Fairy tales and self-esteem program in children from 7 to 10 years old

Programa cuentos de hadas y autoestima en niños de 7 a 10 años

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Abstract

The objective of the research is to determine the influence of the fairy tale program on the self-esteem of boys and girls from seven to ten years old, through the narration of classic tales. In the investigation, we worked with a sample made up of fifteen children, seven of whom are ten years old, three are nine, and another three are eight; they participated in a psychopedagogical workshop for three months; To whom the Coopersmit Self-Esteem Inventory school version was applied, composed of four areas: self-general; social-peers; home-parents and school. The results show that in the application of the pre-test, 53% of the children obtained a low average of self-esteem. In relation to the post test we can observe that 67% presented a high level of self-esteem. It is concluded that the story program contributes to significantly improve the children's self-esteem, both in the relationship with others, in learning and in their emotions

Keywords: fairy tales, skill development, level of self-esteem, program.

Resumen

La investigación tiene como objetivo determinar la influencia del programa cuentos de hadas en la autoestima de niños y niñas de siete a diez años, a través de la narración de cuentos clásicos. En la investigación se trabajó con una muestra conformada por quince niños de los cuales siete tienen diez años, tres nueve y otros tres ocho; ellos participaron de un taller psicopedagógico, durante tres meses; a quienes se aplicó el Inventario de Autoestima de Coopersmit versión escolar, compuesto por cuatro áreas: sí mismo-general; social-pares; hogar-padres y escuela. Los resultados muestran que en la aplicación del pre test el 53 % de los niños obtuvieron un promedio bajo de autoestima. En relación al post test podemos observar que el 67% presentaron un alto nivel de autoestima. Se concluye que el programa de cuentos contribuye a mejorar significativamente la autoestima de los niños, tanto en la relación con los demás, en el aprendizaje y en sus emociones.

Palabras clave: cuentos de hadas, desarrollo de habilidades, nivel de autoestima, programa.

Introduction

Stories have a millenary existence and through them messages have been transmitted from generation to generation, difficult situations have been explained, such as how to share, overcome fears, understand the death of a loved one, etc., since stories implicitly carry a moral lesson. In addition, they influence emotional, behavioral and learning development, since through stories it is possible to teach values, concepts, and how to behave in different situations (López, 2006).

Stories "are characterized because they defy consensual logic by enthroning fantasy; they reflect universal feelings and values: love, hate, jealousy, rivalry, evil, forgiveness, revenge; they address issues that are problems of universal human interest: social relations, values. Family relationships, ambitions and achievements and they cross epochs and cultures by reason

of their transgenerational transmission and use different allegories and symbols" (Veccia et al., 2017 p. 221). Likewise, it is indicated that these in addition to being recreational are an incentive for the child's development and have a therapeutic effect.

Heinsen (2012) states that it is at an early age when the child builds his personality, learns to bond with others; therefore, it is the responsibility of parents and educational institutions to strengthen the child's personality through strategies that allow his integral development. Through storytelling, children develop the ability to listen, to express themselves and this leads to strengthen their self-esteem, since they feel autonomous and free (Albán & Corral, 2010); therefore, it is important to create these situations to contribute to the formative process of children.

In children, at this age, it is observed: fear when expressing themselves, limitations to communicate and distractions in learning situations; therefore, the objective is to determine the influence of the fairy tales' program on the self-esteem of boys and girls between seven and ten years old, with the purpose of improving the level of self-esteem. Fairy tales play an important role in the teaching and learning process, at the same time they stimulate the child's fantasy, fulfilling a therapeutic function by reflecting experiences, thoughts and feelings through a symbolic language. Therefore, based on this, the proposal for a fairy tale program that contributes to the socioemotional development of the child is generated.

Likewise, Mercado y Borda (2021); Bravo y Contreras (2019); Lobato (2018); Orellana y Orellana (2017); Torrealba, (2017); Sucaticona, (2017); Serrabona (2008) state that children's stories are important because they help children to raise their self-esteem. In addition, Lobato (2018) adds that parents should be involved in children's self-recognition. Considering that the self, has to do with the whole psyche of the individual that encompasses the conscious and the unconscious. Fairy tales respond to metaphors and that they cannot be understood literally, but are symbolic representations that keep contents and meanings different from the literal ones, for example, the forest is the metaphor of the unconscious, unknown space, full of treasures and at the same time of dangers (Henche, 2021).

Research Methodology

The type of research is pre-experimental because it will be applied to a single group through a pre- and post-test. According to Gil (1992) this design works with a very small sample and in two moments, one before and the other after the application in order to later contrast the results. The sample consisted of 15 children who participated in a storytelling workshop organized by the College of Psychologists, CDRXVI-Puno.

