CREATIVE MOVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

This article provides information about the relationship of creative movement and technology in the development of young children. More accurately, it discusses the young children’s development on social competence, motor skills, aesthetic and creative thinking through creative movement. Despite the positive development of young children through creative movement, it can’t be denied that many young children do face a lot of difficulties in early childhood education. In addition, it converses some ideas for teacher to educate young children through creative movement. In the end, this article divulges the integration of technology in creative movement. In short, this study serves as a stepping stone to explore creative movement practices in preschool.

Keywords: creative movement, technology, teacher, social competence, motor skills, aesthetic, creative thinking, early childhood education, augmented reality (AR)

INTRODUCTION

Young children naturally love music! Whether it’s in a major key or minor key, young children feel it physically and emotionally. Children naturally love the rhythmic movement and they feel the rhythm. Niland (2009) stated Karl Orff and Emile Dalcroze focused on the connection between music and rhythm and movement using musical and kinaesthetic ay in their training programmes. Children are categorized as playful individual and play is still part of their daily routine. It is a value to emphasize kinaesthetic play and creative experience in children’s movement. Creative movement shares a congruous relationship in children’s world. Dimondstein (1983) claimed that children are naturally creative and simulates them to create movement with a sense of feeling, moving, being and belonging.

Music brings another dimension of beauty into our lives. Music and movement benefit a child’s development in many ways. Young children’s understanding of music through exploring concepts and experiences (Bond, 2015). Music in the preschool classroom, is well known as an important support for physical development as children inherently incorporate movement with music. As young children grow, teachers purposely provide more experiences with music and musical techniques, implementing the elements of music in ways that children can understand (Copple & Bredekamp, 2017)

Young children grow in their appreciation of the creative movement in developing their social competence, motor skills, aesthetic skills and creative thinking. Creative movement has played an important role in the early childhood education. Despite that, many studies stated creative movement helps in developing young children skills such as social skills, express emotions, creative thinking and many more. Rebecca (2010) studied creative movement activities in three kindergartens to promote children’s creativity. As observed by the researcher, creative movement developed in this study could be one of the effective ways to promote creativity in children.
What is creative movement?
The term creative dance, music and movement, rhythmically playful and creative rhythmic movement are used often in early childhood education. These terms explain the use of movement, rhythm and creativity in children expressions. According to Gilbert (1992), creative movement as being joyful way for children to explore movement and to stimulate imagination and creativity. Lloyd (1998) also described movement is a form of self-expression which uses the body movement to express ideas, minds and emotions. According to Kim (2017) music provides an opportunity for the children to develop their senses through listening, feeling, and moving to music. In addition, music and musical activities provide the children experiences in various skills such as creative thinking and communication.

Rebecca (2009), described creative movement activity that emphasizes divergent thinking, imagination and self expression also makes a substantial contribution to the development of creativity. Children in this studies stated theme ‘swimming’ which is one of the movement involved children’s personal experience and feelings. That’s what help children to make connection with personal experience and explore different ways to move. This finding supports Theresa (2014) stated knowledge and skills were a prerequisite for creativity and activities that are relevant to the child’s life experiences support creative thinking.

Jamariah, Mahani & YM Raja Azuan (2017) specified in the research that teacher reported creative movement are able to encourage socialization, imitation and self-calmness among their students. According to Hanaa (1970), states ‘to dance is human’ and in many ways expressive movement can be viewed as a universal language of children who use it to discover and learn about their world, make meaning of experiences and to express reactions and ideas to others and situations. Young children are able to learn about the world by objects and people but they ‘think with their bodies’ before the think with words. For example, the question ‘what did we do to make sound using the music instrument? the children will face difficulty responding in words thus the children will do it by playing the music instrument.

Koff (2000) movement is a basic form of experience and its facilities the acquisition of sensory, motor, cognitive, social and emotional skills either as individual skill or as a coherent integrated development experience. It is more focus on development of young children through creative movement. For example, creative movement help to develop awareness of body movement and body positions such as walking, running, swimming and etc. In addition, it helps the children to explore body movement and body positions by their own.

Why creative movement important to develop social competence, motor skills, aesthetic and creative thinking of young children?
Creative movement is an excellent medium for establishing a relationship between mind and body which is critical to unleashing creativity (Pica, 2004). Creative movement benefit the children’s development in many ways and help to develop the social competence, motor skills, aesthetic development and creative thinking through creative movement. In addition, creative movement enhances the children’s communication skills and represent actions and give a good opportunity to solve problems.

Social Competence
B.Lobo & Winster (2006 )described the preschool period is a particularly important time for the development of social skills. Creative movement play an important role to
develop social competence in young children. It helps young children to understand one’s own uniqueness and appreciate the uniqueness of others. Furthermore, social competence encourages an interactive movement where children share space and they explore movement together. They gradually learn to observe different reaction towards movement ideas by move in their own way. Children’s social skills improve by creating movement together with other children. This was supported by B.Lobo & Winster (2006) there is a reduction in children’s behaviour through creative movement and increase of social skills.

