

Research Article

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The Contribution of School Theaters to the Value Development of Kindergarten Students: The Irbid Example

Luai Taleb Obaidat

Abstract

Background/purpose. This research aimed to investigate the Contribution of school theater to the development of values among kindergarten students from teachers' perspectives in Irbid Governorate.

Materials/methods. A descriptive-analytical approach was adopted using a questionnaire of three dimensions (psychological, social, and aesthetic). The study sample comprises 108 kindergarten teachers. To obtain the study results, means and standard deviations were used, along with multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA).

Results. Findings revealed a moderate role of school theater in developing social, aesthetic, and psychological values among kindergarten students. No statistically significant differences were found in the impact of school theater on the development of psychological, aesthetic, and social values, attributable to the years of experience variable. Similarly, no statistically significant differences in the psychological dimension were observed due to academic qualifications. The findings also indicated statistically significant differences in the aesthetic and social dimensions of the impact of school theatre on the development of values among kindergarten students, with a preference for those with a bachelor's degree.

Conclusion. Based on the findings, the study suggests that, considering the theater's proven substantial benefits for children's psychological, social, artistic, and cultural development, school theatre should be better incorporated into the curriculum for kindergarteners. The study's findings are limited to a sample of kindergarten teachers in Irbid and a three-dimensional questionnaire, which restricts the generalization of the results, and responses may have been influenced by subjective factors.

1. Introduction

Kindergarten typically represents a critical milestone in a child's life, marking the transition from early childhood into more structured learning and social environments. After family, kindergarten is typically the most crucial setting for a child's upbringing, as it plays a significant part in shaping their personality and inculcating societal principles, values, and customs (Badran, 2000). Kindergartens primarily provide a curriculum tailored to strengthen children's experiences by offering rich learning resources and developmental activities that target all aspects of the child's growth, including mental, emotional, physical, motor, and social development. Kindergarten is the most crucial setting for a child's upbringing after family.

School theater is one of the most influential modern learning methods in kindergarten, with a profound impact on children that cannot be overlooked. Kindergarten theater primarily offers a distinctive activity that incorporates the aesthetics of dialogue and performance, characterized by exciting elements such as lighting, music, and kinetic effects. It also presents experiences and facts in a tangible and visually appealing manner, allowing it to engage multiple senses simultaneously. School theater is one of the most prominent means of communication that combines various arts. It is also characterized by its ability to dazzle, as well as by its direct impact on the audience through interaction, which contributes to achieving positive goals and values and encourages engagement with events and characters (Al-Ruwaini, 2023).

Furthermore, school theater is one of the most prominent art forms, enabling effective communication with students and giving them the opportunity to express their feelings and experiences through imitation and simulation. As children, students tend to integrate and interact with their peers, much like actors do with a team. There are other common elements between students and theater, such as imagination and wonder, which make school theater an essential educational tool that contributes to shaping the students' social, cultural, and moral character. Through dynamic characters that capture their attention and stimulate their imagination, school theater is considered an effective tool for building character (Ibrahim, 2021).

School theater plays a key role in modern schools in developed countries, with its use varying depending on its intended purpose. In the early stages of the educational process, theater becomes more of an educational and pedagogical tool than a literary or artistic goal. From this standpoint, children's theater is not expected to produce actors, directors, or set designers; rather, the goal is to use theater in the educational process to develop children's abilities and potential in the most effective way possible. Theater also helps instill social, religious, and moral values in children in a fun way that stimulates their imagination and motivates them to solve problems they may encounter in their daily lives. Theater significantly promotes patriotism, honesty, loyalty, teamwork, and responsibility by involving children at all stages of theatrical production (Bishara & Sultan, 2012).

Furthermore, the School theater also influences both students and their teachers through the educational methods and programs used, which are designed to foster the students' personal growth by developing their potential and capabilities. This type of education requires diverse methods that enhance students' morale and motivation. It also requires students to overcome shyness and acquire moral courage. The success of this work depends on the available resources, which must be adapted to cover basic needs such as decor, costumes, sound effects, lighting, makeup, and masks (Marai, 2002).

