

Effectiveness of Counseling Program for Developing Art Expression and Adaptive Behavior (case study)

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Abstract

This paper reports on case study for an adult male with moderate intellectual disability. It is longitudinal study for last eighteen years through practicing art expression and using adaptive behavior scale. The purpose of the study was to determine if counseling program through art would help subject expand his use of art and self-expression skills. Also The program seeks to address behavioral problems with regard to peer, school, family relationships and spare time at home. Weekly two-hours sessions are divided into expressive arts activity and group discussion through some trips and social activities. Art making process and exhibit art products give him confident ,self-esteem to have friends. Qualitative artistic developmental changes were noted . the implications of these findings are numerous and may have an impact on the field of counseling , education , art expression and community art programs.

Introduction

Art is an easy method for expressing oneself and one's feelings So expressing and using colors are of great importance for the imagination of the people with intellectual disabilities . Just like any individual, the intellectual disabled person needs to create , paint and relate with others in society. If they are able to utilize their social skills, intellectual disability individuals can be integrated in society and express themselves. There are many ways through the various forms of expressive therapies for the intellectual disabled person to achieve this. One of these forms of therapies is art.

People with Intellectual Disabilities have difficulty expressing themselves but through art they can express in spontaneous way and developing their relationships with others. Art expression can provide an opportunity for the intellectual disabled person to communicate with others, make friends, have a positive self-image, gain trust in him/herself as well as gain confidence.

Othman (1999),and **Elarabi (2003)**, stated that addressing the environment in individuals artworks makes them discover the world around them and express themselves and other people's selves. Therefore, art has a social feature through which an individual communicates with others , express his\her ideas , views on the beings and things of the outside world. Also, playing with different materials makes any human feel freedom and enjoyment at the same time . When one is having fun, it is easy to acquire new concept, and possibly positive behavior to assist him\her in growth in many aspects.

The teacher plays a big role in the teaching process, with intellectual disabilities, by using the simplest ways to reach the best results, so as to establish his\her goals based upon the students' actual capabilities, and his needs to develop his mental, personal, and social capabilities, so that the student has an appropriate image in society. The teachers must experiment with many materials and instruction methods, starting from touching coloring and using papers, to painting and making shapes.

When an individual with intellectual disabilities expresses happiness and pride in his\her artworks, his\her mental health is complete. We must encourage him\her to carry out such works, and refrain from ignoring him\her or devaluating in society. The role of parents takes the lead. When there is cooperation between teachers and parents, things are clearer when it comes to consolidating the way to deal with intellectual disabilities students, to achieve independence in everything.

Sobhi (2000) believe that an individual with intellectual disabilities grows not only physically and mentally, but also grows artistically.

Art activities are considered fun and entertaining, but should be carried out as an instruction.

What is the Counseling program ?

the Counseling program has a great importance to deal with the Intellectual Disabled people in scientific and systematic way.

Counseling programs offer services to parents, siblings, and care-givers, as well as to individuals with intellectual disabilities. These services may be helpful for individuals and families who are looking to gain insight, resolve problems, develop alternate approaches to services, and to address other issues of concern. (**Zahran, 2002,p12**)

Counseling through art :

Elarabi (2008,pp 12-40) mention that the counseling program through Art required to invent new ways to use art materials such as crayons, water colors, oil color, clay and collage art, that may be at home, school, garden, or trip, individual and group. Counseling and information/ referral programs offer services to parents, siblings, and care-givers, as well as to individuals with developmental disabilities. These services may be helpful for individuals and families who are looking to gain insight, resolve problems, develop alternate approaches to services, and to address other issues of concern. Socialization and recreation programs offer a planned program of social, recreational, and leisure activities for individuals with developmental disabilities that include opportunities to interact with and participate as part of a community.

Adaptive Behavior includes the age-appropriate behaviors necessary for people to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life. Adaptive behaviors include real life skills such as grooming, dressing, safety, safe food handling, school rules, ability to work, money management, cleaning, making friends, social skills, and personal responsibility. adaptive behavior assessments are used in evaluation of disabilities to determine what behavior strengths and weaknesses should be addressed to improve the learner's possibility for success in school and life. It is not uncommon for

learning disabled students to require instruction to learn adaptive behaviors.
(Al-Ashool 1996, p44)

Adaptive behavior is usually assessed using questionnaires completed by parents, teachers, social workers, students (when possible and appropriate), or adult learners. Adaptive behavior can also be assessed based on observations of the child's actual performance of a specific skill.

Adaptive behavior is the collection of conceptual, social, and practical skills that all people learn in order to function in their daily lives.

(AAIDD, 2010) and **(AAMR 1999)** refer that intellectual disability is a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18.

Also DABS measures these three domains:

1-Conceptual skills: literacy; self-direction; and concepts of number, money, and time

2-Social skills: interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, following rules, obeying laws, and avoiding being victimized

3-Practical skills: activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, use of money, safety, health care, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, and use of the telephone

Intellectual functioning—also called intelligence—refers to general mental capacity, such as learning, reasoning, problem solving, and so on.

