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## INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICE THROUGH THEATRE

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### ABSTRACT

**T**heatre has contributed to the field of education and various studies from ancient time till today. The continuous changes in social, economical, political and cultural scenario in human sphere has influenced theatre in its development and its perception of performance. Theatre as a cultural study has contributed even to the educational sector. Many scholars and socio-cultural thinkers have worked to inculcate theatre in education as value system. Present situation of globalised scenario has drastically changed the scope of theatre and its capability to transfer the knowledge to the pupil/people with a huge source of skills.

The paper focuses on the need of a new method or technique which identifies encouragers and caters to the different needs of the students. Throughout the world, theatre practitioners have constantly experimented with elements of theatre to bring about a qualitative change in the field of education.

**KEYWORDS:** Theatre, Education, Innovation, Teaching, Learning, Students.

### INTRODUCTION:

It is the nature of human being to separate from people or society who is different. Theatre breaks these

barriers of separation and allows to experience the world of another person and at the same time experience oneself in one's own world. In this way theatre bonds together our own humanity.

Theatre has contributed to the field of education and various studies from ancient time till today. The continuous changes in Social, economical, political and cultural scenario in human sphere has influenced theatre in its development and its perception of performance. Theatre as a cultural study has contributed even to the educational sector. Many scholars and socio-cultural thinkers have worked to inculcate theatre in education as value system. Present situation of

globalised scenario has drastically changed the scope of theatre and its capability to transfer the knowledge to the pupil/people with a huge source of skills.

Traditionally education is seen as classroom business where learner and teacher is related with focused syllabus and targeted predetermined results. In this way of teaching there is less scope for students to explore the layered meanings of a particular piece work curriculum understandings. At the same time the Teachers lack the tools or resource to transfer the curriculum understanding. Usually, the mainstream education demands students to produce stereotypical results and understandings and also it posses the teacher to produce so. But theatre



offers multiple layers of understandings put forward through the actor, text, scenic design, music, silence, audience and physical communication to extend the level in to greater understandings.

As Williams Shakespeare puts it, “The play is the thing”, but the power and the promise of the theatre education lie not only in students observing drama on the stage and screen, but also in their own theatre in the class room” Students may watch and observe a number of plays on stage and screen but the theatre in class room is what gives them the complete experience of observing and performing which is equally important.

Every teacher and the educationalist of experience know that even the curriculum and the most perfect syllabus remain dead unless quickened into life by the right methods of teaching and the right kind of teacher. By these lines it shows the importance of using the right kind of teaching method in the curriculum which every teacher is aware of.

At the time when educators across the country are trying new ways to motivate students, plus new ways to prepare a whole new generation for life in a rapidly changing world, theatre can be an important and useful resource. Numerous organizations and initiatives have used theatre as a development tool: for education or propaganda, as therapy, as a participatory tool, or as an exploratory tool in development.

Most of our understandings and learning are always challenged and collide with each other in the process of learning or teaching through Theatre. Most of the physical presentations of the meaning are contradicted by scenic design which enables the learner to get engaged creatively in the process of learning.

It is observed that students understand better when teacher’s communication is good. Drama improves communication skills and helps teacher in this regard. The activities of a teacher and the learner vary depending on the particular society and the epoch.

**METHODOLOGY:**

The subjects are Government and Private School students of Bangalore Urban and Rural District aged between 10 to 15 years. 25 students for controlled group and 25 for experimental group were selected randomly. Quantitative and Qualitative data analysis was done.

|    |                    |    |
|----|--------------------|----|
| 1. | Controlled Group   | 25 |
| 2. | Experimental Group | 25 |

**RESEARCH AND FINDINGS:**

A research was conducted by including creative drama into science teaching as an instructional strategy for enhancing school students understanding of scientific concepts. A treatment group of sixth grade students was thought science unit – Mixtures with addition of creative drama while a control group was thought using the conventional way. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis demonstrated that students who studies science through theatre techniques, exhibited a greater understanding of scientific content of the lessons and preferred learning through theatre.

Treatment group students stated that they enjoyed participating in the activities with the friends and that theatre help them to better understand abstract scientific concept. Teachers involved with the theatre activities were positively impressed and believed that theatre is a good tool for teaching.

Observations also reveal that theatre creates a positive class room environment improved social interaction and self esteem that all students enjoy and the teachers teaching style affects students using theatre techniques.

The study made an effort to understand the challenges posed by the liberalized education due to globalization and the constant effort of the communities and the system as whole to cater to the needs of the students.

It is also observed through the research that theatre is a powerful teaching and learning tool with profound positive effects on a student's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. Theatre is sound pedagogy that reaches students of multiple intelligences and different learning styles. It is a multi-sensory mode of learning that engages mind, body, senses, and emotions to create personal connections to the material that

improve comprehension and retention.

### CONCLUSION:

Students bring to school/college vast differences in gender, maturity, personality, interest, hopes, ability, dreams, ethnicity, social-class, culture, life experiences and so on. Today's education system seems unable or unwilling to grasp these differences. They treat students by grade level with the core – curriculum and education has become a one sided approach. Therefore, there is a need of a new method or technique which identifies encouragers and caters to the different needs of the students. Throughout the world, theatre practitioners have constantly experimented with elements of theatre to bring about a qualitative change in the field of education. Education is one such factor which adds to the quality of the living and many educationists have strived for it.

### Suggestions for teachers: useful for crafting ideas out of concepts:

- + Be prepared: the teacher should be certain to comprehend key terms and concepts, identify desired outcomes, mentally rehearse the activity, and learn about the students.
- + Restore concepts to the experience in which they had their origin and significance: help students understand the power of these concepts had when first discovered by placing them in a clear historical concept. Try to link the information to what the students already know, the effectiveness of this strategy is recognized.
- + Foster anticipation and vital personal experience: treat the lesson as a dramatist would treat a plot, choosing the elements of the content that are most vital and crafting them together to create maximum anticipation and personal involvement.
- + Use metaphors and re-seeing to expand perception: helping see things a-new by braking routine, making students see the common place afresh or making the extra ordinary apprehensible.
- + Creating material out of improvisation, creating stories out of concepts, imbibing the message with the children and Effective post performance discussion.

Education through theatre truly gives joy to both the students and the teachers. It is one form of entertainment that is boundless and grows eternally. Whether one is working with pre-primary, primary, higher education, special or underprivileged children the imagination and creative interest that it can capture has no boundaries. Theatre thus needs to be both sustained and encouraged by all.

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