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Practical Five-Level Model for Activist Pedagogy and Promoting Active Citizenship: Film Study in Israel as a Test Case

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Abstract

Keywords:

active citizenship; activist pedagogy; activist teachers; five-level model for application of activist pedagogy in teaching.

This article presents a practical applicable model for teachers in all high school subjects who chose the teaching profession to educate future generations using activist teaching promoting active citizenship and a progressive liberal world view. The five-level model addressing the activist pedagogy practice developed in the 21st century, helps empower and develop teachers' professional abilities operating in education as social change agents. The model was developed as part of broad research into the need to train teachers using the activist pedagogical approach. The study emphasizes the model's significant contribution to learning teaching skills to promote socio-political awareness in the activist approach developed in light of contemporary pedagogy promoting active citizenship. The article details all model stages and curriculum in high school film studies as a test case. Film studies began with seven film courses as a unique study system in 1992 and reached 400 courses in 2019, as part of mainstream studies in both the Arts and Social Division at the Israeli Ministry of Education, a meteoric growth of about 15 film courses per year. The article is based on interview analysis including an interview with a film study inspector who was among the founders of film studies in Israel, documents, literature review and researcher's experience in the field. By revealing the practical and applicable model for teaching and learning using the activist pedagogical approach, the study proposes innovative theoretical conceptualization of a film educational program which has been in operation for thirty years.

Zusammenfassung

Schlüsselworte:

aktive Bürgerbeteiligung; Aktivismus-Pädagogik; Lehrkräfte als Aktivisten; fünf-Stufen-Modell zur Anwendung der Aktivismus-Pädagogik beim Lehren.

Dieser Artikel stellt ein praktisch anwendbares Modell für Lehrkräfte an weiterführenden Schulen vor, die ihren Beruf gewählt haben, um aktive Bürgerbeteiligung und eine fortschrittliche, liberale Sichtweise bei jungen Generationen mithilfe von Aktivismus als Lehrmethode zu fördern. Das Fünf-Stufen-Modell setzt an der Methode der Aktivismus-Pädagogik an, die im 21. Jahrhundert entwickelt wurde. Es unterstützt Lehrkräfte dabei, ihre professionellen Fertigkeiten in ihrer Rolle als Träger sozialen Wandels im Bildungswesen zu stärken und weiterzuentwickeln. Das Modell wurde im Rahmen weitreichender Forschung zum Bedarf der Weiterbildung von Lehrkräften in der Aktivismus-Pädagogik entwickelt. Diese Arbeit betont den Beitrag, den das Modell zum Erlernen von didaktischen Fertigkeiten hat, die das soziopolitische Bewusstsein mithilfe der Aktivismus-Methodik fördern. Diese wurde im Zuge der zeitgenössischen Pädagogik entwickelt, zu deren Zielen gehört, aktive Bürgerbeteiligung voranzubringen. Im Artikel werden die Stufen des Modells detailliert beschrieben und der Lehrplan der Filmwissenschaften an weiterführenden Schulen als Testfall vorgestellt. Die Filmwissenschaften bestanden 1992 zunächst aus sieben Filmkursen eines spezifischen Unterrichtssystems. 2019 sind es 400 Kurse, die Teil des regulären Schulsystems im israelischen Bildungsministerium sind. Das bedeutet ein rasantes Wachstum von etwa 15 neuen Filmkursen pro Jahr. Im Artikel werden Interviews analysiert, unter anderem mit einem Prüfer der Filmwissenschaften, welcher dazu beitrug, die Filmwissenschaften in Israel zu etablieren. Außerdem wird einschlägige Literatur aufgearbeitet und die praktische Erfahrung von Forschern auf dem Gebiet miteinbezogen. Es wird vorgeschlagen, das filmwissenschaftliche Bildungsprogramm, welches seit nun 30 Jahren existiert, innovativ-theoretisch zu konzeptualisieren, indem das praktisch einsetzbare Modell vorgestellt wird, um mit Methoden der Aktivismus-Pädagogik lehren und lernen zu können.

