

Creative drama and education of patients with type 1 diabetes

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Abstract

Type 1 diabetes, although it can be seen in all age groups, is frequently seen between the ages of 7-15. When diabetes is managed effectively, complications related to diabetes can be delayed or even prevented. Studies have also proven that education is effective in diabetes management. Creative drama is a group activity, that can provide a curative environment for adolescents with T1DM in the adolescent period. There are not many studies in the literature on the use of creative drama in the field of health. The current study aims to describe the use of creative drama in the education of patients with type 1 diabetes. The study follows the qualitative research method, and all data were sought from previous research. According to the results of the research, it was determined that there was a positive change in children's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors using the creative drama method.

Keywords: Creative drama; diabetes; education; nursing.

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1. Introduction

Diabetes is a serious, chronic disease (Kansra & Oberoi, 2023) that occurs as a result of the pancreas not producing enough insulin or the body's inability to use the insulin it produces effectively (WHO Global Report on Diabetes, 2016). Type 1 Diabetes Mellitus (T1DM), the most common endocrine disease of childhood, is a disease that manifests itself with insulopenia and hyperglycemia due to absolute insufficiency in insulin secretion. In type 1 diabetes that develops in childhood, signs and symptoms such as nocturia, fatigue, weight loss, and flu are also seen, in addition to the rapidly occurring diabetic ketoacidosis and the findings called polyuria, polydipsia, polyphagia (three P signs) (Kahrman & Kobya Bulut, 2015). The number of children and adolescents with diabetes worldwide is increasing every year. As stated in the 8th Diabetes Atlas published by the IDF in 2017, there were 7.5 billion people worldwide in 2017. Every year, 132,600 children and adolescents are newly diagnosed (Federation, 2017).

Diabetes control is more difficult in adolescence compared to other age groups due to physiological, social, and psychological changes. During adolescence, problems in insulin dose adjustment due to increased body weight with rapid growth and development, failure to administer insulin injections on time, negative changes in dietary habits, problems with an exercise regimen, recurrent infections, and psychosocial problems that occur as a result of hormonal changes in adolescence also have an impact. Difficulties in adherence to treatment occur, resulting in abnormalities in metabolic control. Experiencing negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, anxiety, unwillingness, and distress in controlling diabetes in children over time may cause treatment interruption and a decrease in quality of life (Aydin, 2013). For these reasons, parents of children with diabetes stated that disease control becomes more difficult during adolescence and that they are worried about the risk of complications due to their child's non-compliance with treatment (Boztepe, 2012; Desrochers, Schultz & Laffel, 2020).

1.1. Purpose of study

When diabetes is managed effectively, complications related to diabetes can be delayed or even prevented. However, many children with diabetes cannot adapt to diabetes management due to their characteristics. The treatment aims to minimize short-term (hypoglycemia, diabetic ketoacidosis) and long-term complications (retinopathy, nephropathy, neuropathy, etc.) by establishing metabolic balance and maintaining a stable blood sugar level. The education of children with diabetes should not only aim to improve children's skills but also aim at behavioral change. This study aimed to describe the use of creative drama in the education of patients with type 1 diabetes.

2. Materials and Method

The study follows the qualitative research method, and all data were sought from previous research. The use of creative drama in the education of patients with type 1 diabetes was discussed in the study. To comply with all ethical standards, references were made to the sources of the data. This study has an impact on the health and arts sectors. The procedure and results of this study pose no harm to people or the environment.

3. Results

3.1. Creative drama

Many different definitions have been given to the concept of "drama". These definitions were mostly made based on the Greek name of this concept, which has a Greek root (Adiguzel, 2007) stated that the concept of dran is a derivative of the concept of "dran", which expresses a Greek concept, and the concept of dran means "to push, to pull, to do, to act," conveying his understanding. In short, drama is the animation of natural and social events in an imaginary environment by using elements such as movement, speech, and imitation (Kurudayioğlu & Özden, 2015). Creativity is generally the ability to establish relationships that have not been established before; it is the ability to reveal new lives, experiences, new thoughts, and new products within a new thought scheme (Wasyliko & Stickley,