One criterion to measure intellectual functioning is an IQ test. Generally, an IQ test score of around 70 or as high as 75 indicates a limitation in intellectual functioning.

Standardized tests can also determine limitations in **adaptive behavior**, which comprises three skill types:

- Conceptual skills—language and literacy; money, time, and number concepts; and self-direction.
- Social skills—interpersonal skills, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté (i.e., wariness), social problem solving, and the ability to follow rules/obey laws and to avoid being victimized.

Practical skills—activities of daily living (personal care), occupational skills, healthcare, travel/transportation, schedules/routines, safety, use of money, use of the telephone. **(AAIDD, 2010)**

The Characteristics of the Counselor:

the counselor plays a big role in the treatment process, especially with regard to the special categories, by using the simplest ways to reach the best results. Also the counselor must have different strategies for guidance and objectives to plane suitable programs for each individual, through integrated the client into society. (Eid, p119)

Lowenfeld considers creative development as following definable stages in a linear pattern of growth. His stage-based theory provides a framework for linking the development of realism in drawing to age-dependent maturation. (**Lowenfeld, & Brittan, 1987**)

Helping an individual to grow through art can involve giving, or showing. It may also mean watching and even at times waiting many times, it means moving in, doing or saying something in an active way. At other times it means being present but silent, respectful of the other's primary absorption in the creative dialogue.

The creative activity of art has the potential of releasing a child's thoughts, feeling and dream which provides an environment for self-expression and an opportunity to experience mastery, personal satisfaction and joy, thereby increasing their self-esteem

(**Lawson, R., L., 2001**)

Process of Making Art :

Art, as an image-making faculty is present in all people of all ages, can be used as tool for self-learning(self-discovery), and increase sensitivity not only to themselves, but to others and the world around them through the process of making art. The art process can assist the individual in understanding his\ her feeling.

Branden (1994) believed that self-esteem is a fundamental human need. It is confidence in our ability to think, to cop with the basic challenges of life, in our right to be successful and happy, to feel worthy, deserving, entitled to assert our needs and wants, to achieve our values and enjoy the fruits of our efforts. Art making is an activity that may provide a protective framework for self-expression. Visual art making can be a boundary between reality and make-believe(**Rubin, 1984**)

Art offers the child an opportunity to safely experience disparities and tension.

The right to live Association (RTLA)

In addition to art and handicraft training, youths are involved in a variety of recreational activities including music, drama and sports. These activities are very important as they help raise the self-esteem of these young people and increase their self-confidence. Moreover they allow for their integration in society.

The right to live Association organized several art exhibitions for the talented students with intellectual disabilities " children and youth " .

The study Problem

Karim with intellectual disability has limitations in adaptive behavior. For example, he find it difficult to take on responsibilities. He has limited social skills, which makes it difficult to integrate him in society. He has difficulties dealing with money and numbers. Therefore he need assistance and training in order to develop his adaptive behavior. On his own, intellectual disability person will not make an attempt to communicate with others independently, and if they do try, most times people around them will have difficulty understanding him. At times, they may also have speech defects which make it even more difficult to interact , communicate with others and having friends.

The Tools

The researcher used some tests : Personal identification form, Buna Test (fourth edition) (**Hanora, 2003**), Good Enough- harris Drawing test (**Cohen, et al 1994**) , Adaptive Behavior measurement (ABS) **Kazonhera (1990)** , Art Expression Program, and H.t.P test (Mlika, lous 1994) .

Psychodynamic theory

Clukey, F., H.(2003, p18) mention this clinically oriented theory centers on the study of the cognitive and affective processes which underlie human behavior and its motivation, especially as developed unconsciously in response to environmental influences. Object relations theory is psychodynamic as are most bother theories used in art therapy. Because art involves making, art therapy involves observable behaviors that can be studied; it has a behavioral-cognitive aspect in addition to the psychodynamic.

Program structure :

The counseling program to develop art expression met twice a week for two hours. Each session involved expressive arts activity and group discussion through some trips and social activities

the hypothesis for the case study was that a developmental behavioral approach to art expression with intellectual disability would increase the individual's ability to express the self non-verbally and verbally and result in improving his adaptive behaviors.

The case study:

Karim is an artist with intellectual disabilities (RTLA), his IQ is (60). He is now 35 years old .he was born as normal child. At the age of one year years old he had accident , he failed down from his bed to stuck on his head on the ground . this caused a brain damage for him. He was the second child for his mother . Karim has one sister elder than him , their father died long time age . his mother suffered from health problems, three of them live in one apartment. his eldest sister supported him allot.

He started to play with colors since he was a young child . when he was 15 years old , the researcher discovered that he is talented in visual arts. Karim started to has his own studio at home in 2006 , with support from his family members. Karim is very quite and handsome , he could talk if you ask him about something , he get nervous very quickly . he had no friends , he didn't care about his colleagues in the school or in his class.

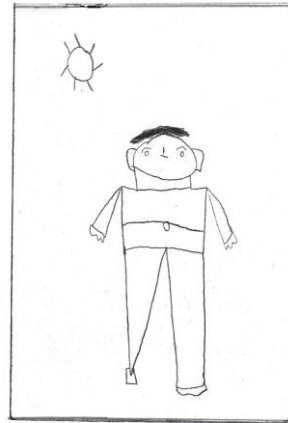
At the beginning he like to use red color and draw flours.