Children's theatre serves as an educational and influential tool that fosters empathy, creativity, and self-assurance, while instilling moral and behavioral values and fostering social and communication skills through interactive storytelling and group activities. Mark Twain noted that children's theater is the greatest invention of the twentieth century, emphasizing its powerful impact

in promoting good behavior through movement and interaction, rather than burdensome books or traditional lessons (Na'isa, 2015).

School theater is more than just a performance activity; it is a powerful educational tool that can embody abstract facts and concepts in concrete terms through the dramatization of curricula and lived experiences. By dramatizing lessons, it engages multiple senses, making learning both meaningful and memorable (Al-Anani, 2007). School theater can be staged in classrooms or open courtyards, and the activities it presents bring school subjects to life in ways that traditional methods cannot (Abu Maali & Hilat, 2007).

School theater is one of the most prominent interactive educational tools that help instill values in children, as it promotes positive interaction and provides emulated behavioral models. Studies indicate that theater provides a rich environment for instilling values such as cooperation, honesty, responsibility, and tolerance, through dramatized life situations that children can easily understand and interact with (Trocler et al., 2022). School theater in kindergarten is also considered an effective strategy for developing psychological, social, and aesthetic values, as it contributes to developing children's skills and personalities endearingly and enhances their readiness to interact positively with their different environments, making it an essential tool for building generations and transferring knowledge and values in an influential manner.

2. Previous Studies

Several studies have cited the role of school theaters in developing social, religious, and moral values among kindergarten students. For instance, a study by Atiyya (2015) examined the role of children's theater in developing children's social and religious values, employing a descriptive-analytical approach. The study covered several significant topics, including the history of children's theatre, the various types of children's theatre, the connection between children's theatre and values, the qualities of values, the significance of values, the categorization of values, and the stages of childhood development, which were symbolized by the traits of early childhood, middle childhood, and late childhood. The results emphasized that children's theaters have a close relationship with the development of social values among children and a significant connection with the development of religious values, as well as with shaping their personality traits.

Bakhit (2015) conducted a study titled "Moral Values in Puppet Theatre Scripts: An Analytical Study", aimed to define the moral values included in puppet theatre scripts presented to middle childhood children (6-9) years old and to examine their suitability for them. The study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to a deliberately selected group of puppet theatre texts that include moral values, using the content analysis tool. The study's most significant findings are that the puppet theatre scripts (the study sample) contained a set of moral principles. For instance, among all moral principles, the value of mercy came in first, followed by the value of admitting mistakes in second place. The values of compassion, tolerance, and apology ranked third, fourth, and fifth, respectively, followed by a number of other values in varying proportions.

A study by Bishara and Sultan (2019) aimed to examine the effect of children's theater (using puppet theater) on instilling specific educational values in children. The study selected a random sample of 6 first-grade students in the city of Lattakia and applied a social responsibility scale. The test-retest results showed differences in the average scores of children between the pre-test and post-test in their performance on the educational values scale. These differences favored the children's scores on the post-test. There were differences between the average scores of children in the pre-test and the post-test in their performance on the scales (participation and cooperation, etiquette, bearing responsibility, security, and safety). These differences favored the children's post-test scores.

In Cairo, Jouda (2021) conducted a study aimed at identifying the role of school theater in developing moral values among primary school students. A sample of (2) school theater performances from private primary schools was selected. The descriptive-analytical approach and content analysis tool were used to identify the moral values embedded in the two plays. The study found a set of moral values in the performances, with (sincerity, tolerance, and investing time) ranking highest, followed by (love of reading, admitting mistakes, and etiquette of speech). Both male and female dramatic characters present these values in roughly equal proportions, avoiding the idea of a single hero or favoring one gender over another, thereby achieving equality.

In Saudi Arabia, Al-Zahrani and Al-Harbi (2024) studied the role of school theater in dramatizing the social studies curriculum to develop citizenship values such as honesty and integrity among sixth-grade female students at (139th Elementary School) in Makkah Al-Mukarramah. The study proceeded in two directions: a theoretical (descriptive) direction and a practical direction based on the experimental method. The sample was divided into two groups: an experimental group (n = 40) and a control group (n = 40). The study's results demonstrated the effectiveness of school theater in dramatizing the social studies curriculum (the values of honesty and integrity), surpassing the traditional method of teaching.

