

Influence of Parents and Childcare Workers on Child's Skills and Abilities in the Field of Art

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine the level of artistic abilities and skills of first grade pupils in the implementation of twelve art teaching units. We wanted to find specific differences among pupils taking into consideration day care in the time of early childhood (parents, grandparents and kindergarten) in order to explain whether parents' education has an influence on the development of artistic skills. Research results show that mother's and father's level of education has a significant influence on pupils' artistic development in the first grade. Taking into consideration the level of skills in the implementation of artistic tasks, pupils whose fathers and mothers have lower levels of education achieve much worse results in individual techniques than pupils whose parents have a higher level of education. Parental role of educated parents is of key importance for the artistic development of a child because they are aware that it is important to spend time with their children in the most active and creative way possible.

Key words: *artistic expression; father's level of education; first grade; mother's level of education; preschool day care.*

Introduction

When a child is born, s/he becomes a part of a process called development. Newborn's brain is not completely developed yet, however, it develops very intensively in the first years of a child's life. Preschool period is the time when a child gets to learn and develop many skills that are important for his/her future development. However, the environment and society which s/he lives in start to influence his/her

innate dispositions. Child's development, namely cognitive, physical and motor, as well as emotional and social, is closely related to the environment in which s/he lives. Within a certain time frame a child reaches developmental milestones, yet this depends on each individual. Children spend the time between their birth and school entry in different environments. Besides the environment, the child's development is significantly influenced by another factor, namely heredity. A question arises whether art activities related to different environments before the start of school have any impact on artistic creativity of the first graders. Children develop at different rates, some progress faster, some slower, and some fall behind. Therefore, each division of their development stages of artistic expression is only apparent and can only be of help in understanding individual examples of children's artistic creations (Gerlovič & Gregorač, 1976). As stated in Marjanovič, Umek, Fekonja, and Bajc (2006), early experience, knowledge and skills which children develop before school enrollment have an important impact on child's later development in school. However, his or her own activity or action is also crucial for child's development (Peček, Čuk, & Lesar, 2009). The fact that children acquire most important competences already prior to school enrollment has been known for some time. In modern times, the range of abilities, knowledge, skills and points of view that children possess when starting school has been increasing. Therefore, the school needs to be prepared in order to enable children to find learning in school both pleasant and stimulating (Matijević, 2011).

Children often learn spontaneously, outside of kindergarten and school. In their own way they shape the world around them, observe surroundings, ask questions and experiment with different materials. When a child watches television or looks at pictures in a book, this is not only a way of representing things because children also link this experience into a special type of mental activity, which in time becomes a structure of their minds (Wood, 1995). Preschool activities a child takes part in and incentives for artistic activities influence later artistic development in the first grade of primary school.

Children start to develop artistically between the ages of one and two. At that time, they notice materials which leave stains and they even notice that their interference with an outside world has some consequences. Simultaneous processes of maturation and learning affect child's development in the preschool period. However, these processes reflect on the development of psychomotor skills, learning about the environment and acquisition of this knowledge as well as on the development of abilities and the need to show knowledge (Duh & Zupančič, 2003). Both communication among parents and children as well as concrete activities may influence the core of education. Children learn by their own experience and with all their personality copy their parents, who guide children in developing basic life values by their own example. Norms and values characteristically shape children's development and upbringing (Jurčević-Lozančič, 2011).

It can be affirmed that preschool activities in which children take part, as well as incentives for artistic activities, influence later artistic expression in the first grade of primary school.

Artistic Development in Early Childhood

After birth, child development takes place simultaneously with the physical growth and maturation of functions. There is always something going on around children. This is why child development comprises changes in biological, social, cognitive and emotional behaviour, being constant and dynamic at the same time. Child meets different people, phenomena and objects. S/he perceives all these actions, thinks about them, and even tries to influence them. Reflection of all these can often be found in children's drawings (Musek & Pečjak, 2001). However, it should be stressed that the development in children is rather different. As was stated in Slovenia by Marjanovič Umek and Fekonja Peklaj (2008), with regard to the expected child's development in modern psychology, we cannot speak only in favour of normativeness, universality and rigidity. According to Fekonja Peklaj (2011), great emphasis is nowadays being put on the observation, which is also an important scientific research method in developmental psychology. Individual's behaviour in everyday situations and in his/her interaction with others can be explained with observation.

