

## The Role of Cultural Events in Rehabilitation, Therapy and Education of People with Special Needs

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### Abstract

Cultural events play an important role in the development of an individual's emotional, cognitive and social development; despite the individual peculiarities and differences of the participants, cultural events strengthen the unity of the group members. They develop the skills of cooperation and dialogue.

The research shows that nowadays the number of events aiming at raising cultural awareness, rehabilitation, physical-psychotherapy, interaction and sensitivity is quite a few. Most number of events has the function of having psychological effect on society. They mostly serve to form certain views, mood and thinking among people. Such events include special evenings, concerts or other kinds of performances dedicated to the people with special needs that emphasize the difference among people. These kinds of meetings can have a negative effect on people with special needs. Most people with special needs or sometimes all of them are passive listeners only. The events acquire the didactic role for the society rather than educational, rehabilitative or therapeutic function for people with any abilities. The events conducted for people with special needs are held quite often. So-planned cultural events cannot develop interaction and culture of communication among people with special needs and other members of society. It is vital to realize that number of cultural events with people of any abilities involved and accurately defined outcomes achieved by each participant as a result of the event is quite small.

Similar events not only support rehabilitation, therapy and education for people with disabilities but also, they have a didactic function for society – acceptance of diversity, the feelings of fellowship and respect towards each other are developed. It is necessary to increase the number of events planned in the abovementioned way especially in the following educational institutions such as preschools and schools.

We can make conclusions of the abovementioned issues:

1. It is compulsory for the cultural events to fulfill the function of rehabilitation, physical-psychotherapy, interaction and sensitivity; the role of education in raising the cultural awareness;
2. It is necessary for the organizers of the events to know the methodology of planning and conducting cultural events;
3. It is important to choose the participants of cultural events taking into consideration diversity, different needs and abilities of people
4. It is vital to decrease to the minimum the number of events emphasizing the difference among people.

**Keywords:** people with special needs, cultural events, musical therapy, art therapy, psychodrama, dance therapy, interaction, sensitivity, raising cultural awareness.

### Introduction

Cultural events, connected with various fields of culture (dancing, music, drama, art, reading fiction, drawing, and sculpture) are based on person's creative skills. They reveal cultural heritage in an improvised way and give opportunity to reveal and develop the resources and potential in the human being.

Cultural events play a certain role in the development of an individual's emotional, cognitive, social development; despite the individual peculiarities and differences of the participants, they strengthen the unity of the group members. Cultural events help to develop the skills of cooperation and communication. They give the opportunity to express emotions and to enrich one's own social experiences that is the precondition of the formation of the deserving citizens.

According to Mirian Donat Sherten the exclusiveness of the cultural events is shown in the following:

1. The cultural Mirian, D. Sherten, heritage is maintained.
2. Integration of feelings, ideas and their abstract demonstration takes place.
3. Harmonization of movement, rhythm, voice and shape is carried out.
4. On the one hand, harmonization of movement and voice, on the other hand, the harmonization of calmness and immobility takes place.
5. The harmonization of intensity and relaxation is fulfilled.
6. The connection of games and rituals is completed.
7. The Combination of truth and fairy tale, fact, fantasy and dream is fulfilled.
8. The integration of individual and common, social interests take place. (Pachkoria, 2008: 330).

Cultural events are integral parts of people of any abilities. Its objectives are information gain,

development of relationships, maintenance of cultural heritage, rehabilitation and therapy, fostering the process of inclusive studies and education.

