



A WAY TO TEACH PRACTICAL LIFE SKILLS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION: MONTESSORI PEDAGOGY

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Abstract:

Montessori stated that the most critical purpose of education is making the children discover themselves and achieve their freedom. Children, whether they are typically developed or have mental disorders, are born with a competence named “absorptive mind” which helps mental activities to emerge. For mental activities to begin to emerge, the child is given a number of keys in a “prepared environment”. When all children are given freedom in a prepared environment, then they feel “happy and motivated” towards a specific skill or knowledge in their sensitive period. When they are allowed to use the equipment freely, they will do practice with it and never get tired of repeated practices. “Repetition” has a key role in “enhancing focused attention, mental strength and ability to grasp and understand”. This review article describes and discusses the Montessori pedagogy and its one type of material, practical life skills.

Keywords: Montessori pedagogy, Montessori materials, practical life skills, special education

1. Introduction

Dr. Maria Montessori (1869-1952) became the first female medical doctor of Italy and specialized in psychiatry at the University of Rome, where she dealt with mentally handicapped children and claimed that going through a special education could support their development. She thought the same methods could work for normal children and began studying in the field of education (Brunold-Conesa, 2010; Ođuz & K6ksal-Akyol, 2006). According to Montessori, one must grasp Montessori principles as a whole and practice them straightforwardly in order to help children. Children are born with a competence named “absorptive mind” which helps mental activities to emerge. For mental activities to begin to emerge, the child is given a number of keys in a “prepared environment”. Children benefit from these keys in order to categorize

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previously perceived impressions of the mind in accordance with their skills and pace. In short, the children are given freedom in a prepared environment and they feel “happy and motivated” towards a specific skill or knowledge in their sensitive period. When the child is allowed to use the equipment freely, he will do practice with it and never get tired of repeated practices. “Repetition” has a key role in “enhancing focused attention, mental strength and ability to grasp and understand” (Montessori, 1997).

According to Wardle (2009), sensitive periods required for applying these principles are similar to Piaget and Montessori’s sensitive principles. These periods in Montessori philosophy are as follows: 0-6 years preschool childhood, 6-12 years childhood, 12-18 years puberty and 18-24 years maturity/adulthood. Like Piaget, Montessori believes that these periods are one and unique and must be fulfilled completely as a preparation for the next one. Child education approach developed by Montessori is an approach that influences the child’s mental and physical development positively, focuses on the child’s sensory, movement and linguistic education and contributes to social, emotional and physical development. One of the benefits of Montessori approach is that bringing older and younger children together develops younger children’s social awareness and self-confidence. On the other hand, Montessori education supports life-long development although it aims to contribute to school success (Lillard, 2011; Danişman, 2012). Children correct their own mistakes instead of following teacher warnings. Individual learning occurs in an environment. Silence is a choice of children rather than an urge to respect the environment. Children are organized because of the environment and it enables them to grow in a positive atmosphere. Teacher assumes a non-instructing role (<http://montessoriconnections.com>).

According to Montessori, the most critical purpose of education is making the children discover themselves and achieve their freedom. Thus, materials are the ones carefully and specially designed by Montessori. These materials include error checks, helping to create auto-education. Montessori materials are among the most important components of the method as they help children to achieve auto-education and move towards specialization through consecutive activities (cited by Büyüktaşkapu, 2014 from Korkmaz, 2005). All these materials are effective on child development. While designing her materials, Maria Montessori observed children’s reactions and chose them according to her observations. She narrated her observation which was so influential on her material choice: “There were splendid toys in the environment I had designed; however none of the children seemed interested. I was so surprised that I had to show these. For example; how an oven works, how we use plates and bowls. Children were only temporarily interested but did not choose to play these toys on their own at other times. After that, I understood that children regarded these toys only as alternatives to play with when they could find no other thing.” (cited by Büyüktaşkapu, 2014 from Montessori, 1985).

Maria Montessori follows a certain order while presenting her materials. This order is based on acquiring the most essential skills first. Montessori education practical skills materials are presented with sensorial materials, mathematics materials, linguistic development materials, scientific skill materials, geography and biology materials and

cosmic education materials, respectively (Carinato, Cluxton, McCarrick, Motz & O'Connor, 1999). This section of the book will offer an insight into the purpose and significance of practical life materials, giving examples from daily life activities.