As stated by Starc, Čudina Obradović, Pleša, Profaca, and Letica (2004), according to recent research of artistic development, the abilities of artistic expression follow Piaget's stages of cognitive development. Grgurić and Jakubin (1996) affirm that children's artistic expression goes through conditional stages of age and environment. Duh and Zupančič (2003) name the period between the ages of four and six a stage of composite symbols. Children are under the influence of perceptions and this is why what they see is important for them. According to Karlavaris (1991), intense artistic development between the ages of four and seven increases significantly. It can be particularly seen in the depiction of man, who becomes more and more man alike. He calls this stage a stage of schemas and symbols. Different sources indicate the duration of the individual periods differently. Differences occur due to different environments children live in, but otherwise children go through all stages described (Duh & Zupančič, 2003). The period from two to seven years is very important for the development of children, since mental, physical and motor development proceed very quickly and co-dependently (Horvat & Magajna, 1987).

The Role of Preschool Education on Children's Development

Having knowledge of children's development is crucial for everyone dealing with children before their school enrollment, and this especially holds true for professionals in kindergartens.

In children's development common laws and common principles of preschool education exist. Child's development takes place in successive stages through which individual areas of development intertwine. In the process, different mental functions are parallel and coherent. The most important periods in child's development are the ones most suitable for obtaining individual skills and for learning things in the most

effective way (Kurikulum za vrtce, 1999). Professionals dealing with children have to know how to distinguish between different forms of learning, the conditions for each form of learning and how one can stimulate or improve them (Marentič Požarnik, 2000).

It is important what kind of environment child lives in before school enrollment and how one can influence child's development. Although an individual lives in an environment with ideal conditions, s/he cannot develop such forms of behaviour for which s/he does not have a biological basis. Innate and acquired hereditary basis are an important base for the development of given mental abilities under the influence of environment. In all areas influences of the social environment and culture, in which a child is born and lives, as well as forms of education, size of family, parents' education and profession and birth order of children, have an important role in child's development (Horvat & Magajna, 1987).

Therefore, children's development should be seen as a whole since it is affected by many factors, each one shaping it in its own way. Some environmental influences can affect children negatively, hence only positive and supportive environment can contribute to the healthy development of children.

A case study (Kljajič & Duh, 2011) proved that influences of the environment could also be evident in the later artistic development in the first grade of primary school, since children who did not attend kindergarten had low self-image and did not trust their artistic abilities. Research in the field of preschool day care (See, 2008) suggests that home environment has a significant influence on child's readiness to attend school and later also on his/her further levels of success. Children who live in poverty and do not attend institutional preschool day care do not have a favourable environment for learning at home, and are therefore deprived of many things.

Research results (Fabes, Martin, Hanish, Anders, Madden-Derdich, & Debra, 2003) prove that children who come from a socio-economically and culturally less stimulating environment have fewer opportunities to achieve higher levels of development in the field of speech and cognitive development and thereby also fewer possibilities to achieve educational success in primary school. Research by Caughy, DiPietro, and Strobino (1994) also proved that early inclusion of children into kindergarten has a positive influence on the readiness to attend school in children who come from a less stimulating environment as well. Namely, in the first four years of life fifty percent of a person's abilities develop (Dryden & Vos, 2001).

We believe that in the field of art a person's abilities develop similarly. Therefore, a question arises whether the environment children live in until school enrollment has any influence on the development of their artistic abilities.

Influence of Parents and Kindergarten on Child's Preschool Development

Many researchers have studied the role of parents on child development. Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington, and Bornstein (2000) support the thesis that

parents play an important role in children's education and personal development. However, all researchers do not share the same opinion. Harris (1995) found in her study that parents do not have any long term effects on the development of child's personality. What children learn at home is not necessarily something they are able to show in a different environment. However, it has been proved that parents' behaviour affects their children.

When examining the role of kindergarten on children's development in Slovenia (Marjanovič Umek, 2004), it was concluded that kindergarten has a positive influence on children's cognitive, speech and social development. Common findings showed that, taking into consideration the developmental perspective, there are many gains for the children who attend kindergarten. This can especially be evident in children whose parents have lower level of education and live in a less encouraging family environment, because those children gain even more (Lešnik & Marjanovič Umek, 2005). The quality of family life and parents' education are significantly associated with child's social and mental behaviour. Moreover, the quality of the kindergarten the child attends is of significant importance (Marjanovič Umek & Zupančič, 2004).