1. Introduction

Activist pedagogy has developed over recent decades in western democracies. Since the beginning of the 21st

century, research books on the topic have been published emphasizing activist teachers or activist teaching, mainly in

Australia, Canada and the U.S.A. (e.g. Catone, 2017; Frey & Palmer, 2014; Marshall & Anderson, 2008; Sachs, 2003; 2016). Borrowing from the language of film photography one can say that the activist pedagogical camera uses zoom-out filming to photograph educational means promoting democratic social justice, human rights, equality, humanist education, civic education, global education, education for multiculturalism, political education, education to fight for the climate, and other educational approaches in the spirit of a progressive and liberal world view.

The importance of educating for activism and active citizenship has increased in recent years, in light of research indicating a number of worrying phenomena such as unwillingness to be involved in politics among graduates of education system, decreased voting percentages among young people, strengthening value of individualism distancing young people from civic involvement. Nevertheless, research has also shown that teachers who have chosen to teach active civic involvement and an activist orientation have influenced their students, and it appears that there is a positive correlation between education for active citizenship and future concern with social justice, and involvement in public activity (Asuti, 2019; Veugelers, 2019).

This article presents activist pedagogy and its link to promoting active citizenship, reveals the five-level model to integrate activist teaching-learning in all subject as well as analysing, with the model's help, a case studying film studies in the Israeli education system.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Active Citizenship Education

Ancient and modern philosophers assumed that active citizenship patterns are not congenital. To become active citizens, young people must learn and acquire behavioural patterns through education with the help of socialization and cultural acquisition (Aloni, 2020). Active citizens are characterized by active civil-socio-political systems, such as, respectful and equal behavior to people and their rights, seeking social justice, pluralism, tolerance and involvement (Oser & Veugelers, 2008). Active civic education including global and local awareness and involvement is one of the skills required in the 21st century (Dede, 2010). Therefore, integrating active citizenship into learning subjects is critical and essential to promoting and maintaining future liberal democratic citizenship.

Many researchers have addressed the definition and meaning of active citizenship, and it appears there is a correlation between how a country defines active citizenship for its educational institutions and its political and social culture. Studies in education for active citizenship have addressed views, characteristics, and behaviours of active citizens (e.g., Brannan et al., 2006; Kennedy, 2006). Active citizenship moves along an axis

between passive active citizenship (PAC) and active active citizenship (AAC). The former refers to civic activity such as voting in elections and supporting national symbols and anthems, whereas the latter refers to activities whose purpose is involvement in socio-political processes such as political party and civic movement membership. The former generally maintains the status-quo in contrast to the latter, which casts doubt on it and it is this that will be addressed in this article (Kennedy, 2006).

2.2 Activism

From the end of the AAC axis, another has opened and that is the spectrum of activism, which refers to activities challenging and subverting the status quo (McDermott, 2017). Activism links to reality change – actions occurring in a social, public and community context, mainly against oppressive forces, and strives for a more worthy society (Menuhin, 2010). It is common to make a distinction between circumstantial and task-oriented activism factors (Ollis, 2020). Task-oriented activism relates to desire and hastening long-term activist purposes. One can assume therefore that teachers who view teaching as a realm to promote open or latent socio-political awareness are task-oriented activists.

2.3 Activist Pedagogy

Activist pedagogy did not blossom in a vacuum, and there were those who defined its growth from critical pedagogy established in the 1960s and 1970s (Freire, 1970/2018). Many pointed to educational systems operating without purpose, which did not lead to inspirational teaching but were concerned with the mechanics of learning and how to teach the superfluous and superficial, instead of promoting human and critical educational narratives. Schools disseminate conservative traditions employing manipulations of pressure and threats (grades and tests) to force students to learn irrelevant contents. Traditional and conservative education push aside learning methods developing critical and independent thinking, skills to identify latent and complex messages and generate meaning (Postman, 2011). It is possible there was an expectation that critical pedagogy would provide a response to changes so needed in education systems, but there are those who argue this was not enough and activist pedagogy was required like “putting meat on critical pedagogy’s theoretical bones. (Frey & Palmer, 2014, p. 26).

Critical theory promotes release from oppressive balances of power as well as how to reduce the power given to narratives and texts, and creates educational connections requiring critical dialogue between intellectual and artistic teachers and their students. Activist pedagogy is based on this, as well as promoting actions of active citizenship and finding partnerships and involvement in changing the status quo (Catone, 2017; Marshall & Anderson, 2008; Ollis, 2012).

