, Sosyal Gelişim, Sosyal Sorumluluk Projeleri

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1. Introduction

Broadly, education can be defined as the process of creating a positive change and development in the cognitive, emotional and psychomotor behaviors of the individual and all the kinds of practices guiding that process. According to this definition, education is all the processes that prepare the individual for social life and enable him to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviors for the development of his personality. According to Aslan, "Education is a process that takes place in society, is affected and shaped by society, and also affects and shapes society. ... In that case, ... society can be seen as a goal and education as an indispensable tool to achieve this goal" (Aslan, 2001: 25, 28). In this respect, perhaps the most important function of education is to teach the values, social rules and norms of the society (desirable and undesirable) to the individual in various ways, in other words, to ensure the socialization of the individual (Tezcan, 1991: 45).

Turkish Language Association defines the concept of socialization as: "Socialization is the process of preparing the individual for a certain social environment by gaining a personality and integrating with society" and " it is the learning of a person to behave like those who live in his own group or culture" (http://tdk.gov.tr). These two definitions indicate that the individual interacts with two different social environments during the socialization process. The first is the environment consisting of family, teachers, relatives and neighbors, which serves a relatively more controlled and desired social development; The second is the social environment consisting of peer groups with which the individual has uncontrolled and random social interaction. Many studies have focused on the importance of play and peer groups in children's social development. "Especially in studies conducted on small groups, it has been experimentally demonstrated that individuals in a group are affected by the values, thoughts and feelings of other members of the group, and even tend to identify with them" (Tuna, 2008: 45).

Research and practices draw attention to the necessity and importance of music education in processes such as gaining a social function, strengthening communication and social harmony among children between the ages of 7-14 in family and friend groups and, at school. Hargreaves, Marshall, and North (2003), in their studies examining the sociological effects of musical behavior and experiences, present examples from different studies (Parncutt &

McPherson, 2002; Juslin & Sloboda, 2001; Shields, 2021, DeNora, 2000; Sundin, McPherson & Folkestad, 1998; Hallam, 1998; Kemp, 1996; Rauscher, Shaw & Ky, 1995 etc.) and put forward the increasing functions of music in daily life with similar results. "Music has cognitive, emotional and social functions for all of us, and these social functions manifest themselves in three main ways in daily life, namely: self-identity management, interpersonal relationships and mood" (Hargreaves et al. 2003, pp. 149-151). Soley and Köseler (2021) presented the common results of developmental research on the social effects of music by an extensive literature review study. In the research, it was found that the number of music-focused educational programs created for children with the aim of developing social-emotional skills and increasing positive social attitudes and behaviors has increased, but these programs/applications differ in terms of content, target age group, duration and structure; For this reason, it has been stated that the results and effects vary. In addition, since children participating in these programs generally cannot be followed in the long term, they recommended that these programs should be organized and carried out in a longer term, systematic and cross-cultural manner in order to understand their effects on social development. In their research, Kirschner and Tomasello (2010) observed positive and significant improvements not only in the social behavior of children who were involved in music (playing instruments or singing), but also in their individual problem-solving skills. Hospital et al. (2018) also state that musical practices, especially when carried out collectively, contribute to many cognitive and affective skills that affect individual and social development in children and young people, such as self-awareness, self-expression, planned and orderly living, social awareness and sharing. Hallam (2010), investigate the effects of active participation in music on the cognitive, individual and social development of children and young people, reveals that positive effects occur only when musical practices are an enjoyable and rewarding experience. Anshel and Kipper (1988: 146) state that musical practices performed in groups increase self-confidence, self-awareness, emotional relaxation, enjoyment and communication, which can positively affect interpersonal behavior and willingness to cooperate. These findings also coincide with the findings of a study conducted at Cambridge University in 2012 with children aged 8-11. It was observed that children who regularly engaged in musical practices with a group increased their ability to empathize with others (Burns, 2012: BBC News). In a book chapter on music education and social projects, Figueiredo

and Odena (2022) evaluate two separate social projects in Brazil and also provide comprehensive information about the resources and research on the subject.

We can say that every child enjoys taking part in music-related activities (such as listening to music, playing instruments, singing, dancing individually or collective), and although they have different degrees of musical talent, every child has musical abilities that can be improved to a greater or lesser extent (Eskioğlu, 2003). Developing this ability of the child largely depends on creating a suitable educational environment. Due to the place and importance of music in social life as an educational tool, musical practices outside of school, which contribute positively to the social development of children, are becoming increasingly widespread all over the world.