Social skills can be developed through creative movement and research was done by B.Lobo & Winster (2006) to investigate the effects of creative movement on the social competence of preschool children. The social competence were analysed using Social Competence Behaviour Evaluation: Preschool Edition (SCBE). The finding of this research revealed strong scientific evidence which is effects of dance, music and creative movement programs in early childhood.

Yazıcı (2017) studied the effect of “Art Education Program” on social skills of preschool children. Research was done using control group and experimental group. The findings showed pre- and post-test revealed positive result in the social skills of the young children. Apart of that, cognitive and physical development of young children also showed positive impact. Therefore, creative movement opens up chances and provide space for children to communicate better and help increase the skills with creative ways and loved by children (Jamariah, Mahani & YM Raja Azuan, 2017).

Motor Skills
Kenney (1997) described that music carries all the rhythms for locomotor skills. Walking, running, hopping and jumping can all be expressed in sound. Creative movement was popular activity among children to develop motor skills in their young age. If children fail to develop these skills during this period of their life, they often experience failure in the motor domain during childhood and adolescence (Gallahue, 1996; Poest, Williams, Witt & Atwood, 1990). According to Cameron, A. Cottone, M. Murrah, & W. Grissmer (2016) early childhood classrooms require children to coordinate their body movements in directed action, in tasks such as self-care, paper– pencil tasks, and manipulating objects.

Mandanici, Roda, & Canazza (2017) studied the connection between body movements and musical concepts in a preschool. Finding of this research shows the group of young children who exhibited a controlled exploratory phase with slow, rhythmic movements were more likely to complete successfully the melody harmonization task. Music and movement essential to encourage young children to express creative idea in order to develop motor skills.

Mandanici, Roda, & Canazza (2017) suggested the developmentally appropriate music and movement program on jumping and dynamic balance should be generally implemented in preschool children programs. Researcher revealed the developmentally appropriate program is not a teaching model or method but its way to educate children physically and it seems very important for the early childhood educators to plan lesson according to children’s needs and way of thinking and acting.

Young children are also learning that movement can communicate messages and represent actions. (Abdulrahman & El-Gendi, 2016). Creative movement allows the exploration maong young children in order to develop the motor skills. Another research was done by Lykesas, Tsapakidou, & Tsompanaki (2014) to study the effectiveness of a creative dance movement in development of motor skills for children.
The researcher used Urlich TGMD-2, 2000 to evaluate accesses of gross motor development in children aged 3 to 10 years. The test is divided into two and researcher only used the sub-test of travelling. The finding of this research revealed developing in motor skills of the children involved in creative dance movement program. Creative movement promote the development of new motor skills and creativity of children in young age. Furthermore, another research was done by Pick and Colleagues (2013) about interventional program for children aged 4-6 that included imitation of movements to promote coordination of movement and motor skills and the results showed significant improvement in the experimental group.

Aesthetic
In 1962, Merleau Ponty stated children’s body movement is a stand-out feature of children communication playfully and body movement is very likely the first form of knowing, feeling and being in the world. Creative movement and aesthetic skills are enjoy a congruous relationship. Aesthetic allows the creativity and imagination through the exploration of creative movement.

Aesthetic dimensions describes from an early childhood perspectives as ‘the sensory’, sensual, mind-body connection that goes into imagining, forming and enacting roles and dramatic situation (Guss, 2005). Creative movement endorsed to develop aesthetic in young children. Alcock (2008) studied the relationship between young children’s rhythmic, musical, aesthetic and playful creative communication in an early childhood centre. Finding of this research showed there is a positive relationship between young children’s rhythmic, musical, aesthetic and playful creative communication. Creative movement important to encourage self-expression and able to express the ideas in a creative way. For example, children will express the ideas through creative movement.

Dissanayake (2001) suggests that early rhythmic communicative musicality underpins the development in humans of artistic and aesthetically creative ways of thinking and being. Alcock (2008) was done the research using ethnographic design and analysed using the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). Researcher suggested children have multiple ways of communicating, expressing, representing ideas and feelings and teachers should support to develop their aesthetic skills through creative movement.

Creative thinking
Chan (1995) pointed out that creativity involves receiving information, choosing information and the ability to interpret information. Therefore we should encourage children to explore the movement skills and create the own interpretation thus in developing creative thinking. Creative movement is also foster creative thinking in children. Moreover, even though children can involve in creative thinking if the teacher didn’t appreciate their idea they aren’t likely to continuing thinking creatively.

