



A Comparative Study of Primary Education Art Curriculum Goals in Brazil, Greece, Iran and South Korea

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 14 January 2020 Revised: 24 February 2020 Accepted: 19 March 2020 Online: 27 April 2020	The purpose of this study was to compare main goals of art curriculum in primary education in Brazil, Greece, Iran and South Korea. The qualitative comparative research method used and data were collected through upstream and national education documents, research reports and articles in scientific journals. In addition to Iran, Brazil, Greece, and South Korea were purposefully selected as the sample of the study. For analyzing and comparing the data, a four-step model of Bereday (description, interpretation, juxtaposition and comparison) was used. The results show that the four countries have similarities in areas such as development of creative thinking, acquaintance with famous artists and their works, recognizing the beauty of nature, developing handicraft skills, using artistic materials and tools, expressing emotion and expression through art. The differences between these countries are in the areas of how students participate in artistic experimentation, particular attention on visual arts and art as a intercultural exchange tool.
KEYWORDS Art Curriculum Comparative Analysis Primary School Brazil Greece Iran South Korea	

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1. Introduction

Art education is one of the major concerns of the world's educational systems. In the meantime, attention to the art curriculum is more important (Sherman, 2019). For Camille and Steve (2020), artistic experiences such as theater participation, graffiti, practicing a piece of music, or learning color combinations can develop children's emotional and social well-being. Savage (2018) and Barrett, Flynn & Welch (2018) have concluded that artistic practices such as listening to music, playing instrument, melody, chord and rhythm cause both brain hemispheres to engage in mental activity. The next work in music is the development of students' creative and group skills, which in a short time reinforces their confidence, willpower and socialization. Lozano & Hammer (2001) believe that art education gives students the opportunity to improve their problem-solve, self-discipline, and utilize unique subjective potentials. Shaw's research (2020) showed that the education of art to the young generation preserves the artistic and cultural identity of regional and local artworks. Alter, Hayes, and O'Hara (2011) found that art education can have consequences such as developing a positive attitude towards learning, developing cultural and personal identity, and enhancement of children's creative and imaginative thinking. Kraehe (2020) and Sullivan & Gu (2017) have emphasized that art has a positive effect on the mental and nervous system of individuals. Greene (1995) revealed that students' participation in an art curriculum - like an extraordinary miracle - frees them from mundane activities. In Iran, research by Mahdizadeh Tehrani, Asareh, Mehr Mohammadi & Imamjome, (2019) showed that art curriculum is a link between the past, present and future of humanity, within and outside of humans, linking individual to community and community to individual, and the basis for reconciliation of human generations.

According to some research in Iran, primary school art curriculum suffering from challenges such as marginal, superficial, ornamental attention (Karkozar, Kebok and Al-Daghi, 2019), lack of attention to individual differences among pupils (Nouri and Farsi, 2016) , inattention of planners and officials (Tabatabai, Abbasi, Mertheb, 2016), incompatibility with current and new realities (Kian, Mehr Mohammadi, 2013), misconception of the artistic goals and educational system uncertainty about this subject and its goals (Rezai, 2013). In this regard, the present researchers try to study primary school art curriculum in Brazil, Greece and South Korea to enrich the art curriculum by transferring the experiences and strengths of these countries to Iranian educational planners.

In view of the foregoing, the purpose of this article is to present results of a comparative study of art curriculum's goals in primary schools of selected countries. So the research questions are:

1. What are the similarities between the primary education system of Brazil, Greece, Iran and South Korea regarding the goals of art education?
2. What are the differences between the primary education systems of Brazil, Greece, Iran and South Korea regarding the goals of art education?

2. Research Method

The present study is a qualitative comparative study using Bereday's four-stage model (1964). The stages are description, interpretation, juxtaposition and comparison. Among the lightweight countries in art education, Brazil, Greece, Iran, and South Korea were selected according to the strategy of "different systems-different outcomes" (Bray, Adamson, Mason, 2007). The data were collected through the study of top documents of educational policies, national documents of the Ministry of Education, research reports and articles in scientific journals.

3. Results

Question 1: What are the similarities between the primary education system of the countries of Brazil, Greece, Iran, and South Korea regarding the goals of art education?

