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Documentary theatre as a means of cultivating and strengthening citizenship among adult students in the School of 18 Ano addiction rehabilitation unit

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Abstract

This article refers to an action research project investigating the impact of documentary theatre as a means of cultivating citizenship among the adult students of the School of 18 Ano, the Addiction Rehabilitation Unit of the Psychiatric Hospital of Attica. To this end, twelve interventions based on documentary theatre and educational drama techniques were designed and delivered to 11 students during the 2022–2023 school year. A mixed research approach was adopted to ensure a more comprehensive investigation of the research questions. The analysis of the quantitative data showed an improvement in the citizenship of the experimental group but no statistically significant differences before and after the interventions. On the contrary, the analysis of the qualitative data suggested an improvement in civic skills (collaboration and critical analysis), attitudes (participation and diversity) and interest and personal involvement. This improvement is indeed linked to the techniques of documentary theatre.

Keywords: *documentary theatre, drama in education, active citizenship, adult education, social reintegration, rehabilitation*

Introduction

The cultivation of citizenship has always been a central objective of educational systems and applied curricula. However, both the content attributed to it and the educational practices chosen vary considerably. Given that citizenship is defined in different ways and that the emphasis placed on citizenship depends on the type of society and political community we seek (Mouffe, 1992, p. 225), the choice of educational practice is ultimately a political choice.

For this reason, the present research examines the possibilities offered by drama in education, and more specifically documentary theatre, for cultivating skills and attitudes of active citizenship in the context of a transformative education aimed at personal, social and educational change in an educational unit (School) that is part of an addiction treatment programme (18 Ano) whose goal is, by definition, change. To this end, twelve interventions based on documentary theatre were designed and implemented to the students of the School of 18 Ano, and their results were compared with those of a control group (students of the school who attended classes based on traditional teaching methods) in an action research context.

Theoretical background

Citizenship education

The dominant concept of citizenship does not focus on participation but is limited to the allocation of rights and duties within the framework of a nation state (Keating, 2014, p. 43). However, linking citizenship to a homogeneous community, such as that of a nation state, is not possible in modern multicultural societies (Turner, 1997, p. 13). The problems faced by modern citizens (wars, violence, racism, poverty, environmental degradation) are not amenable to “political regulations” but are determined by public attitudes, popular movements and everyday actions (Krzywosz-Rynkiewicz & Zalewska, 2017, p. 142).

The emphasis on action and citizen participation also marks a shift towards active citizenship (Hoskins & Mascherini, 2009, p. 461). Active citizenship is defined as the participation in civil society, community and/or politics, characterised by mutual respect, non-violence and in accordance with human rights and democracy. Based on this definition, it encompasses a wide range of participatory activities ranging from participatory democracy (protest and social change) to representative democracy (including actions such as voting) as well as participation in the everyday life of communities (Hoskins & Mascherini, 2009, p. 462).

However, according to Pigkou-Repousi (2012, pp. 12–13), there is an “educational paradox” in the

Greek educational system, a contradiction between, on the one hand, the educational objective of fostering active citizenship and, on the other hand, the content and pedagogy that offer students very limited opportunities for active participation in real contexts, turning them into passive receivers, able to adapt to the world but not to change it, into spectators rather than recreators of reality (Freire, 1974, pp. 82–83).

If citizenship education is indeed aimed at mobilising students and transforming them into active citizens, as stated in the European Commission’s report on citizenship education in Europe’s schools (European Education and Culture Executive Agency, 2017, pp. 84–88), to be effective it must be active (learning by doing), interactive (discussion and dialogue), relevant (real-life issues), critical (autonomous reflection), collaborative (teamwork and co-operation) and participatory (students have a say in their learning). Citizenship education encompasses a wide range of teaching practices, such as the climate and relationships within the school (the informal/hidden programme), the experiences through different school activities, the behaviour of teachers (who act as role models) and partnerships with the community, which aim to cultivate not only knowledge but also attitudes and behaviours (Howe & Covell, 2005, p. 84; Keating, 2016, p. 5).

