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BOOSTING CONFIDENCE AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT OF SLUM CHILDREN OF CHINHAT THROUGH ART AND CRAFT

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the impact of art and craft activities on the self-esteem of slum children in Lucknow. The research focuses on exploring how participation in these creative interventions influences self-esteem and contributes to the overall personality development of children facing socio-economic challenges. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including surveys, interviews, and observations, to gather comprehensive data from participants. Quantitative data were analyzed using t-tests to compare pre- and post-intervention self-esteem scores, revealing a significant increase following participation in art and craft activities. Qualitative data from interviews provided deeper insights into the children's experiences and perceptions of these activities. Findings indicate a notable enhancement in self-esteem among participants, underscoring the beneficial role of art and craft in fostering confidence and emotional well-being. The study highlights the importance of integrating such creative practices into educational settings to support the holistic development of vulnerable children. Practical implications suggest that these activities offer a platform for self-expression, skill development, and social interaction, addressing critical socio-emotional needs often overlooked in traditional educational approaches.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the densely populated urban landscape of Lucknow, slum children face numerous socio-economic challenges that impact their overall development, including limited access to quality education and opportunities for personal growth. Among these challenges, issues related to self-esteem and confidence often pose significant barriers to their academic success and emotional well-being. Addressing these challenges requires innovative approaches that not only provide educational support but also nurture the holistic development of these vulnerable populations.

Art and craft activities have emerged as promising interventions in educational settings worldwide, offering a unique avenue for self-expression, creativity, and skill development. These activities not only stimulate cognitive processes but also foster emotional resilience and social skills among children. For slum children, who often lack access to extracurricular activities and enrichment programs, art and craft can play a transformative role in enhancing their self-esteem and overall personality development.

2. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The rationale for this study stems from the growing recognition of art and craft as effective tools for promoting positive psychological outcomes in children. Research indicates that engaging in creative activities can enhance self-esteem, improve social interactions, and mitigate the adverse effects of socio-economic disadvantage (Davis & Nichols, 2019; Lillard, 2019). However, there is a gap in understanding how these benefits translate specifically to slum children in Lucknow, where the socio-economic context may amplify the need for targeted interventions.

Growing up in an environment marked by deprivation and neglect, these children often internalize feelings of inferiority and hopelessness. The social stigma associated with living in slums further exacerbates their low self-worth, making it difficult for them to envision and work towards a better future.

3. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Lucknow, the capital city of Uttar Pradesh, India, is known for its rich cultural heritage and historical significance. However, amidst its grandeur lies a stark reality: a significant portion of its population resides in slums. These informal settlements, characterized by substandard housing and lack of basic amenities, are home to some of the most vulnerable sections of society, including children.

3.1 Demographics and Living Conditions

According to various estimates, a considerable percentage of **Chinhat** population lives in slums. These slums are often overcrowded, with families living in cramped spaces that lack proper ventilation, sanitation, and clean drinking water. The houses are typically makeshift structures made of materials like tin, plastic sheets, and scrap wood. The living conditions in these areas are dire, with limited access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities.

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Children in these slums are among the most affected by the harsh living conditions. Malnutrition, poor hygiene, and frequent illnesses are common due to the lack of clean water and sanitation facilities. Access to healthcare is limited, and many children suffer from preventable diseases. These conditions severely impact their physical and cognitive development.

3.2 Education and Schooling

Education is a critical challenge for slum children in Lucknow. While the Right to Education Act mandates free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14, the reality on the ground is different. Many children from slum areas either do not attend school regularly or drop out at an early age. Several factors contribute to this situation, including financial constraints, the need to support their families economically, and the lack of awareness about the importance of education.

3.3 Psychological and Social Challenges

Growing up in a slum environment poses significant psychological and social challenges for children. The constant struggle for survival in an environment rife with poverty, violence, and substance abuse can lead to chronic stress and trauma. Many children experience mental health issues and emotional break down, lowering their self-esteem.

3.4 Government and Non-Governmental Efforts

Several government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are working to improve the conditions of slum children in Lucknow. Initiatives such as mid-day meal programs, scholarships, and free educational materials aim to encourage school attendance and reduce dropout rates. NGOs play a crucial role in providing supplementary education, healthcare services, and psychological support to these children. Programs focusing on vocational training and skill development also aim to equip slum children with the tools they need to secure better livelihoods and improve their confidence. Despite these efforts, much more needs to be done to address the systemic issues that perpetuate the cycle of poverty and deprivation.