For the execution of this research, the fairy tales' program was applied, which was developed during three months through *google meet*. It began with the application of a pre-test, for which the self-esteem scale of Coopersmith SEI (2006) school version was used, which comprises four areas: self-general, social-peers, home-parents and school. To achieve the objective, 10 fairy tales were selected, which were developed in 20 sessions, through words, art, games and dynamics that facilitated the work process. Each story was developed in two sessions: in the first one, the story was narrated considering a series of aspects such as voice (tone, volume, rhythm), sounds, onomatopoeias, gestural expression and in the second one, playful activities were carried out with a duration of 90 minutes each session and concluded with a post-test, which was evaluated with the same instrument. The stories selected were: The wolf and the seven little goats, Hansel and Gretel, The brave little tailor, Elsa the smart, Tom thumb, The jumping dwarf, The water of life, The two wanderers, The fearless prince and The Bremen musicians. The stories were selected considering that they should not be those they had already worked on in previous workshops, so that they would not lose interest, but others that would generate expectations in the children.

Results and discussion

The results obtained from the fairy tales' program will allow considering a psycho-pedagogical space that optimizes the children's personal assessment.

Pre test

Table 1. Average Self-Esteem

Level	Score	(PA) Average Self-Esteem	
		Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	5	33%
Low average	25 a 49	8	53%
High average	50 a 74	2	13%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	0	0%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI Self-Esteem Scale (2006)

Table 1 shows that 8 children (53%) are located in the low average level of self-esteem, followed by 33% in the low self-esteem level and only 13% in the high average level. These results indicate that even most of the children need to strengthen their abilities to achieve an adequate personal development in the academic, family and personal areas of their experience.

Tabla 2. (SG) General Self

Level	Score	(SG) General Self	
		Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	5	33%
Low average	25 a 49	9	60%
High average	50 a 74	1	7%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	0	0%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI Self-Esteem Scale (2006

In Table 2 of the General Self, it is observed that 60% of the children are located in the low average level, 33% are located in the low self-esteem level and 7% are located in the high self-esteem average. According to Coopersmith (2006), "Self-esteem refers to the attitudes presented by the subject with respect to his self-perception and his own valuative experience of his physical and psychological characteristics". These results indicate that most children still need to develop their self-esteem skills in order to achieve an adequate self-perception and valuation of their physical and psychological characteristics that affect their personal development.

Table 3. (SP) Social - Peers

Level	Score	(SP) Social - Peers	
		Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	4	27%
Low average	25 a 49	11	73%
High average	50 a 74	0	0%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	0	0%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI self-esteem scale (2006)

Table 3 of Social-Pares shows that 73% of the children are in the low average level and 27% of the children are in the low level of self-esteem. According to Coopersmith (2006), this dimension "is related to the attitudes of children in their social environment, specifically in relation to their peers or friends". Regarding the results we can say that most of the children present in their interpersonal relationships attitudes in the process of development in the social environment towards their peers or friends.

Table 4. (HP) III. Home - Parents

Level	Score	(HP) III. Home - Parents	
		Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	6	40%
Low average	25 a 49	8	53%
High average	50 a 74	1	7%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	0	0%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI Self-Esteem Scale (2006)

In table 4 of Home-Parents, we can observe that 53 % of the children are in the low average level, 40 % in the low self-esteem level and 7 % in the high average level. This indicates that the attitudes and experiences in the family environment in relation to living with their parents are not favorable.

Table 5. (ES) School

Level	Score	(ES) School	
		Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	5	33%
Low average	25 a 49	10	67%
High average	50 a 74	0	0%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	0	0%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI self-esteem scale (2006)

Table 5 shows that 67% of the children are in the low average level and 33% in the low self-esteem level. This means that the experiences within the school are not adequate and the expectations in relation to satisfaction in their academic performance are affected.

Pos Test

Table 6. (PA) Self-esteem average

Level	Score	(PA) – Average Self-Esteem	
		Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	0	0%
Low average	25 a 49	0	0%
High average	50 a 74	5	33%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	10	67%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI self-esteem scale (2006)

In Table 6 of the post-test General Average, we have that 67% of the children have a high self-esteem level and 33% have a high average level. As can be seen in the results, the self-esteem of most of the children has improved their self-esteem attitudes in the academic, family and personal areas of their lives, which promotes an adequate personal development.

Table 7. (SG) General Self

Level	Score	(SG) General Self	
		Frequency	**Percentage**
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	0	0%
Low average	25 a 49	0	0%
High average	50 a 74	11	73%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	4	27%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI self-esteem scale (2006)

In Table 7 of General Self, we can observe that 73% of the children are in the high average level of self-esteem and 27% in the high self-esteem level. According to Coopersmith (2006) "Self refers to the subject's attitudes towards his or her self-perception and own evaluative experience about his or her physical and psychological characteristics". After the application of the fairy tale program, it is evident that most of the children have significantly developed their abilities to become aware of themselves and their capacity for self-appraisal. This implies that they are aware of their strengths and weaknesses which allows them an adequate personal valuation.

