

Degree of Creative Teaching Skills Used by Teachers Practicing Social Studies in Jordan in Light of the Variables of Qualification, Experience and Gender

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Abstract

The study aims to find out the degree to which teachers practicing social studies in Jordan use creative teaching skills and how the variables of qualification, experience and gender affect these skills.

A random sample of 145 teachers was selected, and the tool of the study used consisted of 26 items to measure creative teaching skills. The study found that the degree of creative teaching skills used by teachers practicing social studies in Jordan in light of variables of qualification, experience and gender was large, with statistically significant differences in the degree of practice among teachers due to the variable of qualification in favor of master's degree holders and experience, especially those with less than 5 years. There were no significant differences in the variable of gender in the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers

Keywords: skills, teachers, creative teaching.

1. Introduction

Creativity is considered to be a crucial topic in various countries. Many research studies have highlighted its importance especially in educational areas which call for the need to train teachers on specific practices that lead to the unleashing of the creativity of students because standard teaching knowledge does not provide a good basis for learning and teaching creativity. Great progress in the development and advancement of technology, cognitive and scientific discoveries, and modern inventions are the core result of creative individuals and their ability to think. This progress is partially the result of the creative practices of teachers that lead to the development of character, self-fulfillment and emancipation of students as opposed to the traditional models in teaching.

Dynneson and Gross (1995) showed that skill is the ability and knowledge of using a particular thing accurately. Borger and Seaborne (1966) presented skill as a particular complex activity that requires a period of organized training and practicing so as to lead an appropriate manner, and in this sense the focus is on activity, achievement and the treatment of mental realism. Creativity is "the process of sensing problems and awareness of weaknesses, gaps, inconsistencies, lack of information, the search for solutions, forecasting, formulating and choosing new hypotheses in order to reach solutions or new commitments by using available data and the transfer or delivery of results to others" (Torrance, 1993, p43).

Saphier and Gower (1987) saw teaching skills as a set of performances that should be available in the teacher in order to be able to implement the teaching process successfully and effectively. The planning skills of teaching include formulating the behavioral objectives of the lesson, determining the introduction to the lesson, identifying the range of references for the lesson, formulating the elements of the lesson, identifying the educational tools that will be used during the implementation of the lesson, and preparing questions to evaluate it. These skills become evident in the preparation of an effective plan for the lesson, along with the skills of lesson implementation, classroom behavior management, and verbal and non-verbal interaction in classroom.

Teaching is considered a creative process. When teachers are creative, they can achieve an integration of the pillars of teaching, achieving a creative interaction between the teacher and the learner, on the one hand, and between the learning material and learning environment, on the other hand. Bear in mind that creative teaching is takes full advantage of the availability of educational attitudes and directs them in line with the preparations and potential capabilities of the learners.

Creative teachers have the ability to develop themselves as teachers through the innovation of teaching methods from time to time, as well as to be able to create the right conditions to raise positive competition among learners, prepare all untalented learners who need their abilities and interests to become talented, and show teaching as a way of life and not as a source of income only (Qotami, 1995).

1.1 Creative Teaching Skills

Creative teaching skills have emerged from the prevailing environment in the society in general and the availability of administrative, technical, and physical circumstances and conditions in the school which encourage creativity and the nature of the school's curriculum. Also, creative teachers understand the nature of creativity in light of their abilities and the abilities of their students at the same time which is a major contributing factor to the choice of teaching materials, method of submission, and configuration of appropriate teaching-learning situations. Creative teaching skills can be identified as follows (Jerwan, 2002; Ibrahim, 2005):