2. Goals of Practical Life Skills

Maria Montessori is one of the prominent representatives of “child-oriented” movement in pedagogy in early 20th century. It is considered a Renaissance of views and practices in child education field. She suggested that children should not be treated like adults and they are the representatives of a specific life style rather than copies of adults. One of the leading foundations of this pedagogy is the ability of children to determine their own future. Role of education is to aid the child to live. Parents and educators must help children to realize themselves. It is possible to summarize her opinion in a sentence: *“Help me to do it alone”* (Arslan, 2008). The first step for families and educators in helping children must be making them acquire practical life skills at early childhood according to their maturation levels which may also be defined as sensitive periods. Montessori’s target is *“to support the child’s personal development process within a fair education where the individual focuses on and strives to achieve individualization and socialization”* (Lillard, 2012; Mutlu, Ergişi, Bütün-Ayhan & Aral, 2012). Children learn to manage practical life skills independently in a purposeful environment with practical life activities. Goal of practical life skills is to help the child to manage their actions, acquire physical coordination and independence and adapt to the social environment. When the goal of Montessori pedagogy is the case, concentration, coordination, control, independence and order should come to mind. Practical life skills have direct and indirect goals (McElwee, 2014).

2.1 Direct Goals

Primarily focus on development of children’s movement and coordination skills. Practical life activities designed in a purposeful and prepared environment enable children’s mental and physical balance while frequent repetition of activities results in mistake correction and perfection. As practical life activities constitute the life itself, children satisfy their curiosity and interest in adults’ life. Doing the activities ambitiously enhances children’s focusing skills. Children who achieve excellent results by learning to focus also gain will and self-management in early years. For example, when you watch a child carrying grains from one jar to another, you will observe that the child is listening to the sounds of grains eagerly. This sound is so relaxing and pleasant that the child wants to repeat it again and again. The extent of coordination skill is measured according to the number of grains dropped while carrying. Keeping the balance of grains in a spoon or carrying one by one with tweezers requires strengthening fine motor skills and finger muscles. Following situations that require coordination are writing and keeping the balance while walking. Final goal of practical life skills is the independence feeling that children gain. Children repeat the activities introduced by the instructor until they are able to do it independently and perfectly.

Thus, independence capability gained in an activity prepares the children for the next activity and children feel the joy of success.

2.2 Indirect Goals

Children acquire skills for their development levels and adapt to their own cultures by learning practical life skills. For example, while a child is working on a shoe lacing frame, direct goals of the activity involves independence and development of coordination. Tying their own shoe laces is one of the indirect goals of the activity. This is necessary for the child to realize his/her self-care in his/her own culture. Montessori aims to teach children a series of skills so that they achieve complete independence by the age of 4-5. Children may cut fruits if they feel hungry and clean a dirty dish. The children are eager to do the activities before a sense of duty develops because they find them interesting. After the age of 4-5, they will begin to do practical life activities only when necessary.

3. Significance of Practical Life Skills

According to Kayılı and Arı (2011), practical life skills activities, sensorial education activities, mathematics activities, linguistic development activities and cosmic learning activities aim to prepare the child for life and primary education. Child education philosophy developed by Montessori is a method that influences the children's mental and physical development positively, focuses on their sensory, movement and linguistic education and contributes to social, emotional and physical development and primary school readiness. Practical life activities reflect cultures. Each activity is a reflection of real life and daily routine of adults. Doing these activities independently at early ages and developing free will are the most significant gifts of Montessori education to the children. Will requires being interested on a task, choosing and realizing relevant actions and being persistent till the end in order to achieve a goal. The child with a will has taken a great step towards adulthood (Feez, 2010). According to Topbaş (2004), practical life activities aim to develop every individual aspect of a child to the possible extent. It trains the child as one who cites and answers questions. What matters is the child being self-sufficient. Self-sufficiency is achieved through freedom and the keys to freedom are order and discipline. The child who has stepped into independent life both increases his/her life quality at home and school and learns to socialize with self-confidence brought by success. Daily routine activities help to form a tie between Montessori classes and home culture and each practical life activity gives the child freedom and a chance to choose (Feez, 2010). Practical life activities have certain benefits to the children in physical, mental and emotional development in addition to building their characters. They can be explained in this way: movement control and coordination, independence, synchronization of muscles, stopping, repetition, action analysis, recognizing and sorting materials contribute to movement development; ordering, logic, distinguishing-realizing materials, vocabulary, repetition and will contribute to mental development; satisfaction of internal needs, self-control

through error-checking, self-criticism, self-confidence, self-esteem, individualism, patience, persistence and focusing are useful for spiritual development. On the other hand, practical life activities are closely related to social life (Demiralp, 2014):

- Gaining coordination;
- Displaying adaptive behaviour in human relations;
- Assuming self-responsibility;
- Loving, acknowledging and respecting oneself;
- Doing self-care;
- Using objects carefully;
- Assuming responsibility.