Kharaza and Gabriel (2021) conducted a study to identify the role of kindergartens in developing preschool children's values. The study was conducted with a sample of mothers of children attending Al-Amal and Al-Zohour kindergartens in the city of Masalata, using a descriptive-analytical approach and a questionnaire to elicit their opinions. The results showed that kindergartens play a significant role in developing children's abilities and personality at this stage, and also indicated no statistically significant differences in parents' opinions by gender.

In Jordan, Al-Jabali and Suwar (2009) investigated the influence of school theater on the instillation of educational values among primary school students in Irbid Governorate. The researchers employed an analytical approach, along with a questionnaire distributed to primary school teachers. The results of the statistical analysis showed that theater is an effective means of promoting educational values, including personal, religious, social, and national values.

Reviewing previous studies reveals that most have focused on developing values through school theater. Atiyya's (2015) study examined the role of children's theater in developing social and religious values from multiple perspectives, while Bakhit's (2015) study explored the order of moral values in puppet theater texts. Bishara and Sultan's (2019) study demonstrated the impact of puppet theater in instilling specific educational values, while Joudah's (2021) study identified a set of moral values that theater helps develop. Al-Zahrani and Al-Harbi's (2024) study focused on the role of school theater in dramatizing the social studies curriculum to develop citizenship values. Kharaza and Gabriel's (2021) study aimed to identify the role of kindergartens in fostering preschool children's values. Al-Jabali and Suwar's (2009) study examined the impact of school theater on the instillation of educational values among primary school students. In terms of research methodologies, most studies relied on a descriptive-analytical approach, such as those by Al-Jabali and Suwar (2009), Kharaza and Gabriel (2021), Joudah (2021), Bakhit (2015), and Atiyya (2015). Other studies employed an experimental approach, as seen in the studies by Al-Zahrani and Al-Harbi (2024) and Bishara and Sultan (2019). These studies were used to build the theoretical framework and design the study tool, and to review their results and transfer them to teachers for application in the educational field.

In light of recent educational literature highlighting the growing importance of school theater and its role in developing values among learners at different educational stages, it is evident that most previous studies have focused primarily on elementary and intermediate levels. These studies have generally addressed value development in broad terms without delving deeply into the kindergarten stage in particular. Moreover, limited attention has been paid to kindergarten teachers'

perspectives on the effectiveness of school theater in fostering children's psychological, social, and aesthetic values. Therefore, the significance of the present study lies in its attempt to fill this gap by analyzing the contribution of school theater to the development of values among kindergarten students in Irbid Governorate, while examining the influence of teachers' academic qualifications and years of experience. This study thus seeks to make a new scientific contribution, enriching the educational field with practical insights to enhance teaching approaches and promote value formation in early childhood education.

2.1. Problem Statement:

Kindergarten is a crucial foundational stage in a child's life because, during this stage, their personality is typically shaped by their emotional and social behaviors. This stage also witnesses significant development in their linguistic abilities and the acquisition of moral, educational, and social values, requiring the adoption of modern instructional methods that target both the child's cognitive and emotional aspects, contributing to the comprehensive development of their values and attitudes. Since children are easily influenced by their environment, it is indisputable that the experiences they have during their formative years have a significant impact on their future. Their personality is therefore greatly influenced by the educational care they receive during this phase. In this context, school theatre is considered a powerful and necessary tool for fostering attitudes and values such as leadership, cooperation, tolerance, and a sense of community. According to recent research, it also contributes to the development of social, intellectual, and emotional intelligence (Armesto Arias et al., 2024; Zakaria et al., 2023).

