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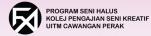
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HAND EMBROIDERY AS ART THERAPY FOR CHILDREN

a chapter by

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Introduction

Children are often defined as those having a dynamic personality and able to follow through on their life process. The visual work serves as a communication tool and as a reflection of their feelings. According to Koster (2001), this reflection will continue growing until it reaches maturity. The art created by a child has a different interpretation than that created by an adult. Lowenfeld (1975) asserted that every child is creatively portrayed. This statement is consistent with the idea of a child which is always to explore something new. The word creativity comes from the Latin word "creare," which means "to make." and the Greek word "creare" means "accommodate."

According to Kamus Dewan (2002), creativity is the ability to generate, produce, and develop original and unique ideas. May (1975) also stated that creativity is a process of bringing something new into the world. According to Torrance (1970), creativity is something that possesses unique qualities. The essence of creativity is the ability and willingness of an individual to create something original and unique.

Definition of Hand Embroidery

Embroidery is a decorative art form using fabric, needles and thread designed to add texture and embellishment. Hand embroidery is a combination of yarn and pieces of fabric to produce a variety of new forms of interesting ideas. Hand embroidery can be decorative as well as practical. It is a series of small straight stitches done in a line and can be used for hand embroidery.

The primary purpose of embroidery is to decorate fabric. It can communicate an idea

or purely add interest and texture to a garment or fabric item such as homewares. The colour used may be monochromatic or vibrant and contrasting.

Hand embroidery is an easy and pleasurable skill to learn, and anyone can learn it through various techniques. The basic embroidery stitches are running stitch, backstitch, split stitch, stem stitch, satin stitch, and French knots. From the stitches, a variety of art in different styles could be produced.



Figure 1: Practice of hand embroidery technique, Rohaizan Mat Nashir @ Mohd Nasir (2023)





Figure 2: Practice of hand embroidery technique, Rohaizan Mat Nashir @ Mohd Nasir (2023)



Figure 4: Process of hand embroidery technique using punch needle, yarn, fabric and embroidery ram, Rohaizan Mat Nashir @ Mohd Nasir (2023)



Figure 5: Practice of hand embroidery technique, Lia Softbeamcanvas (2023)

Definition of Art Therapy

In the context of education, therapy can be defined as a means to assist individuals in developing a balanced perspective towards a certain activity or goal (citation?). Art therapy is a single field of mental health that uses the creative processes to improve and purify an individual's physical, mental, and emotional well-being (citation?).

The relationship between behaviour, character, and discipline serves as a mechanism to determine each person's creativity. It is a type of expressive therapy that uses various colourful mediums.

Art therapy includes creation, appreciation and healing. The types of art therapy include painting, drawing, colouring or finger painting using different types of paints, colour pencils, markers, pens or pencils as a form of expression. People can also create collages, photography and sculpting by working on clay as a form of art therapy.

The main aims of art therapy are creating artwork, reflecting on the artwork, and connecting to personal insights. Creating artwork can help someone understand how they process and express their emotions when doing these activities. Art and

creativity can be a way to express emotions and release feelings of stress and tension. It can be an outlet for emotions that may be difficult to express in words.

Benefits to children

Hand embroidery can release neurotransmitters that promote joy and well-being, while also reducing stress hormones to people. When the children are taking time to look at and appreciate a pleasing piece of embroidery, or any visual art, it can help to manage and reduce anxiety. The benefits of arts to children are no need to talk and speak since it is an activity that has to be focused on the process. It will encourage creative thinking and give them the opportunity to develop skills and thoughtful ideas.

Apart from that, hand embroidery is a versatile art that lets children express themselves through something that they have considered. Hand embroidery is an incredibly relaxing and meditative art form. When the children start stitch by stitch, they will be able to concentrate on the growing embroidery piece in their hands. In addition to that, this activity is rather informal and does not require specific X to provide results. Colour, shape, and symbols are the main characters used in art therapy.

Observation from an embroidery workshop

From the activity, children between the ages of 10 to 12 years reported that it was fun to participate in an embroidery workshop. Children responded they were happy and understood the activities. They enjoyed the process of doing embroidery by using different colours of threads.

It shows that embroidery activities can encourage children to reflect on their artwork and the emotions that may arise from the art sessions. A powerful tool for those who struggle with verbal communication, providing them with a means of expressing themselves. Moreover, it can develop and enhance their hand-eye coordination, fine and gross motor skills.

The activity conducted in a group settin can help

children to connect with others and gain emotional insight. It is a fun experience as it combines enjoyable activities with therapeutic benefits. The most important, it promotes relaxation, reduce stress, and improve overall mental and emotional wellbeing.

In a collaboration activity done with freelance artist, Nor Liana Syairah Mohammad Sowi from "softbeamcanvas", she said that art therapy is an amazing way to execute emotions that cannot be verbalized.

Artmaking allows people to access multiple sensory points. The distinctive texture of yarns gives a feel; chunky fluffy yarns are the most favourite.

The art therapy workshop was held at a local art gallery, Kotak Seni in Kota Bharu. It helped children by providing a safe space to come in and express themselves. It guided them and provided a sense of containment and safety to transform their inner experiences.

As an instructor to fiber art in embroidery, this experience has given mixed emotions especially when having a group of clients with different ages working together even though they were there for different reasons; to fill their time or an escape. But in truth, they shared the same goal to have fun.

The most important is, believe that everyone should discover art therapy. It assists with emotional growth and mental health conditions. And there are different approaches to it.





Figure 6: Final touch of hand embroidery tittle "Bee" by Sarah Muhammad Nazif, Rohaizan Mat Nashir (@, Mohd Nasir (2023)



Figure 7: Punch needle Embroidery Lia Softbeamcanvas (2023)

Conclusion

One of the main goals of providing early childhood education to children is to increase their cognitive abilities. It also contributes to the quality of life through the joy of artistic creation. Engaging in this activity could help reduce stress and increase faith. Moreover, it will encourage children to have high self-esteem when they can see the results that have been achieved. Therefore, artistic creation offers valuable insights, as education is based on kinematic, sensory, and emotional aspects.

Creativity is defined as a tool for creating something unique, useful, unique, and unique with the intention of creating and imagining. To achieve anything creative, you must have the ability to be creative. By encouraging children to participate in activities, we may foster creative individuals and children's minds.

Art therapy practices may enhance the emotional, physical, and cognitive development of a child. It also can reduce stress. Making art is helping many people express themselves, without having to use words.

Art therapy exercises may not be equally appealing to everyone. Still, these can be practiced at home with a focus on choosing a theme or issue to guide the creative process and allowing oneself to create without judgment or self-criticism.

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