

Examining the Impact of Historical Stories on the Development of Creativity in Children

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ABSTRACT

The lack of attention from developing countries, particularly those facing war and insecurity, to developing children's creativity, coupled with the use of traditional educational systems in schools, severely impacts children's creativity. Despite this, fostering creativity and imagination in children is considered a key educational goal in the current age. Creativity helps children develop the ability to think creatively, solve problems, and generate new ideas. Thus, one effective way to strengthen and empower talents and skills is through the study of historical stories. Not only do children gain knowledge about events, occurrences, historical figures, and past scientists, but they also find a means to journey into the world of imagination, examining and observing historical events from various perspectives. Through historical stories, they learn about crises, challenges, and the triumphs of heroes and conquerors, drawing valuable lessons from their histories. By reading historical stories, children can model perseverance, ethics, and decision-making, deepening their imagination and thoughts. This study aims to examine the impact of historical stories on the development of creativity in children, considering the importance of this subject. It seeks to demonstrate, based on previous research and studies, how historical stories can serve as a useful and effective tool for developing creative and innovative skills in children. The research also investigates how historical stories can strengthen children's creativity and measures their impact on problem-solving and decision-making skills, as well as institutionalizing the motivation to read historical stories and their effectiveness in enhancing children's reasoning abilities and critical thinking skills. The research method was conducted library-based, examining various types of historical stories to evaluate their effects on children's creativity, including critical thinking and analytical abilities. The results reveal that historical stories can act as a valuable tool in the learning process, going beyond mere narration of the past. They also enhance critical thinking and creativity in children while providing a foundation for learning deep human and cultural concepts. This paper focuses on the impact of historical stories on children's creativity and examines the challenges and opportunities present in developing countries and regions facing war and insecurity. Findings indicate that the challenges and issues hindering children's creativity arise from unsuitable conditions for studying historical stories and factors such as insecurity and ongoing wars in the countries, which prevent children's development and deprive them of education. Children may drop out of school due to losing their family breadwinner. These mentioned challenges can be mitigated to some extent by applying the conclusions and recommendations available in this research. This study emphasizes the importance of incorporating appropriate historical stories into educational programs to enhance children's creativity and innovative thinking, which largely depends on creativity, perseverance, and the understanding of responsibility among parents and teachers in educational and developmental institutions.

Keywords- Motivation, environmental impact, development, children's creativity, historical stories, role of teachers and parents.

I. INTRODUCTION

The main issue and topic of this article is examining the impact of historical stories on the

development of creativity in children. This subject is especially considered because some developing countries, particularly those in war and insecurity, have neglected the development of children's creativity and

also utilize traditional educational systems, which significantly damage children's creativity. This issue necessitates serious attention to children's individual differences and the adaptation of modern education systems. Thus, the research problem is formed around this topic, and until now, no independent study has been conducted on the effect of historical stories on the development of children's creativity. The key question is whether studying historical stories affects the creativity of children. How can historical stories help enhance children's creativity? Our hypothesis is that, yes; one reason for the lack of attention from developing countries, especially those in war and insecurity, toward the development of children's creativity is not knowing the answer to the question: why should we read historical stories? Meanwhile, historical stories of human societies are not simply narratives; they are tales of survival and the struggles of human societies to stay alive. Every nation should be a proponent of peace; however, at the same time, it should be aware and vigilant with firm belief and trust (Will Durant, 1958, p. 531). Undoubtedly, historical stories represent a nation's glorious history, its spiritual capital, and the cornerstone of its self-esteem. One of the main benefits of history is that it helps humanity understand itself and others, enabling informed interactions with others. The study of history empowers individuals as if they have consulted with wise people and scholars, and this consultation is superior to that with contemporaries and acquaintances (Balkhi, 1959, p. 8). Historical stories encourage children to imagine the details of life in bygone eras. This not only helps children learn history; it also enhances their creativity, especially when they are asked to recount a historical event from the perspectives of different characters (Hosseini, 2015, p. 50).