Rehabilitation, therapy and education own common aspects. Rehabilitation means to recover the lost functions and it also can affect the person in a therapeutic way. As a result, the learning process becomes easier. Effective therapy improves the process of learning and rehabilitation. Moreover, good education brings therapeutic results and helps the rehabilitation process. It is clear they are mutually conditioned. However, therapy plays the utmost role among these three things as it affects deep feelings and human psychology. Its types are:

1. Musical therapy- founded by Pitagora. Researches show that pleasant emotions caused by melody improve the activity of the brain-cortex, blood circulation, breathing, and metabolism. Physiological reactions become effective. As a result, capacity of work, mood and disposition gets better. (2);

2. Dance therapy – it was recognized in 1950. Its origin is connected with the dancer and choreographer Marian Chace, who was first to observe the dance therapy. She discovered its successful effect on the patients. The dance therapy movement can only bring benefits to the patients. With the help of combination of body, soul and spirit, dance therapy ensures the development of the feelings, disposition and emotional experience (4)

3. Psychodrama is a team and game-based method where the important events of life are acted out instead of speaking about the actual problems. The psychodrama method encourages not only solving the problem but also, the activation of creative skills, forming spontaneous reactions which are necessary in order to respond to non-typical situations and adjust the social role (5).

4. Art therapy – the idea belongs to the German psychiatrist Arthur Kronfeld (Psychogogik, - Psychotherapy about the upbringing process). He indicated the fact that for the development of a human being it is vitally important to apply those therapeutic methods, which contribute to the harmonious development of the person and reinforcement of internal forces. To achieve the goal, the doctor considered the art therapy to be the best method. He was one of the initiators who referred to the different fields of the art while working with children of certain disabilities. The concept “art therapy”, which was later used in medical literature, was firstly used in 1938. Literally, the term “art therapy” means treatment with the help of art and the emphasis is done not on the creation of the masterpiece of high esthetical value, but the therapeutic effect of the process of creation (3: 6)

Cultural events play more important role in rehabilitation and therapy rather than in education. They have the following functions in education:

1. Cultural events give the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and formation of skills in the field of art (students gain knowledge about historical events, cultural traditions; they develop the skills of dancing, music, drawing, sculpturing and other similar skills).

2. Cultural events give children education with the aim of raising cultural awareness, interaction and sensitivity.

While planning and carrying out cultural events it is necessary to share a holistic approach of child development, which implies the following: Children, taking part in the events have the existing experience of physical, social, emotional and intellectual characteristics, which has been acquired because of interaction and cooperation with physical and social environment. Education should give individuals the opportunity to gain new experience, that requires taking into consideration the influence of all the aspects of development (physical, social, emotional and intellectual) and physical and social environment. (Pachkoria, 2008:347)

It is important to realize that an individual is in a reciprocal action in a direct or an indirect way with the micro environment (family, kindergarten, school and etc) and the relationship of “giving and getting” is formed, where the balance is kept through respect towards the individual person, defense of his/her rights, social relationships existed in families, democracy, society, workplace. In addition, micro environment with its laws and rules affects the person with the influence of media that indirectly affects an individual’s knowledge and education. Furthermore, nature, climate, global politics and culture can have some influence on the person’s development.

While realizing the role of cultural events, except for person’s development and the factors affecting on that, it, is vital to know the concept of creativity. According to the Norwegian researcher Gunvor Rand (1981), creativity is the process, in which the individual person is searching for new, original product, relevant to the situation, concrete or abstract carried out as a result of the interaction with the environment, his/her abilities, skills.

According to the analysis of literary sources, there are two types of creative work: intuitive and analytical. Intuitive creative work is not planned beforehand, it is improvised. However, analytical creative work is planned beforehand through individual’s views and wishes. In most cases, the process of creative work is the combination of intuitive and analytical creation. The creative process does not like the strict frames; though having no structure at all often hinders the process of creation. Hence, it follows that it is necessary to have the certain structure. For instance, it is necessary to define beforehand the title, the main content, duration,

movement, shape, color and other similar things and freedom, as well as unlimited improvised activity.

Gunvor Randibelieves that the skill of creative work is not only the gift given from the god. The creative skill can be developed in every person, in spite of the level of development and skills. It depends on the opportunities the environment will give the person. The researcher believed that the problem of creativity in children of hearing and visual impairment might be connected more with their teachers than the skills of the children. This can be proved by the analysis of the situation existed nowadays: There are cases, when children with hearing impairment surprise the audience with the beautiful dances performed by them. The children with visual impairment astonish the audience with their skills of fine arts (Pachkoria, 2008: 353-354).