- Planning and Preparing the Lesson: Creative teachers identify the learning objectives for the lesson clearly and accurately so that the goals are commensurate with the students, formulate educational goals that can behaviorally be measured, and put many equivalent goals for the situation of education, and others.
- Analyzing the Content of Topics: Creative teachers prepare integrated lessons that are consistent with the goals related to the content of the lesson, using teaching and assessment methods that are suitable for the topics of the lesson. The teachers should be aware of the dimensions of the content analysis process and identify the aspects of the learning process of concepts, relationships, and skills.
- Teaching and Learning: Teachers should have a deep knowledge about the skills of teaching and learning as these skills help the teachers to achieve many objectives including: helping students to understand concepts by associating them with their own experiences and ideas, providing the appropriate mindset to gain knowledge of various concepts on an ongoing basis, developing concepts and varied expertise, providing freedom for the students to ask questions and make mistakes until eventually they reach the correct formulation for the concept to be learned, and giving students the opportunity to observe and classify things.
- Using Educational Materials in the Teaching Process: Teachers should fully integrate textbooks and other educational activities, providing different sources of learning for the student with real direct contact by the student.
- Formulating and Asking Classroom Questions: Teachers should take into account varying abilities. Questions should be specific, precise, short, clear, sequential, logical, coherent, and suitable for the age of the students and their degree of achievement. Questions should be addressed to all students without stipulation and asked more than once. Teachers should listen to more than one answer, pay attention to wrong answers and clarify errors, and give enough time to reflect on the questions.
- Preparation of Classroom Tests: Teachers should prepare tests that according to scientific sources are stable, objective, honest and comprehensive as well as easy to prepare, apply and correct.
- Using a Blackboard in Teaching: The effective use of a blackboard in a lesson is one of the factors that unites the spirit of unity in the class. Also, it improves the ability of teachers to teach and improves students' ability to learn.
- Organizing and Managing Classrooms: Teachers should recognize and follow the practices and processes that make classroom management effective to achieve success in the educational process and educational goals.

Patrick (2000) aimed to identify the impact that training programs for teachers of science in Britain in the field of creative teaching had on the creative thinking abilities of students and their attitudes. The study sample consisted of 20 teachers, and the results showed that creative skills were displayed by the teachers and that led to the improvement of the capacity for creative thinking among students that directly correlated with the training programs for teachers.

Pratte (2001) found out about the impact of teachers on the academic excellence and achievements of students. A questionnaire tool consisting of 20 exercises was used. The study sample was from a group of students from the faculties of Engineering and Science from the original study of the population at Ohio University in the United States of America. The results showed that the creativity of teachers affected the level of academic achievement of students by 70%, worked to overcome the theoretical routine side of school material, influenced students by 50% with their charisma and practiced creative teaching skills which led students to respond and cooperate with the teacher to reach a higher level of excellence and creativity.

Cheong (2003) measured the impact of teachers' skills and creativity on the level of student achievement and scientific excellence with a questionnaire consisting of 17 exercises. The study sample consisted of 62 elementary schools, 58 directors of elementary schools, 10,476 teachers with a length of service between two and 23 years, and 71,969 students from the sixth grade of the study population. The study concluded that the creativity of teachers were significantly associated with students' educational attainment and affected the building of students' concepts and ability to control actions inside or outside the school and their psychological status. The teachers' creativity positively affected students and led them to imitate their creative teachers.

Mills (2003) conducted a study designed to explore and identify the characteristics of outstanding teachers for talented students in the United States. Sixty-three teachers and 1,247 students of high-capacity participated and the results showed that teachers with advanced degrees were highly experienced practitioners, most of whom

didn't have official licenses or certificates in gifted education.

Rasras (2006) in his study argued that the creative skills of Islamic teachers in Jordan were related to students' attainment. The sample of the study consisted of 40 teachers, and the results showed that the teachers' creative skills were at an average level, with no statistical difference because of the variables of qualification, gender, or teaching experience.

Al Najjar's (2012) study aimed to know how teachers of scientific material have creative teaching skills and the relation with academic attainments in college. The sample of the study consisted of 22 teachers of scientific material from the Teachers College in Qanfatha, Saudi Arabia. Cards were used as a method of study, and the study showed that all of the teachers didn't have creative teaching skills but practiced traditional teaching.

This study benefited from the former studies in the selection of the methodology and tools of study, the variables of the study, and the suitable statistical treatment in addition to strengthening the results of the current study with the results of past studies.

2 Statement of the Study

The strategies of creative teaching and its ability to improve students are considered the main role in teaching. When these strategies are implemented by teachers, they enable teachers to deal with educational variables by providing the precise interaction between learners, elements of their environment, learning resources, and educational materials that contribute to the development of modern creative ideas and principles. This is the main objective and purpose of the educational process in the contemporary world.

The significance of the study shows the important role of teachers and their behavior in the educational process. Creative learning among students is learning which responds to patterns of change to the actual needs of the learners. Another reason of the importance of this study is that it displays the real practice of creative teaching skills for social studies teacher, and especially that creativity is an important topic in the educational process. The results of this study are particularly important for administrators in the Ministry of Education to contribute to the development of programs to prepare social studies teachers in-service and before that as well.