2003). It can be said that Harriet Finley Johnson from the United States, was the first to use creative drama in his works that teach the messages he wants to convey to his students through various animations using written texts (Wasylo & Stickley, 2003; Öktem & Johnson, 2014). The theater should be used as a tool to prepare the child for life, to ensure his or her spiritual development, and to develop his or her personality (Clark et al. 2010). Many techniques are used in creative drama, mainly role-playing and improvisation. According to Wasylo & Stickley (2003), developing creativity and imagination with creative drama applications, providing self-knowledge and self-realization, developing communication and cooperation skills, and some other features of creative drama that provide a healthy discharge and control of emotions are as follows:

- It is a group activity.
- It is based on the experiences of the participants and puts them at the center.
- It is animation focused. This focus is based on pretending, fiction, spontaneity, improvisation, and role-playing.
- It is a process-oriented study, not a result.
- It has a different meaning in the theater. Creative drama is not theater, but it is constantly fed by theatre.
- According to the configuration, it is carried out in certain stages that are systematically linked to each other.
- It is carried out in a certain place that has the features required by the work or in other places that are suitable for drama studies.

3.2. Stages of Drama

There is a process that must be followed during the implementation phase of the drama's activities. In this process, the steps that should be taken into account and should not be skipped should be followed carefully and meticulously. If one of them is not implemented, it should be done with the awareness that drama activities will do more harm than good (Adigüzel, 2007).

These stages are as follows:

- Warm-up-Preparation Studies
- Animation
- Evaluation – Discussion

3.2.1. Warm-up - Preparation Work

It includes the preparation of the participant physically and mentally for the activity and the preliminary work done to interact with the drama leader (Adigüzel, 2007; Adak et al., 2017). In these studies, which are also known as relaxation exercises, participants try to relax by doing mental, physical, and emotional exercises. The aim of the warm-up activities carried out in the physical sense is to ensure that the participants get to know each other and socialize (Adak et al., 2017).

3.2.2. Animation

Animation is to enter someone's personality through an event or plot to ensure that the participant is active, to internalize an experience, and to bring it to life within itself. It is called expressing a subject through a person by planning it according to a certain process and then putting it into a form (Püsküllüoğlu, 2004). It is the stage on which certain techniques of drama are used by adhering to the starting point of the subject to be played. This stage, which expresses the most critical process in which the results of drama activities and permanent learning experiences are obtained, allows the person to empathize and socialize with the group he is in (Adigüzel, 2007). In this process, individuals discover new things as they portray the person they play. Karakaya (2007) expands the world of knowledge by dreaming about many affective acquisitions that will be necessary for him in his social life, the character he integrates as he portrays and assumes the role of.

3.2.3. *Evaluation-Discussion*

It refers to an important stage in which the results of the drama studies are obtained and should be emphasized. At this stage, the positive emotions and thoughts left by the event enacted by the students during the drama activities are questioned, and the contribution of the students to motivation and course success is evaluated at the end of the process (Adıgüzel, 2007).

3.3. *Drama Types*

Drama has certain genres that it has in itself. Each of these types has some peculiarities of its own. Knowing these features, it is thought that it will be easier to decide which drama type is more suitable for the subject and will serve the intended purpose more easily (Gümüş, 2019).

3.3.1. *Educational Drama*

Educational drama, a type of drama that is known to be used in almost every subject in education, enables students to learn through their own experiences and take an active role in the lesson. In this respect, it is also described as a pedagogical drama in the sources. This type of drama, which is mostly used in the educational life of individuals, contributes to the development of both cognitive, affective, and pico-motor skills in the individual (Akkuş, 2016). Educational drama, which has flexible rules according to the developmental status and needs of the students, is a method that enables the activity to reach its goal by directing the children as if they are playing, accompanied by a drama leader (Önder, 2016).

3.3.2. *Sociodrama*

It is a method in which a group formed by a drama leader focuses on the common problems they have and acts jointly to produce solutions to these problems. The greatest support that sociodrama provides to its participants is that each participant has the opportunity to express the problems they experience and to experience the solutions they produce on how to overcome these problems. It is known as a method that allows the problem to be solved more easily by bringing different perspectives together and allowing individuals to relax.

3.3.3. *Psychodrama*

Although this drama method is known as a method used in the treatment of adults, it should also be known as a method that will facilitate children and young people's coping with their problems (Önder, 2016). In this way, individuals experience introversion by coping with their problems. It can also be considered a therapy method that enables them to solve the different problems they experience within themselves and similar events they encounter more easily (Erdoğan, 2010).