The main problem of this study is to investigate the effect of musical practices within the scope of SRP on the social development of the child. The study is important in terms of drawing attention to the importance of music education, which has positive effects on reducing the tendency of primary school children to negative behaviors and on their growth as individuals in harmony with society. It is hoped that with this study, the place and importance of music education within the scope of SRP out-of-school will be better understood and the value given to music education will increase.

1.1. Children and Music Education

"The Convention on the Rights of the Child [CRC] defines a "child" as a person below the age of 18, unless the relevant laws recognize an earlier age of majority. However, in our society, childhood is defined as between the ages of 0 and 14; The 15-25 age group is called the person in adolescence, that is, young people" (Çelebi, 1990:391).

The children subject to the research in this study are primary school children between the ages of 6-14. The benefits of music for this age child can be listed as follows:

- In the development of the child's auditory skills; It is effective in learning to listen and gaining skills such as perceiving and understanding what is heard.
- In terms of language development and speaking skills, it is effective for the child to learn new words and sentence patterns through singing, to learn how to pronounce words correctly

and to speak clearly, that is, to improve his diction. In addition, nursery rhymes and counting games help the child gain language agility and develop fluent speaking skills and habits.

- Physically, when using instruments and/or moving with music, small and large muscles develop, and the development of body-mind coordination is positively affected.
- With the influence of music, negative emotions and behaviors such as insecurity, timidity, aggression and fear can be transformed into positive emotions and behaviors and the child can be provided with positive development in psycho-social and psycho-motor behaviors.
- Through regular musical practices, the child learns to use his free time correctly, program his life, communicates with his peers, and takes the right examples as a model.
- Through group work, the child learns to relax in a group, to be with others without drawing attention to himself, to experiment without fear of making mistakes, and to communicate effectively. However, a child with special talents may find the opportunity to stand out in the group with his solo work.
- Through group work, students learn to be in harmony with others, the rules of collaboration, and to take responsibility. In this way, he understands the importance of being in harmony with society and acquires the habit of discipline.
- Music enables the child to focus on aesthetics and to be sensitive to the environment he lives in; It develops the child's taste and enables him to distinguish the good and the beautiful.
- Music also motivates the child's creativity, teaches him to be open to innovations and tend to new experiences, and creates opportunities for him to become original.
- Music allows the child to get to know national culture and traditions.

The most important gain provided by music education is undoubtedly the ethical values. Gençaydın stated that art education is a very important resource that affects human development circles and nourishes sensitivity by saying "Uninformed societies become ignorant, but insensitive societies become barbaric". He adds that it is impossible for a person whose emotions are nourished by the pleasure of aesthetic values to move away from ethical values and think of evil and states that the most economical and shortest way to gain sensitivity is through art education (Gençaydın 2002: 29 as cited in Mercin and Alakuş, 2007: 18). Due to its importance, music education, which is one of the main branches of art education, should be

given not only to individuals with artistic talent, but also to those other than these individuals. In this sense, in order for music education to achieve its goals, educational opportunities must be increased and educational environments outside of school must be provided.

1.2. Social Responsibility Projects and Music Education

According to research, the individual both socializes and develops his personality by adopting the behavioral examples and perspective on events of the social group he joins. In this respect, social groups, and especially peer groups in childhood, play an important role in the education of individuals and the formation of their values. It has been demonstrated through various experiments that children are influenced by the values, thoughts and feelings of other members of the group they are in, and even tend to identify with them.

According to Buchanan et al. (1998), school is one of the important institutions that contribute to the socialization of individuals, and if the school cannot fulfill this function for any reason, it will negatively affect the success, development, adaptation to the environment and mental health of the individual. In response to the effectiveness and importance of education that develops the individual and prepares him for life; Incomplete, insufficient and incorrect education can be the source of many problems (Yavuzer, 2006:162). For this reason, education should be considered as a whole, and efforts should be made to raise the child as a whole and at the highest level in terms of cognitive, emotional and psychomotor aspects. For this, it is necessary to provide the child with a modern educational environment that combines science, technique and art education.

Cengiz (2012) states that every child should receive art education and has the right to benefit from the opportunities of art while getting to know life and to express himself through one or more of the branches of art. He continues his statement with the following words mentioned in CRC: "State Parties shall respect and encourage the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for children in leisure, recreation and artistic and cultural activities" (Cengiz, 2012).

