


Open Access

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Perceptions and Lived Experiences of Teachers about the Status of Art Education in Multigrade Classes (A Case Study of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, Iran)

Zahra Sayadi Shahraki ¹, Zeinab sadat Athari ^{*2}

1. MA of Curriculum Planning, Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran
2. Corresponding Author: Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran E. Mail: zathari@kashanu.ac.ir

Received: 2023-06-06

Accepted: 2023-12-26

Abstract

Aim: The present study aimed to identify the life experiences of the teachers with regard to the status of teaching art in multigrade classes through phenomenological approach. The participants were teachers of multigrade elementary classes in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, Iran. The data were analyzed via Corbin and Strauss method. Data analysis led to the emergence of 2091 open codes, which were classified into four main categories: drawing, crafts, literature, and performance arts. The axial code of “teacher and students’ participatory role in the process of teaching” had the highest frequency in graphic arts, performance arts, and literature while the axial code of “mixing craft arts with different lessons” had the highest frequency in crafts. Finally, the research findings implied that teachers did not place the same amount of importance for different types of art in multigrade classes. Therefore, it is suggested that principals of multigrade schools explain the importance of teaching and attending to different types of art to teachers through holding in-service training courses.

Keywords: *Teaching Art, Multigrade Classes, Elementary School, Elementary Teacher, Phenomenology*

Introduction

The most important goal of the Ministry of Education, as the leading institution of official public education, is to educate versatile, specialized and committed labor forces to achieve a pure life (High Council of Education, 2011, p. 18). The Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE) serves as the basis of all the programs and policies formulated in the education system. Aesthetics and artistic education are important as they have been emphasized in FRDE, and are an essential part of art and the philosophy of education in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Bitarafan et al., 2020, p. 85), which indicates the importance and necessity of art. Art’s constructive and beneficial results for various aspects of students’ lives, especially students of multigrade schools, elucidate the key and strategic role of art as a noble humane value and a tool to achieve the other goals of FRDE, especially in multigrade schools. These schools hold numerous capabilities, and provide a suitable platform for students to know themselves, the world, and God better, use their imagination and think in artistic activities in the best place (nature), and develop their sense of aesthetics (Hasanzadeh, 2021, p. 14). Accordingly, the present study aimed to identify teachers’ perceptions and lived experiences about the state of art education in multigrade elementary classes in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, Iran.

Methodology

This applied qualitative research used semi-structured interviews and phenomenological methods to collect and analyze the data. The statistical population comprised all teachers of multigrade classes in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province in the 2022-2023 academic year. Purposive snowball sampling was used to select the teachers. Interviews were conducted with 16 teachers; after the 13th interview, theoretical saturation was achieved, and the interview did not yield any new information. To further ensure saturation, interviews were continued with 3 other teachers. The validity of the interview guide was confirmed after several rounds of examination by experts, and its reliability was examined based on four criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

The interview transcripts were sent to the interviewees to confirm the accuracy of the findings to ensure credibility. Male and female teachers in different multigrade schools of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province with different degrees, school regions, and work experiences were recruited to ensure transferability. The research was conducted under the supervision of experts to ensure dependability. The codes were given to the experts, and the final codes were obtained after making the necessary modifications. The researcher tried to keep assumptions and biases from interfering with the data collection and analysis to guarantee confirmability. Finally, the data were analyzed by using Corbin and Strauss's method.

Results

According to the findings, 2091 open codes were extracted from the interviews in four themes: drawing (frequency: 29.89%), crafts (26.30%), literature (24.63%), and performance arts (19.18%). The axial code "the participatory role of the teacher and students when teaching drawing" had the highest frequency in drawing, with a frequency of 14.88%, performance arts had a frequency of 17.22%, literature had a frequency of 25.24%, and the axial code "integration of crafts with different subjects" had the highest frequency in crafts, with a frequency of 14.36%. Besides, "performing individual craft activities" in crafts (1.45%) and literature (0.58%) were the least frequent axial codes. The axial codes "the teacher's neglect of evaluating performance arts" and "using the classroom to perform performance arts" had the lowest frequency in performance arts (2%), and the axial code "lack of attention to groupings of drawing" had the lowest frequency in drawing (0.96%).

Discussion and conclusion

The results demonstrate that according to the teachers of multigrade classes, different art forms (drawing, crafts, literature, and performance) did not have the same degree of importance. The greatest attention was paid to drawing and the least to performance arts. Therefore, authorities should explain the importance of education and attention to all kinds of arts to the teachers of multigrade classes by holding in-service training and providing the necessary support. Another issue raised in multigrade classes is the volume of multigrade textbooks, which does not differ from single-grade textbooks, and teachers may have little time to teach arts. Since multigrade teachers need curricula with unique content, authorities should collaborate with experts to compile books with appropriate volume and a curriculum compatible with the characteristics of multigrade students; in this way, the task will become easier for teachers and students, and teachers can introduce students to and teach various forms of arts.

Reference

- Bitarfan, F., Sojudi, M., Dehghani, M. (2019). Examining the implementation obstacles of the fundamental transformation of education document. *Research in curriculum planning*. 2(40), 110-90. <https://doi.org/10.30486/jsre.2020.1884437.1515> (Text in Persian)
- Document of the fundamental transformation of education*. (2011). Ministry of Education and Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Tehran. 64-2. (Text in Persian)
- Hassanzadeh, S. (2021). Challenges and opportunities of integrated education in multigrade classes of primary school students. 1-17. (Text in Persian)



How to cite: Sayadi Shahraki, Z., & Athari, Z. S. (2024). Perceptions and Lived Experiences of Teachers about the Status of Art Education in Multigrade Classes (A Case Study of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, Iran). *The Journal of New Thoughts on Education*, 20(3), 185-203. doi: 10.22051/jontoe.2023.43677.3781