A) Description and Interpretation

1. Brazil

In Brazil and since 1996, art has a compulsory curriculum, introducing it as the main lesson by National Board of Education. In elementary schools, each class is run by a teacher. The curriculum is 200 working days and 800 hours per year organized for rural students according to the seasons of planting and harvesting crops (WENR, 2019). The time devoted to art lessons is 2 hours per week. There are no specialist teachers for art education, but regular teachers teach based on the specialized training they have taught. The Brazilian Public Schools Curriculum (2015) emphasizes that art education at Grades 1 to 8 should enhance students' artistic and aesthetic competencies

and increases their interest in the visual arts, music, dance and drama, in order to produce both artwork and enjoy other cultures. Analyzing the content of resources such as "Art in Brazilian Public Schools" (De Araújo, 2017), "Visual Arts Curriculum in Basic Education" (Filho, De Oliveira, 2014), "Music Education in Brazil" (Mas and Narita, 2011), "Art education in Brazilian Schools" (Barbosa, 2001), "National Curriculum"(1997), "Visual Arts in Brazil "(Almeida and Barbosa, 2001), the other goals of art education in Brazil can be defined as below:

Table 1. Summing up the Goals of the Brazilian Primary Schools Art Curriculum

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to Brazilian Art Heritage ▪ Introducing famous artists such as Da Vinci, Boutichelli, Fernando Butro and their whereabouts ▪ Environmental beauty care training ▪ Inspiration of folk art ▪ Understanding simplicity of aesthetics ▪ Interact with different artistic materials, equipment and methods ▪ Positioning to put objects in the best place ▪ Respect the art of different demographic groups ▪ Enjoying the fantasy element ▪ Awareness of musical instruments ▪ Recognize and value the music of different ethnic groups ▪ Ability to perform group anthems ▪ Helping personal growth ▪ Development of culture ▪ Creativity ▪ Imagination and understanding of the facts ▪ Development of visual literacy ▪ Interpretation of artwork and love of visual arts ▪ Learn a variety of folk and traditional dances ▪ Introduction to Brazilian Culture and Civilization ▪ Introduction to the types of visual arts and their history ▪ Manipulation and Discovery of Artwork ▪ Understanding the surrounding nature ▪ Introduction to drawing and painting styles
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As seen in Table 1, the goals of the Brazilian primary education art curriculum have a diverse and diffuse spectrum, often related to the cognitive domain of learning. In this regard, emotional and functional goals have been neglected. There are, of course, a few interesting goals such as consideration of cultural background and visual arts, each of which can have its own effect on the students' artistic literacy.

2. Greece

According to Article 16 of the Greek constitution, art education is free and should be promoted by the State (Greek Constitution, 2001: 30). Art education (such as painting, handicrafts and music) is taught in six grades of primary schools (Alikianou, 2020). Training time at first and second grades is 2 hours and at third to fourth grades is one hour per week. Music education is also available 1 hour per week at all school grade (CTI, 2019). Since 1980, teacher education curricula have included subjects such as music education, visual arts (calligraphy, painting and crafts) and dance. Thus there is no special teacher of art education in Greece (Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, Trouli, Linardakis, 2015). One of the primary goals of the elementary school, which is emphasized in the elementary school textbook, is to "nurture the imagination to present artwork and express itself in artistic creation" (CTI, 2019). One of the main goals of art education emphasized in the primary school textbooks is to "cultivate the mental ability of pupils to present artwork and express oneself in artistic creation" (CTI, 2019). The main goals of the Greek primary school curriculum based on resources such as "Art Education of Preschool Teachers and Elementary Teachers in Greek Universities" (Sotiropoulou-Zormpala, Trouli, Linardakis, 2015), "Greek Art Education Curriculum" (Christopoulou, 2008), and "Reforming the National Curriculum" (Fterniati and Spinthourakis, 2006) include:

Table 2. Summing up the Goals of Greek Primary Art Curriculum

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Learn ancient and historical dances •Understanding original music and instruments •Awareness of art history and theories •Gain aesthetic insight •Understanding cultural values •Expressing emotions, thoughts and beliefs through the production of artwork •Developing handicraft skills •Linking artwork to life events •Promote creative thinking •Ability to express through theater language arts •Enhance visual and tactile senses •Get acquainted with the greats of Greek art and the world •Enjoy the colors available in art forms •Divergent thinking growth •Relation of art with context and cultural background •Understanding Greece's place in world art history •Acquire social skills by performing artwork collectively
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The goals of the Greek primary art curriculum have been nourished by the country's rich art history and have been able to depict the evolution of art for students. Music, theater and dance are important pieces of art that have attracted attention in Greece. But the lesser-known goal is to teach art through the capacities of nature around us and ordinary life. In other words, the overwhelming emphasis on the pages of Greek art history and neglect current situation is the most important defect that the curriculum suffers.

3. Iran

Art education is one of the basic subjects of Iranian primary school since 1937 (Mehr Mohammadi, 2015). The time devoted to teaching art in the first and second grades is 2 hours per week and at grades of three to six is 1.5 hours per week (Tahvilian, 2016). Art education is taught by a regular teacher who teaches other subjects. In other words, in primary school, there is no specialist teacher of art. To compensate for the lack of an art teacher, all teachers receive special training during their teacher education programs. Some of these courses are "Art Education Basics", "Art Workshops 1, 2 and 3" and "Application of Art in Teaching" (Farhangian University, 2014).

In the "Fundamental Document of Educational System of Iran", which was approved by the Islamic Parliament in 2011 and is one of the most important upstream documents, the aesthetic and artistic is considered as one of the most important aspects of education that reflect the activities of the imagination and the enjoyment of aesthetic emotions, feelings, and tastes (ability to understand and appreciate themes and actions that have a material or spiritual beauty), ability to appreciate and create artworks. On page 156 of this document, we read "The use of the imagination in creation of artworks for the preservation and excellence of artistic heritage at the national and world level" is one of the of art education goals (Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution. 2011). In addition, this national document emphasize on "Preparing educators who acquire ability to aesthetic understanding of God's creation, artistic human artifacts - strive for the preservation and excellence of artistic heritage at the national and global level in accordance with the Islamic standard system - and the use of imagination" p. 19 . Abu Zayed (2016) wrote how "Fundamental Document of Educational System of Iran" deals with art education: "This document, with a special and deep look at art education, has further enhanced the status of art in Iran's education system; because it views art as a powerful and elegant cultural tool "(p. 5).

The Supreme Council of Education (2012) in "National Curriculum of Iran" defines the ultimate goal of art curriculum as "achieving perfection". The realm of this perfection involves understanding artistic ideas, processes, skills, and artistic expression in two practical areas (production based on the rules of composition) and theoretical (understanding work based on aesthetics, cultural and art history, analysis and critique of works). The Supreme Council of Education (1977) has also proposed the following two objectives for the primary school students:

- By expressing the surrounding objects, simple natural, cultural and artistic phenomena, express their sensation and enjoyment in the language of art.
- Nurture their imagination and creativity by making constructive changes in environment and objects around.

The Educational Research and Planning Organization (2012a,b), in accordance with the upstream documents, has set the goals of the art curriculum in three areas:

- ❖ Cognitive [Acquaintance with nature as source of inspiration for artistic creations, acquaintance with art disciplines, introductory acquaintance with tools and materials of art disciplines, acquaintance with Iranian cultural and artistic heritage],
- ❖ Emotional [attention to beauty and nurturing aesthetic sense, desire to express thoughts and feelings in various fields of art, attention to their abilities and self-confidence, interest in exploration and experience in various fields of art, attention to preservation artwork and cultural heritage, desire to communicate and collaborate],
- ❖ Psychomotor [Development of sensory skills, development of speech skills, development of motor skills for use of materials, simple art tools and techniques, development of thinking abilities, ability to express thoughts and feelings in art, development of social skills].