In another newspaper report by Gökbudak (2013), Prof. Dr. Gülgün Tosun addresses the issue from another perspective and states that the rate of children being pushed into crime is closely related to their educational level, and according to research, the number of children pushed

into crime decreases as their educational level increases. Tosun states that children should have socialization opportunities not only in school but also outside of school, in their neighborhoods with these words: "When we consider the socio-economic conditions of children who cannot access educational opportunities and socialize at school, it becomes easier for them to be pushed into crime. Because these children are children of families with relatively lower socio-economic income levels, the environment and environment in which they grow up is very suitable for this. Therefore, it becomes much more important to increase educational opportunities and create different socialization environments for these children. ... Children should be directed to areas where they can improve themselves in socialization activities according to their interests and the subjects they are inclined to".

Like, Dr. Tosun, Yener and Öztürk (2008), who point out that violence and delinquency in children is an important social problem today, emphasize that there is a need for permanent not temporary- solutions in controlling violence in primary and secondary education institutions and that the issue should be turned into a national project. Their study mentions that giving more emphasis to music education is an extremely important issue. It is recommended to include more social activities, especially musical practices, organizing informative, educational and explanatory events on the concept of music education in educational institutions in order to prevent the phenomenon of violence and gang formation in schools. It is also stated that at least one music teacher position should be provided to all primary and secondary education institutions (p.114).

Similarly, the findings of a study by Apaydınlı (2010) revealed that directing students who have problems at school and tend to engage in negative behaviors to a musical activity will encourage them to become role models for society by reinforcing their sense of respect and love and, will connect them to school. Creedon (2011) defines "art education" as the most effective "preventive pediatric medicine" in preventing, reducing and eliminating the tendency for depression and excessive stress, which are widespread in childhood, and emphasizes that the power of art to create positive emotions is of vital importance for schools. He states that music, dance, drama and visual arts practices are so important that they should be a part of in-school and out-of-school education. Çakmak (2013) states that positive thoughts about the future are formed in children who develop a sense of confidence through collective activities that

encourages cooperation and, also as a result of one-on-one work, these children can be enabled to participate in social life.

At this point, there is a need to popularize music education, which contributes positively to the social development of the individual and/or the child who is the subject of this study, and to organize it for each child. To respond to this need, music education studies outside of school are becoming increasingly widespread all over the world (Çakmak, 2012; Lindgren et al., 2016; Odena, 2023). Many private and legal organizations such as municipalities, universities, schools, foundations and associations give priority to education within the scope of community service practices and SRP, believing that the solution of social problems and the development of the country can only be achieved through education. SRP mentioned here is is organized, carried out and, provided by voluntary institutions and individuals for every person, regardless of age, socio-economic status and education level.

Argüden (2007) explains this phenomenon which is referred to as "corporate social responsibility" in the literature as "the voluntarily contribution of companies to a better society and a better environment". He states that the happiness created in the society by institutions that are compatible with the expectations of the society and show interest in its problems will result in happier employees, happier customers and therefore happier shareholders in the future. Emphasizing that the principles and targets in social responsibility projects should be clearly stated and implemented with serious planning and implementation, Argüden expresses that in line with the principle of "unmeasured performance cannot be improved", the relevant performance criteria should also be determined and monitored regularly. In addition, the author recommends developing collaborations with other organizations and nongovernmental organizations while fulfilling social responsibilities and providing opportunities for creative solutions in order to achieve targeted results. He also adds that future leaders who take pioneering activities in this regard should be trained and encouraged (Argüden, 2007: p. 37-40).

Today, SRP carried out directly by the state or governments to solve social problems through music education are becoming widespread in the world. The "Gamelan Project" in Indonesia, the "Music Manifesto" in England, and the "El Sistema" movement implemented in Southern Venezuela since 1975 can be given as examples of these projects. Especially, El Sistema has been

taken as an example in many countries and started to be implemented with similar projects (Creech et al., 2013; Lindgren et al., 2016). The "Leading Note" project in Canada is one of them. The common feature of all these studies is that they consist of trainings that are based on volunteering and are carried out in solidarity, without boring the children, without discrimination, without considering social class. The aim is to reveal and use the musical talent that every child has at a certain level to ensure the healthy individual and social development of the children. And, to provide the necessary environment and opportunities to ensure that they are happy in both their personal and social lives as conscious, creative, productive, sharing and responsible individuals. Educational institutions at the primary, high school and higher education levels in Türkiye aim to raise their students as socially sensitive individuals with the "community service courses" they offer within the framework of their education programs, and they fulfill their social responsibilities through studies related to their fields carried out by the students. Again, foundations, associations, banks, institutions and organizations etc. also conduct SRP in many provinces that support education through art and music. For example, the "Music for Peace Foundation", founded in 2005 by Architect Mehmet Selim Baki in Edirnekapı, İstanbul, has removed the obstacles to the right to participate in arts through music education by creating common social and cultural living spaces for thousands of children with limited opportunities. It has become a center of solidarity and sharing with the active participation of children and families (Çakmak, 2013: 50). A recent press briefing by Ercan Evren, founder of Antalya Philharmonic Association (AFD), drew attention to an important point on the subject. Stating that there are no music lessons in primary schools in Türkiye although this field of education has a great impact and importance in childhood, Evren said that a project named "Art Begins in Primary School (ABIPS) is being held in 10 schools in Antalya with the support of Antalya Education Foundation (ANTEV) and Antalya Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (ANSİAD)" and talks about the work done. However, Evren stated that without the support of state, the work of such non-governmental organizations would be insufficient; that the studies would only be applicable in a single province and selected schools and would not be sustainable and, that the impact of the projects (Şehrim would be limited News: to just raising awareness Antalya https://mobil.sehrimantalya.com/haber/ okullarda-muzik-ogretmeni-yok/23559/).