The findings of the research indicate that some educational institutions continue to implement traditional education systems, which have minimal effectiveness in developing children's creativity. In contrast, studying historical stories significantly contributes to the development of creativity, innovation, and critical thinking, which enhances children's reasoning and analytical abilities. Encouragement from parents and educators was also deemed effective in the research results. The primary aim of this study is to reveal the lack of development in children's creativity and their unawareness of the importance of historical stories. Therefore, developing children's creativity through the study of historical stories, analyzing ancient texts, comparing them with research findings, and assessing the extent of creativity development in children through historical stories constitute other objectives of this scientific research article.

Definition of History and Historical Stories

History refers to the collection of events and occurrences that have taken place in the past and have been documented as human knowledge, encompassing

the registration of texts, documents, and historical artifacts. Historical stories are a form of literature inspired by real historical facts and events, narrated imaginatively and engagingly. In historical stories, prominent figures, significant historical events, and cultural advancements are presented in the form of fiction to familiarize the audience, especially children, with history. These types of stories can provide children with a better understanding of the past and introduce moral concepts through historical characters (Moradi Kermani, 2001, pp. 35–36).

Definition of Creativity and Its Importance in Children

Creativity is the ability to generate new, useful, and original ideas, solutions, or objects. In children, this trait can flourish through imagination, art, play, and even storytelling. Creativity helps children view the world around them with a fresh perspective, solve problems in new ways, and better understand concepts. In this context, historical stories can play a significant role in enhancing children's creativity. By listening to various stories, children learn how to utilize their imagination, envision different endings, and explore new characters in their minds. This process supports their mental growth and strengthens their problem-solving abilities (Shabani, 2015, p. 42).

II. THE IMPACT OF ENGAGING STORIES ON CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND CREATIVITY

Engaging stories not only entertains children but also helps them better comprehend educational concepts. These stories are usually crafted using various narrative styles, interesting characters, and unexpected endings. The appeal of a story encourages children to focus their attention on its content and follow it closely. This deep engagement opens up children's minds, making them more receptive and creative during the learning process. Stories that are accompanied by specific images or sounds can also expand children's imaginations and facilitate creative exploitation (Ahmadi, 2011, p. 58).

III. HOW TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO LISTEN TO HISTORICAL STORIES

To encourage children to listen to historical stories, we should narrate them in an engaging manner that sparks their interest. One effective method is to use intriguing questions that provoke the child's thinking. For instance, after reading a story, ask the child to reconstruct the ending in their way. Additionally, using educational tools like picture books can enhance the appeal of the story. Encouraging children to actively

participate in the storytelling process can further increase their interest (Karimi, 2019, p. 57).

Every individual, regardless of age, expects to be praised for their good deeds. This is especially true for children, where encouragement can serve as a crucial educational tool. Encouraging children is vital for modifying their behavior. By rewarding acceptable behaviors, we can strengthen, solidify, and ultimately teach desirable behaviors. To encourage them, we can use various reward methods and teach new skills in the following ways:

- 1- **Verbal Praise:** Using verbal rewards can be beneficial in early childhood. When a child exhibits positive behavior, praise them with affectionate and kind words. For example, expressions like "Wow!" "Great job!" "Well done, my dear!" or "Thank you for doing such a good deed!" are effective. If verbal rewards include describing the child's behavior, the results will be even better, as the child will fully understand the good action they've taken. For instance, if a child puts their books in the right place upon entering the house, you could say, "Well done, thank you for placing your books correctly." When praising verbally, it's important to convey enthusiasm and affection with our words.
- 2- **Non-verbal Praise:** This involves using simple actions to encourage the child without speech, such as patting the child's back, placing a hand on their shoulder, or offering a thumbs-up. For example, if you want to encourage a child in front of their friends due to appropriate behavior, you can use a nod or a gesture.

Both types of praise foster the child's interest, especially when accompanied by rewards, such as reading a story, promising a trip to an amusement park, or buying storybooks, pens, notebooks, and the child's favorite supplies. These rewards not only serve to motivate but also improve the relationship between parents and children (Zarei et al., 2011, pp. 13-14).