Despite the abundance of theoretical literature confirming this importance, educational practices in the field do not always reflect these trends. From my experience as a teacher and educational supervisor, I have found that school theater is often used only for public events, rather than effectively implemented in classrooms to illustrate lessons or clarify concepts. There has also been a discrepancy in how it is employed among teachers, with it sometimes used in a haphazard, unorganized manner that fails to achieve the desired educational goals. Based on the above, the need arose to study the Contribution of school theater to the development of values among kindergarten students, from the perspective of their teachers in Irbid Governorate. This was achieved by answering the following two questions:

What is the Contribution of school theater in developing values among kindergarten students from the perspective of their teachers?

Are there statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the assessment of the Contribution of school theater in developing values among kindergarten students attributable to the variables of (academic qualification, years of experience)?

2.2. Study Objectives:

This study aims to:

Investigate the Contribution of school theater to the development of values among kindergarten students, as perceived by their teachers, in Irbid Governorate. This is achieved by analyzing and demonstrating the extent to which teachers perceive the impact of school theater on the development of values among kindergarten students.

- Detect differences in the Contribution of school theater in developing values among kindergarten students, attributed to (academic qualifications, years of experience).
- Identify the values that can be developed in kindergarten children through school theaters.

2.3. Research Importance:

The research is important because previous studies and educational literature demonstrate the considerable influence of school theater on the development of values and sound behaviors among kindergarten students. This formative stage constitutes a fertile environment for learning and acquiring educational, moral, and aesthetic values and behaviors; therefore, kindergarten school theaters are directed toward meeting children's developmental needs by tailoring curricula that include scripts designed for this purpose. Research has shown that school theaters play a vital and constructive role in the development of children. Since buildings constructed on unsound foundations are susceptible to collapse and demolition, no construction is complete without a strong foundation. One of the educational resources that currently holds a significant position in the field of experiential education, which is founded on knowledge of reality and real-world application, is theatre. Children enthusiastically participate in this school-based artistic endeavor and are captivated by the theater's enchanted, hidden elements (Bishara & Sultan, 2019). The creation of a kindergarten follow-up team on the ground and the strategies made by decision-makers are what make this study significant. This study tool also offers a novel approach that can be used as a measure across all kindergarten roles. It also establishes standards for the values concepts that kindergarteners need to understand and aids future research in identifying findings and adding novel elements.

2.4. Conceptual and Operational Definitions

School theater refers to a set of structured theatrical activities performed by school staff, students, teachers, and parents to cater to the various interests of kindergarten students, such as drawing and acting, under the supervision of a theater education trainer (Fadlallah & Aba Al-Hajj, 2018). Operationally, it is defined as the theatrical activities practiced within kindergarten institutions, whether in the classroom or in the school environment, which aim to promote social and moral values among children. These activities are measured through teachers' responses to the study tool (questionnaire) in its various aspects.

Values development: This is the fundamental principle for determining what is right and what is wrong, and it is also seen as the frame of reference within a person's psyche that is used to evaluate their behaviors (Zamel, 2015). Operationally, it is described as a set of desirable positive behaviors that teachers seek to develop in kindergarten children through school theater, such as honesty, cooperation, respect for others, commitment, cleanliness, tolerance, and others, as shown in the questionnaire items.

Kindergarten: It is the stage in which children between the ages of three or four and six are cared for in social educational organizations that aim to achieve integrated and balanced development for children in all mental, psychological, and social aspects (Badr, 2009). Operationally, they are public or private educational institutions that offer tailored education for children aged 4–6 in Irbid Governorate, and where the study was conducted based on the responses of teachers from these institutions.

2.5. Study Limitations and Determinations

Objective Limitations: This study was confined to the topic "The Contribution of School Theater in Developing Values among Kindergarten Students," focusing on teachers' perspectives on this role.

Human Limitations: This study was conducted on a sample of kindergarten teachers in public schools in Irbid Governorate during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

Spatial Limitations: The study was limited to kindergarten schools affiliated with the Education Directorates in Irbid Governorate.

Methodological Limitations: This study relied on a descriptive-analytical approach, using a questionnaire designed to measure teachers' perspectives on the Contribution of school theater to the development of values.