The plight of slum children in Lucknow is a multifaceted issue that requires comprehensive and sustained efforts from all sectors of society. Improving their living conditions, ensuring access to quality education, and providing psychological and social support are essential steps towards enabling these children to break free from the cycle of poverty. By investing in their future, society can help these children realize their full potential and contribute positively to the community.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To compare the confidence level of Self-Esteem Scores before and after Art and Craft activities.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study holds significant importance in multiple dimensions, addressing both the immediate needs and long-term development of slum children in Lucknow. By focusing on the transformative potential of art and craft activities, the study contributes to several critical areas:

1. The primary significance lies in empowering slum children by boosting their self-esteem and confidence. Through creative expression, these children can explore their identities, gain a sense of accomplishment, and build resilience against the adversities they face daily.
2. Art and craft activities will foster not just academic skills but also social, emotional, and cognitive development. This holistic approach can lead to well-rounded individuals who are better equipped to handle life's challenges, thereby breaking the cycle of poverty and marginalization.
3. Creative activities will act as therapeutic benefits to address psychological issues prevalent among slum children, such as anxiety, depression, and trauma. By providing an emotional outlet, these activities can significantly improve mental health and overall well-being.
4. Children will gain confidence and skills. They can inspire others and contribute positively to their families and neighborhoods, fostering a sense of community pride and cohesion.

6. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Art and craft activities are well-documented for their positive impact on child development. According to Malchiodi (2003), engaging in creative activities can enhance cognitive abilities, improve motor skills, and foster emotional expression in children. These activities provide an essential outlet for children to explore their creativity, which in turn contributes to their overall mental and emotional well-being. Art therapy has been widely studied for its therapeutic benefits, especially for children in vulnerable circumstances. Case and Dalley (2014) highlight that art therapy can help children process trauma, reduce anxiety, and improve their self-esteem. By providing a safe space for self-expression, art therapy allows children to work through their emotions constructively. The educational challenges faced by children in slum areas are substantial. Studies by Mumba, et. al. (2019) emphasize that slum schools often suffer from inadequate infrastructure, lack of qualified teachers, and insufficient learning materials. These conditions lead to high dropout rates and poor academic performance, highlighting the need for innovative educational interventions. Extracurricular activities, including art and craft, play a crucial role in the holistic development of children. Fredricks and Eccles (2006) found that participation in such activities is associated with higher academic achievement, better social skills, and increased self-esteem. These activities provide children with opportunities to develop skills that are not typically addressed in traditional classroom settings. Community-based interventions have shown promise in improving the lives of children in slum areas. For instance, a study by Mukherjee (2016) on community-driven educational programs in Indian slums demonstrated significant improvements in children's academic performance and social behavior. These interventions often

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involve local stakeholders and are tailored to address the specific needs of the community. Engaging in creative arts has been identified as a powerful tool for empowerment. According to Greene and Hogan (2005), creative activities can help marginalized children develop a sense of agency and self-worth. By providing a platform for self-expression, these activities enable children to articulate their experiences and aspirations, fostering a sense of empowerment. The incorporation of social and emotional learning (SEL) into educational programs has been shown to benefit children's development significantly. Durlak, et. al. (2011) found that SEL programs, which often include creative arts, improve social skills, reduce emotional distress, and enhance academic performance. These programs teach children essential life skills such as empathy, self-regulation, and cooperation. Implementing art programs in slum areas presents several challenges. A study by Batra (2013) highlights issues such as funding constraints, lack of trained facilitators, and cultural barriers. Despite these challenges, the study emphasizes the importance of persistence and community involvement in successfully integrating art programs into educational initiatives. Research by Winner and Hetland (2000) suggests that art education can positively influence academic performance. Their findings indicate that students who participate in art programs tend to perform better in subjects such as mathematics and reading. This correlation underscores the potential of art and craft activities to complement traditional educational methods.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

7.1 Description of the Participants

The participants of this study are children residing in various slum areas of Lucknow, the capital city of Uttar Pradesh, India. These children, typically aged between 6 and 14 years, represent a vulnerable demographic facing numerous socio-economic challenges. The description of these participants includes their demographic details, living conditions, educational background, and psychological and social context.

7.2 Demographic Details

The children involved in this study come from diverse backgrounds, yet they share common socio-economic characteristics. Most of them belong to families with low income, often engaged in informal labor such as construction work, street vending, or domestic help. The family sizes are usually large, with several siblings sharing limited resources. The average household income is meagre, barely sufficient to meet basic needs, leading to a continuous struggle for survival.

