

RESEARCH ON CHILDREN'S LEARNING MOTIVATION AND CREATIVE THINKING IN AESTHETIC LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

The early childhood education creates affirmative and encouraging impact on the schoolwork performance and character development of child. The benefits of education are irrefutable and indispensable. The critical evaluation on character development in childhood education is interrelated to the curriculum activities of aesthetics. Propositions development and literature review are particularized with disagreement notification. Creative thinking and learning motivation are other undeniable competencies in early childhood education. Evidences and findings are demonstrated by supportive positive impacts of childhood education. The need of early education is well documented by peer review viewpoints with argumentative discussions.

Keywords: Early childhood education, aesthetic, creative thinking, learning motivation.

INTRODUCTION

The overall development of child can generate beneficial and long lasting effects by early childhood education pivotal for academic and mental development of child, and systematized practice of educating child at an early age. The impact of early education on life of every child is enormous, since the component of character education is at the heart of the curriculum activity in early childhood education. On the other hand, aesthetics is the branch of philosophy which deals with the judgment of taste and sentiments. Also, it is defined as the study of sensory responsive values dealing with the nature of taste, beauty, nature and art. In such sense, the growth of childhood not only affects the reasoning and emotional development, but also the physical, educational activities and bond with other people. The learning and thinking of children can be enriched by creating a stimulating environment, while the mode of learning is diverse for every child. Effective childhood development provides opportunity for every child to maximize their potential and develop their social and physical domains. Early childhood development programs enables child to strengthen their cognitive skills, prepare from perplexing school environments, provides opportunity to socialize and develop self-confidence. In early childhood education, the critical evaluation of art, capability to appreciate and enhancement of reflection of sense are the part of aesthetic development. With the improvement of sense of aesthetics, a child tends to interpret the significance of colour, taste, arrangement and patterns. In childhood education, character development, learning motivation, creative thinking and aesthetics are the pivotal parts. For building positive and vibrant character development, basic fundamental competencies provide the opportunity to build affirmative character, create motivation for learning and striving to build progressive mental health. As aesthetics development and early education provides a positive impact on the academic achievement of children, a recent study by multiple meta-analyses reveals that, early education has a substantial encouraging impact on children by increasing high school graduation percentile and raising achievement test marks.

This research paper will describe about the aesthetics and character education in early childhood education.

LITERATURE REVIEW PROPOSITIONS DEVELOPMENT

This literature review will be briefly discussed from the following four different development propositions.

(1)Aesthetic and Character Development in Early Childhood Education

For more than 2,000 years, the value of education has been acknowledged and regarded as a beneficial factor for development of children. Nevertheless, comparatively upsurge of public awareness has bought the importance of early childhood education at the foremost position. Additionally, further insight on the importance of early childhood education has been proved by recent research, which proves the swift development of child brain at an early age. For aesthetic is the study of beauty that can stimulate senses of child over the practice of music, drama and art., while the advancement of aesthetic awareness is contributed by the feeling of environment, sound, colour, taste and aroma. Actually, aesthetic education is referred by Maxine Greene as the premeditated efforts to advance encounters with arts (Furman, 2000). According to Maxine Greene(2001), aesthetic education is an intentional undertaking designed to nurture appreciative, reflective, cultural, participatory engagements in arts, and the work of art is an aesthetic item that enables people to notice the sense of colour, patterns and taste. By enabling learners to notice what is to be notices, they can see differently and resonate differently. In other words, aesthetic education is regarded as integral to the cognitive, perceptual, emotional, and imaginative development of learners, and this is why aesthetic education is the pivotal part for childhood development.

The importance of art education cannot be denied. Both art and education have the same prominence in the development of child at early years. According to Friedman, children surrounded by attractive environment can appreciate their art and develop aesthetic awareness, and development of aesthetic awareness can encourage children to reduce the level of stress and develop positive behaviours. By observing the surroundings, children can observe beauty in nature, and through early childhood education, opportunities are provided for children to express their thoughts and cultivate aesthetic consciousness. Unfortunately, the sense and knowledge of children are often negligible, so proper educational experts and tutoring become a must for developing skills. Besides, hindrance and obstruction can act as a destructive diminishing factor for the development of child, but according to Elliot Eisner, the engagements in the learning of arts enables children to promote subtlety, enhance the experience of learning, promote extension, facilitate dimensions of intuition and enhance the qualitative experience of children at a primary age (Squire, 2003). Elliot Eisner has not revealed the potential of an aesthetic education towards the enhancing the process of value of learning, and Herz-Sommer described the importance of art learning. It enables children to enrich their learning experiences.