Practical life activities give children hints on how their environment and life work. Children like any kind of job. They also like being orderly and keeping the environment clean. This strengthens their self-esteem, makes them feel valuable and gives them a chance to develop their manipulative skills. Children must never be instilled the idea of working only for themselves. When they become adults, they will choose a profession they enjoy and do well. Thus, they will earn the money to live on and also contribute to their society. They will be happy and respect themselves for doing their job well. Children learn at early ages through practical life skills that they must care for their environment and be productive not only for themselves but also for their environment and society.

Practical life skills support mental development. Every activity follows a logical order from simple to complicated and known to unknown and using hands contributes to formation of new neuron connections. These exercises are also foundation for mathematics and configuration of many fields including volume sizes and geometrical shapes. Practical life skills also prepare children for emotional education. They contribute to tactile sense and encourage children to act in aesthetics, grace and courtesy to train them for social life. While applying the method, the child is supported as a whole and strengthened against life. This self-confidence helps the child to develop his character by being sympathetic, sensitive, modest and tolerant against others (Demiralp, 2014).

4. Repetition and Imitation

Adults must never complain about their jobs in the presence of children at home and school. Children learn to imitate adults at early ages. If adults do not like their jobs, children take the message that they must avoid any type of work. Then, they transfer this new knowledge to school and turn into reluctant students, believing that their manipulative will not improve (Montessori, 2004). Little children like doing something for themselves and imitating what adults and other children do. They volunteer to join daily routine activities and are willing to imitate adults' activities and perform them independently. First, instructor shows how to use practical life materials at school environment and then children are free to play with any materials they like. As they do observations while the teacher is presenting the material, they learn how to do the

activity. Children's interest and curiosity encourage them to imitate. Completing the activity successfully encourages frequent repetition of the activity to make students feel the joy of success (Feez, 2010). Montessori educators claim that children must never be interrupted while doing an activity because they are only able to do the activity independently with much repetition and attention and they like it that way. Interrupting children and their repetition effort causes anger and passive behaviour. In other words, an idea occurs in their mind that their opportunities are being restricted, driving them to an inactive mood.

According to Feez (2010), children enable error correction of materials by repeating practical life activities. For example; when a glass is dropped or broken, a chair falls down, water or rice is spilled, they realize that there is a mistake and the activity has not achieved its target. These mistakes create opportunities for more learning and interaction and encourage the child to achieve success through more repetitions.

5. Stages of Practical Life Lessons

While introducing the materials, educator should follow a simple to hard sequence and act very carefully. Introduction of practical life activities involves three stages. Unnecessary words and actions are avoided while introducing materials. Actions begin with perceptible steps to improve understanding, so the children are more likely to succeed when they use the materials later on. Teacher may either introduce the materials to students one by one or have small groups watch presentations (Durakoğlu, 2010; Feez, 2010). Three stages of presentation are explained below:

A. Teacher's Presentation

The first stage of Montessori activities involves the teacher introducing the material and display how to practice it. Teacher introduces the activity by telling the name and purpose of the material to children. Then, he shows children where to find the material and explains how to carry and lay it onto the working area. Each step is explained slowly and clearly with details. Teacher must be interested in the activity rather than the children while presenting, because children must be reminded that they must focus on the materials as they learn by imitating the teacher (Feez, 2010).

B. Independent Work (Grasping)

The second stage of activity is realized when the child selects the activity presented in the first stage. The child imitates and repeats the stages presented by the teacher. Montessori educators believe that learning occurs at grasping stage when the child works independently. The real goal is to have the student select the activity voluntarily and focus on it. Interest enables children to repeat the activity numerous times; children succeed and their self-esteem improves when they complete every stage from beginning to end. Teacher must observe students in the classroom, repeat presentation stage to motivate the students if they are not interested in the activity (Feez, 2010).