Table 8. (SP) Social - Peers

Level	Score	(SP) Social - Peers	
		Frequency	**Percentage**
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	0	0%
Low average	25 a 49	0	0%
High average	50 a 74	8	53%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	7	47%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI self-esteem scale (2006)

Table 8 of the Social-Pairs area shows that 53% of the children are in the high average level and 47% in the high self-esteem level. The results indicate that most of the children after the application of the fairy tale program have significantly improved their attitudes in relation to their peers.

Table 9. (HP) III. Home-Parent

Level	Score	(HP) III. Home-Parents	
		Frequency	**Percentage**
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	0	0%
Low average	25 a 49	0	0%
High average	50 a 74	9	60%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	6	40%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI self-esteem scale (2006)

In Table 9 of Hogar-Padres we can observe that 60% of the children are located in the high average self-esteem level and 40% in the high self-esteem level. The results indicate that most of the children have significantly improved their abilities to relate to their parents, establishing an adequate bond in their family dynamics.

Table 10: (ES) School

Level	Score	(ES) School	
		Frequency	Percentage
Low self-esteem	0 a 24	0	0%
Low average	25 a 49	0	0%
High average	50 a 74	2	13%
High self-esteem	75 a 100	13	87%
Total		**15**	**100%**

Source: Coopersmith SEI self-esteem scale (2006)

In Table 10 of the school dimension, it is observed that 87% of the children are located in the high self-esteem level, 13% in the high average level. The results show that after the application of the fairy tale program the children have significantly improved their abilities to adapt, to relate to others and affirms their perseverance. This contributes to their academic performance.

Therefore, fairy tales allow directly and indirectly to expand the lexicon, the correct pronunciation and intonation of words in children's communication. Likewise, it allows developing interest in reading and at the same time generating a habit (Zamora, 2016).

Analysis and discussion of the results

The fairy tales program contributes to raising self-esteem in children from 7 to 10 years of age, as can be seen in the results of the pre-test and post-test, after the application of the program, in which significant improvements in the development of self-esteem can be seen.

In Table 1 the results show that in the pretest 53% of the children are located in the low average level, while in the post test it is evident that 67% of the children achieved a high self-esteem. The research agrees with Bravo and Contreras, (2019) who state that children's stories help children to raise their self-esteem.

This was observed in the various sessions in which the children externalized various emotions, showed predisposition to interact with each other and actively participated in the process of storytelling. As Lejuin (1988) states, storytelling will contribute to the integral development of the child's personality. This confirms the importance of the application of these programs in the formative process of the child. It will allow them to develop and strengthen their self-esteem, to value themselves as individuals and at the same time to integrate into a small community.

On the other hand, in the General Self area in the pretest results, it was found that 60% of the children were located in the low average level, however, after the application of the fairy tales' program in the post test we found that the children who participated in the workshops 73% are located in the high average level of self-esteem. These data agree with that of Orellana and Orellana (2017) who conclude that children's fairy tales manage to develop high self-esteem, facing new goals with joy as they feel proud of their successes, in addition, to accept and respect themselves and their group. At the same time, they reject negative attitudes and express sincerity in all their actions. We can add that, they become a set of complex knowledge in their daily life. (Incacutipa Limachi, 2021).

The research shows that the children have effectively developed skills in their personal development, since the storytelling helped them to reaffirm themselves, to disinhibit themselves, to value themselves, to accept themselves, to have self-confidence and security. These results were verified in the workshops when working with the children, who through the stories have been able to express their emotions, feelings and ideas in an active and participatory manner, thus acquiring greater self-confidence and self-assurance.

The results of the pre-test show, in the Social-Pairs area, that 73% of the children are located in the low average level of self-esteem. However, in the post-test, 53 % of the children were at the high average level of self-esteem. This agrees with Sucaticona (2016) who states that children's stories, significantly influence as a strategy to develop children's self-esteem. Therefore, it is concluded that most of the children have developed their social skills by interacting more flexibly with their peers.

Conclusions

The application of the fairy tales' program has significantly influenced the self-esteem of children from 7 to 10 years of age, since in the pre-test 53% of low average and in the post-test 67% of high self-esteem were obtained. This achievement is obtained in the different dimensions: General Self, pretest 60% low average and in the post test a high average of 73 %; Social-Parents, pretest 73 % low average and in the post test a high average of 53 %; Home-Parents in the pretest a 53 % low average and in the post test a high average of 60%; and School in the pretest a low average of 67 % and in the post test a high self-esteem of 87 %. The results of the application of the *Fairy Tales* program contribute significantly to the child's socioemotional development and allow him to express his emotions and feelings spontaneously without fear. In addition, it stimulates their cognitive development because it brings into play their imagination and creativity to better understand different types of texts.

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