In recent years, studies which examined the influence of family and parents on early children's development have been carried out (Bonci, Mottram, & McCoy, 2011). The main findings were that parents have a significant influence on child's success by giving them support at home. Parents are children's first teachers and this is why the family background, social status, family size and parents' level of education have an impact on child development. For parents who have a low level of education it is of even greater importance to be a part of the life and work of the school because their children are at a greater risk to have difficulties in acquiring certain skills. It has been proved that the parents' level of education is related to the cognitive development of children in the preschool period because children of highly educated parents were developmentally, on average, twelve to thirteen months ahead of those children whose parents had lower level of education. In The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) project it was established that children whose parents spent time with them before school enrollment, whether they read to them, wrote, drew or created, had less problems when enrolling school and showed a positive inclination in their overall development as well.

Professionals in kindergarten have the opportunity to systematically observe child development. Observing the child is in modern times an important scientific research method in the developmental psychology which can explain the behaviour of an individual (Fekonja Peklaj, 2011). The task of a childcare worker is, based on the sociocultural theory, according to Vigotski (1986), to monitor the development of a child in order to encourage his/her development by learning and planning content in the area of the forthcoming development. In order to do this, childcare workers need information on a child's behaviour and development.

The Role of a Teacher and Children's Enrollment into Primary School

The change from preschool environment into the first grade of primary school is a big turning point in the lives of children and their parents alike. Children come from different socio-economic environments and have different levels of prior knowledge. A first grade teacher has to face many challenges since s/he has to get to know pupils and accordingly s/he has to plan the learning process for all subjects, including art education. The most basic guidance for the teacher is the primary school syllabus. Matijevič (2009) stated that parents had pointed to problems in the children's transition to compulsory primary school since the methods were not sufficiently adjusted to the developmental characteristics of individual children.

In the first grade of Slovenian primary schools in the learning process children should learn art concepts on the most basic level, be guided in expressing their art skills spontaneously and in acquiring basic art-expressive experience. "Good educational work has significant impact on children's creativity. In the development of creative abilities of students, teachers need to be aware that creativity develops through one's own activity and that students are different from one another. Account must be taken of the fact that each student has rather diffuse interests, and only the right approach to delivering learning contents and to the presentation of artistic tasks can arouse the interest in students and hence contribute to good results" (Herzog, 2008, p. 88). Primary goal of the art classes is the development of child's artistic abilities (competences) (Učni načrt, 2011). In art classes, it is important for pupils to get to know the subject matter through their own art experience (Duh et al., 2008). In the Slovenian syllabus for art classes (Učni načrt, 2011), the fields of art are divided into surface modelling (drawing, painting, graphics) and three-dimensional modelling (sculpture, architecture). Child adopts art vocabulary gradually and teacher's role is to stimulate pupils' artistic activities. Artistic tasks need to be planned in a way that they enable spontaneous artistic expression. At the same time, it is important that children develop evaluation skills, such as observation and perception of works of art.

The existing findings in Slovenia, in the field of the influence of preschool day care on the development of art skills in the first grade of primary school, confirm already known facts that the environment in which a child lives before school enrollment has an important influence on his/her artistic development in the first grade. A case study research in Slovenia (Kljajič & Duh, 2011) examined children's works of art. Work process during painting was compared among the pupils who attended kindergarten and those who did not. Results showed significant differences in artistic development among individuals. Pupils who attended kindergarten were among the most successful ones. The research proved that preschool day care has a significant influence on artistic development in the first grade of primary school.

Research Methodology

The aim of this study was to examine the level of artistic abilities and skills of first grade pupils in the implementation of twelve different visual art techniques. We wanted to compare the identified levels of artistic skills in relation to the attained education levels of mothers and fathers.

Research is based on the descriptive and inferential statistic method of empirical educational research. For an in-depth research of children's artistic development, the most appropriate approach is the qualitative approach since, with its help, one can monitor the making of a work of art (Duh, 2009).

Research Sample

A purposive sample of first grade pupils (n=156) from Slovenian primary schools was used in the research. Among them were 117 (75%) pupils who attended kindergarten, 21 (13.5%) who were taken care of by their grandparents and the remaining 18 (11.5%) were taken care of by their parents.