In a discussion of the concept activist pedagogy, distinction must be made between macro and micro politics (Kelchtermans, 2007; Kostiner, 2003). Macro political activist pedagogy refers to changing policy for the majority through legislation and reforms, whereas micro political activist pedagogy refers to socio-cultural theories of changing majority awareness through classroom education (teaching-learning in all subject areas) and outside classrooms (physical education lessons, sport tournaments, breaks, annual trips and the like). Researchers found a gap between changes in macro political educational policy and reality in the micro political field, and it is noticeable that despite changes in education policy, in practice in the field of classroom change assimilation has not been expressed (Chhabra, 2017; Perry-Hazan, 2015). Therefore, one must assume that generators of meaningful change are activist teachers themselves.

2.4 Activist Teachers

Teachers interested in educating the next generation to cast doubt, to constantly seek interpretations and latent messages are those who will educate their students to understand the need for social changes and teach in the activist spirit. Studies following activist teachers in various parts of the world emphasized the need for the transformation of the teaching profession in the 21st century with emphasis on activist teaching (Catone, 2017; Marshall & Anderson, 2008; Sachs, 2003). Researchers of activist pedagogy, such as McDermott (2017) have shown that critical pedagogy obligates teachers to teach students to explore global social and economic issues, and view activist pedagogy as encouraging local or global acts of change.

Activist teachers are similar to intellectual teachers defined by Freire (2019). They choose to function as people with opinions, positions and presence in class, as human beings with a socio-political identity and dream in practice of world reform. These teachers do not concede or submit to formalistic mechanics of teaching. They do not accept authority as obvious but examine and test and even produce alternatives within standard educational framework. They face their students as role models to address conventions through criticism, authenticity and relevance to their lives and contemporary reality (Greene, 2019; Sachs, 2003).

Many studies from the early 21st century focused on activist teachers, their activist means in civic organizations, and the separation some made between classroom teaching, teaching strategies and skills. These studies showed that activist teachers operated with courage integrating socio-political content in their teaching to promote social agenda, and as a result often experienced loneliness. Additionally, activist teachers operated intuitively, without work routines or formal framework and when asked, described a lack of professional training in activist teaching. Sometimes activist teachers were forced to resign or hide to realize

their world views, which did not sit well with educational policy. Many spoke about courage and risk and the need to establish support organizations for activist teachers, which were indeed established locally (e.g. Catone, 2017).

Researchers indicated that activist teachers have to cope with routines reinforcing a performance culture measured by numerical data of average student test results, although activist teaching can benefit society, community and learners, and promote social justice and world reform (Kumashiro, 2015; Sach, 2016). In a 2018 OECD report about the future of education and skills required for 2030, education for active citizenship by taking responsibility and substantive action stood out. Activist teachers educate the core values of human rights and social responsibility, democratic, liberal values, and the value of humanism – tolerance and empathy for one another (Bron, 2005). Activist teachers develop students investigative, involvement, responsibility entrepreneurship skills and as well as encouraging them to act substantively. However, despite the title ‘Training teachers for active citizenship education’, what was remarkable was the absence of training empowering and providing teachers with practical tools to teach according to the activist approach promoting active citizenship.

2.5 Training Teachers to Teach Using the Activist Pedagogical Approach

Research in the field of activist pedagogy has addressed an innovative definition of the role of educational personnel as those who have the responsibility and ability to promote active citizenship and encourage independent, critical learners, with motivation to act towards social change. However, it seems that practical training for teachers according to this approach is lacking (Nelson & Kerr, 2006). To be able to teach according to the activist approach, teachers must be given theories, knowledge and practical tools; there is a need to discuss with them their views and attitudes towards the subject, support them, create opportunities to collaborate and promote the empowerment of activist teachers interested in undermining the status quo, and encourage action and change through socio-political awareness.

Based on conceptualizing theory for activist pedagogy and the need arising in the 21st century for developing activist professional teachers, it is noticeable that there is a need to develop a training program for activist teachers to promote active citizenship. This article addresses one component of a complete system of teacher training for activist pedagogy. The article presents the model and an applicable aid to activist teaching and promoting active citizenship developed as part of broader research conducted as part of doctoral research.