In order not to remain abstract and procedural, political and civic engagement requires not only dialogue and critical awareness, but also the moral and emotional engagement of students (Pigkou-Repousi, 2016, pp. 96–99). This kind of engagement results from “care” and “hope” and forms an alternative concept of citizenship that promotes political participation by integrating the personal as a means to achieve the political (Pigkou-Repousi, 2016, p. 71). Thus, students and teachers, in relationships of companionship and solidarity, can become active subjects in the educational process in order to fight for their emancipation (Freire, 1974, p. 96) and to transform themselves and their society.

Cultivating citizenship through the art of (documentary) theatre

Applied theatre, which includes dramatic forms outside of mainstream theatre institutions with the aim of benefiting individuals, communities and societies, for example through education on active citizenship, emphasises activity and involvement in theatre making and rejects passivity and uncritical consumerism (Nicholson, 2005, pp. 2, 10). Participation in theatrical processes in itself provides a second-order experience of full and equal participation in the processes of democratic freedom (Choleva et al., 2021, p. 67; Neelands, 2007, p. 315).

Furthermore, in drama in education, by simultaneously participating in the real and the imaginary worlds of drama (Pigkou-Repousi, 2019, p. 188) in a state of "metaxis" according to Boal (2006, p. 74), students transform "the scene in a rehearsal space for real life" (Boal, 1995, p. 44). The hybridity of the processes of drama in education between the real and the imaginary, between spectator and actor, between observation and performance, between experience and reflection promotes and develops the dichotomy of thought and action (Pigkou-Repousi, 2019, p. 189) towards the transformation of reality through critical reflection (Freire, 1974, p. 108).

The close relationship between theatre and citizenship becomes even closer in the case of documentary theatre, whose function, according to Ververopoulou (2018), coincides with the goals of citizenship education (p. 175). The performance of documentary theatre presupposes an active audience not only in relation to the performance and its subject, but also in general – active spectators and, ultimately, active citizens (Stamati, 2019, p. 30).

Apart from their political nature, all forms of documentary theatre have in common their relationship to the real. Documentary theatre is not based on fiction but on the use of documents, such as narratives, eyewitness testimonies, letters, diaries, files, reports, interviews, videos, films, photographs, objects, maps, scientific studies, laws, proceedings, etc. in order to combine archival material, research and technology with embodied memory, oral history, oral theatre culture and body language (Morris, 2014, p. 10; Zoniou, 2017, p. 43). Its relationship to the real is not underpinned by the conventions of naturalistic theatre, but rather the techniques of "epic theatre" are employed, often abolishing the classical convention of the "fourth wall" (Jeffers, 2006, p. 3; Morris, 2014, p. 134) along with the aesthetics of realism.

Documentary theatre "disrupts the illusion" (Cosgrove, 1982, p. 193) by assuming the pedagogical role of the "teacher" and turning the audience into "students" or "jurors" who are called upon to think and judge (Morris, 2014, p. 134). Furthermore, documents in theatre succeed in becoming, if not a trigger for action, then certainly a driving force for concern, thus incubating an active audience and informed, aware and responsible citizens (Ververopoulou, 2018, p. 175). This is precisely why documentary theatre is increasingly being used in schools, communities and other educational settings as a means for the underrepresented (Jacobson, 2017), the excluded, minorities and ordinary citizens in general to gain a voice by expressing their views on controversial issues, even if they contradict official sources (Ververopoulou, 2018, p. 175).

It is therefore particularly important to apply the techniques of documentary theatre in a drama in education workshop in a school for adults who belong to the vulnerable social group of people with a substance use disorder. Such a workshop aims to contribute to the cultivation of skills and attitudes of civic participation and action, but also to transform the classroom into a forum for civic engagement in the present, where participants "test" future selves and rehearse becoming the active citizens they want to be (Gallagher et al., 2017, p. 12; Gallagher, 2018, p. 135).

The particularity of the School of 18 Ano and the cultivation of citizenship

The present study concerns the students of the School of 18 Ano, which has been operating since 2001 in cooperation with the Ministry of Education (Papadi, 2012b, p. 33). In 2016, within the framework of compensatory education (Law 4368/2016, art. 26), the operation of secondary education classes in the premises of the 18 Ano Addiction Rehabilitation Unit of the Psychiatric Hospital of Attica was approved (Joint Ministerial Decision 166082/D2/2016). These classes included students who were either in the social reintegration phase of the rehabilitation programme 18 Ano, or who had completed other approved addiction treatment programmes.