In accordance with the purpose of the study, we observed the level of their parents' education, separately for mothers and fathers.

Table 1

The number (f) and structural percentage (f%) of pupils according to their parents' education

	Mothers		Fathers	
	(f)	(f%)	f	(f%)
Primary school	9	4.1	7	4.8
Vocational school	19	12.9	30	20.5
Secondary school	64	43.5	67	45.9
College and junior college	26	17.7	18	12.3
University	26	17.7	21	14.4
Master's degree	5	3.4	1	0.7
Doctorate	1	0.7	2	1.4
Total	147	100	146	100

For the purpose of further processing of the data we have combined similar levels of education of both parents; namely into three categories: lower level than secondary education (primary school and vocational school), secondary education and higher levels (college, junior college, master's degree and doctorate).

Data Collection

In order to collect the required data for the research we used pupils' works of art and photographs, and an observation sheet for the assessment of pupils' artistic skills. Pupils' work was observed through twelve art tasks carried out in different art techniques. Observation sheets were conceptualized for each field of art specifically, a four-level scale referred to the observation of pupils' individual abilities and skills as well as skills needed for the performance of art tasks. The observer also wrote notes

about other observations noticed in individual pupils, namely pupils' perceptions, use of materials and motivation. Cognitive, affective and psychomotor areas of each pupil's personality were observed. Drawings and other works were made in normal working conditions in art classes. Data had been collected from September till November, at a time when the influence of school and consequently the role of a teacher is not so decisive yet. The level of parents' education was acquired by providing them a seven-level scale which referred to individual levels of education; namely primary school, vocational school, secondary school, college, junior college, university, master's degree and doctorate. They had to circle the correct answer for the corresponding level of education; however, some did not want to share this information with us.

Data Processing

Data acquired from the observation sheets were, with the help of the statistical programme SPSS, statistically processed in accordance with the research purpose and hypotheses. Arithmetic mean of numerical skills levels was calculated (1 - needs help at work, 2 - needs guidance and advice, 3 - skilful, but occasionally needs advice, 4 - skilful and independent at work). For the testing of differences in grades with regard to the type of day care and the level of their parents' education Kruskal-Wallis test was used. Qualitative part is represented by the analysis of teachers' notes.

Results and Interpretation

Firstly, average assessment levels skills (1 – needs help at work, 2 – less skilful, 3 – satisfactorily skilful, 4 – skilful and independent at work) in performing art techniques or tasks are to be presented.

Table 2

Techniques ranked according to average estimates (\bar{x})

Techniques	\bar{x}
Pencil drawing	2.040
Potato printing	1.895
Clay modelling – vase	1.860
Clay modelling – animal	1.794
Paper modelling	1.732
Painting - gouache	1.676
Monotype	1.674
Charcoal drawing	1.660
Ink drawing	1.623
Assembling cardboard boxes	1.611
Crayon painting	1.608
Collage – cut paper	1.510

The table shows that, according to teachers' assessments, children were most skilful at pencil drawing (\bar{x} =2.040), followed by potato printing (\bar{x} =1.895), vase modelling

with clay ($\bar{x} = 1.860$), animals modelling with clay ($\bar{x} = 1.794$), paper modelling ($\bar{x} = 1.732$), painting - gouache ($\bar{x} = 1.676$), monotype ($\bar{x} = 1.674$), charcoal drawing ($\bar{x} = 1.660$), ink drawing ($\bar{x} = 1.623$), assembling of cardboard boxes ($\bar{x} = 1.611$), crayon painting ($\bar{x} = 1.608$), and the lowest level achieved was at the collage technique ($\bar{x} = 1.510$).

According to the four-level scale (1 – needs help, 2 – less skilful, 3 – satisfactorily skilful, 4 - skilful and independent at work), all average assessments are quite low (from 2.04 to 1.5), which proves that first grade pupils are assessed less favourably in terms of the development of artistic skills. Teachers' observations and comments for individual techniques prove this as well. If we sum up teachers' comments, we can see that first grade pupils had difficulties with specific manual dexterities, such as paper modelling and wrinkling and space design. Pupils were unskilful in cutting hard paper and gluing. Folding a sheet of a paper down the middle and formatting it presented quite a problem to them. In painting, a problem was filling in the empty space with colours as well as the use of a brush. New techniques were interesting to them. However, they were unskilful in the implementation, especially in charcoal drawing and in the collage technique.