C. Using Knowledge in Other Contexts (Generalization-Specialization)

According to Feez (2010), success of the first and second stages is understood at the third and last stage which is also called generalization or specialization stage. At this stage, the knowledge that the child acquires through exercises is recorded on the data storage to be used in daily routines. For example, when a child cleans the table without any directions after an art activity, it proves that he/she has mastered the activity and learnt it. Teacher or family is responsible for preparing the environment in various ways for the child to generalize. The more a child repeats the daily routine activities in different settings, the more self-confidence he/she develops and feels ready for more challenging tasks.

Sample Lesson: Table Washing

Table washing is one of the most common practical life activities in Montessori classes. Table washing activity presented to little age groups is of great importance as it is considered a part of cleaning and tidying done after meals, art works, scientific experiments and cooking.

At Children's House, table washing activity requires simultaneously performing actions of water games including a series of sensitive actions. If the child is to fulfil the activity successfully, he must focus strongly with attention and minor muscle control. If the child wants to do the activity but is not ready for its stages, a simpler version may be done. As the child grows, steps and challenge level may be increased. After many repetitions, children memorize every stage until they are able to do them alone when they find a convenient setting.



Figure 1. Table washing
(Source: [link](#))

6. Practical Life Activities

Lillard (2013) suggested that Montessori activities and learning through play have a lot in common. Activities are presented during the lesson and based on interaction. However, it is not true to say that Montessori activities are games to the full extent. Activities are the real life itself. According to Dr. Montessori, child's own work creates the person he will be in the future. While an adult tries to improve the environment, a child tries to improve only himself. Using the child's natural inclination as the starting point, Dr. Montessori built many classroom exercises. These activities help to satisfy the child's needs through meaningful activities. Very familiar objects –button, brush, plate, pitcher, water and other objects from the child's home- for these exercises. Many practical life activities involve using water. Most children are likely to enjoy playing with water. Pouring water from a glass to a tub helps enhancing the child's

coordination. When an activity such as table cleaning begins, attention time is gradually elongated. They learn to be careful when they watch repeated actions (Topbaş, 2014). Although practical life activities are simple and ordinary, they constitute the basic components of Montessori program. Each activity helps the child to develop his coordination to work with more complex materials in the future. No learning is realized without attention and focus. The child is prepared for learning through attention activities.

According to Demiralp (2014), practical life exercises are the sum of activities that the child encounters in daily life. These activities not only help the child to get rid of his dependence on adults but also support his physical, mental and emotional development. Rule and Stewart's (2002) empirical study shows that practical life activities enable children develop their ability to use hand muscles, reducing their dependence on adults. Practical life activities, exercises depend on the culture of the relevant country. For example, people greet each other in Africa by putting their left hands on the other person's heart while people simply shake hands in most other countries.

Practical life activities also support linguistic development. They help to build the mother tongue and name of activities and objects in every activity are given with their alternatives. Thus, the child's vocabulary is enriched. These activities are the basis for language education and very important for education in the future.

Wilbrandt (cited by Büyüktaşkapı, 2014 from 2008) summarized practical life activities. Children:

- Learn through experience.
- Learn and strengthen their senses as a result of activities.
- Gain experiences through direct interaction with materials.
- Explores the law of human and materials through experience.
- Have experience on casual relationships.
- Learn to improve their own limits and capability and realize their creativity and strength.
- Adapt to focusing on work.
- Gain experience of trial and error.
- Grasp the logical consequence at different stages of a work.

Researchers classified practical life skills in different ways. Here, Feez's (2010) classification will be considered: lessons in grace and courtesy, preliminary exercises, care of self, care of the environment, control of movement.

6.1. Lessons in grace and courtesy

Rules of grace and courtesy take place in the first stage of practical life activities because living in peace, harmony and solidarity is probably the most important life skill taught in Montessori pedagogy (Seldin and Epstein, 2003). These activities support child development socially and in terms of practical life style. Teachers are recommended to teach grace and courtesy rules on the first several days in order to maintain synchronization and adaptation. Children who know how to behave in different social

contexts and solve problems develop self-confidence and resistance. Grace is defined by Montessori as the harmony between body and mind. Grace includes any behaviour in the classroom. Children control their own behaviour with grace activities. Courtesy is defined as the harmony between children themselves and others. Grace and courtesy lessons help little children to adapt to the class and feel confident in social settings. When there is no grace and courtesy lesson, the child feels incapable, unconfident and unprepared in the classroom. Like an adult who feels shy and anxious in his social affairs at a visit abroad, children feel the same in the classroom, which is an unfamiliar setting. A child who learns grace and courtesy rules become less dependent on adults and knows how to adapt to various social settings and interact with others (McElwee, 2014). According to Feez (2010), grace and courtesy rules are best introduced to children through role models. Educators display the role of empathy and respect in social affairs through short dramas. Teacher animates the proper behaviours with words and body language and students imitate them. For example, children who shout in the classroom are attracted to the activity and then this problem is presented in a drama.