IV. EFFECTIVE PLANNING FOR STORYTIME

Effective planning for story time means that stories should be selected based on the child's age and comprehension level, and the timing should be arranged in a way that allows the child to listen to the story comfortably and enjoyably. Storytime should be an engaging and joyful experience for the child, not merely an educational activity; it should also serve as an opportunity to strengthen emotional bonds with parents or educators. Proper timing, selecting stories that align with children's interests, and creating a calm environment for storytelling are key aspects of effective storytime planning (Hashemi, 2016, pp. 21-22).

V. THE ROLE OF HISTORICAL STORIES IN TEACHING HISTORY

Studying history is both enjoyable and educative for children, making it an important subject. Many renowned figures and historical personalities dedicate part of their time to reading historical stories, whether from general history or specific events. Average people also encounter historical content daily, whether at home or work, through various media like magazines, newspapers, radio, and television. History is a vast field, and we engage with it constantly. By being thoughtful and trying to understand historical context, we can greatly benefit from it (Collingwood, 2006, p. 16).

Through studying historical stories, children develop curiosity, self-awareness, cultural understanding, and knowledge of influential scholars and figures in their homeland, along with appreciation for their efforts. Consequently, students' interest in their country increases, fostering patriotism and instilling the importance of preserving historical heritage in children, making love for their homeland an indispensable value (Ansari, 2008, p. 40).

History refers to the collection of past events involving humans and societies, often documented or narrated based on real events but may include imaginative or descriptive elements to make them more engaging. These stories help children gain insights into culture, values, and significant historical figures. To clarify, the role of historical stories in teaching history is outlined as follows (Moradi Kermani, 2001, p. 35).

Historical stories can convey complex historical concepts in a simplified and appealing manner for children through imagination and the art of storytelling. Some noteworthy examples to introduce to children include:

- **Sweet Historical Stories of Islam:** These stories are especially intertwined with famous and influential figures in history, helping children become acquainted with moral concepts and human values.
- **The Story of Galileo and the Discovery of Stars** (Jafari, 2021, pp. 12-15).

Studying historical stories not only familiarizes children with history and culture but also enhances their creativity and cognitive abilities. Stories are powerful tools for the intellectual and emotional growth of children. Therefore, parents and educators should utilize these tools to ensure children benefit from the learning and entertainment that stories provide (Darveshi, 2018, pp. 102-104).

Challenges in Using Historical Stories in Education Alongside the benefits of historical stories in developing children's creativity, there are challenges in effectively using them for children's education. One such challenge is the difficulty in selecting suitable stories for

different age groups. Additionally, some stories possess complex content and numerous details that might make it hard for children to fully grasp the narrative's message (Mirzaei, 2015, p. 65).

1. **Increasing Interest in History:** Historical stories, through engaging narratives, vivid characters, and real or fact-based fictional events, spark children's interest in studying history. Rather than presenting dry and lifeless facts, these stories engage the audience's emotions (Salehi, 2008, p. 45).
2. **Explaining Complex Historical Events:** Historical stories provide children with the opportunity to think about the causes and consequences of historical events, enhancing their analytical skills and critical thinking (Moradi Kermani, 2015, p. 102).
3. **Development of Critical Thinking Skills:** Historical stories enable students to reflect on the causes and outcomes of historical events, thereby strengthening their analytical and critical thinking abilities (Kamrova, 2014, p. 78).
4. **Enhancing Long-Term Memory:** Information conveyed through historical stories is often better retained in long-term memory due to its narrative nature and imaginative elements. This approach helps students to remember more details (Hasanzadeh, 2011, p. 64).
5. **Familiarity with Values and Cultures:** Through historical stories, students become acquainted with the cultural, social, and moral values of past societies, allowing them to compare these with contemporary life (Tabatabai, 2009, p. 123).
6. **Empathy with Historical Figures:** Historical stories give students the chance to become familiar with historical figures, understand their emotions, and analyze their decisions. This empathy can make history more tangible for students and create an emotional connection with the past (Yousefi, 2012, p. 89).
7. **Using Imagination for Better Understanding of History:** Historical stories leverage imaginative elements to help children better visualize life in the past, especially in stories that discuss the environment, clothing, tools, and customs of the time (Nasrollahi, 2011, p. 33).
8. **Promoting Moral and Social Values:** Many historical stories convey lessons of courage, justice, loyalty, and other moral values, contributing to the moral development of children (Hosseini, 2014, p. 72).
9. **Strengthening Cultural and National Identity:** By studying historical stories, students become more familiar with their country's history, which can help reinforce their sense of cultural and national identity (Karimi, 2009, p. 28).
10. **Understanding the Human Aspects of History:** One benefit of historical stories is that they present