The results of the analysis taking into consideration the level of mother's education are presented below.

The results prove that children whose mothers have a higher level of education also have a higher level of skills in carrying out individual art techniques. There is a statistically significant difference in the level of artistic skills in relation to the level of mother's education for the *paper modelling* technique ($p=0.005$). The existence of a tendency in the level of artistic skills among the students, taking into consideration the level of mother's education, is evident in *clay modelling* (0.068) and *gouache painting* (0.088) techniques. Pupils whose mothers have higher level of education proved to be more skilful. Reasons for such results can be in the fact that mothers take more time and offer children materials that can be remodelled, as in this case paper and clay. Thus, children spontaneously test paper, wrinkle it, tear it, fold it and gather their own experience which helps them later in school at fine arts. Therefore, it can be concluded that similar holds true also for clay modelling. If a child in preschool period has a possibility to have in his/her hand clay, plasticine, modelling clay and salt dough, it will be easier for him/her in the first grade and s/he will also be more skilful. In kindergarten, children are in groups, and some of them are quite large. Therefore, individual incentives and childcare worker's help cannot be provided to everyone at the same time. However, it should be emphasized that similar advantages of children whose mothers have higher level of education can also be evident in other techniques. It is also worth mentioning that, with the exception of drawing, where the level of mother's education that is lower than secondary school speaks in favour of their children's creating, in all other techniques, the children of better educated mothers had the advantage in creating.

Table 3

The results of the Kruskal – Wallis test indicating the level of skills in implementing the twelve art tasks from different art fields and different techniques regarding the level of mother's education.

Technique	Level of education	n	\bar{R}	χ^2	p
Pencil drawing	Lower than secondary	25	83.04	3.026	0.220
	Secondary	61	72.07		
	Higher than secondary	57	67.08		
Crayon painting	Lower than secondary	23	69.39	0.101	0.951
	Secondary	61	69.18		
	Higher than secondary	55	71.16		
Clay modelling - vase	Lower than secondary	20	50.78	5.371	0.068
	Secondary	59	62.35		
	Higher than secondary	48	71.54		
Charcoal drawing	Lower than secondary	24	65.50	0.676	0.713
	Secondary	61	71.88		
	Higher than secondary	56	72.40		
Collage - cut paper	Lower than secondary	25	68.74	1.914	0.384
	Secondary	57	65.24		
	Higher than secondary	56	74.18		
Assembling cardboard boxes	Lower than secondary	25	66.22	2.089	0.352
	Secondary	57	65.28		
	Higher than secondary	55	74.12		
Ink drawing	Lower than secondary	24	72.58	0.343	0.842
	Secondary	62	69.50		
	Higher than secondary	56	73.25		
Painting - gouache	Lower than secondary	23	63.72	4.856	0.088
	Secondary	62	65.60		
	Higher than secondary	55	78.85		
Potato printing	Lower than secondary	24	66.44	1.513	0.469
	Secondary	62	69.99		
	Higher than secondary	57	76.53		
Paper modelling	Lower than secondary	22	61.89	10.724	0.005
	Secondary	56	56.37		
	Higher than secondary	52	76.87		
Monotype	Lower than secondary	24	69.83	3.840	0.147
	Secondary	55	59.66		
	Higher than secondary	53	72.08		
Clay modelling - animal	Lower than secondary	21	64.71	0.563	0.755
	Secondary	57	65.86		
	Higher than secondary	56	70.21		

The biggest deviation was observed in drawing, where the highest average number of skills level was acquired by the pupils whose mothers had the education level lower than secondary school and the lowest average number of skills level by those whose mothers had higher level of education. From this it can be concluded that mothers with lower level of education most often give their children a sheet of paper, a pencil and crayons. Children by nature like to draw and this is how mothers can occupy

them for some time, without having to specifically deal with them. Children who draw a lot surely acquire additional skills in this field, which can also be evident from the results of the research.

Below are the results of the analysis taking into consideration the level of father's education.

Table 4

The results of the Kruskal – Wallis test indicating the level of skills in implementing the twelve art tasks from different art fields and different techniques regarding the level of father's education.