3. Research methodology

This article presents a theoretical study describing in detail the development of a theoretical five-level teaching model using the activist approach promoting active citizenship. After a background review, the model will be described, followed by examining an example of a film education curriculum applied in Israel. The role of this analysis as a test case is, among others, to validate the model.

The theoretical study included two stages – the first of which was conducting a literature review about activist pedagogy and education for active citizenship, followed by interviews with two focus groups of teachers who were interested and curious to learn and discuss activist pedagogy and promote active citizenship. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 teachers who defined themselves so or who were openly activist on social networks and agreed to be interviewed. As a result of all these, a practical model to apply the activist approach in teaching was constructed as part of the author's broader research on the topic of teacher training in activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship.

At the second stage, data was collected about film teaching programs, documents, curricula and course directors' directives since 1992, interviews with three film and communication study teachers and chief inspector of film studies and communications in Israel (1992-2019), to which the researcher's experience in the field as a film studies teacher, coordinator and instructor was added. As a result, data will be analysed as a test case of the model.

The following section describes the development of the practical five-level model for activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship. It will then demonstrate and validate the model using a test case of film studies education in that the article hypothesizes that the curriculum for film studies education had from its inception, and assimilation, an activist pedagogy and active citizenship promotion orientation.

4. Findings

4.1 Five-Level Teaching-Learning Model for Activist Teachers in All Subjects

Descriptions of the different levels of the practical teaching and learning five-level model of activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship are well-known and have been examined in education studies as teaching strategies or competences. The model's innovation has three aspects: (1) connecting the five levels together; (2) placing them gradually; (3) their connection at a practical level to activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship.

As a preliminary stage to applying the model, teachers need to clarify for themselves personally their role, beliefs

and worldviews that led them to choose education. Each teacher's personal social vision serves as a type of pillar of fire facing them in the course of education (Postman, 2011). This clarification includes all the following questions – What is my personal identity? What is the core of my educational role? What is my social agenda? What is my personal social vision? What are teaching attributes? and what is my education approach? (Aloni, 2020; Higgins, 2010).

Activist teachers will both operate around their chosen social vision and encourage their students to act, obviously without indoctrination. These education approaches belong to a progressive, liberal world view espousing rights promoting tolerance, pluralism, and even critical views about activist teachers' world views. These approaches include, among others, education for social justice, feminism, and gender, preventing racism, and addressing the climate crisis (Catone, 2017; Marshall & Anderson, 2008).

Level 1

First level of the model: learning environment enables the promotion of active citizenship and activism:

It is important to apply the first level, because following levels rely on it. It creates a safe space enabling activist and active citizenship education. Teachers can choose their own appropriate teaching means according to the different model levels, but the first level constitutes a type of informal contract enabling safe discourse and a place where teachers and students can express ideas, attitudes and their opinions and world views. The first level is not only a practical tool, but the strategic basis for activist pedagogy.

An enabling environment is consolidated under the leadership of activist teachers both in and outside classrooms, in micro politics, this environment is mostly linked to teachers' activist social vision, but at the same time enables sharing and discourse with all class participants. An enabling environment exists both at a level of physical infrastructure safety, for example walls, classroom arrangement, boards and corridor and at an interpersonal level, for example equality promoting climate, politics of identities, pleasantness, containment, and working on a dialogic culture (Harpaz, 2018; Niblett, 2014; Sarroub & Quadros, 2015; Zalmanson-Levi, 2019). With online learning an enabling atmosphere also exists in online classrooms physically for example, chosen backgrounds, thing brought to lessons and at an interpersonal level, private and dialogic learning by dividing space into activity rooms or restricted online sessions.

Level 2

Second level: ten minutes to open lesson – stimuli for the topic promoting active citizenship and activism

The model's second level includes revealing personal social visions chosen by teachers and increasing awareness of it during the opening ten minutes of a lesson. It is possible to encourage active discussion and discourse, but one must remember that this stage lasts purely for the first ten minutes. Thereafter, planned lessons begin with content according to subjects' lesson plans. Some teachers refer to this part as an 'entry ticket' to lessons, which is also suitable for online learning. Activist teachers pour ethical content into these ten minutes linked to social vision using their chosen educational approach. Consistent application of this opening is likely to encourage students to initiate such openings themselves later. The purpose of this level is to awaken awareness, remove student apathy and encourage change actions by giving subjects relevance in reality. Another purpose is to start lessons differently, breaking day-to-day banality and encourage students to escape apathy and routine (Greene, 2019).