history in a human and relatable manner, rather than focusing solely on numbers, dates, and major events. This approach helps children see how ordinary people lived during different periods (Rajabi, 2013, p. 44).

11. **Application in Group Projects:** Historical stories can be used in group activities, such as reenacting a historical scene, creating a play, or developing a new story based on historical facts. These methods promote collaborative learning (Shariati, 2011, p. 88).
12. **Increasing Engagement in the Learning Process:** Using historical stories makes children more interested in learning about history, breaking the monotony of historical texts (Ahmadi, 2012, p. 12).
13. **Developing Analytical and Critical Thinking:** Through historical stories, children can ponder the causes and consequences of events and analyze the context of those times. This skill prepares them for a better understanding of history and its application in everyday life (Maleki, 2008, p. 65).
14. **Connecting the Past and the Present:** Historical stories show children how past events can influence the present and future. This connection helps them understand history as a dynamic discipline relevant to their lives (Fattahi, 2014, p. 22).
15. **Creating Motivation for Deeper Learning:** Many historical stories generate questions in the minds of audiences that encourage them to explore further historical sources (Behrami, 2013, p. 78).
16. **Developing Language and Expression Skills in Children:** Another significant effect of historical stories is the enhancement of children's language and expression skills. These stories help children learn new words, understand complex concepts, and strengthen their writing and speaking abilities. When children are exposed to the literary language of historical stories, their minds naturally engage in analyzing and interpreting the text and language, leading to the development of their language skills. Stories that contain more complex language and rich literary vocabulary—such as narratives from the *Shahnameh* or epic poetry—can help children learn more sophisticated vocabulary and linguistic structures (Karimi, 2017, pp. 43-44).

VI. DISCUSSION

Reading and comprehension skills are among the most important learning needs for children. Comprehension, which includes understanding, interpreting, and inferring from both academic and non-academic texts, familiarizes children with new ideas and information, teaching them better ways to think and live. In other words, literacy is the means through which one can access the endless reservoir of human experience (Abbaspour, 2003, p. 14).

While the study of historical stories offers numerous advantages in developing children's creativity, it also faces challenges and criticisms. Despite the significant benefits of historical narratives in fostering children's creativity, some researchers argue that these stories, by presenting factual information and fixed events, may limit children's thought patterns. This can negatively affect their unrestricted imagination and creativity, preventing them from developing their stories without a historical framework.

One of the key advantages of using historical stories is their ability to engage and activate children's minds, enabling them to better understand complex historical concepts. This method helps children gain a clearer understanding of historical events while also extracting moral and social messages from the stories. Many historical narratives feature prominent figures whose lives can inspire children. For instance, stories about the lives of prophets and notable characters, such as Abul-Maslam Khurasani, Seyyed Jamal ad-Din Afghan, and Mir Ghulam Muhammad Gobar, can motivate children and teach them how to approach and solve their life challenges.

However, in war-torn countries, attention to children's creativity is often neglected. The critical conditions resulting from war, such as a lack of educational resources, the absence of creative programs, and the psychological pressures on children, constitute serious barriers to developing their creative thinking. Furthermore, the reliance on traditional and outdated teaching methods, especially in schools, hampers children's ability to fully utilize their intellectual capacities.

On the other hand, historical stories, which could serve as powerful tools for children, receive less attention in these regions. Teachers, often lacking specialized training and adequate resources, do not employ engaging and innovative methods, limiting their teaching to the mere narration of events and historiography. These issues not only impede children's cognitive growth but also deprive future generations of understanding their country's historical and cultural values (Rahmani, 2016, pp. 32-33).