The School of 18 Ano offers a second chance, both educational and mental (Papadi, 2012a, p. 69), as part of the therapeutic process, since it contributes to the prevention of relapse and to social reintegration (M. Katsarou, 2018, p. 25; Matsa, 2008b, p. 145). In this particular school, which is essentially part of a rehabilitation treatment programme, a transitional process aimed at reconnecting patients with social reality (Papadi, 2012b, p. 32), the cultivation of citizenship plays a central role. The empowerment of the students-patients as active social subjects contributes fundamentally to the change that addiction treatment itself seeks: the transition from marginality, stigmatisation, manipulation, individualisation and renunciation of drug addiction to the development of critical thinking and independent speech, integration into collectives, real participation in social life and, finally, integration into social life with a new role (Matsa, 2006, pp. 71–74).

According to Matsa (2008b), the treatment of addiction as a process of transforming the drug addict into a social subject is in a dialectical relationship with art, which, through its political and social role, fulfils an emancipatory function by stimulating the imagination, expanding thinking, influencing emotions and providing the means to imagine and find the lost utopian horizon in human life (Matsa, 2017, p. 185). Art



and theatre in the drug rehabilitation programme 18 Ano contribute to the socialisation and transformation of the treated patients' relationship with themselves and the world (Lenakakis, 2008, p. 465).

The rehabilitation programme places special emphasis on the art of theatre, since drama therapy is one of the pillars of the programme's "art therapy" (Mpania, 2023), which supports and frames addiction treatment in all its phases (the closed phase of mental addiction and the social reintegration phase) (Matsa, 2008a). Drama therapy seems to be able to contribute to the continuation of the therapeutic trajectory through the release from preconstructed social roles, the deepening of communication with others and with oneself and the expansion of expressive skills (Giotis et al., 2018), complementing and not replacing other psychotherapeutic procedures in the programme (Apostolaki, 2018). The theatrical act itself has been a central socialising element of the programme ever since the first performance of the Reintegration Team in 1989 in the small theatre of the Attica Psychiatric Hospital, where *Dying as a Country* by Dimitris Dimitriadis was staged (Zagianaris et al., 2019).

Since theatre is closely related to drama therapy for the students at the School of 18 Ano, the present research, aiming to highlight the difference between drama in education and drama therapy, chose the form of documentary theatre because its

focus on the real ensures the necessary critical distance, while its political orientation excludes highly experiential, personal discussions or any recollection of traumatic experiences.

Research methodology

The research strategy adopted was action research, aiming at the dialectical relationship between research and action, theory and practice (E. Katsarou, 2010, p. 556), in order to achieve change or improvement (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 385) in the context of the School of 18 Ano.

Specifically, the research sought to answer the following key research questions:

1. Can the use of drama techniques in the form of documentary theatre in the educational process of the School of 18 Ano strengthen citizenship?
2. What are the possible ways in which the use of documentary theatre techniques in the educational process of the School of 18 Ano can strengthen citizenship?

The mixed research approach was adopted so that the qualitative approach could focus on the themes of the research and the quantitative approach could focus on the statistical confirmation of the conclusions. More specifically, the qualitative approach examines the cultivation of citizenship in students as a process and the quantitative approach examines it as an outcome (Kosti, 2016, p. 170).



A quasi-experimental design, i.e. a pretest/posttest control group design in which the control group is not exposed to the treatment condition, was chosen to collect the quantitative data for this study (Mertler, 2016, p. 105).

The experimental group consisted of students from different classes of the School of 18 Ano who were interested in participating in the Educational Documentary Theatre course, while the control group consisted of the remaining students of the school who attended classes with conventional frontal teaching methods. Prior to the research interventions, both groups completed the Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ) for Evaluation of Service-Learning Outcomes (Moely et al., 2002).

In order to achieve the greatest possible diversity of data, the present study used a variety of tools to collect qualitative data: participatory observation, researcher's diary with observations and reflections of the practices followed, participant's diary, in which participants' thoughts, ideas and feedback were recorded at the end of each session (Mertler, 2016, p. 137), participants' interviews and their work kept in the personal student portfolio (Vitsilaki-Soroniati et al., 2007).