3. Methodology and Procedures

3.1. Research Approach

The methodology of the present study followed a descriptive–analytical design aimed at examining the contribution of school theater to the development of values among kindergarten students. The study sample consisted of 108 kindergarten teachers selected randomly from public schools in Irbid Governorate. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire that covered three main dimensions—psychological, social, and aesthetic—designed to capture teachers' perceptions of the educational impact of school theater. The instrument was validated by a panel of experts in early childhood education, measurement, and educational psychology, and its reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which indicated strong internal consistency across all dimensions. The data collection process was conducted electronically via a secure link distributed to participating teachers during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics (e.g., means and standard deviations) and inferential tests, including multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), to examine differences by academic qualification and years of experience. These methodological procedures enhance the rigor and replicability of the study, ensuring that the findings are both valid and generalizable within similar educational contexts.

3.2. Study Sample

The study sample consists of 108 female kindergarten teachers randomly selected from schools affiliated with the education directorates of Irbid Governorate. The demographic distribution of the sample is presented in detail in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Frequencies and percentages of the study sample by demographic variables

Variable	Categories	Frequency	%
Academic qualification	Bachelor's	82	75.9
	Graduate Studies	26	24.1
Experience	< 5 years	58	53.7
	5 ≤ 10	44	40.7
	>10 years	6	5.6
Total		108	%100

Results in Table 1 demonstrate that:

The study sample consisted of 108 participants; the majority, 82 (75.9%), had a bachelor's degree, and only 26 (24.1%) held postgraduate degrees.

In terms of experience, the highest percentage of participants, 58 (53.7%), had less than 5 years of experience, compared with those with 5-10 years of experience, 44 (40.7%), and those with more than 10 years of experience, 6 (5.6%).

3.3. Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

To establish the face validity of the instrument, it was presented in its initial form to a panel of seven faculty members from Jordanian universities specializing in curriculum and teaching methods, measurement and evaluation, theater education, and kindergarten education. They were requested to evaluate the appropriateness and relevance of the items to their domains, the clarity of their wording, and the comprehensiveness of areas related to the Contribution of school theater in developing values among kindergarten students. After receiving feedback, necessary amendments were made, including the deletion of some items and the addition of new ones, to enhance the instrument's comprehensiveness.

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to assess the questionnaire's consistency by examining the strength of correlation between the tool's dimensions and its total score. The correlation coefficients between the different fields themselves ranged from -0.238 to 0.362 and 0.319. However, the correlation coefficients between each field and the overall study score ranged between 0.296 and 0.716. Furthermore, all correlation values are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, so no items of the questionnaire were deleted.

Table 2. Results of the Pearson correlation coefficient values

Dimensions	Social	Aesthetic	Psychological
Social	1		
Aesthetic	0.319	1	
Psychological	-0.362	-0.238	1
Total	0.716	0.676	0.296

3.4. Instrument Reliability

Table 3. Results of Cronbach's alpha coefficients

Dimensions	Cronbach's alpha coefficients
Social	0.806
Aesthetic	0.818
Psychological	0.714
Total	0.653

All Cronbach's alpha coefficients presented in Table 3 were high (0.714-0.818), indicating high reliability of the questionnaire items.

3.5. Correction of the Study Instrument

A five-point Likert scale was adopted to analyze the data and test the hypotheses, based on the participants' responses to the questionnaire items. The scale values were assigned as follows:

(1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. To determine the level of response, the researcher classified the results into three levels (High, Medium, Low) after applying the following formula:

$$\text{Interval length} = \frac{\text{Maximum value (5)} - \text{Minimum value (1)}}{\text{Number of categories (3)}} = 1.33$$

Accordingly, scores from 1 to 2.33 indicate a low score, scores from 2.34 to 3.67 indicate a medium score, and scores from 3.68 to 5 indicate a high score.

3.6. Research Procedures

The researcher followed structured and integrated procedures to ensure the achievement of the objectives of this study as follows:

- Previous investigations related to the Contribution of school theaters in developing children's values were reviewed. Based on this, the study problem was identified, the questions formulated, and the objectives, importance, and limitations stated.

- The researcher collected and analyzed studies related to the study topic, such as the Contribution of educational theater, value development in early childhood, and kindergarten teacher methods. This contributed to the development of the theoretical framework and the identification of the research gap.