Level 3

Third level: Assimilating active citizenship and activist education into lesson plan

The model's third level refers to lessons in curricula where it is possible to integrate and assimilate ethical topics connected to promoting active citizenship and activism. It is an opportunity to add to lessons a different view of any learning topic that can be linked to social injustice, inequality and promote contents encouraging activism and active citizenship. During lessons, teachers connect subject lesson content to the activist pedagogical approach, by emphasizing liberating dialogue with students undermining the status quo (Freire, 2019).

At the third level, teachers use activist imagery, empower students, and encourage activism by allowing them to be involved and voice their opinions about the lesson as well (Baharuth & Steiner, 2000). There are many examples of integrating values promoting social justice: preventing racism in lesson content at a theoretical level as well as ideas at a practical level, for example in exact sciences such as mathematics and wordy subjects such as literature or physical education (Luguetti & Oliver, 2019; Messiah, 2018; Zalmanson-Levi, 2015).

Level 4

Fourth level: Experiential learning encouraging active citizenship and activism

Experiential learning is enabled in various ways and is multi-dimensional. It helps empower students, consolidate their positions by exposing them to socio-cultural topics, to cope with tolerance and practically learn to take responsibility. Different studies on activist pedagogy have

addressed ways of experiential learning. Frey and Palmer (2014) in their book "Teaching Communication Activism" described intervention programs about activist communication in the community. Among involvement experiential programs are Service Learning, programs promoting experiential learning aims in the community. Lash and Kroeger (2018) described a case of activist experiential learning at early childhood and its effects not only on the children but on the entire community.

Experiential programs of community service teach us about two aspects, one, in actions serving a community that help but preserve the status quo, and the other, actions to promote social change in and outside the community. When students serve their community, they are exposed to social injustices and different possible ways of addressing them. Ideas about social change mostly arise through discourse with activist teachers who are interested in encouraging critical discourse about their pupils' social involvement. Some maintain that as a result of experiential learning during socially involved programs at high school, students will become more active citizens in adulthood (Youniss, 2009).

Level 5

Fifth level: activist initiatives in teaching and learning

The fifth and last level is a result of an activist educational process promoting active citizenship over a period and realizes to some extent the previous levels. At this stage, students themselves, with or without teachers, initiate activities encouraging social change. The role of activist initiatives is to empower students and promote their growth to be active citizens involved in their society. Students in public education systems usually learn to quote and surrender (for example to curricula content and/or existing learning methods). At the model's fifth level, students who have undergone activist experiential learning with teacher linked to previous model levels, can leave their classrooms and initiate influential actions themselves.

Research has provided us reports about activist lecturers in the U.S.A. who share their dilemmas at this stage of sending students to participate in activist social initiatives. In their words, at this stage, lectures do not govern students' actions, and sometimes as a result of breaking lecturer/student boundaries, a challenging process occurs (Sundvall & Fredlund, 2017). Another challenge during the fifth level occurs when a regular school environment changes, and other partners join the activist initiative process – parents, community, academia, civic organizations, and groups with similar progressive liberal activist interests (Sach, 2003).

The first part has described so far, in detail, the practical five-level model to integrate activist pedagogy and promote active citizenship for teachers in all subjects as can be seen in figure 1. The second part focuses on a test case of film

studies education assimilated into the Israel education system from 1992 to date.



Figure 1. Five-level practical model for activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship (personal proposal)

4.2 Case Study – Analysis of Five-Level Model to Teach Using the Activist Pedagogy Approach and Promote Active Citizenship through Film Study Education in Israel 1992-2019

In 1989 a professional committee wrote the curriculum for mass communication (the academic view was that film studies were part of mass media communication). The committee included academic and professional experts from the field of education and communication and mass media (Cohen, 1992). As a preliminary stage, before examining the various levels, one must choose a social vision that will lead to a film studies world view. A humanist approach was chosen as the leading value for film studies curriculum in Israel.