3 Questions of the Study

First question: What is the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers practicing in Jordan?

Second question: Did the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers practicing in Jordan differ according to gender, qualification and experience?

4 Definition of Key Terms

Degree of practicing: The degree exercised by the teacher through their responsiveness on a set scale prepared reflecting the reality of the practice of social studies teachers using creative teaching skills.

Social studies teachers: Teachers of history, geography, and civics for the high elementary level who were in service in the Directorate of Education in the first and second governorate in Amman in the second semester of the academic year 2012/2013.

Creative teaching skills: Range of methods, procedures, and verbal and non-verbal behavior by the social studies teachers during their interaction with students in a classroom.

5 Limitations of the Study

Results of this study are determined by the nature of the sample and study tool, where the limitations of this study are summarized as follows:

- Limiting the sample of teachers in the Directorate of Education in Amman, the capital of Jordan.
- Reliance of study on the tool prepared and developed by researchers through a literature review of the subject of educational study, such as the study of Rasars (2006).
- Limiting the study to the variables of gender, academic qualification, experience, and teachers as a sample of this study.

6 Methodology of the Study

This study relied on the descriptive analytical approach by reviewing the theoretical literature on creative thinking skills and practices, in addition to relevant previous studies. This study developed a questionnaire to collect data, the answers to the questions of the study were analyzed and a set of recommendations were provided in the light of these results.

6.1 Sample of the Study

The sample consisted of all primary school teachers (293 teachers) in the first and second governorate in Amman, the capital of Jordan. The table.1 shows the characteristics of the study sample.

Table.1

6.2 Study Tool

A questionnaire was developed for measuring the variables of the study relying on the theoretical literature of practicing creative teaching, as well as an access to tools used in previous studies such as Rasras (2006). The study tool consisted of two parts. The first part was devoted to the collection of the demographic data of the teachers including academic qualification, experience, and gender. The second part was to measure the instructional practices of the teachers on creative thinking; this part included 26 items where the following ranking was used to denote the averages of the responses among the respondents on the degree of creative teaching skills used by practicing teachers:

- Arithmetic averages for estimates 4.2 and more corresponded to a very large degree of practice.
- Arithmetic averages of estimates from 2.4 to 4.3 corresponded to a large degree of practice.
- Arithmetic averages of estimates from 3.4 to 2.6 corresponded to a moderate practice.
- Arithmetic averages of estimates from 2.6 to 1.8 corresponded to a little degree of practice.
- Arithmetic averages of estimates of 1.8 or less corresponded to a very little degree of practice.

6.3 Validity of Study Tool

6.3.1 First: Validity of Consultants

The study tool was seen by seven specialists in the field of educational psychology and curriculum and instruction in Jordanian universities to verify the appropriateness and validity of items used to measure the practices of social studies teachers related to creative skills. The observations and opinions of the specialists were taken into consideration, and the items were reformulated in the light of these observations.

4.3.2 Second: Validity of Internal Consistency

To verify the validity of the internal consistency of the questionnaire, a Pearson correlation coefficient was used to measure the relationship between each phrase and its overall degree. The results are as follows:

Table.2

Table (2) shows that all of the correlation coefficients between each phrase and the overall degree of the questionnaire were positive and statistically significant at the level of 0.01 ranging between 0.656 - 0.888.

This indicates that all of the questionnaire phrases are resolute and measure their targets precisely.

6.4 Stability of the Questionnaire

The researcher tried to find the reliability of the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the questionnaire that reached very high level which is 0.980, assuring that the questionnaire has a very high degree of consistency.

6.5 Statistical Processing Methods

To achieve the objectives of the study, the researchers used the statistical packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze the data and get the results as follows:

Frequencies and percentages to describe the characteristics of the study sample.

Averages and standard deviations to identify the responses of the respondents on each of questionnaire phrases.

A Pearson correlation coefficient (Pearson Correlation) to measure the validity of the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

A Cronbach alpha coefficient (Alpha) to measure the stability of the questionnaire.

A T Test to calculate the differences between two independent groups.

Analysis of one-way ANOVA to calculate the differences between more than two independent groups.

A Test (LSD) to compare the differences of dimensional averages.

6.6 Variables of the Study

Independent variables: three sections:

A – Teacher Qualification: two levels of Bachelor and Master.