3.3.4. *Creative Drama*

Creative drama is a game that individuals create on their own without being attached to any written text, based on their own experiences, and take part in the animation of the text they have created (Güney, 2009). This type of drama aims to reveal the creative ability of the participant. This method can also be considered a way to increase the child's self-confidence. Although creative drama is a genre that is dealt with in drama, it differs from other types of drama due to its unique characteristics (Aytaş, 2013).

3.4. *Use of creative drama in the field of health*

Creative drama can be used as a very convenient tool in the field of health, as a contemporary method that enables the participants to form a social group, express their feelings and thoughts in a democratic environment, and convey a subject to be taught permanently without boring the participants while having a good time (Thoft, Nielsen & Enggaard, 2022; Sunni et al., 2023). However, there are not many studies on the use of creative drama in the field of health in literature. Considering that health education is one of the main activities of health professionals, this situation is quite remarkable. In the current studies, in the education of nurses (Wasylo & Stickley, 2003) and midwives

(Kemp, 2009), and health professionals generally, creative drama is used in teaching preventive health practices to healthy people (Stephens et al., 2007; Joronen, 2008) and in the processing of some psychosocial issues (Dikici et al., 2010; Guli et al., 2013).

There are not many studies in the literature on the use of creative drama in the field of health. Considering that health education is one of the main activities of health professionals, this situation is quite remarkable. Daykin et al. (2008) find that the scientific world is still in its infancy in terms of studies investigating the effects of artistic activities such as drama, performance, dance, and music on the behavior and health of adolescents. However, there are studies evaluating the effect of creative drama applied to different groups on behavioral problems such as anxiety, depression, aggression, and sociability. Davis (1985) found that the anxiety scores of the participants decreased after the creative drama study was applied to the elderly.

Puetz et al. (2013) examined 27 studies involving 1576 cancer patients to evaluate the effects of artistic activities such as dance, drama, music, and writing on patients. As a result, they found that these artistic activities significantly decreased the anxiety and depression levels of the patients. Gündoğdu (2012) determined that after the creative drama program was applied to 13 adolescents, the aggression scores of the participants decreased significantly compared to the control group. Various researchers have published articles on the positive effects of creative drama on social development. Kara and Çam (2007) reported that after the drama practice, they applied to the pre-service teachers, the participants showed a significant improvement in social skills such as the ability to do and carry out a task with the group, initiating and maintaining a relationship, and self-control compared to the control group.

Barrera and Schulte (2009) determined that social skill scores increased significantly as a result of the social skills program they applied using various entertainment activities, expressive art therapies such as music, art, and drama, and cognitive behavioral strategies for children diagnosed with brain tumors. Erbay and Doğru (2010) found that as a result of a 10-hour creative drama program they applied to five kindergarten students with learning disabilities, there were significant improvements in the children's social communication skills, such as greeting their friends when they entered the classroom, joining the group, and starting communication.

Durmuş (2008) found that psychological counseling with the group integrated with creative drama significantly decreased the shyness scores of university students. However, there is also a study stating that creative drama does not affect children's social skills or behavioral problems. Researchers suggested that the control group also had music lessons in this study, therefore, in the case of experimental work with creative drama, the control group should not have artistic activities (Freeman et al., 2003). Nutrition for children and adolescents, protection from infectious diseases, the harms of smoking, etc. According to the results of the research examining the effects of the creative drama method on health education issues such as health education, it was determined that there was a positive change in children's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors (Joronen, 2008; Basso and Pelech, 2008; Li et al., 2008). In a study in which the effect of drama on the development of emotional intelligence was qualitatively investigated, it was determined that there was an important development in all sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence and communication skills, which is a natural result of the development of emotional intelligence (Demir Acar, 2014).

Creative drama is directly related to ataxia, which is the state of being between real and fictional experiences. Metaxas: The game is based on improvisation and role-playing, creating new fictional worlds based on the real world and traveling back and forth between these two worlds through games. A participant in this process experiences the actions of perceiving, understanding, and sharing the images that he has created in the fictional world or that have been created by other participants. Thus, the participants are also living directly within the fictional realities they create based on their own experiences in the real world. These images also contribute to the effectiveness of the process, the development of group dynamics, their learning, and the development of their awareness.