Film as part of media is basically a tool intended to preserve democracy, and therefore, it is essentially a critical area with a strong connection to actuality and mass culture, and its aim to be a tool to store and transmit information and values in society (Cohen, 1992). As such, film studies are associated with a liberal pluralistic world view. In addition, the program promotes a holistic approach to human behavior because the programs learned will help students to deepen their views about themselves and the world surrounding them (Cohen, 1992).

Many teachers from the film and television industry came to teach film studies in schools aiming to prepare the next generation of cinematic personnel as well as grow a new generation of film goers. Thus, the formal framework of film studies teaching, examinations and access to teachers was cooperative, details of school curricula were not dictated top-down and there was much room for teachers' choices. A constructive dialogue developed between staff and the Ministry of Education's film studies inspector and a liberating and emancipating dialogic process to produce modelling for how teachers would conduct themselves in a humanistic and dialogic manner with students (interview with inspector, 22.7.2020).

From the interview one sees an experience of shared learning with students and finding original methods not dictated in textbooks.

Inspector: *"Cinema motivates me personally. It demands that I look at myself profoundly and leads to a world we don't see, awakens emotions and also teaches an entire culture...I relied on teachers to develop the program themselves, teach using films with which they are connected. I would ask teachers: 'Why are you teaching film studies, why is it important to you?' And thus, I discovered within a broad human world view what motivated each teacher. I, for example, very much wanted to strengthen the status of women ... One day a teacher came for an interview for a role of practical film studies teacher without the required technical knowledge. I asked him, why did you apply for the role? And he said: 'I will learn together with students...and he was appointed!'"*

The aims of the program include the understanding that media outputs are a consequence of professional and human choices and not a neutral reflection of reality, as well as exposure, understanding and criticism of ideological and ethical aspects of the media (Cohen, 1992). The program led to film studies becoming an educational field serving as a means to increase social involvement and responsibility.

The 'flower' model to analyse films in classrooms including five questions, like five flower petals (Keller, 1994), indicates how much weight the subject places on human, humanist meanings derived from watching films. The role of teachers was and still is to teach students to find revealed and hidden messages in films, with the purpose of reaching conclusions and taking stands in relation to themselves and the society in which they live. Thus, one can see that 30 years ago, a curriculum to teach film studies in Israel evolved with a practical social vision and worldview for teachers and learners, and is humanist, emancipating, anti-oppressing dialogic education for subject teachers as well as educating to act.

Level 1

First model level: Learning environment enabling promotion of active citizenship and activism

The first model level is building an enabling environment, both physical and interpersonal. Physically, an enabling environment in film studies was expressed by classroom setting with a cinema screen that could be darkened and create an intimate atmosphere, an infrastructure breaking the classical structure of classrooms. Film posters were chosen to hang on walls and decorate classrooms. Many film studies courses left walls empty providing students with a place for self-expression, and which were mostly filled with film-related graffiti.

One of the features of an enabling environment is listening, as the inspector said:

"During my years of work I listened. We don't approach students with teachers in possession of all knowledge, a 14-year-old child can sometimes know something a teacher does not. When asking students what

they see, what they hear and what they feel in a film scene watched, our role is to listen and to give students space for discourse. And then we will hear, fears, anger, revulsion; remembrances from their personal space, assumptions of 'it seems to me', and also spontaneous statements and these lead to a profound human discussion. We even suddenly hear whether they are listening. Yes, that happened to me too... Sometimes I passed on or recommended to teachers to pass on statements to the counsellor and suddenly through a film and environment enabling students to speak, we saved souls”.

The 1992 curriculum stated (Cohen, 1992 p’ 7): that qual teaching process, a process in which learning is the fruit of dynamic dialogue between teachers and students. The emphasis was not just on passing on knowledge but on the development of tolerance to the unique expressions of others. After two decades, in a directive from the chief subject inspector for the 2012 curriculum (Ballin, 2012), these principles have not changed, and maintained that teachers should be directed to promote meaningful learning by allowing a learning environment providing an experience of involvement both in terms of process and understanding output. They should motivate and instruct learners to identify, processes, criticize and create knowledge, think, ask questions and be partners in the learning process. Teachers must enable good learning characterized by interest, preparedness, curiosity, students’ intrinsic motivation, and allow their involvement in the learning process. In such a process, all aspects of awareness are involved: thought, imagination, emotion, desire, and identity. Teachers must provide students with tools encouraging active learning. To promote this, they must encourage flexibility, choice, a range of methodologies adapted to holistic, meaningful learning skills.