In engagements with the artworks, adults are more inhibited than that of children. Aesthetic education enhances the learning process in broad ways. Children at an early age require care and support from elders and teachers by curriculum activities in primary and secondary schools. Children may be more puzzled and surprised by the social experience. The contribution of teachers towards children is vast. Teachers help enhance the understanding of children by engaging them in conversations and guiding them to develop. Learning arts

seems to be easy, but it requires effective education and guidance to succeed. At this point, character development enables children to develop their quality of intuition and behaviours (Kellert, 2002). In addition, study of art and music is part of character development of children. Children who master at study of art, taste and music can help themselves in intellectual, mental and social development. In fact, aesthetic education plays a crucial role for the development of human. The primary aim of aesthetic education is to cultivate aesthetic faculties and imagination, understand the mental power, and create the skills of message conveying (Lindqvist, 1996). Therefore, cultivating the philosophy of line and development of spirit and personality becomes the other aspect of aesthetic education, while character development of children is related to the aesthetic curriculum.

Childhood education enables children to control their cognitive capabilities and fine motor skills. Character development of children at an early age includes development of ethical behaviour, empathy behaviour and moral understanding. According to Laura E. Berk, ethical behaviour and moral understanding of each child is influenced by adults in the beginning, and childhood education provides perfect platform for children to enrich their feelings and moral behaviours. Adults hold the prime share for influencing the character of children. However, regarding atmosphere of society, collaboration with peers and influence of tutor are also essential aspects in development of children. At this point, art development of child can be influenced by gender and exposure to culture and art media (Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972). Actually, these are the beneficiary factors for the character development of children in childhood education. Therefore,

Proposition 1: Aesthetic learning is related to children's character cultivation.

(2) Aesthetics and Learning Motivation

Newborn babies are born with incredible amount of intrinsic motivations, which have a great effect on the environment. If children get rewarded against their action, they will continue to perform those actions. The inspirations in children are quite visible if they are exposed to materials that can entertain them, and in turn, they can get some knowledge to help their physical and mental development. As discussed earlier, aesthetics is part of philosophy that deals with arts, music, taste, nature, beauty and several other factors. Study of Aesthetics enhances creativity of brain and helps children's positive development that can be helpful for the children to acquire discreet knowledge in a particular subject by a mode of entertainment. According to Anna Reyner, artistic activities help children to develop skills in several ways (Hidi, 2000). For example, children in kindergarten are taught to design alphabets and pronounce them. Children are able to catch the alphabets only with the design and the sound they hear by their teacher. The design displayed to them encourages them to draw the similar object and understand its meaning. This is a positive way for children to learn things because it helps them develop their ability to learn unknown objects by the medium of arts and designs.

Music is another form of aesthetics that help children be motivated towards multi-dimensional perspectives. Music is commonly enjoyed by every individual, yet children find it entertaining when they get to learn it. Music becomes a subject that can amuse them and reduce their academic loading. In other aspects, schoolwork subjects are definitely important according to Mei-Ju Chou, so music plays an important role in curriculum. Consequently, music should be incorporated in school syllabus owing that it helps understand several ethical and moral values. Science alone can-not be enough for mental growth of children, and this is why aesthetics becomes so important in development of activities initiated by the brain (Bers,

2002). Though this argument is true, there are several factors required to keep in mind when child is exposed to the vast study of aesthetics.

Aesthetics is a philosophical subject, and it should be brought to children in such a way that it can help them develop a creative thinking for enhancement of other subjects. For example, literature in schools should not only be taught to make children understand a story, it should also be delivered to enhance their grammar and understand use of compositions. Moreover, poetry is helpful for them to comprehend and analyze the summary behind them. Children have huge capacity to in-take various subjective matters, but only through proper use of knowledge, it is possible for them to find a way to deliver the knowledge they earn. Motivated learning involves several rational and non-rational elements, and learners should try to have an idea of using rational elements in order to develop skills helping deliver proper responses, if required (Blais, 1992). For infants, they are provided with toys they find as a matter of amusement, but toys have certain positive significance in assisting children to develop their ability of brain. In addition, some toys can produce several type of sounds that children are fond of, which arises several questions in the mind of infants, such as "Where is the sound coming from?" "What does it mean?", and etc. In fact, children try to understand the secret behind the sound or movements of toys (Brostrom, 2005). Such activity in the mind of children motivates them to analyze the toys they play with, and it is quite common that some children might break their toy to reveal the secret behind the strange happenings with them. This motivation is very essential for children because it helps them discover the facts unknown to them.