In the light of all these explanations, it is necessary to emphasize once again the importance of musical practices carried out within the scope of SRP and to draw the public's attention to the impact of music education not only on the education of children but also on the education of societies.

2. Method

In this study, the literature review method was used as a qualitative research design. As Karasar (2016) states, in qualitative research, scanning is a research approach used to understand and describe a specific situation or phenomenon. Data were obtained by scanning the publications that could be accessed on the subject in the literature. Suggestions were presented regarding the compiled and interpreted data.

3. Result

In order for the child to continue and complete his social development in a healthy way, he must be able to adapt to and integrate with the society he lives in and acquire the behaviors that are valid in the society. Apart from being an educational field and educational purpose, music education is also an important and effective educational tool due to its positive effects and contributions to the social development of children. Extensive literature highlights music's pivotal role in enhancing social skills, emotional intelligence, and cooperative behaviors among children aged 7-14. Music education not only improves the cognitive and psychomotor skills of children, but also provides emotional and social benefits, including its capacity to cultivate empathy, self-confidence, and creativity. Music education contributes to children growing up as individuals who are self-confident, enterprising, able to express themselves accurately and beautifully, have high perception, have developed aesthetic value judgments, are sensitive, and at peace with themselves and their environment.

In this sense, in order for music education to achieve its goals, educational opportunities must be increased and every child must be given equal opportunity to benefit from music education, which is their "legal right". It is necessary to contribute to the social development of children who have socio-economic deficiencies, who do not have the opportunity to participate in musical practices at school or outside of school, and/or who need special education, by providing educational environments outside of school and by receiving support from out-of-school music education.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, music practices within the scope of SRP, which are organized and carried out on a voluntary basis by various private and legal institutions and organizations, which offer every child the opportunity to receive art education outside of school and engage in any branch of art, regardless of socio-economic status and education level were investigated. This study emphasizes the positive role and beneficial impact of these musical practices on the social development of children.

In a process where the Ministry of National Education has indirectly taken away children's right to art education by making art courses in schools optional, the musical practices carried out within the scope of SRP are quite meaningful and functional. SRP can be defined as "the collaboration of public, private and non-governmental organizations for a common purpose and producing and implementing projects for the benefit of society". The target audience in these projects is children. Because generations with qualified education are the future of a country. If we want a livable world consisting of peaceful and sensitive societies, we need to fulfill our social responsibilities both personally and corporately. By integrating music into comprehensive educational frameworks and SRP, societies can nurture socially responsible citizens equipped to navigate and positively contribute to their communities, thereby advancing broader social and cultural goals.

Although SRP are voluntary practices designed with a collaborative approach, the state should also take some regulatory measures in the dissemination of these important services; Supporting laws and regulations for corporate SRP projects need to be established. In this process, first of all, it is necessary to inform and raise the public's awareness by attracting the public's attention about the contribution of art education to the psycho-social development of children, and to implement community-based and society-integrated change programs. However, in order to draw attention to the importance of the subject and create a widespread impact, it may be suggested that the music education studies carried out in our country and around the world within the scope of SRP be shared with more comprehensive and practical research and scientific publications.

4.1. Limitations and Suggestion

Another recommendation is to conduct SRP with children in need of special education and increase its practices. It is stated in the literature that these studies are the subject of "music therapy" and although there are research on music therapy studies with special needs kids (Devroop, 2012; Teachout, 2015), no studies related to SRP have been found. Accordingly, it may be recommended that music therapy studies be carried out within the scope of SRP, which will enable these children to participate in social life through art education and contribute to their development of cognitive, emotional and psychomotor skills.

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