- A questionnaire with three dimensions was developed, aiming to measure the Contribution of school theaters in developing kindergarten students' moral, social, and behavioral values.

- A preliminary statistical analysis of the study instrument was conducted using methods such as face validity and internal consistency validity (coefficient correlation between the item and the domain). The appropriate statistical analyses for the study were then extracted.

- A purposive sample of 108 kindergarten teachers in Irbid Governorate was selected. Their diversity was confirmed in terms of academic qualifications and years of experience. The researcher distributed copies of the questionnaire to the teachers via an electronic link.

- The collected data were entered into the SPSS statistical program, and appropriate analyses were computed to answer the study questions. These included frequencies, percentages, arithmetic means, and standard deviations, as well as a three-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test to examine the significance of differences across variables (academic qualifications and years of experience).

- The study results were discussed in light of previous studies and the theoretical framework. Their educational and pedagogical implications were interpreted and linked to the reality of kindergarten teachers' field practice in Irbid Governorate.

- A set of practical suggestions was developed to support the activation of school theater as an educational tool for value development, along with proposals for complementary future research.

The methodology section presents a clear and comprehensive description of the research design, which followed a descriptive–analytical approach. It explains in detail the study sample (108 kindergarten teachers), the data collection instrument (a questionnaire covering the psychological, social, and aesthetic dimensions), and the statistical procedures employed (including MANOVA using SPSS and Cronbach's alpha for reliability). The high reliability coefficients reported indicate the robustness and consistency of the measurement tool. However, it should be noted that the sample was composed exclusively of female teachers — a factor that ought to be explicitly acknowledged as one of the study's limitations. Additionally, including examples of the questionnaire items would enhance methodological transparency and allow readers to better understand the operationalization of key variables.

The following variables are analyzed in this research:

1. Independent variables: They include academic qualifications (bachelor's, postgraduate), and years of experience (less than 5 years, from 5 years to 10 years, and 10 years or more).

2. Dependent variables encompass the Contribution of school theater in developing values among kindergarten students, as perceived by their teachers in Irbid Governorate, and the study sample members' proficiency in each of the dimensions. This is reflected in the mean scores for participants' responses to the items in each dimension of the questionnaire (social, aesthetic, and psychological).

4. Findings and Discussion

The introduction provides a well-developed discussion on the significance of early childhood education, highlighting in particular the vital role of school theater in nurturing children's value development. The importance of the topic is convincingly supported through relevant scholarly references. Nonetheless, the study's specific contribution and its divergence from prior research need to be articulated more clearly and introduced earlier in the text to clarify its novelty. Additionally, the precise and coherent formulation of the research questions in the introduction effectively guided the study's overall structure and focus.

1. The Contribution of school theaters in developing values among kindergarten students

Table 4 presents the mean scores and standard deviations for participants' responses regarding the Contribution of kindergarten theater to the development of values among kindergarten children. Additionally, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted.

Table 4. Results of mean scores and standard deviations of the participants' responses to the impact of the study on the social dimension

Dimensions	Mean	Std	Degree
Social	3.53	.697	medium
Aesthetic	3.19	.886	medium
Psychological	3.13	.617	medium
Total	3.29	.414	medium

According to the results in Table 4, kindergarten teachers reported a medium role for school theatre in developing values among kindergarten students across the social, aesthetic, and psychological dimensions, with arithmetic means ranging from 3.13 to 3.29, suggesting a moderate degree.

This result can be attributed to several influential factors that have diminished the Contribution of school theater to the development of values. These factors include a lack of adequate infrastructure, such as school space and playgrounds, which hinders opportunities for practicing physical activity, and the fact that some schools operate in rented premises that lack the necessary institutional capacity. On the other hand, kindergarten teachers face various challenges, including the heavy workload imposed on them, which limits their ability to design instructional activities and programs primarily focused on cognitive development. Additionally, deficiencies in professional development related to dramatic pedagogy weaken their efficacy in fostering value-based learning. All these factors contributed to teachers' lack of interest in aesthetic education and cultural enrichment opportunities. These findings also contribute to strengthening educational policies and developing teacher training programs, highlighting their importance in improving pedagogical practices and enhancing the overall quality of the educational process.