B – Experience (years of service): four levels of less than 5 years, from 6 -10 years, 11-15 years, and more than 16 years.

C – Gender: male and female.

The dependent variable was the degree of creative teaching skills used by teachers practicing social studies.

7. Research Results and Their Discussion

Results related to the first question: What is the degree of creative teaching skills used by teachers practicing social studies in Jordan?

To answer this question, the researcher calculated averages, standard deviations, arrangements and the degree of creative teaching skills used by teachers practicing social studies in Jordan, and the results are presented in Table .3 displays the degree of creative teaching skills used by teachers practicing social studies in Jordan from the point of view of the respondents with a range between 3.48 and 4.41.

Table.3

Phrase (1) (use of various technological teaching tools to clarify material) got the highest average (4.41) with the

highest degree of practicing, while the rest of the other phrases got a high degree of practicing and the lowest is the phrase 24 (use encouragement to strengthen uncommon responses) which acquired the lowest average (3.48). The Table .3 also shows that the practice of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan as a whole got average values (3.80) with a high degree of practicing, and this indicates that the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan are significantly high. The researchers believe that this result is consistent with the modern trends of the Ministry of Education through the project to develop education programs towards a knowledge-based economy, where modern curricula is designed to activate creative teaching strategies and provide computerized educational programs and training courses in the field of teaching. This curriculum in creative modern methods and strategies as well as the assignment of valuable awards for Distinguished Teachers in the kingdom like the Queen Rania Award for Distinguished Teachers, will impact positively on teachers and their creative educational practices. This result is consistent with the study of Patrick (2000) but disagrees with the conclusion of Najjar's (2012) study in the degree of creative practices of teachers which was low.

Results related to the second question: Did the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan differ according to gender, qualification and experience?

Gender

Averages and standard deviations of the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan by gender were extracted and the T test was used to see significant differences between these averages.

Table.4

and the results are presented in Table 4 that shows there is no statistically significant differences at the level of 0.05 in the arithmetic averages of the degree of teaching creative skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan depending on the variable of gender. Researchers have shown a logical outcome because training and guidance by the Ministry of Education is subject for both genders and at the same time, place and circumstances, which justifies the similarity of innovative practices they have. This result is consistent with Rasras' (2006) study in the absence of significant statistical differences in the practice of creative teaching skills.

Qualification

Averages and standard deviations of the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan by qualifications were extracted and the T test was used to see significant differences between these averages, and the results are as follows:

Table.5

Table 5 shows the existence of significant differences at the level of 0.05 in the arithmetic average of the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan depending on the qualification variable for obtaining a master's degree. This result explains that teachers acquire the skills and abilities of best teaching when they get higher qualifications, due to the scientific courses at the postgraduate level which lead them to experience an in-depth awareness of their performances and the expansion of their minds by practicing what they have acquired in their studies. This study is consistent with Mills' (2003) study but disagrees with the conclusion of Rasras' (2006) study in the absence of significant statistical differences in the practice of creative teaching skills attributed to scientific qualification which is possibly due to the period between the two studies.

Experience

Averages and standard deviations of the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan by experience were extracted and the T test was used to see significant differences between these averages.

Table.6

and the results are illustrated in Table 6 which shows the existence of significant differences at the level of 0.05 in the arithmetic average of the degree of creative teaching skills used by practicing social studies teachers in Jordan depending on the experience variable. To learn the differences that existed from any of the categories of expertise, a test (LSD) was conducted for comparison, see Table 7.

Table.7

It is clear from this table that there are significant statistical differences in the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan and experience less than 5 and other experiences to the benefit of 5 or less, between the experience 6-10 and more than 15 for the benefit of 6 - 10, as well as between experience 11 - 15 and more than 15 for the benefit of 11 - 15. This indicates that the degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan is more whenever experience is less.

This result shows that teachers with modern expertise can affect students positively. According to Pratte (2001) and Cheong's (2003) studies, students were affected by 50% of their teachers' personalities and the creative teaching skills used by their teachers. These practices are used less by the teachers with more years of experience as teachers become familiar with teaching practices, especially if they stay in the same school.

8. Recommendations

1. Setting courses for creative skills while preparing teachers at the first undergraduate (Bachelor's) stages.
2. Rehabilitating and appointing specialized supervisors in the development of creative teaching skills.
3. Intensifying training programs for creative teaching skills of teachers of advanced expertise in teaching.