Cultural events will contribute to the development of the individual's creative skills. Supposing it is necessary, they will take active part in it. The organizers will be well mastered the methodology of conducting the cultural events.

While planning cultural events it is necessary for the organizer to be aware of the skills needed for the involvement in the cultural events. The organizer of the events should be well aware of the participants' level of development and abilities. He/she should know the feelings cultural events might evoke in each of the participants. It is important to take into account the participants' interests in order to choose the optimal role for them.

The events should be planned for the development of physical, social, emotional and intellectual skills and should have the following outcomes: Reviving the memories and imagination; expressing feelings, the development of the feeling of independence; stimulation of social demands and interaction; Development of critical attitude and opinions.

When working on the cultural event, the teacher must be able to notice the change of mood in the process, the level of interaction and relationship that is the basis to stir up creative skills.

What is meant under interaction and relationship? Interaction and relationship create the basis for teaching and development of any person and develops the belief in your own abilities.

Interaction is the attention drawn to two or more people towards each other, or to the other objects in the process of which individuals speak to each other, play, listen and carry out observation, develop empathy.

The relationship implies sharing. It is held between two or more people. They share the ideas, feelings, interests, information etc.

Interaction and relationship is closely connected with each other. The high level of interaction and relationship can be characterized with sensitivity, spontaneity, stamina, kindness, creative work, empathy.

Cultural events develop the process of interaction and relationship of all the participants. At the same time, they create the necessary structure for the development of interaction and relationship. It can increase individuals' confidence and gives them the opportunity of effecting their personal life and development.

With the help of cultural events, people develop strong personality, interests and the skill of the problem solving. It encourages the development of the inclusive process, which is a powerful tool for the formation of inclusive, democratic society.

We have carried out the research for the purpose of justification the importance of the planning the cultural events in the right way, purposefully for the people with special needs.

**Research problem:** To define the quantity of events for educational functions aiming at raising cultural awareness, sensitivity, physical- psychic therapy and interaction, rehabilitation of the people with special needs; To assess the conducted cultural events and to arrive at relevant conclusions and make recommendations.

**Research methods:** Questionnaire survey, in-depth interview.

**Object of study:** Batumi Public School №1, 2, 3, 6, 14, 15, Gonio Public School students, parents and teachers.

**The course of research:** Questionnaire survey was carried out in which 100 students, 100 parents, 100 teachers of abovementioned schools took part. It turned out that the number of events aimed at raising cultural awareness, rehabilitation, physical-psychic therapy and interaction, sensitivity, education is quite a few in the region. Most number of events has the function of having psychological effect on society. They mostly serve to form certain views, mood and thinking among people.

In-depth interview was conducted to parents and 11-12 grade students. 80% of respondents believed that the events, concerts or other kinds of performances dedicated to the people with special needs emphasizes the difference among people, that can have a negative effect on people with special needs. Most people with special needs or sometimes all of them are passive listeners only. The events take the didactic role for the society more than educational, rehabilitative or therapeutic function for people with any abilities.

Some cultural events conducted at the city level for people with special needs cannot fulfill its functions completely, nor has the didactic function for the society. So-planned cultural events cannot develop interaction and cultural communication among people with special needs and other members of society.

The number of cultural events in which people of any disabilities are involved and accurately defined outcomes achieved by each participant because of the event is quite small. Similar events not only support

rehabilitation, therapy and education for people with disabilities, but also, it has a didactic function for society – acceptance of diversity, the feelings of fellowship and respect towards each other are developed. It is necessary to increase the number of events planned in the abovementioned way especially in the following educational institutions such as preschools and schools.

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2. It is necessary for the organizers of the event to know the methodology of planning and conducting cultural events;
3. It is important to choose the participants of cultural events taking into consideration diversity, different needs and abilities of people;
4. It is significant to increase the number of events in which people of any abilities can participate together;
5. It is vital to decrease to the minimum the number of events emphasizing the difference.

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