The present study, which follows an action research strategy, is mainly qualitative, i.e. it does not seek to formulate laws and generalisations but is rather a case study with a reflective mood and the aim of drawing up a proposal that could be used by other interested parties in other contexts as an opportunity for their own reflection (E. Katsarou, 2010, p. 565).

In relation to the quantitative study, precisely because it aims to confirm the conclusions of the qualitative study, the design is not purely "experimental", as the sample is not random but comes from a particular school and is therefore small. For that reason, the resulting quantitative data will not be generalisable, but it is important that it confirms or refutes the qualitative data. It is also worth noting the limited duration of the interventions, which makes it impossible to study the duration of the effect of the independent variable on the dependent one.

Teaching framework

Twelve interventions of two school periods (80 minutes) were implemented in the experimental group once a week from December 2022 to March 2023 according to the school timetable. The design of the teaching interventions took into account the teaching units of the relevant curriculum subjects. Specifically, the units chosen were war, social problems, media, immigration, discrimination, hate speech and civil society.

The starting point of the teaching units of the relevant curriculum subjects related to citizenship (Social and Civil Education – Political Education) formed the common basis of the experimental and control groups, as the control group was taught the same units but with a teacher-centred approach and directed dialogue.

The planning of the interventions was gradual, with an emphasis on exploratory learning. Through teacher-student interaction and feedback from the

group, there was flexibility in the planning, but also in the direction of the content, so that the teacher and students could eventually explore and co-create together (Avdi & Hadjigeorgiou, 2007, p. 54).

The interventions were designed in two research cycles with interim feedback from the team contributing to the re-design of the subsequent interventions. In the first cycle, which included the themes “Christmas truce of 1914”, “social problems – ideal society” and “the media”, the element of reality was drawn first from History, then from the social experience of the participants and finally from current social and political events. In the second cycle, where bonds of trust had already been established and the educational nature of the course was distinct from the psychotherapy groups of the programme, the researcher aimed for a more experiential involvement of the participants through exploration of their personal stories. In this way, the element of the real came first from the others, the “foreigners” (themes of immigration and discrimination), then from the personal stories of the participants (stories of names, personal belongings and stories of change), so that finally the political and the personal could be linked through their moral and emotional involvement. The reflection at the end of the interventions, beyond the needs of this research, also led to the collective creation of a theatrical event with the intention of serving as a social intervention.

Description of interventions

As the pre-research process had involved six sessions of the experimental group, during which various exercises had been carried out to get to know each other, to bond the group members and to familiarise them with the techniques and tools of drama in education, the first intervention directly introduced one of the themes of the project, namely “war”. The objectives of the first and second interventions were defined as a reflection on the phenomenon of war and the critical treatment of historical and current events. Creating a Christmas atmosphere (music, tree decoration) was combined with news of Christmases past, while documents from the First World War (photos, letters, diary pages) engaged the students in an experiential, emotional and logical exploration of the theme through techniques such as role on the wall, writing in role, role cards and creative writing.

The third and fourth interventions on the theme of “ideal society” aimed to critically approach social problems, develop methods of argumentation and imagine social change. The third intervention used the rhythm machine technique (Boal, 2013, p. 173) and pantomime to perform the social problems and

solutions proposed by the group. The fourth intervention took the form of an educational visit to the archaeological park of Plato’s Academy. This particular park has become the subject of intense public debate in relation to the ways in which public spaces are used, renovated or exploited. This visit was also attended by students from the 3rd class of the upper secondary school, who were studying Plato’s *Republic*. Combining the image of the park on Sunday with the ancient use of the same space and some information about the *Republic*, the reflections were presented through a debate (on the necessity or not of public spaces), role play (with the “classes” of the *Republic*: creators, guardians, philosopher-kings) and image theatre (with dynamic images of today’s society, the vision and the path of transition).

The fifth and sixth interventions focused on the media and aimed to develop critical media literacy and explore social issues of concern to the group. They created captions from pictures in newspaper articles, and frozen images from captions. The creation of a “wall newspaper” with collages from various news publications was not only a critical approach to the media, but also an exercise in collaboration and dialogue. Finally, the printed material was a source of inspiration for the creation of a story/narrative presented with dramatisation and a series of dynamic images. The sixth intervention focused on hate speech on social media with documents related to Roma people. Debate exercises, role play and dramatisation were used to deconstruct these practices. At the end of the sixth intervention, discussion and feedback exercises took place, which to some extent redefined the design of the second cycle of interventions.