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Table 1. Distribution of the study according to the study variables

Variable	Categories of variable	Number	Percentages
Gender	Male	77	53.1
	Female	68	46.9
Qualification	Bachelor	98	67.6
	Master	47	32.4
Experience	Less than 5	44	30.3
	6-10	32	22.1
	11-15	37	25.5
	More than 16	32	22.1

Table 2. Correlation coefficient of items to the overall degree

Paragraph	Correlation coefficient	Item	Correlation coefficient
1	**0.699	14	**0.869
2	**0.656	15	**0.888
3	**0.787	16	**0.830
4	**0.784	17	**0.840
5	**0.792	18	**0.859
6	**0.734	19	**0.879
7	**0.774	20	**0.870
8	**0.739	21	**0.772
9	**0.853	22	**0.749
10	**0.879	23	**0.816
11	**0.828	24	**0.836
12	**0.826	25	**0.823
13	**0.879	26	**0.756

* A significant statistical difference

Table 3. The degree of creative teaching skills used by teachers practicing social studies in Jordan

No	Phrases	Average	Standard deviation	Degree of practicing	Arrangement
1	Using various educational technological means to clarify material	4.41	0.493	Very high	1
2	Constantly encouraging students to cooperation and teamwork	4.01	0.672	High	2
12	Using a variety of methods for evaluation	4.00	0.707	High	3
13	arousing curiosity among students through the educational situations	3.93	0.805	High	4
7	Encouraging students to write research and studies	3.92	0.766	High	5
6	Asking students to discover relationships between objects or phenomena	3.92	0.766	High	6
4	Allowing students to express their views freely with respect	3.92	0.795	High	7
8	Thinking loudly while solving problems to illustrate the steps to solve it	3.90	0.739	High	8
16	Encouraging students to join scientific clubs and societies to develop their creativity	3.90	0.743	High	9
3	Using teaching strategies that will help the development of thinking	3.89	0.774	High	10
11	Answering questions of students fluently	3.88	0.754	High	11
18	Trying to find a descriptive environment based on free debate within specified period	3.83	0.799	High	12
17	Encouraging students' creative works	3.82	0.752	High	13
10	Encouraging students to be proactive and take initiative	3.79	0.850	High	14
5	Displaying the educational activities that require students to generate a large number of responses	3.79	0.792	High	15
15	Directing students positively giving them the freedom and self-reliance of thinking	3.78	0.820	High	16
14	Directing students positively through educational situations	3.77	0.773	High	17
19	Encouraging students to search for terms of ideas and opinions	3.76	0.863	High	18

20	Asking questions in the high levels of knowledge	3.76	0.863	High	19
9	Practicing strategies to raise motivation	3.73	0.853	High	20
21	Setting new ideas about the subject of teaching	3.62	0.737	High	21
22	Offering the opportunity for students to practice self-evaluation of their ideas	3.60	0.711	High	22
25	Encouraging students to formulate ideas gained from a particular educational experience in a new way	3.55	0.824	High	23
23	Offering the opportunity for students to submit selected ideas	3.49	0.746	High	24
26	Avoiding criticism of the ideas of students	3.49	0.800	High	25
24	Using reinforcement to strengthen uncommon responses	3.48	0.774	High	26
	Total	3.80	0.621	High	

Table 4. T test results for significant differences in the average degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan according to the gender variable.

Gender	Number	Average	Standard deviation	Value of (T)	Degree of freedom	Significance level
Male	77	3.84	0.631	0.803	143	0.423
Female	68	3.76	0.611			

Table .5 T Test results for significant differences in the average degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan according to the qualification variable.

Qualification	Number	Average	Standard deviation	Value of (T)	Degree of freedom	Significance level
bachelor	98	3.45	.371	17.696-	143	0.000
master	47	4.54	0.298			

Table 6 Test results for significant differences in average degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan according to the experience variable

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Average of squares	F value	Significance level
Between groups	26.029	3	8.676	41.461	0.000
Within groups	29.507	141	0.209		

Table 7 Test results (LSD) to compare the categories of expertise to degree of creative teaching skills used by social studies teachers in Jordan

Experience	Arithmetic average	6-10	11-15	More than 15
Less than 5	4.423	*	*	*
6-10	3.640			*
11-15	3.614			*
More than 15	3.337			

* A significant statistical difference

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