Technique	Level of education	n	\bar{R}	χ^2	P
Pencil drawing	Lower than secondary	35	71.66	4.604	0.100
	Secondary	66	78.41		
	Higher than secondary	42	62.21		
Crayon painting	Lower than secondary	35	65.04	1.337	0.513
	Secondary	65	69.98		
	Higher than secondary	39	74.49		
Clay modelling - vase	Lower than secondary	30	59.70	0.898	0.638
	Secondary	62	63.02		
	Higher than secondary	34	67.72		
Charcoal drawing	Lower than secondary	35	63.94	4.529	0.104
	Secondary	64	77.50		
	Higher than secondary	41	65.17		
Collage - cut paper	Lower than secondary	35	61.31	3.846	0.146
	Secondary	62	75.31		
	Higher than secondary	41	67.70		
Assembling cardboard boxes	Lower than secondary	33	70.55	1.576	0.455
	Secondary	61	70.33		
	Higher than secondary	41	62.49		
Ink drawing	Lower than secondary	36	70.93	0.378	0.828
	Secondary	65	72.71		
	Higher than secondary	40	68.29		
Painting - gouache	Lower than secondary	33	60.05	3.323	0.190
	Secondary	65	72.98		
	Higher than secondary	41	73.28		
Potato printing	Lower than secondary	35	63.79	4.078	0.130
	Secondary	66	78.17		
	Higher than secondary	41	67.35		
Paper modelling	Lower than secondary	32	62.30	0.798	0.671
	Secondary	60	64.03		
	Higher than secondary	37	68.92		
Monotype	Lower than secondary	32	59.64	1.517	0.468
	Secondary	60	68.58		
	Higher than secondary	39	67.26		
Clay modelling - animal	Lower than secondary	32	63.06	1.990	0.370
	Secondary	61	71.18		
	Higher than secondary	39	62.00		

The results prove that in both cases there are no statistically significant differences in the level of artistic skills among pupils when taking into consideration the level of fathers' education. However, in the techniques of *drawing* ($p = 0.109$) and *charcoal drawing* ($p = 0.104$), there is an observed tendency in the level of artistic skills among pupils when taking into consideration the level of fathers' education. Namely, there is a higher skills level acquired by the children whose fathers had secondary education. The latter were also found to have the advantage in the majority of other techniques, however, the lowest results were achieved by the pupils whose fathers had the lowest level of education, namely primary school or vocational school. According to the results acquired, it can be concluded that fathers with secondary education deal with children in a way that they offer them drawing materials and drawing paper only. Fathers with lower level of education, according to results, however, do not spend time with children to deal with the skills of artistic expression. Yet, it is interesting that there is greater advantage with fathers who have secondary education. Perhaps, in the current situation, fathers with higher level of education do not spend so much time at home and thereby do not have time to spend with children, play with them, create and draw. According to the results of our study, it can be concluded that the level of parents' education influences pupils' skills and abilities in the field of art, and that parents' role in the preschool period is not negligible.

Conclusion

In the research we were interested in specific differences among pupils in the first grade taking into consideration the level of skills in implementing the twelve art tasks in different fields and techniques considering the level of mother's and father's education. First grade pupils are in general, as estimated by the teachers, in terms of the development of artistic skills, assessed less favourably. Social and cultural conditions in which a child lives as well as heredity and even child's activity are the components that influence his/her development. In this research we examined the differences in the level of artistic expressions among the pupils considering the level of their parents' education in individual art techniques at the beginning of the first grade when the influence of school is not so present yet. The existing results prove that kindergarten is a place where children's abilities are developed under professional guidance and, as stated by Marjanovič Umek (2004), kindergarten has a positive influence on a child's cognitive, speech and social development. Yet, even children who spend preschool period at home with their parents have many possibilities to develop artistic creativity in all fields of art. Of course, all of the following play very important roles in the process: socio-economic status of the family, parents' level of education, child's interests for learning and his/her cognitive abilities. Results of the research confirmed that there is a statistically distinctive difference in the level of skills in the paper modelling technique taking into consideration mother's level of education. However, tendency in clay modelling and gouache painting speaks in favour of the