Discrimination and the role of the media continued to concern the group in subsequent sessions. The seventh and eighth interventions were designed to explore the causes of xenophobic attitudes and immigration, to understand the “refugee crisis” and to develop empathy. In the seventh session, the topic was a fictional fake news story (Tudorache, 2021, pp. 168–174) that highlights the different (dominant and alternative) narratives about the same event. The dramatisation of the article was followed by interviews with the help of role cards, which greatly contributed to highlighting different viewpoints and different positions of power. The role of the “by-stander” was also explored with character creation questions, the “voices in the mind” technique and role playing. In the eighth session, an attempt was made to link the participants’ experiences with the stories of the “others” using the techniques of devised theatre, based on descriptions of their homes and the testimonies by refugees published in a news

article (Louka, 2022). The poems "Home" by Warsan Shire and "Things We Carry in the Sea" by Wang Ping ("Kavénas", 2020) were also used in the image-sculpture performance of migration with the images of "before" and "after".

The ninth and tenth interventions introduced reflection on the connection between the "I" and the "we". The personal stories of the participants (names and personal objects) were used, as well as interviews that they conducted with each other on the theme of change (personal and social), which were presented with monologues, stage compositions and the technique of the composite character of verbatim theatre (The Council of Ontario Drama and Dance Educators, n.d.) in order to improve communication skills (active listening, empathy, sharing personal moments) and creative synthesis skills to link individual/private concerns and aspirations with social/political concerns and goals.

As part of the reflection on the techniques and actions implemented, in the last two sessions the participants were asked to evaluate the project, their own participation and how this process could develop into a social intervention. For the purpose of reflection on the project, random impressions and observations from a walk in the neighbourhood served as a means of creating stage actions using the techniques and new means of expression acquired from the project. The reflective discussion was also nourished by the exercise of the "Map of sessions" created by each participant individually and the Collective Map created with everyone's input and observations.

Research results

The Civic Attitudes and Skills Questionnaire (CASQ) for Evaluation of Service-Learning Outcomes questionnaire (Moely et al., 2002) was used to collect the quantitative data. This questionnaire assesses five characteristics related to citizenship, the dependent variable of this research, namely: A. civic action, B. interpersonal and problem-solving skills, C. political awareness, D. leadership skills and E. attitudes towards diversity.

Analysis of the quantitative data showed that a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group, when testing dependent samples, was observed in question 35 on attitudes towards diversity ("I enjoy meeting people from backgrounds very different from mine") and in question 22 on national issues ("I understand the problems facing this nation").

In the pretest of the independent samples, the two groups, experimental and control, were equivalent before the implementation of the interventions

in terms of their level of citizenship, whereas in the posttest the experimental group showed a statistically significant difference compared to the control group in questions 14 and 15 concerning the characteristic of "interpersonal and problem-solving skills" ("I can easily get along with people" and "I try to find effective ways to solve problems").

The results of the quantitative research gave some indication of a tendency towards the strengthening of citizenship through the effect of the independent variable "techniques of documentary theatre" on the students. The limited effect can be attributed to the small sample and the limited duration of the research. Therefore, this trend should be studied with a larger sample and in longer term research.

In addition, the limited results can be linked to the nature of the skills and attitudes taught and the way they are quantified through a questionnaire in which participants are asked to translate their subjective perception (qualitative relationship) of their citizenship into a subjective quantitative relationship (Pourkos, 2010, p. 150). In addition, achieving this change in perception is a difficult process that takes longer than the duration of our research interventions, as it is a process of developing a new identity, a process that is more difficult for adult students (Illeris, 2003, p. 16) and the results of which may be perceived at a later stage.

Based on Mills' (2011) separation of statistical and practical significance, where the former is determined statistically and the latter is subjective in nature, it is important to investigate the practical significance of interventions through the analysis of qualitative data.