Given the aforementioned aims of art education in Iran, it can be stated that these aims are very spiritual and derived from religious doctrine. Another point is that the policy makers' perspective is idealistic, so that the distance between goals and realities is very high. The goals are also very general and set up for a long time horizon. This makes it difficult for some goals to be achieved in practice. Another issue is the lack of a specific educational philosophy to facilitate the introduction of some artistic aspects such as music into the art curriculum. Iranian schools do not teach music. Lack of music education can damage students' emotions and reduce their self-esteem. The next argument is that existing goals often seek to introduce different types of art and are not

intended to foster students' artistic feelings and emotional connection with the spirit of art. Another challenge is the inconsistency of the overall goals with students' cognitive development in a way that does not take into accounts their ability and capacity.

Table 3. Summing up the Goals of Iranian Primary School Curriculum

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Benefit from aesthetic emotions, feelings and tastes •Using the power of the imagination to create artwork •Appreciate the artwork and values •Beautifying the living environment •Aesthetic Understanding of God's Creation •The revival and dissemination of Iranian - Islamic arts •Identifying the individual and society and countering the cultural invasion •Expressing its intuition and pleasure in the language of art •Fostering imagination, visualization and creativity through productive change in the environment •Introducing of artistic fields •Attention to your abilities and gain confidence •Interested in exploring and gaining experience in various fields of art •Willingness to communicate and participate •Development of speech, social and motor skills •Development of thinking capabilities
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4. South Korea

Primary school in South Korea is six years and covers age group of six to twelve years. Art has a special place in the curriculum of primary school and is defined in two subsections of music and fine arts (Ministry of Education, 2009). According to the South Korean National Curriculum, students attend art classes 2 hours each week (Kim, 2014). Art education in primary education is taught by specialist teachers (Sharp and Le Métais, 2000). Among the goals of the South Korean National Curriculum for Art Education (2009) is understanding of the necessity of using art in everyday life. According to sources such as "Art Education Policy and Cultural Diversity in South Korea" (Hong, 2019), "Critical Review of Art Education in South Korea" (Kim, 2014), "South Korean Schools Curriculum" (Ministry of Education), 2009), "A Historical and Social View of South Korean Art Education" (Kane, 2006), and "Realities of Music Education in South Korea" (Jang, 2004), main goals of South Korea's primary art curriculum are:

Table 4. Summing up the Goals of South Korean Primary Art Curriculum

Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to existing subcultures artwork • Creating opportunities for intercultural exchange • Enjoy the artistic experience • Building empathy and social understanding through the integration of art and social science concepts • Gain peace • Realization of artistic aspirations • Imitating nature to manage life • Assist in psychological development • Crafting ability • Getting acquainted with the generalities of music • Getting acquainted with and proud of South Korean art history • Understand the beauties of nature • Understanding the beauties of artwork • Help with the interpretation of everyday events • Effective use of art materials and tools • Help express emotion • Appreciate South Korean art and other foreign countries • Understanding the seven components of music including rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamics, percussion, tempo, shape • Introduction to traditional and folk songs of East Asia • Understand all kinds of musical instruments including piano, flute, violin, clarinet, dance
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The South Korean elementary art curriculum takes a native and national approach and strives to teach its original arts to students. Music has a special place among the goals and has influenced much of the program. While less attention is paid to painting and drawing. Another point is the individuality of art education, which is incompatible with the collective spirit of East Asian countries and their collective cohesion.

(B) Juxtaposition and Comparison

Similarities

Table 5. Similarities of primary school curriculum goals in the countries under study

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Attention to growth of creative thinking ❖ Attention to students' familiarity with greats of art and their famous works ❖ Attention to state of the art in understanding beauties of nature ❖ Attention to development of sensory-motor skills and ability to work with art forms ❖ Attention to role of art in understanding culture, customs and traditions of society ❖ Attention to empowering students to use art materials and tools ❖ Attention to the role of art in expressing feelings and expressing oneself

According to Table 5, the main similarities of four countries are development of creative thinking, acquaintance with the greats of art and their famous works, understanding of beauties of nature, development of crafting skills in the use of art forms, use of artistic materials and tools, the expression of emotion through arts.