According to Chronopoulou & Riga (2012) stated the purpose of the study to investigate the effect of music and movement activities to creative thinking in preschool children. Research was done using control group and experimental group. The findings showed pre- and post-test revealed positive impact of the interventions and there was an increase in the children’s freedom of expression. Apart of that, the result of creative behaviours also showed an increase in children’ freedom of expression during the intervention.
In addition, another two research was done by Breda Kroflic (1992, 1999). The influence of creative movement on children’s creative thinking and was investigated. The first one conducted about influence of guided creative movement on the creative thinking of preschool children. The second study examined how creative movement, as a way of teaching and learning. The analysis and finding of this research showed creative movement as a holistic approach that could stimulate creative thinking in children.

According to Sternberg and Lubart (1995), the best way to foster creativity is to provide creative thinking role models. If you want children to be creative, teacher must be a role model of creative thinking for the children in the class. Children learn to take sensible risks and fight obstacles by watching teacher doing things. Moreover, a child’s creative movement indicate the creative thinking. Creative movement also gives children an outlet for their thinking in a creative way.

Suggestions on developing social competence, motor skills, aesthetic skills and creative thinking through creative movement

Social Competence
Ducenne (2004) stated music was a very important element of the dance activities and have been a cultural tool internalized and used by the children for enhanced behavioural self-regulation. Other than that, the combined and individual effects of music and dance on young children’s behavioural regulation and social competence are important for future early childhood program. Moreover, B.Lobo & Winster, 2006 suggested teacher must conduct this study with other population of early childhood setting with critical issues and creative movement provided lesson about how to use their body to express their ideas, thoughts and emotions.

Motor Skills
Lykesas, Tsapakidou, & Tsompanaki (2014) suggests that the adoption of this teaching method develop self-motivation, encourages experimentation and kinetic models. Moreover, teacher must follow the proper structure of a development program for early childhood music education focused in creative dance. Rebecca (2010) supported creative dance is a teaching approach through exploration and experimentation, it teaches children to use their creative abilities that lead them effortlessly in the development of movement abilities and also in the increase the availability and willingness to engage in motor activities.

Aesthetic
Young children have the capability of communicate, represent, learn, create and re-create ideas and feeling through exploration thus they were experiencing the world aesthetically. Alcock (2008) studied and suggests the pedagogical focus on aesthetic experience through creative movement for early childhood educators. The teacher should teach aesthetic skills through creative movement and enrich children’s learning.

Creative Thinking
The teacher’s dedication in use of creative movement help to develop children’s social interactions and creative thinking. The teacher also encourage children to discover new creative movements by independently. Finally, the implementation needed from teacher’s side to foster creative thinking through creative movement. (Chronopoulou & Riga, 2012)
Integration of Technology in Creative Movement

Today, early childhood education is important to nurture the child from young to build a holistic development. In Malaysia, early childhood education has been contemplated and preschool education is an essential early learning experience in the world of education. According to the Malaysian National Preschool Standard Curriculum version 2017, young children are encouraged to use information and communication technology (ICT) and communicate in accountable and ethical manners, by applying and using appropriate ICT resources for improving their learning process (Filzah, 2013).

The role of ICT in children’s lives is the combination of both play and learning. ICT helps to develop curiosity, observation, and experimentation in children (Saffar, Al-Jafar, & Al-Yousefi, 2017). It shows that the use of ICT is recognized as a significant part of early childhood education. The integration of Technology in creative movement makes the young children to feel and learn to participate more active in class. There are many ways to integrate the technology in creative movement teaching and learning such as using augmented reality app.

The augmented reality (AR) is a growing technology that is popular in every field. Rasslenda and Balakrishnan (2016) has carried out the study to explore the application of Augmented Reality in technology in Early Childhood Classroom in Malaysia. The researcher used qualitative method for data analyses according to four research questions which children’s reaction is when using AR for the first time, the role of AR in the process of learning, children’s experiences using AR and motivation and engagement of learning when using AR.

CONCLUSIONS

Creativity is a dynamic element within all children. Movement is the initial way where children begin their creative process. Creativity as the process of new ways through the unique and individual application of true knowledge and understanding. Creative movement empowers development of young children. Children can make their own music and construct the own musical experiences through movement.

Creative experience in music and movement serve two major purposes. First, they meet the needs of the whole child by physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively, creatively. Second, they help integrate and enrich the early childhood curriculum. Creative movement are remarkable for the development of young children. In short, creative movement support the development of social competence, motor skills, aesthetic and creative thinking through creative movement.

In addition, teacher must fulfil their responsibilities in creating creative movement activity for young children based on the children’s ability. As a teacher, they perform as motivators, planners, co-participants and observant. Furthermore, teacher should integrate technology nor augmented reality (AR) in creative movement activities. As a conclusion, integration of technology evolves holistic development of young children.

REFERENCES


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