Grace and Courtesy Activity: List in Lessons

Movement	Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shaking hands; • letting someone else pass a narrow corridor; • bringing a chair for visitors; • receiving visitors; • coughing; • yawning; • keeping the door open to welcome someone in; • blowing one's nose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listening; • greeting; • introducing oneself; • inviting someone in; • interrupting someone's speech; • apologizing; • offer and request; • saying please or greeting; • answering the phone; • buying something at a shop; • helping each other.

6.2 Preliminary exercises

In Montessori classes, little children are shown how to use clothespins when they want to hang a wet cloth. In other words, children are taught whatever they need at the time. In kindergartens, preliminary exercises are shown in detail much before children need them. Through preliminary exercises, children learn (Feez, 2010): a. Whole body coordination and balance, b. Control of minor hand muscles and holding with thumb and index finger.

Preliminary exercises teach children how to communicate, carry objects and find what they need in the new environment. Children must first specialize in preliminary activities before they begin more challenging tasks like polishing wood, ironing and washing table. As children learn from preliminary exercises how to control hand movements, they become more familiar with practical life preparing activities. For example, cooking, sewing, stringing beads, weaving, knitting, clay modeling, woodwork etc. For a child to do table washing activity successfully, he has to gain the

water pouring skill, which is the prerequisite of the activity. In short, preliminary activities teach children all the prerequisite skills required for acquiring the skills of folding, opening, closing, spooning etc. These exercises strengthen children’s motor skills, self-confidence and independence for future experiences. Practical life activities also help teachers to set behavioral principles and rules in the classroom. For example, a child learns that he must not interfere in another’s area while walking on the activity mat and acknowledges this as part of a positive working atmosphere.



Figure 2: Folding clothes
 (Source: [link](#))

a. Preliminary Activities List

Whole Body	Hand
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walking in the classroom without disturbing others; • opening and closing the door; • carrying, sitting and standing from a chair; • carrying a table/tray; • carrying the activity mat-rolling and opening the activity mat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • folding clothes; • spooning rice or beans; • using clothespins; • pouring water or rice; • opening and closing.

6.3 Self-Care Activities

In Montessori classes, children learn to take care of themselves with practical life activities. Task at this stage may seem too easy for an adult, because once they are learnt they are automatically repeated. However, children test their self-esteem and success feelings when they are able to do these tasks without help. Lessons involving self-care activities are designed according to the needs, interests and motor skills of children (Pitamic, 2013). Feez (2010) classified self-care activities into three groups.

Self-Care Activities List

Food Preparation	Dressing	Personal Care
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pouring liquid; • cutting fruit; • making a sandwich; • using sharp objects (knife, scissors, etc.); • washing/cleaning table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • polishing shoes; • wearing a coat; • opening closing; • frames (button, snaps, hook and eye, zipper, belt, buckle, bow); • washing hands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • combing hair; • brushing teeth; • cleaning/polishing shoes; • dusting; • sweeping.

a. Food Preparation

Food preparation is an inseparable part of Montessori classes as children are very keen on it. Little children often make bread dough. All the ingredients are previously arranged and put in a container. At the first stage, the children are shown in what order they should add the ingredients, mix and knead them to shape the dough. Then, the dough is carefully packed so that the child takes it home to bake and share with family members. Montessori students prepare pizza, pasta, cake and desserts in this way.



Figure 3: Dressing frame

(Source: [link](#))

b. Dressing

Dressing frames are available in Montessori classrooms. These wooden frames are designed to put two pieces of cloth together. Both pieces of cloth may be tied to the other with different tying styles. Children can do plenty of repetitions in these frames to get dressed-undressed on their own. Activities on dressing frames involve using buttons, snaps, hook and eye, belt and zipper and threading a needle.

c. Personal Care

Montessori activities in this field serve very useful educational purposes related to independent life and hygiene. For example, children learn to get dressed, clean and wash hands on their own. These activities help children to calm down and maintain focus and life balance. Like grace and courtesy lessons enabling children to be respectful and careful towards others, care of self exercises teach children to be careful and respectful towards their own bodies.