Children are very vulnerable to changes taking place beside them every day, and it is the parents' and teachers' duties to make children accustomed to the environment where they live. Absolutely true, aesthetics plays a very important role in shaping the creativity, while children should be motivated to learn things due to suspense they find in several factors that entertain their minds. Aesthetics is an important study because it develops the thinking ability that becomes useful for children in process of growth, and dealing with various subjective matters like mathematics, physics, geography etc (Loewenstein, 1994). Hence,

Proposition 2: Aesthetic learning is related to children's learning motivation.

(3)Aesthetics and Creative Thinking

Creativity of children arises due to a variety of factors involving progression in mental developments. Aesthetics plays a very important role in developing creative thinking of children. It has been observed that children prefer to play or draw and enjoy music rather than studying their course subjects. Infants also have a tendency of drawing things they do not know about or play some type of games that makes them feel happy (Torrance, 1972). Spontaneous and creative-expression helps children raise their sense of competence that helps them make appropriate decisions in the future. Aesthetics has been known well as beauty of arts, nature, music, games and many other subjects. It helps children improve their creative thoughts and make response from a very early age. For example, as per Walter F Drew (Bers, 2002), children who like painting have the power to express themselves through the medium in a very unique style that elders might not be able to do. This ability of children helps them think in a different way from other people in the society, and based on their capability, those children can become good engineers or professional painters or architects.

The main objective behind the discussion is to bring out the reason of why children get the ability to think differently. Children with significant interest in art possess the habit of

making decisions by themselves at an extremely early age. This ability helps them overcome various problems and make spontaneous decisions. In this sense, aesthetics helps children deepen their understanding and ultimately, they become able to handle multiple works at the same time (Hui & Lau, 2006). Such ability might not be observed in most of the children; however, there are certain children with deeply focusing ability that helps them perform multi-tasks. Also, aesthetics involves children's learning with a growing sense of competence. It has been observed that children who like to play have a tendency of playing with their peers instead of playing alone. This is definitely a positive symptom among children. Mixing up with other children help to develop their inter-personal skills as well as thoughts growing rich among them. The reason behind development is that playing is communication in its own-way. Communicating with parents and teachers is significantly different from communicating with peers. Communication with peers is an amusement for children while they try to inhibit some good characteristics that help boost up the ability of creative thinking (Hocevar & Bachelor, 1989). Aesthetics is important because children can learn science, literacy and mathematics joyfully by playing actively with diverse and open-ended materials. According to Duckworth, children intend to develop sense of aesthetics by analyzing beauty of a material. For example, if a child with three other children playing in their home with a book addressed to them, they get a chance to play as well as reading at the same time. This factor enhance interest among children towards a particular subject.

Children are the best learners provided they get open-ended explorations. Teachers have tremendous effect on the learning abilities of children (Runco, 1996). The approach of teachers to their students should be in a light and joyful manner. This behaviour with children helps them to learn without fear and enhance their creative thinking abilities. It is very important to remember that aesthetics deal with a variety of materials not just drawing or playing. Different children may have different interests hence they should be give distinguished and fair chances to work towards their interests (Chien & Hui, 2010). Based on the above discussion,

Proposition 3: Aesthetic learning is significantly related to children's creative thinking.
(4) Character Development and Early Childhood Education

It is highly important for the teachers to consider character development aspect in the early childhood education programme. It is also important for the parents to think about character development of their children before they gain academic or career development knowledge. First of all, it is important for children, their parents and teachers to understand the meaning and significance of character development (Baumrind, 1967). It is essential for a child or a kid to become a good human being rather than only a good and intelligent student. There are several important and valuable styles that need to be followed by the parents as well as teachers to enhance character development of children (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989). Moreover, such character development can be considered as a pivotal element of early childhood education. These styles have been discussed below.

i. Interaction Style

There are three major interaction styles that have been maintained by the teachers during the character development programme for children in their early childhood education. These styles are permissive, authoritarian and authoritative (Scott, Scott & McCabe, 1991). These three interaction styles are generally identified in the teacher-child and parent-child interaction processes (Crockenberg & Litman, 1990). It is true that, there are several

character traits that are maintained by the parents or teachers during the interaction or communication process in order to enhance the children's character development aspect in their early childhood education programme (Broffnenbrenner, 1986). However, the basic three interaction styles have been discussed below.

A. The Authoritarian Style

It is true that parents, teachers or several career consultants tend to develop children through authoritarian style who possess particular character traits in order to keep control over the particular authoritarian children. For example, statements like "I don't want to hear a single word any more regarding this matter" (Baunmrind, 1993). This dialogue generally reflects the example of authoritarian character development style of the children or kids. Moreover, several ordering dialogues by parents or teachers or career developers, such as "Do it in this way as I said so" or "Do the similar way as you are told" (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg & Dornbush, 1991).