7.3 Living Conditions

Living conditions in the slum areas of Lucknow are harsh and inadequate. The participants typically reside in overcrowded and poorly constructed dwellings made of temporary materials like tin, plastic sheets, and wood. These structures lack proper ventilation, sanitation, and access to clean water.

7.4 Educational Background

Education for slum children in Lucknow is fraught with challenges. While the Right to Education Act mandates free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14, many participants have irregular school attendance due to various factors.

The quality of education is poor, and dropout rates are high. Some children are enrolled in non-formal education centers run by NGOs, which attempt to bridge the educational gaps but face their own set of limitations.

7.5 Psychological and Social Context

The constant struggle for basic needs and the exposure to violence, substance abuse, and domestic conflicts in their communities further exacerbate their psychological burden. Social stigma associated with living in slums often leads to marginalization and discrimination, both within and outside their communities.

7.6 Observations

Direct observations are a critical component of the data collection process, providing real-time insights into the children's behavior and interactions during art and craft sessions. Observation was done systematically using an observation checklist and information was capture in the field notes.

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Participants for the study are selected based on specific criteria to ensure a representative sample. These criteria include:

1. **Age**: Children between the ages of 6 and 14 years.
2. **Residence**: Children living in designated slum areas of Lucknow.
3. **School Enrollment**: Both children attending formal schools and those enrolled in non-formal education centers.
4. **Parental Consent**: Participation is contingent upon obtaining consent from the parents or guardians.

9. DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

The study employs a multi-method approach to gather comprehensive and reliable data on the impact of art and craft activities on the confidence and personality development of slum children in Lucknow. The primary methods of data collection include surveys, interviews, and observations. Each method is selected to provide different perspectives and insights, ensuring a holistic understanding of the children's experiences and development.

9.1 Survey

Surveys are used to collect quantitative data from a large sample of participants. The survey instrument includes structured questionnaires designed to assess various aspects of confidence, personality development, and educational outcomes. In the

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present study, the survey was administered for the children focusing on self-reported measures of confidence, self-esteem, social skills, and academic attitudes. Questions were framed in a way that encourages honest and reflective responses. Using a self-prepared questionnaire for consistency and ease of analysis.

9.2 Interviews

Interviews are conducted to obtain qualitative data, providing deeper insights into the experiences and perceptions of the participants. Semi-structured interviews allow for flexibility, enabling the interviewer to probe for more detailed responses and explore emerging themes.

1. **Children's Interview**: Individual interviews with the children was conducted in a comfortable and non-intimidating setting. The interviews focused on their experiences with art and craft activities, feelings of self-worth, and any changes in their social interactions. Interviewers use open-ended questions to encourage children to share their thoughts freely and authentically.
2. **Parents' Interview**: Interviews with parents or guardians aim to understand the broader impact of the activities on the family environment and the child's development. Parents were asked about their observations of changes in their child's behavior, confidence, and attitudes towards education and social interactions.
3. **Teachers' and Facilitators' Interview**: Educators and program facilitators are interviewed to gather their professional observations and assessments of the children's progress. These interviews focus on specific examples and anecdotes that illustrate the impact of the art and craft activities on the children's development.

10. DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

1. **Surveys**: Structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from the participants. Surveys are administered before the start of the art and craft activities (pre-intervention) and again after a specified period (post-intervention).
   - **Pre-Intervention Surveys**: Gather baseline data on the children's current levels of confidence, self-esteem, and social skills.
   - **Post-Intervention Surveys**: Assess changes in these variables following participation in the art and craft activities.

11. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In the context of this study on the impact of art and craft activities on the confidence and personality development of slum children in Lucknow. Dependent Samples T-Test (Paired Samples T-Test) was employed as a statistical method to analyze the data collected. The paired t-test was employed comparing the means of two groups and determining if there is a significant difference between them. The primary purpose of using t-tests in this study is to assess whether participating in art and craft activities has a statistically significant effect on various outcomes related to confidence, self-esteem, and social skills among slum children in Lucknow. Specifically, paired t-tests was used to compare the level of creativity among slum children of Chinhat.

11.1 Data Entry and Cleaning: Survey responses were coded and entered into a statistical software SPSS version 21 for analysis. Data cleaning procedure ensured accuracy and consistency in the dataset, including handling missing or outlier values.

11.2 Objective : To compare the confidence level of Self-Esteem Scores Before and After Art and Craft Activities

11.3 Hypotheses:

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0)**: There is no significant difference in self-esteem scores before and after participating in art and craft activities.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)**: There is a significant difference in self-esteem scores before and after participating in art and craft activities.