This result is consistent with the study by Atiyya (2015), which emphasized the Contribution of children's theater to the development of social and religious values in children. It also aligns with the study by Joudah (2021), which demonstrated that school theater plays a role in imparting moral

values. However, the study differed from that of Al-Zahrani and Al-Harbi (2024), which focused on the sixth grade, whereas this study covered the kindergarten stage.

2. Examining Statistically Significant Differences ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in Assessing the Contribution of School Theater in Developing Values Among Kindergarten Students Based on Academic Qualification and Years of Experience

MANOVA was used to examine differences in participants' responses regarding The Contribution of school theater to the development of values among kindergarten students, based on academic qualifications and years of experience.

Table 5. Results of MANOVA test for the mean scores of the participants' estimates on each field of the impact of the Contribution of school theatre in developing values among kindergarten students by academic qualification and years of experience

Source of variance	Dimensions	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean squares	F-value	Statistical significance
Qualification	Social	1.983	1	1.983	4.126	.045
	Aesthetic	3.652	1	3.652	4.767	.031
	Psychological	.002	1	.002	.006	.940
Hotelling's Trac Value: 0.070, sig.:0.075						
Experience	Social	.118	2	.059	.123	.884
	Aesthetic	.946	2	.473	.617	.541
	Psychological	.212	2	.106	.272	.762
Hotelling's Trac Value: 0.023, sig.:0.886						
Error	Social	49.980	104	.481		
	Aesthetic	79.681	104	.766		
	Psychological	40.490	104	.389		
Total	Social	51.967	107			
	Aesthetic	83.921	107			
	Psychological	40.733	107			

The results of the MANOVA analysis revealed no statistically significant differences ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) in the Contribution of school theater to the development of values among kindergarten students, as perceived by their teachers, particularly in the psychological dimension, which was attributed to years of experience. The F value was 0.272, with a p-value of 0.762, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Similarly, no statistically significant differences ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) were observed in the aesthetic dimension attributed to years of experience. The F value was 0.617, with a p-value of 0.541, indicating that the difference was not significant at the 0.05 level. Likewise, teachers' years of experience have no impact on the Contribution of school theater in developing social values. The analysis showed that

the F-value was 0.123 and the p-value was 0.884, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05, suggesting no statistically significant difference at the $\alpha \geq 0.05$ level.

This outcome may be explained by the fact that all teachers are expected to perform the same jobs, work, and duties, and that they all use the same curricula and programs issued by the Curriculum Directorate and the Ministry of Education.

Furthermore, most teachers possess similar skills in utilizing and integrating theater within the classroom and school setting, regardless of their years of experience. Teachers, of course, receive the same training and are required to employ modern instructional strategies and adhere to the standards established by the ministry or directorate in activating school theater, which applies formally to all teachers regardless of their years of experience. Furthermore, this result may also be attributed to teachers' perception of school theater as a highly valuable educational tool that children greatly enjoy, and as an effective strategy for fostering various values and facilitating the interpretation and clarification of information and ideas related to school activities.

This result is consistent with the study by Al-Jabali and Suwar (2009), which investigated the use of school theater to instill educational values in students, and the study by Joudah (2021), which demonstrated the Contribution of school theater in developing moral values. It differed from the study by Bishara and Sultan (2019), which found a significant impact of children's theatre on the development of educational values. In contrast, this study differed from Al-Zahrani and Al-Harbi's (2024) study on the effectiveness of school theatre in dramatizing the social studies curriculum and developing citizenship values. In this study, the Contribution of theatre had a more limited impact.