Level 2

Second level: Ten minutes at lesson start exposure/stimulus to subject promoting active citizenship and activism

The second model level, ten minutes exposure to social issue, is expressed in the curriculum (Cohen, 1992) which stated that media teaching addresses the world relevant to students, their experiential, actual, cultural, and ethical world, stating that. Efforts will be made in classes to integrate media contents relevant to students. As mentioned, many film studies teachers came from the industry and had experienced different things in the field of film and television. Teachers were asked to start lessons by sharing past experiences, which sometimes encouraged discourse about conflicts and authentic dilemmas relevant to youth. In addition, film studies teachers watch films and mostly shared their recommendations about what to watch or their critiques at the start of lessons.

Level 3

Third level: Assimilating a subject promoting active citizenship into lesson plans

Film studies lessons invite concern around watching films connected to social and activist topics. The curriculum from its start till now is flexible. Teachers must choose teaching contents from a wide range. The basket of possibilities includes topics such as social and political cinema, docu-activism, Israeli cinema and addressing conflicts in Israeli society. Among the theories chosen for teaching are cinema and gender theories, Marxist and neo-Marxist theories, activist video, and social documentary cinema.

During lessons, teachers are asked to teach in a manner allowing students to explore, subvert and have doubts, to be flexible and use films as a fertile ground for innovative learning (Ballin, 2018). Students must also learn independently and present to classes knowledge and insights acquired, and thus increase their self-confidence during their years of study on film studies courses. Independent assessment means and teachers construct the matriculation examination themselves according to the curriculum they chose to teach. Each matriculation examination is sent for professional checking to maintain a high level, but uniqueness and originality is maintained around content chosen by teachers. In this way, teachers were empowered from the start, with each lesson based on contents that were relevant to their social vision, to a nucleus of formal curricula and dialogue with students in class.

Level 4

Fourth level: Experiential learning encouraging active citizenship and activism

Experiential, practical contents have been a cornerstone from the start of film studies curricula over the years, until production of a film for matriculation at the end of three years’ study. Over their course of film studies, students experience film and television production. Since the worldview of film studies teaching is humanist, critical and relevant to reality, students experience film through personal and social projects. They film in their close environments, in their communities, and raise communal or personal dilemmas to create drama or an interesting inquiry.

Experience producing films and clips during the first years of film studies allows students to express messages and ideas through cinematic visual language. Most experiences occur outside classrooms, breaking out of classroom learning and going out to other places in the community. For example, film production as cinema experience around students’ reality, realizing dreams, addiction, challenging families, special needs, and other topics concerning youth in school and community space. Some practical experiences producing films have led to

expressing theoretical learning about films from around the world experienced in class.

Level 5

Fifth level: Activist initiatives in teaching and learning

After three years of study, students produce final films for their matriculation. These films have an activist initiative nature, both at execution and content levels. To successfully produce a film, cooperation with production teams is necessary, with each student having a significant role – director, producer, editor, and cinematographer. Grades are mostly given to teams, and therefore, each team member understands his/her responsibility for the production. At a content level, students control the messages they are interested in conveying through visual language. They must submit a production file and justify their choices. They analyze different means of visual language and their editorial choices to influence viewers. Students are exposed for the first time to various considerations and experience them themselves, similar to media-controlling tycoons. For example, editorial considerations can change messages from one extreme to another, and students experience this in practice and learn critical education through action. In cases where messages are subversive and encourage social change, it is even possible to say that students learn how to be activists.

The uniqueness of a film production team is that every student has a specified role – director, cinematographer, editor or producer, and hence collaborative learning acquires a further dimension, when each has sole responsibility and an equal place in the film production. Without each one performing these roles, there is no film, and at the same time success belongs to all members of the group. Each one has a personal voice and unique, appropriate, and essential knowledge in producing the final film.