Differences

Table (6). Differences of primary school curriculum goals in the countries under study

Differences	country			
	Brazil	Greece	Iran	South Korea
Attention and faith strengthening, Religious knowledge and the acquisition of moral virtues through art	-	-	*	-
Attention to the visual arts	*	-	-	-
Foster of imagination	*	-	*	-
Making art for intercultural exchange	-	-	-	*
Idealism and low performance	-	-	*	-
connection between art and daily life	*	*	-	*
Acquire social skills	-	*	*	-
Absence of music education due to religious laws and Value structures of upstream elementary education documents	-	-	*	-

As Table 6 shows environmental conditions (art reserves and capitals) and political and social climate influence the setting of art education goals. In a way, it can be said that art, while having a free and unrestrained spirit, has lost its integrity. While art education in Iran is influenced by ideology, in Brazil the visual arts have become overrated, in Greece art has become history-stricken, and in South Korea, music has been given priority over other arts. It is clear that every country has chosen one aspect of the art and dictated it to the students. In other words, the way art education is targeted in each country is influenced by the upstream documents of educational system, documents that show cultural, political, and ideological conditions.

4. Conclusion

The findings of the present study, which was conducted to compare main goals of primary school art curriculum in Brazil, Greece, Iran, and South Korea, show that all selected countries have a national and endogenous cultural context for art curriculum. They also look at art curriculum as a program that promotes personal, social and cultural development, not just artistic development- of pupils. However, there was a few differences between these countries on goals of art curriculum that can be attributed to the lack of attention to music in Iran and extra emphasis more on spiritual value of art, more value for visual arts in Brazil, insistence on learning historical and ancient dances in Greece and highlighting role of art in intercultural exchange in South Korea. Given the similarities and differences, the following suggestions may help improve the art curriculum of Iranian primary schools:

- Objectives in Iran's primary school curriculum, due to its idealism and low performance require a thorough review.
- Reconciling art curriculum with music is the next step that should be philosophically supported and provide the basis for change in macro education policies.
- More attention to the student development stages that can influence quality of arts education and goals' achievement. In this connection, Hui Kean (2006) in his work "A Historical and Social View of South Korean Art Education" as well as a report on "Conceptual Framework for Art Learning" published in the United States for children recommended that set of goals should consider the stages of student development (NCCAS, no date).

- Another point is the involvement of students in artistic experimentation. In this regard, Kroflic (2012) has also emphasized the need to uphold the intrinsic value of artistic experience.
- Considering the Brazilian art curriculum, it is suggested to pay more attention to visual arts (puppets, hand prints, photography, graphics, architecture, design) in the Iranian art education curriculum. According to documents such as Visual Arts Curriculum in Basic Education (2014) and Visual Arts in Brazil (2001), attention to visual arts can influence students' motivation, interests, and artistic skills.
- Integrating art with other school subjects [like social sciences] and using integrated art approach is an important experience that can be learned from the South Korean art curriculum. The integration of art with other subjects has also been suggested by Härkönen & Stöckell (2019), Burstein & Knotts (2010), Smith (1971), and Croce (1966).
- Based on description and interpretation of art curriculum goals in Brazil, Greece and South Korea, it is recommended to Iranian policy makers to pay close attention to teaching of traditional Iranian music and its instruments. Iranian music is rich and has unique instruments. Of course, the content of the music is also important, and what the authors of the article support are in line with Adomo's (1976) findings. Music should be free from mere entertaining, but rich in linguistic features as well as awareness.
- With regards to Brazil, Greece and South Korea's emphasis on the proper use of indigenous arts at the micro and local levels, it is suggested to follow these experiences in Iran too. Fascinating native art can provide the perfect platform for its survival.
- Introducing students to the structure and composition of colors and using it in a variety of arts is another experience of an art curriculum in Greece that can be considered in Iran. Consistent with this suggestion, Ovliyaei (2018) reveals that the use of colors, especially warm colors, has stimulated students' activity and motivation, inspiring brightness, happiness, and movement.

The final experience which is only visible in Iran's primary art curriculum and can be of interest to art curriculum planners in other countries is the use of religious art. Research by Howard (2020), Mousavi, Nili, Massoud & Nasr (2016) and Maleki (2010) reveal that curriculum planners should not be afraid of using "religious art". This art can be used as a rich resource to help development of pupils' artistic abilities.

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