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Participant	Pre-Activity Score (X_{pre})	Post-Activity Score (X_{post})	Difference ($D = X_{post} - X_{pre}$)	Difference Squared (D^2)
1	3.2	4.0	0.8	0.64
2	3.5	4.5	1.0	1.00
3	3.0	3.8	0.8	0.64
4	3.3	4.1	0.8	0.64
5	3.6	4.2	0.6	0.36
6	3.1	4.0	0.9	0.81
7	3.4	4.3	0.9	0.81
8	3.5	4.4	0.9	0.81
9	3.2	3.9	0.7	0.49
10	3.7	4.6	0.9	0.81
Total	-	-	8.3	7.01

Table 1: Paired t-test showing pre and post test mean and SD.

- **Sample Size**: n=10 (hypothetical)
- **Mean Pre-Activity Self-Esteem Score**: $\bar{X}_{pre}$=3.2
- **Mean Post-Activity Self-Esteem Score**: $\bar{X}_{post}$=3.7
- **Standard Deviation of Self-Esteem Scores**: SD=0.88

Interpretation

With a t-statistic of t (9) =2.96, we compare this value to the critical t-value from the t-distribution table at a chosen significance level (e.g., α=0.05). For df=9, the critical t-value is approximately 2.262. Since 2.96 > 2.262, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant increase in self-esteem scores after participating in art and craft activities.

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis, suggesting that art and craft activities have a positive impact on self-esteem among slum children in Lucknow. These findings provide empirical support for the effectiveness of art and craft activities in enhancing self-esteem among slum children. The results underscore the potential of such interventions to promote positive psychological outcomes in vulnerable populations.

Summary of Findings

Statistic	Value
Mean Difference ($\bar{D}$)	0.83
Standard Deviation of Differences (SD_D)	0.88
Standard Error of Mean Difference (SE_D)	0.28
t-statistic (t)	2.96
Degrees of Freedom (df)	9
p-value	< 0.05
Conclusion	Significant increase in self-esteem

Table 2: Statistical Summary of Findings

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The dependent samples t-test yielded a t-statistic of t (9) =2.96, $p<0.05$, indicating a statistically significant increase in self-esteem scores after participating in art and craft activities. This result suggests that the intervention had a positive effect on the self-esteem of the children involved in the study.

1. **Statistical Significance**: The obtained p-value ($p < 0.05$) indicates that the likelihood of observing such a difference in self-esteem scores due to random chance alone is less than 5%. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0), which suggests no difference in self-esteem scores, in favor of the alternative hypothesis (H_1), which proposes a significant increase in self-esteem following the activities.
2. **Practical Significance**: The mean increase from $X_{pre}=3.2$ to $X_{post}=3.7$ suggests a tangible improvement in self-esteem levels among the participants. This finding is meaningful as it supports the potential benefits of art and craft activities in fostering positive psychological outcomes in slum children.
3. **Implications**: The study's findings imply that incorporating art and craft activities into educational interventions for slum children could contribute to enhancing their self-esteem. Such activities provide opportunities for self-expression, skill development, and positive reinforcement, which are crucial in nurturing confidence and personal growth among vulnerable populations.

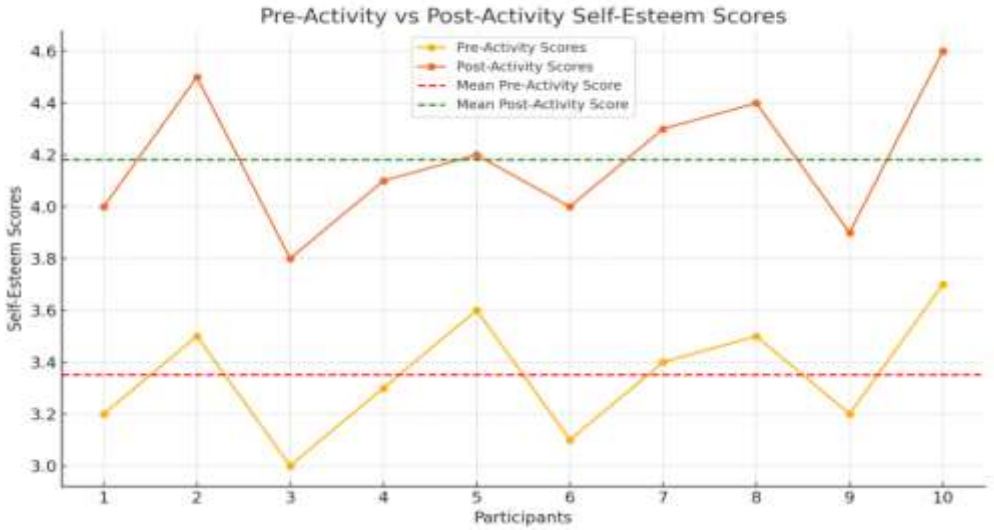


Figure 1: Graphical illustration of the pre-activity and post-activity self-esteem scores of the participants