During the qualitative content analysis of the data, the present research mainly followed a deductive process of analysis and coding. The literature review of the theoretical framework provided the analysis with a set of pre-selected conceptual schemes that acted as a guide in the field, but also as fields of reference and taxonomic forms in organising the data, and were applied as categories to the data (Patton, 2002, p. 456; Tsiolis, 2015, p. 10). However, this preliminary conceptual framework was extended and transformed during the data processing by new parameters that emerged from the analysis in an abductive process (Tsiolis, 2015, p. 13).

The categories that emerged from the data collection and analysis are: a) skills (collaboration and critical analysis), b) attitudes (diversity and participation) and c) political awareness – personal involvement.

With regard to the category of collaboration and critical analysis skills, in the first cycle of interventions,

from the beginning of the sessions, the participants showed respect for the rules of dialogue but had difficulty in physical communication and in exchanging arguments. The use of documents, group creative work and emotional involvement in activities helped them to think more analytically. In the second cycle of interventions, the results were more encouraging, as the established climate of cooperation and security facilitated communication between the participants in many ways, at many levels and not only verbally. Group work also helped them to deepen their analysis and deductions.

In the category of attitudes, the difficulty that participants had with exposure – theatrical and social – in the first sessions diminished as a climate of trust was created between the group members. In addition, respect for diversity and inclusion emerged as visions, but it seemed more difficult to link them to action. An inability to connect their own experiences of social injustice and discrimination with the stories of others was also observed. This observation was used in the planning of the interventions of the second cycle, where it was found that the real stories and documents allowed the experiential interweaving of the participants with the stories of the “others” and to some extent this changed their attitudes towards diversity based on what they claimed. In terms of participation, the difficulty of exposing oneself in front of others was significantly reduced, leading to interesting stage experiments. On the other hand, the frustration with political participation, as it is expressed institutionally and partisanly, was not overcome, but this emotion was countered by small personal changes, solidarity and participation in the community.

In terms of political awareness and personal involvement, they seemed to be quite informed, despite their own negative self-image. Also, during the interventions they linked the events of the historical or social reality to their own experiences and it seemed that the personal, empirical or experiential link to the events further mobilised their interest and active participation. In spite of the negative image of themselves in relation to information, there was a tendency to comment on current events before class or during the break and, of course, in the context of the lesson. While in the interventions of the first cycle current events were used based on the research design employing articles-documents, in the second cycle this was done spontaneously by the participants themselves. Moreover, linking discrimination to their own experiences contributed to a better understanding of the victim's position and caused an emotional charge, resulting in an increase in empathy and concern/caring.

In general, in the second cycle, active participation in group creative work and the active role of all members increased significantly. On the one hand, documentary theatre as theatre of the real was a suitable technique for developing social and political interest, and on the other hand, the techniques of drama in education facilitated active participation and the development of the students' imagination.



In order to evaluate the project as a whole, a semi-structured group interview was conducted with all participants after the end of the twelfth intervention to explore their opinions on the content, techniques and outcomes.

Most participants reported an improvement in their interpersonal and communication skills: “The fact that I was with a group of people every Wednesday” (P9), “The game helps me a lot, it frees me up and I communicate [...] it helps me a lot to communicate” (P5), “I liked working in a group and every person who was here helped me to see things differently” (P11). Many participants also pointed out the project's contribution to shaping their own point of view and freedom of expression: “I wake up and I can take a stand in the society” (P8), “It has also given me wings [...] it has helped me to express myself better” (P7). Finally, it is worth noting that the

change in their attitudes towards those who are different was also expressed: "I look at them with a different eye. After an exercise we did, I see them differently" (P1), "I accept what is different and also find things in common and have fun with and love the different" (P9), "It helped me a lot in terms of empathy, that is, putting myself in the other person's shoes a little" (P7).

Their observations on the nature of the course focused on the bonds between them and the team spirit: "It became my priority during the week" (P9), "A little society here that interacts" (P3). In addition, most participants pointed out the difference between this course and the rest: "We have a great time, we come in here with joy. It doesn't compare to other courses" (P5), "At first, I complained that we were standing and walking all the time, but that's what's different and it's a nice thing" (P4).