6.4. Care of the Environment

Care of environment activities are independently done with a wide range of materials. They are applicable both indoors and outdoors and the goal is to teach long-term skills for immediate environment. These activities help children to develop personal responsibility and perceive the social outcomes of personal preferences (Sackett, 2013). Children must have easy access to care of environment materials in Montessori classes. These materials must be absolutely real and working with toys is unacceptable. Size of everything to be used in the activities must be suitable for children's use. Activities must be done again and again because children gain responsibility and awareness at different ages. We should keep in mind that the earlier children begin to assume responsibility the earlier they care for the environment and realize care of environment activities at their disposal without any directions (McElwee, 2014).

Care of Environment Activities List

Indoors	Outdoors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dusting• Polishing (wooden table, mirror, glass)• Cleaning and polishing metal• Picking and arranging flowers• Sweeping• Window cleaning• Cleaning cloths and dishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Watering plants & Caring for pets• Watering flowers• Raking flowers• Fertilizing a garden• Sowing• Cleaning weeds• Cutting flowers• Cleaning garden/path



Figure 4: Dressing frame
(Source: [link](#))

6.5. Control of Movement

One of the direct goals of Montessori activities is to enable body coordination. According to Montessori, movement is a creative process guided by internal drives. Intelligence guides movement while movement helps intelligence to develop. Agility, coordination and balance require much repetition. Balanced actions require coordination of mind and all body parts. Children are very keen on balance movements and feel happy to control their movements. As they grow and become more conscious,

they are able to keep body balance in movement and coordination activities. For example; playing the violoncello, doing pottery, painting and doing ballet require balance and are better to perform after children mature. The most common movement-body coordination activities in Montessori classes are walking on the line and silence game.

A. Walking on the Line



Figure 5: Walking on the Line
(Source: [link](#))

Walking on the line is a part of practical life exercises in Montessori classes. It is a systematic walking activity performed on an elliptical line marked on the floor in every Montessori classroom. Children start with music and try to keep their balance on the line. They step on the line heels to toes carefully. This is not a very simple activity for children as children have developing muscles and the activity requires body coordination. Once children begin to do it properly, walking on the line turns into a very exciting activity that also requires much attention. When the children are ready, a harder version may be introduced by giving them something to carry while walking on the line. The most familiar objects to carry while walking are flag (to prevent them looking at their feet), a bell (trying not to ring it), a glass of water (trying not to spill it) and objects on a tray. It is possible to prepare older or more capable children for dance and physical education by making them walk with rhythm and beat.

B. Silence Game

This activity is not intended for discipline and children are not forced to do it. Children must be emotionally ready for the activity. The goal is to make children realize that silence is a pleasant situation and noise pollution can be prevented. This activity also makes students develop their coordination, working and concentration skills and feel that they are responsible for their environment. You may begin practicing it at the age of 2.5-3. There must be at least two instructors. One of them says the name of other

instructor rather slowly. Instructor goes to the previously determined corner. This shows children how they will work. Then the name of a child is said and it goes on until all the children go to the corner. The activity ends when all children gather next to the instructor (Büyüктаşkapu, 2014; Feez, 2010). M. Montessori observed that children did not eat the candies she gave them as rewards after silence game because they felt too satisfied and happy to need another reward. The way that children play silence game voluntarily shows that silence is a natural need.

Absolute silence and inactivity is not possible because heart beats and breaths break the silence. Indeed, the aim is to achieve maximum silence. A sound will be heard even if no word is spoken and hands and feet are kept still. Silence prepares the soul for inner experiences. One finds truth listening to his heart's voice in absolute silence. This is why followers of mysticism and thinkers always sought for silence because it gives them information on their inner worlds (Standing, 1998).

7. Conclusion

As a result, Montessori pedagogy as described above has a big influence on not only children who are typically developed but also are mentally disabled as it provides firstly prepared environment that looks after the child's both physical health and the spiritual life. Another outcome of Montessori pedagogy is the ability of children to move freely in their environment where there can be found constructive activities for their development. Thus, researchers suggest including and practising Montessori materials more in lessons and train teachers and educators to make them familiar with Montessori pedagogy.

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