In this type of character development interaction style, the authoritarian adults, such as teachers, parents or career developers never want to consider the views of students or kids or children. Moreover, these authoritarian adults feel frustrated when the kids tend to share their views regarding any issue or matter (Miller, Cowan, Cowan, Heatherington & Clingempeel, 1993). In sometimes, the authoritarian adults generally rely on punishment or harsh punishments in order to ensure the character development of children in early childhood education period. Most importantly, there is little scope of negotiation for the children (Pinto, Folkers & Sines, 1991).

B. The Permissive Style

In the permissive style of character development, adults may become permissive in child-centred and indulgent way, or the adults may become permissive in adult-centred and negligent manner. Both forms of permissiveness actually do injustice to the kids or children in their early childhood career (Raikes, 1996). Generally, permissiveness can be linked to the behaviour of children, which is bossy, dependent, self-centred and impulsive with lower degree of achievement and self-control. Children who are permitted to act in an impulsive way needed to meet some level of expectations (Howes, Hamilton, & Matheson, 1994). Moreover, in this way, those children cannot depend on adults to set or develop limits to guide particular behaviour or traits that are left to navigate the waters of life for themselves.

On the other hand, the uninvolved interaction or negligent permissive style generally appears to be specifically difficult for the kids or children to overcome in early childhood career. A three-years-old child may display bizarre levels of acting out behaviour or aggression. This particular aggression can be known as temper irritability (Sprunger, Boyce & Gaines, 1985). Impact or effect of this uninvolved interaction style or negligent permissive style tends to persevere over the time period. This particular character trait generally gives rise to hostile, anti-social, poor achievement and aberrant behaviour in later period of time.

ii. The Authoritative Style

Last but not the least; authoritative interaction character development style is generally characterized by fairness, high-standard, involvement, induction, reasoning, both way communications, warmth and enforcing reasonable rules. According to this style, the

authoritative adults are generally aware of what, when, how and with whom the kids or children are involved or engaged. The authoritative adults generally give encouragement and support to the children. They are quite open to negotiation. Moreover, these adults generally give reasons for any kind of developed rules (Howes, Phillips & Whitebrook, 1992). According to this authoritative style, children are generally given appropriate and authentic choices, are respected, encouraged and asked for their valuable opinions. The children are valued and participating member of the family and expected to presume role, responsibilities and join the fun times with other family members.

It is true that several positive character traits are correlated with the particular authoritative style. These traits generally include creativity, interdependence, mature social and communication skills, leadership skills, self-control, motivation, optimism, persistence, academic competence, achievement, adequate decision making skills and interdependence. However, adults generally look after support, warmth, consistent expectations, limits and encouragement in this authoritative interaction career development style in early childhood education process (Howes, Galluzzo, Roding & Myers, 1988). This particular interaction style can be considered as the most effective and positive character development process in which the kids or children learn how to behave or communicate with other individuals within the society.

A. Practical Applications

Teachers or career developers generally apply several practical applications in order to enhance children character development aspect. Listening, reasonable standards development, explanation, negotiation, asking, offering solutions, idea generation, independence, encouragement and giving redirection are the practical applications that help children or kids to possess valuable positive traits. It is true that permissive and authoritarian interaction style cannot enhance the character development aspect of children (Steinberg, Dornbush, Darling, Lamborn & Mounts, 1994). Therefore, several schools or educational institutions generally consider authoritative and practical applications and styles of character development. It is quite important to listen to the children and understand their views. Then only an adult can understand whether he or she is going in a right or a wrong path. It is true that, children love negotiation in childhood days (Thomas, Chess & Birch, 1968). On the other hand, it is also important to control their aggressiveness or anger. Then only a child can become a good human being or socially responsible human being. Consist with this logic,

Proposition 4: Teachers' guidance role is related to children's character cultivation.

CONCLUSION

Career growth of children highly depends upon the effectiveness of early childhood education. Therefore, it is highly important for parents, teachers as well as career consultants to consider the significance of aesthetics, learning motivation, creative thinking and character development in early childhood education. It is true that, children always have knack to others except studies in their early childhood years. It is the responsibility of the adults to encourage and motivate them to get involved in games, arts or music in order to ensure positive career development. A child cannot grow positively until and unless he or she becomes independence to share his or her thoughts and views. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the adults to create such a surrounding environment for children, so that the children can take interest in studies except their hobbies or passions or interests. This

specific surrounding may help the children to become motivated, innovative and creative in their academic career.

Character development is another important aspect that should be considered by the adults in early childhood education. It is highly important to become a good human being rather than only a good student. Therefore, the adults should focus on several positive and effective interactions regarding character development styles in childhood education to generate positive character traits of children. Authoritative and practical interaction style should be considered as pivotal character development styles by the adults in order to enhance early childhood education of children in the society.

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