Karim used to draw the human parts body with some details and unbalanced body parts but with complete features.

these drawings below are the result of using good enough test in 2004 (boy- girls , tree, and house)

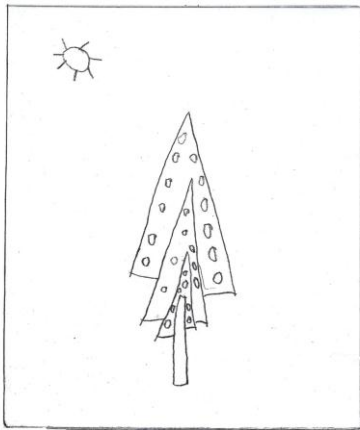


Drawing Girl

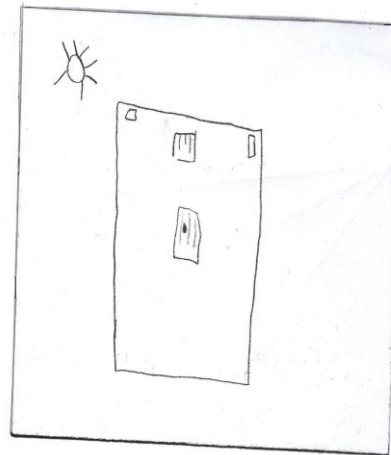


Drawing boy

Karim sometimes express about his the tree as a Christmas tree , and paint house with hanging door and windows in the second floor in one diminution. You can see the sun at the top.



Christmas tree



my house

The explanation for this drawing is that Karim has lake in relationships with environment, and the open windows means the his needs for love out of his family . also he didn't draw any windows in the first flour , because he feel lonely , though his mother and sister love him so much but he needs more love or different love .his dream to has his own house and freedom in life.

In 1992, Karim started to express his painting with oil colors for the vas of flowers , he used the color from the tubes so he didn't mix the colors. At that time he contributed in the first art exhibition , under the title "we also create" held by Right to live association.

In 1998, Karim started to use and mix oil colors , to express about his dreams . in this painting he imagined that he is a ministry of culture, so he must has a car with a driver and somebody carry for him his bag.

In 2003, Karim painted " Spring flowers " with bright background He had more optimistic vision. Comparing with the flowers in 1992 , there are big difference between the two paintings. Also he painted one boy , to express about himself alone in this big garden. See the sun with it's light in the sky, he express about his bright future, he said " I will be popular artist not only on Egypt but international artist "

In 2004 , Karim painted the see waves , it was observed that karim every week changed his waves colors. He started with bright colors(yellow- white- pink –orange) the last day he completely changed the colors see below . the paintings covered by green colors.

In 2005 Karim painted (My beautiful Butterfly), it was clear that he got more experience in using oil colors and mixed it in accurate ways. His spontaneous way to add the color in each place through the painting was very creative. That because he practice at school and at his spare time at home

in 2006 Karim choose to draw with colored pens, he started to express about political issues around the word .He imagined that he traveled to Russia and he met the president Potten to discus with him some problems. As you see the Russian president is very big than Karim but they have the same colored face (yellow). Also you can see the airplane with red color . At the bottom he singe his complete name and the exact date by pencil . the date was 28th November 2006

In 2008 karim painted "my beautiful country"
He expressed himself with our civilization in simple way He mixed the color , and designed a very clever painting, really he is talented .

2010 karim painted in the right to live Association art workshop with his teacher in one painting , they together contributed in the art exhibition "Rhythm of love and life"

In **April 2010**, at the art exhibition "Rhythm of love and life" Karim invited his friend Bahaa to see his paintings. Also many other friends came to attend the opening day of the exhibition.

Conclusions

The counseling program to develop art expression was very effective lifetime with Karim.

That increase his ability to express the self non-verbally and verbally and result in improving his adaptive behaviors. In addition give him confident and trust himself to have friends. He could contribute in any conversation topics . he take care of his colleagues , he now know who is absent . Through group activities Karim found his interests . He started to control his nervous but he need more advices .

The researcher succeeded to encourage him to feel good toward himself and accept that he is special person but talented . he proud of himself and feel happy in life.

Karim start to take on responsibilities with his family , he helped his mother and take care of his sister. His social skills improved through the years by cooperate between school and his family.

Karm go every day to the cafeteria to stay his brake time with his friends and drink tee . he still has difficulties in counting money so his mother give him the same amount of money every day to take it with him .

He has a good relationship with a group of colleagues so he ask for a group meeting or a group breakfast .

The results indicate that using art making process increase adaptive behavior in many aspects and it is a means of self-expression in supportive environment to find out how self-esteem my be affected.

Also group work is very important to improve social skills and activities.

In addition , the results of this study provide possible areas for future research for talented individuals with intellectual disabilities.

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Key words :

Intellectual Disability – Counseling program – Art Expression – Case study