3.5. Creative drama and type 1 diabetes education

Drama offers the individual the opportunity for multi-faceted development by enabling individuals to be active in the learning process, to learn by doing and by living, to realize themselves, and to discover their creative aspects. With drama, the individual learns the relationship between events and situations more easily. Type 1 diabetes, due to its severe and chronic nature and the complexity of self-care, requires making multiple daily self-care decisions. Patient education is very important in increasing self-care and making the right decisions in diabetes (Amsberg et al., 2009).

The difficult and complex reality of diabetes care is incompatible with the traditional educational approach to patient education. In the traditional approach, patients are mostly silent and passive, and health personnel are experts in self-management who provide the knowledge, skills, and recommendations that patients need. In disease management, individuals want to be in a more active position where they can express their problems regarding their self-management and are listened to and supported (Adolfsson et al., 2004; Funnel and Weiss, 2008). In this aspect, the traditional approach does not comply with the needs of the patients, does not take into account their psychosocial experiences, and may cause them to feel powerless (Anderson and Funnel, 2005).

Education is an important part of diabetes management (Britton et al., 2023), and it is accepted in the world that blood sugar is kept under control, the number of hospitalizations is reduced, and complications are delayed or prevented thanks to diabetes education. Studies have also proven that education is effective in diabetes management and regulates metabolic control (Anderson and Funnel, 2005; Ayar, 2012; Cheyne, Smith & Pollet, 2021). Helping patients examine and clarify the emotional, social, cognitive, and spiritual elements in their lives about the decisions they make about their health and providing them with the opportunity to acquire and develop the problem-solving and communication skills necessary to manage their health will enable them to be more successful in disease management. Since creative drama is a group activity, it provides a curative environment for adolescents with T1DM in the adolescent period when peer interaction is important (Güven, 2009).

In creative drama, the participants learn to evaluate events and gain problem-solving skills through the activities performed during the animation and evaluation stages. These activities in drama enable patients to use the processes of problem-solving, teaching-learning, and empowerment. In creative drama, the participants both take an active role and become the audience during the animations and evaluations (Altay, 2013). These can provide patients with experience about different events, facts, and situations, help them realize their feelings and thoughts, express themselves more easily, and recognize, trust, and empathize (Turak, 2012). It also helps them develop their observations, communication skills, and listening skills about other people and events. All of these can enable patients to learn actively by doing and experiencing (Sefer and Akfırat, 2009).

During the warm-up, animation, and evaluation stages of the drama, they are expected to evaluate the activities and the whole session by asking questions (Güven, 2009). Along with these questions, it contributes to communication and interaction (intersubjectivity) between nurses and individuals with T1DM. In creative drama activities, artistic works such as breathing exercises, progressive relaxation exercises, imagination, music, dance, rhythm exercises, physical and tactile activities, role-playing, improvisation, and painting are used (Turak, 2012; Güven, 2009). After the activities, the participants are asked, "What would you do if you were me? What did we think? What did we feel?" Democrat leader in creative drama, respectful and valuing people, accepting that each participant's feelings and thoughts are important, reassuring, natural, being a good listener, behaving sympathetically, ethically, empathetically, sincerely, and organizing the drama space according to the participants.

4. Conclusion

Drama gives people the chance to grow in a variety of ways because it encourages active participation in the learning process, learning through doing and living, self-realization, and the exploration of one's creative side. In order to improve self-care and make wise decisions when dealing

with diabetes, patient education is crucial. Education is also useful in managing diabetes and regulating metabolic regulation, according to studies. Since creative drama is a group activity, it offers adolescents with T1DM a therapeutic setting during the adolescent stage, when peer interaction is crucial. Through the exercises carried out during the animation and evaluation stages, participants in creative drama gain the ability to evaluate situations and develop problem-solving abilities. The participants in creative drama both take an active role and develop. Studies on the application of creative drama in the realm of health are scarce in the literature. This situation is rather amazing given that health professionals' primary focus is on health education. According to recent studies, nurses and midwives are typically taught by health professionals through creative theater. It was observed that it is advantageous in the processing of some psychosocial concerns as well as in the teaching of preventive health behaviors to healthy persons. Children's and adolescents' nutrition, immunity to infectious diseases, the dangers of smoking, etc. According to the study's findings, which looked at how creative drama affected health education topics including health education, it was discovered that kids' knowledge, attitudes, and actions had improved.

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