pupils whose mothers' had higher education. It can be concluded that mothers with higher education offer their children materials and allow them to create with colours and paintbrush, to draw with charcoal, knead clay and transform paper. Therefore, children get to know this kind of artistic expression and do not have any problems later in the first grade. While working with all these materials, they are relaxed, which contributes to a better quality of artistic expression. In addition, the results of the study confirmed that father's role in the preschool period is not negligible. According to the acquired results, fathers with secondary education tend to spend time with their children while drawing at home, since this tendency can be evident in the level of artistic skills among children in the field of drawing and charcoal drawing. On the skills level in implementing artistic tasks in individual artistic techniques, the pupils whose parents had lower level of education achieved much worse results than the pupils whose parents had higher education. This study, as well as some previous studies (Bonci, Mottram, & McCoy, 2011), confirmed that the role of educated parents is crucial for the overall development of the child. Parents with higher education are aware of the importance of spending time with their children in the most active and creative way. Irrespective of working time and the fast pace of life, educated parents tend to find the time for their children, to talk with them and play.

As stated by Lašek, Novotna, and Kostkova (2011), the most important role of parents in the family is to raise children to be independent, and to become mature, both emotionally and ethically. It may be that at home children are more relaxed and without inhibitions which they usually have in kindergarten, especially when being part of a group. The acquired research results remind us that children do not have enough experience with certain materials and art techniques in kindergarten because, as stated by Dryden and Vos (2001), children learn best by experience, which includes all senses. Play is one of the most efficient methods of learning. It is important that children learn by their own acts. For the field of art this means that a child familiarizes herself/himself with the brush, and that s/he is given different materials which s/he can knead, roll, cut, fold and form in different ways. Moreover, the results of the research prove that children who stay at home have the possibility of modelling with different materials, such as clay, modelling clay, plasticine, and to assembly package waste and play with dice, using similar methods. They paint and draw with different materials. Professional workers in kindergartens need to know children's developmental stages and plan their activities in accordance, taking into consideration the Slovenian kindergarten syllabus as well. Art is of significant importance in the development of a child, since it contributes to the creation of the complete conception of the world in which every child finds himself or herself. Moreover, it enriches the emotional life of a child, develops his/her imagination, emotions, memory, and speech, stimulates inventiveness, develops motor abilities, enables calmness, and fully influences personality development (Turković, 2008). Besides parents, these facts need to be followed by childcare workers in kindergartens as well as teachers in schools.

According to Podobnik and Bračun Sova (2009), their task is, using well chosen materials, techniques, tools, methods and contents, to create quality content learning situations that should enable children's motivating artistic expression. Children also need to have a direct contact with fine arts and should as well try to get accustomed to adult artworks.

These are the facts which should be followed by everyone who is professionally involved in raising and teaching children. Also, it would be reasonable to offer different training in the field of art classes in order to organize art workshops where professionals employed at kindergarten would try different art techniques by themselves. However, it is important that, no matter where the child spends his/her early childhood day care, s/he has the possibility to get to know his/her age-appropriate art materials and techniques, to create through games and at the same time to be stimulated and actively involved.

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Utjecaj roditelja i odgojitelja na sposobnosti i spretnosti djeteta na području likovne umjetnosti

Sažetak

U članku predstavljamo rezultate istraživanja u kojem su nas zanimale specifične razlike između učenika u prvom razredu, u ovisnosti o tome gdje su preživjeli predškolsko doba.

S tim rezultatima želimo objasniti utječe li okolina u kojoj dijete živi do ulaska u školu na njegov razvoj na području likovne umjetnosti. Dugoročni je cilj istraživanja smanjiti razlike između učenika na području likovne umjetnosti, koje su posljedica različitih oblika predškolskog odgoja.

Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da učenici koji su predškolsko doba preživjeli s roditeljima ili bakom i djedom, a ne u vrtiću, postižu bolje rezultate na likovnom području. Ti rezultati još se bolje vide prilikom crtanja s ugljanim bojama i slikanja u tehnici kolaža. Uloga roditelja, baka i djedova u predškolskom odgoju nije zanemariva. Veoma je bitno potražiti razloge za takvo stanje i izvoditi aktivnosti kako bi se pridonijelo porastu kvalitetnog izvođenja likovnih aktivnosti u vrtiću.

Ključne riječi: *baka i djed; likovno izražavanje; predškolski odgoj; prvi razred osnovne škole.*