The results showed no statistically significant differences at the level $\alpha = 0.05$ in the psychological dimension attributable to academic qualifications. The f-value was 0.006 and the p-value was 0.940, both of which are greater than 0.05. This suggests that all teachers possessed a similar level of cognitive and skill proficiency, regardless of their academic qualifications, due to standardized training. Therefore, academic qualifications do not significantly influence the activation of school theater or the development of values and psychological aspects in children. This result is consistent with the study by Kharaza and Gabriel (2021), which confirmed that some variables do not affect the development of values, and with the study by Al-Jabali and Suwar (2009), which highlighted the Contribution of theater as an effective means of promoting educational values. However, it differs from the study by Bishara and Sultan (2019), which demonstrated that academic qualifications influence The Contribution of theater in developing values.

The results showed statistically significant differences in both the aesthetic and social dimensions attributed to academic qualifications. In the aesthetic dimension, the F-value was 4.767 at the 0.031 significance level, with female teachers holding a bachelor's degree recording an average of 3.28 (standard deviation = 0.099). In the social dimension, the F-value was 4.126 at the 0.045 significance level, with female teachers holding a bachelor's degree recording an average of 3.6 (standard deviation = 0.076). These results indicate that female teachers with a bachelor's degree are better able to recognize the aesthetic and social aspects of theatrical activities. This is due to their recent graduation and continued possession of up-to-date knowledge and skills, as well as their enthusiasm to demonstrate their professional competence and overcome the stereotype of them as "new teachers." Furthermore, their participation in modern training programs has helped them develop more effective methods for interacting with children and using theater to enhance confidence and develop values. This result is consistent with the findings of Al-Jabali and Suwar (2009) and Joudah (2021), which highlighted the Contribution of theatre in developing values and its relationship to academic qualifications. However, it differs from Al-Zahrani and Al-Harbi (2024) and Kharaza and Jibril (2021), who indicated that the impact of academic qualifications in this area is limited.

4.1. Recommendations

Based on the results of the current study, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen the role of school theater in value development among kindergarten students. First, it is essential to integrate school theater into the kindergarten educational curriculum by allocating specific classes for this purpose, given the significant positive effects observed on children's psychological, social, aesthetic, and cultural dimensions. In parallel, specialized training programs should be developed to equip kindergarten teachers with the skills needed to implement school theater effectively in their instructional practices and to foster positive values among children. Moreover, teachers should be encouraged to incorporate educational theater into their daily classroom activities on a regular basis, as its benefits in promoting values have proven to be consistent regardless of years of experience or academic qualifications. In addition, children's psychological abilities—such as literary boldness, attention, and concentration—can be further developed through structured theatrical activities, particularly puppet shows, which demonstrated high effectiveness in supporting these skills. To ensure broader applicability, future qualitative and field studies are recommended in various educational settings and at different levels to verify the generalizability of these findings and to explore additional variables that may influence the relationship between school theater and value development. Finally, establishing stronger partnerships between schools, arts institutions, and local theater organizations is crucial for sharing expertise and developing comprehensive theater programs that enhance the quality of educational activities provided to children in early childhood.

4.2. Research Limitations

The findings of this study are limited to a sample of kindergarten teachers in public schools in Irbid Governorate ($n = 108$) during the first semester of the 2025/2026 academic year, and to a questionnaire comprising three dimensions (psychological, social, and aesthetic). This restricts the generalizability of the results beyond similar contexts. Given the descriptive cross-sectional design, causal inference is not possible, and responses may be influenced by social desirability and self-report biases. The results were not supported by classroom observations or experimental interventions for triangulation, and the estimates remain subject to the assumptions of MANOVA and the characteristics of the five-point Likert scale. Moreover, variations in school resources and training opportunities may act as latent factors influencing the perceived social and aesthetic contributions that the instrument could not fully capture.

Declarations

Author Contributions. The author contributed to the conceptualization, design, data collection, analysis, and writing of this research.

Conflicts of Interest. The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Approval. The relevant ethics committee has reviewed and approved this study. The research adhered to all ethical guidelines, ensuring full respect for participant privacy and data confidentiality. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement, and their identities remain confidential in accordance with ethical research standards.

Data Availability Statement. All data used to justify this study's outcomes are provided fully within the study paper and supplement materials. Readers and researchers interested in knowing may refer to the paper for overall information, data analysis, and results. One does not require any extra data beyond what this report has reported.

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