

Effect of Arts and Crafts Programme on Creativity and Adjustment among Primary School Children

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ABSTRACT

Formal education has traditionally focused mainly on ‘learning to know’ and to a lesser extent on ‘learning to do’. In the new scenario, focus of education is shifting towards the inculcation and development of various life skills i.e. abilities for adaptive and positive behavior enabling individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. So, in this context, the importance and significance of ‘creativity’ and ‘adjustment’ could be well estimated. It was considered that through constructive activities viz. arts and crafts intervention programme, children may get freedom in gathering, assembling, comparing and reshuffling of ideas leading to generation of creative thought; an avenue to interact and mix with others (social and school adjustment); and medium to reveal and release their pent up emotions, if any and grow freely (emotional adjustment).

The present research was designed to see the effect of arts and crafts programme (ACP) on the various components of creativity and adjustment among primary school children. For this purpose a sample of 240 students of G.L.T S.B.M. Sr. Sec. School, Nehru Nagar, New Delhi-65 belonging to 3rd, 4th and 5th grade, each representing 40 boys and 40 girls was selected. Two groups i.e. experimental and control were formed by random assignment of subjects in each group, resulting in 12 groups of 20 children of each gender in each grade, thus representing 3 x 2 x 2 factorial design in the study. Data was collected using Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (Figural Form A) developed by Torrance and his associates (1968) and Child Behavior Rating Scale developed by Cassel (1962). ACP, a well planned programme of systematic arts and crafts activities designed by the researcher including: i) Pictorial Art (Drawing and Painting), ii) Decorative Art (Collage, Printing and Floor decoration), and (iii) Crafts (Clay modeling, Reliefs/turning wastes into productives and Construction /model making), was performed among the experimental group subjects.

The differences between experimental and control group with respect to creativity (creative abilities CAs, creative strengths CSs and creativity index CI) and adjustment

(emotional, social & school adjustment) under pre and post treatment conditions were analyzed using t-statistics. Post treatment scores were further analyzed by 3x2x2 ANOVA for grade, group and gender. Moreover, significant two and three-way interaction effects of grade, group and gender were further analyzed by Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT). Pearson's Product Moment coefficient of correlation among different areas of creativity and adjustment was also calculated.

Analyses of results revealed that under pre treatment condition both the groups were similar in all aspects of creativity and adjustment. Under post treatment condition, experimental group children, who received ACP exhibited (i) significant enhancement in all measures of creativity (except synthesis of figures) and adjustment supporting the hypotheses that children who receive arts and crafts (ACP) treatment will be benefitted significantly on various components of creativity and adjustment, as compared to those not receiving ACP; (ii) further significant enhancement after ACP in terms of fluency, abstractness of titles, resistance to premature closure, emotional expressiveness, storytelling articulateness, expressiveness of titles, humor, fantasy, creativity index, emotional adjustment, social adjustment, and school adjustment in children belonging to grade 3rd than grade 5th school children; (iii) significant enhancement in grade 5th children as compared to 3rd and 4th grade school children after ACP on creativity components of originality, elaboration, movement or action, unusual visualization, internal visualization, extending or breaking boundaries, richness of imagery, colourfulness of imagery, and total creative strengths as a result of ACP; (iv) significant differences in the context of gender with boys receiving more benefits than girls on the measures of movement or action, social and school adjustment while girls were better than boys only on the measure of storytelling articulateness; (v) significant interaction effect of grade and gender for grade 3rd and 4th (not for grade 5th) on the measure of emotional expressiveness with boys exhibiting more emotional expressiveness than girls in grade 3rd and the opposite trend was seen in case of grade 4th school children; (vi) significant positive correlation of creativity index and mean creative abilities with social adjustment and school adjustment; and (vii) significant positive correlation between mean creative abilities and emotional adjustment. To conclude, if the child is engaged in arts and crafts i.e. constructive activities of the kind in which he/ she gets enough opportunities to think, feel, explore, observe, discover, experiment and manipulate lots of objects or / and environmental stimuli, it would help him/ her a lot in unfolding his/her creative potentialities and blossoming his/her personality in a holistic way.