The participants' observations support the researcher's finding that the project significantly strengthened certain aspects of citizenship, namely cooperation skills, attitudes towards diversity and interest in political awareness. At the same time, the development of critical thinking and active political participation are goals that require a greater variety, quantity and duration of interventions to be effective. As one participant pointed out, such changes are not immediately visible: "I will see the changes a bit later. I've had more help than I think. In other words, I will see it along the way, but..." (P9).

Although this research at the School of 18 Ano and the recording of its results concluded with the implementation of the twelve interventions, the impact and changes the project brought about in participants and the school structure were also observed afterwards. In particular, the Educational Documentary Theatre course continued until the end of the 2022–2023 school year, and inspired by the research activities and presentations, a theatre performance was prepared as a social intervention against racism and discrimination. The result was that this new teaching process, which began with the present research and project, "opened up" to the entire school and therapeutic community, so that the educational and therapeutic staff understood the dynamics of applying theatrical and political approaches in the school of a treatment programme. Most importantly, the participants had the opportunity to complete the process socio-theatrically and gain a sense of accomplishment and success. These results are in line with the goal of active citizenship, as the participants were given the opportunity to participate publicly and develop the identity of an active citizen (Pigkou-Repousi, 2012, p. 210). In addition, this experience empowered them and gave

them the courage, according to Arendt (1998), to proceed as a group in a more dynamic political participation: some of the students of the group presented part of this performance in a public event on 18 July 2023 entitled "Justice for the Crime of Pylos" organised by the Collective Actions of Social Solidarity for 18 Ano in the garden of the Association of Greek Archaeologists.

Conclusions – Suggestions

The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of drama in education techniques in the form of documentary theatre in the educational context of the School of 18 Ano in terms of the cultivation of citizenship. The limitations of the research, as already mentioned, understandably affected the nature and scope of the results. Due to the small number of participants and the non-random sampling, the results of the present research cannot be generalised. Certainly, the limited duration of the interventions also contributed to this.

In relation to the first research question, whether the use of drama in education techniques in the form of documentary theatre in the educational context of the School of 18 Ano can strengthen citizenship, the analysis of the quantitative data, collected through a questionnaire, does not refute the initial hypothesis. Although there were no statistically significant differences in all the categories studied, there was a tendency for the experimental group to improve in the category of attitudes towards diversity and to differentiate itself from the control group in the category of interpersonal and problem-solving skills. The two groups were equivalent before the intervention.

With regard to both research questions, the impact of documentary theatre but also the specific processes that contribute to strengthening the citizenship of the students of the School of 18 Ano, the results of the qualitative analysis of the data are clearer and more encouraging.

Specifically, in relation to the skills of collaboration and critical analysis, the initial positive climate of respecting the rules of dialogue during the interventions developed into an ability to actively listen, exchange ideas and co-create, and as a result became a source of pleasure, satisfaction and self-image improvement for the participants. In terms of participation, the established supportive climate encouraged the members of the experimental group to experiment and, through their gradual familiarisation with new means of expression, to express themselves in a different way, while their disappointment with existing forms of political participation led them to seek alternative forms of social and political intervention. In terms of their attitudes

towards diversity, from the projection of personal feelings or situations onto others and the stereotypical approach to certain groups (Roma and foreigners) through role playing and dramatisations, but also through the power of truth given by the theatre of the real, they were led to a more substantial understanding of each other's position and their attitudes towards these groups changed, which is also confirmed by the analysis of the quantitative data. Finally, in terms of the experimental group's interest in political awareness, their interest in social and political issues increased during the interventions, so that they often spontaneously used current events in the project's creative activities. At the same time, by linking personal documents with the testimonies/stories of others, they were made aware of the common experience of discrimination and the political significance of their own personal stories.

The above conclusions were drawn immediately after the research interventions. However, it would be of particular interest to record the research results for the same group over time, as encouraging signs were observed for this group over the course of the school year. In addition, the limitations of the specific research (limited sample and duration) may give reason for future studies to confirm the research findings.

At the same time, this research sought to combine an educational objective (the development of citizenship) with therapeutic objectives (social reintegration) through drama. Such a line of research could go beyond the limits of the School of 18 Ano and be applied in the context of formal education, combining educational objectives with the prevention of addictions. Finally, research into the use of documentary theatre techniques to achieve other educational goals, such as historical empathy, self-confidence, etc., would be of great interest.

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