Conducting workshops that encourage students to write historical stories, design historical cartoons, or create art projects based on historical events can significantly contribute to developing creativity and deepen their understanding of history. This approach is particularly beneficial in war-torn areas, as it allows children to express their emotions through these activities (Jafari, 2016, pp. 35-36).

While history is important from a child's perspective, historical stories must be presented in a way that is understandable to their minds. This may involve simplifying historical events, characters, and complex concepts and creating narratives where the storytelling element is prominent.

Findings indicate that historical stories can act as a powerful tool for stimulating children's creativity, even in conflict zones. These narratives provide positive role models and stories reinforcing human values, positively impacting children's mental development.

According to Ali Akbar Salehi, historical stories are not just educational tools; they can also help reduce psychological damage (Salehi, 2008, p. 78). However, the lack of access to specialized teachers and suitable content in these areas limits this positive role. The educational systems in war-torn countries are often traditional and ineffective. Children in these regions typically lose the ability to utilize creative learning approaches due to a lack of modern infrastructure and resources. Zahra Karimi notes that employing modern educational methods, especially in conflict zones, can significantly improve educational quality (Karimi, 2011, p. 142).

The United Nations and organizations like UNICEF play a vital role in addressing educational and supportive challenges faced by children in war zones. They strive to alleviate crises by establishing temporary schools, distributing educational resources, and providing psychological services. However, budget constraints and a lack of cooperation from local governments reduce the effectiveness of these programs.

The UNICEF Annual Report (2022) emphasizes the necessity of long-term investment in educational infrastructure and mental health support for children in conflict areas (UNICEF, 2022, p. 23).

VII. FINDINGS

Research into historical sources, particularly regarding the impact of stories on the development of creativity in children, is essential. Based on the research results, the following findings were obtained:

1. Identification of the impact of various suitable historical stories on children's creative development.
2. Understanding the therapeutic role of historical stories in war-torn regions.
3. Recognition of the enhancement of problem-solving skills in children.
4. Awareness of the role of parents and teachers in fostering children's creativity.
5. Understanding the lack of modern educational systems in developing countries.
6. Acknowledgment of the psychological challenges faced by orphaned children in conflict zones.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Research on **the impact of historical stories on the development of creativity in children** indicates that these stories can serve as powerful tools in children's education. They not only aid in developing creativity and imagination but also enhance social and emotional skills.

Historical narratives allow children to engage with challenges and learn problem-solving methods and critical thinking. To improve the impact of these stories, it is essential to select appropriate resources and design complementary creative activities to create a positive and constructive learning experience.

The use of historical stories in educational programs, especially in culturally rich countries like Afghanistan, can help instill values and cultural awareness while guiding the next generation toward creative thinking and innovation. Future research should delve deeper into the social, cultural, and psychological effects of historical stories across different age groups, considering cultural diversity.

Children in war-torn societies often face psychological, economic, and social limitations that hinder their creativity. Due to the stress and trauma from war and orphanhood, these children require significant support to develop their creative skills. Providing psychological, financial, and educational support is crucial for orphaned children to access education and nurture their creativity. Creating a safe environment and employing creative teaching methods can pave the way for their success. Thus, when historical stories are systematically integrated into educational systems, they can profoundly impact children's creativity. Historical narratives not only facilitate the teaching of history but also enhance creative thinking, imagination, and cognitive abilities. In countries facing war and crisis, historical stories can serve as a tool for psychological rebuilding and motivation for children. Special attention should be paid to incorporating historical narratives into curricula and replacing traditional teaching methods with more creative approaches.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the research, the following suggestions are made to enhance the process of developing children's creativity through historical stories:

1. Improve the use of historical stories to strengthen children's creativity.
2. Select a variety of appropriate stories according to children's age groups.

3. Integrate historical stories with children's creative activities.
4. Educate parents and the community about the importance of historical stories.
5. Create support programs for children in war-torn areas.
6. Develop educational centers and utilize modern educational systems in developing countries.
7. Encourage the participation of international organizations in providing educational resources.
8. It is necessary to conduct another study titled "The Impact of Teaching Historical Stories on Children's Cognitive and Emotional Development" to supplement the results of this research.

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