Producing a film is similar to project-based learning (PBL) and is not a new learning approach. PBL's popularity has increased over recent years, but in the film studies education this method is inbuilt into the curriculum from the start. Producing a final film requires students to leave classroom boundaries and conduct initiative meetings. Film studies teachers encourage activist initiatives. The difference between level four (experiential learning encouraging active citizenship and activism) and level five (activist initiatives) is that producing the final film is not solely experiential learning and active experience, but a process requiring high level thinking, seeking knowledge and practically realizing all three years of the process.

The reflection and assessment accompanying activist initiatives of these final films are carried out during all stages of the process. Students producing films have to point out links between theoretical and practical learning. They submit a written document describing and discussing

their reflections about the process. There is room for personal references to, thoughts about, and discussions of their work process on the film. Reflection reveals on the one hand what changed in them from looking inwards from the beginning to the end of the project, and on the other hand the sources of their inspiration to produce a film (community figures, directors, classic films, big ideas, etc.).

Not every film produced in film studies' courses is considered an activist film whose role is to encourage social change, but the strategic skills in teaching are activist and encourage change. Not all students realize this during the film production process in 12th grade, they get opportunities to do so because of teachers' activism in teaching and encouragement for activist initiatives. Despite this, it appears that many final films in film studies' courses are indeed activism for social change. The point of origin for most these films is located in social injustices students feel, and thus employ their films as a means of awakening awareness or encouraging change, therefore this is the climax of ethical education transmitted by film studies' teachers through the years, humanist critical education.

Teaching staff's activist initiatives include for example, the film studies inspector, teaching staff and cinema instructors have produced film festivals for school youth since 1999 in a town considered to be peripheral in the south of Israel, Dimona. Film studies students attend once a year to watch hundreds of student films, attend creative workshops with pupils from other populations, such as Jewish and Arab students, as well as observing panels of media personnel on social and political topics. In addition, a large cinema in Tel Aviv holds a film and human rights solidarity festival including films made by schools' film studies' students.

5. Discussions

This article focused at the start on conceptualizing theory of the term 'activist pedagogy' and revealing the five-level model to apply activist pedagogy and promote active citizenship in teaching. As a test case, the article analyzed the field of film studies. In the discussion, it is possible to explore the following questions: how can innovation be seen in the five-level model applied to teaching in the activist approach? Is film studies education in Israel truly ground-breaking and did it apply the activist pedagogic approach before the term became integrated into educational discourse? What uses can be made of the five-level model for education in the activist pedagogical approach and promoting active citizenship?

The applied model is composed of components known in educational research, its contribution and innovation exposed in the article is in connecting five developing levels from the first to the fifth and particularly the link to activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship. Teachers from all subjects who came to teaching to be

agents of social change and are interested in teaching using the activist approach, can find in this model a solution and pedagogical framework as a strategic of their educational work. Today, there are teachers in the field who intuitively apply some of the levels, and the model described in this article can serve as a diagnostic tool, indicator of activist pedagogic orientation, and provide those operating in the field a sense of empowerment and structured means of continuing their work.

The author of this article, who is currently conducting broad research, will continue to explore in-depth teacher training in activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship in the field of film studies and the link to activist pedagogy. It will be fascinating to see whether there is a difference between film studies and communication teachers and teachers in all other subjects, whether current film studies and communication teachers have a higher orientation towards activism than their colleagues in other subjects. In addition, the article is based solely on qualitative methodology being part of broader doctoral research, and therefore does not provide comprehensive information. It will be interesting to examine the field using mixed methodology.

6. Conclusions

The test case described in the article and analysed according to the five-level model applying activist pedagogy and promoting active citizenship is a film studies curriculum. The article presents an innovative concept researched in the 21st century and uses it to analyse film studies education from the 1990s without knowing the concept and unaware that in practice the outline, contents, means and vision fit an innovative theory of activist pedagogy. Therefore, the model was a gauge to examine the film studies curriculum, and in the future can continue to serve as a gauge to measure other and varied curricula.

Finally, perhaps this article will inspire further breakthroughs to integrate activist pedagogy and promoting democratic liberal active citizenship in other subject curricula in education systems.

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