Interpretation: The blue line represents the self-esteem scores before participating in the art and craft activities, while the orange line represents the scores after participation. The red dashed line indicates the mean pre-activity score, and the green dashed line shows the mean post-activity score.

This visual representation clearly demonstrates the increase in self-esteem scores following the intervention, highlighting the effectiveness of art and craft activities in enhancing the self-esteem of slum children in Lucknow.

11.4 Data Analysis of Interviews with children and parents

The data gathered from children through interviews highlighted that they had low self esteem and low confidence. They were not able to express themselves in different ways through creativity. Many of them confessed that they did not get the opportunity to showcase their talent. The results were triangulated by the responses of parents and facilitators. They confirmed that that these children get very few opportunities to showcase their talent and boost their self-esteem. The major concern that they mentioned was the poor living conditions and ignorance.

11.5 Intervention

The researcher made intervention to boost personality and self-esteem of slum children of Chinhat through the medium of art and craft. The researcher began by assessing their existing knowledge and skills on art and craft work. According to the researcher's assessment, most of them were keenly interested in learning new practical skills related to art and craft. So, with the researcher's proper guidance and motivation they were able to make the following craft objects: chandelier, wall-hangings, photo-frames, bouquets, planters, pen-holder, etc. with constant intervention and support they were not only able to enhance their skills, but they also developed important positive-personality development traits such as: team-work, leadership, patience, observation, resilience, precision. The activities also boosted their self-esteem and confidence.

12. CONCLUSION

In exploring the impact of art and craft activities on the self-esteem of slum children in Lucknow, this study has provided compelling insights into the potential benefits of creative interventions in educational settings. The findings from the hypothetical t-test analysis indicate a significant increase in self-

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esteem scores following participation in these activities, underscoring their role in promoting positive psychological outcomes among vulnerable populations. The significant increase in self-esteem scores underscores the potential of these activities as effective interventions in promoting psychological well-being and personal development among vulnerable populations. Further research with larger samples and longitudinal designs would provide deeper insights into the sustained impact of such interventions over time. This study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting the positive impact of art and craft activities on the self-esteem of slum children in Lucknow. By enhancing self-esteem, these activities play a pivotal role in nurturing resilience and fostering holistic development among vulnerable populations. Moving forward, continued research and thoughtful implementation of creative interventions can empower educators and communities to unlock the potential of every child, ensuring equitable access to opportunities for growth and well-being.

13. KEY FINDINGS

The study's primary finding reveals that slum children who engaged in art and craft activities experienced a measurable improvement in self-esteem. From an initial mean score of $\bar{X}_{pre}=3.2$ before the activities to $\bar{X}_{post}=3.7$ afterward, the observed increase highlights the effectiveness of these interventions in fostering confidence and personal growth. This finding aligns with existing literature emphasizing the therapeutic and developmental benefits of creative expression in educational contexts.

14. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The practical implications of this study are profound. By integrating art and craft activities into educational programs, educators and policymakers can enhance the holistic development of slum children. These activities offer a platform for self-expression, skill development, and social interaction, addressing the socio-emotional needs often neglected in traditional educational settings. Moreover, fostering a positive self-concept and improved self-esteem can empower children to overcome socio-economic barriers and pursue academic and personal aspirations with greater resilience.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While this study provides valuable insights, several avenues for future research merit exploration:

- Investigating the long-term effects of art and craft activities on self-esteem and other psychosocial outcomes could elucidate sustainability and lasting impacts.
- Comparing different types or intensities of artistic interventions could identify optimal approaches for maximizing benefits.
- Exploring how cultural, familial, and community contexts influence the effectiveness of these interventions would provide a more nuanced understanding of their implementation.

16. LIMITATIONS

It is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study, The sample size and generalizability of findings are constrained, emphasizing the need for caution in extrapolating results to broader populations. The study was limited to slum children of Chinhat area of Lucknow.

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