

How Educational Settings Can Influence Development of Creativity through Play in Young Children

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Abstract : This study focuses on how teachers view and use play to influence creativity in preschool children. Play is strongly featured in most of the discussions about creativity in young children. Hence, it was noted through direct observation that most preschool teachers are not concerned with promoting play to develop the child's creativity. Therefore, this study attempts to investigate how the teachers use play, for the development of creativity in the preschool environment. The survey method was used as the research design and interviews, observations and document perusal were used as data collection methods. The sample consisted of 20 preschools from selected administrative divisions in the Colombo district. It was revealed that a majority of preschool teachers used folk games as a means of involving children in play. Teachers assume that this type of guided play will motivate the child learn new words, memorization and provide enjoyment. Eighty percent of the preschool teachers used the play equipment installed in the preschool premises to encourage children to get involved in activities calculated at promoting the physical development of the child. In 40% of the preschools visited it was noticed that when children were given their break they created their own forms of free play and enjoyed themselves thoroughly in the little time available to them. Also, about 20% of preschool teachers promoted imaginative play with their preschoolers. There was also the situation where the role of play was interpreted negatively by the teachers who assigned the children to copy letters and numerals during the time assigned for play. This has a negative impact on the child's creativity. In conclusion, it was felt that the teachers do not make the best use of the opportunity available to use the child's enthusiasm to stimulate creative actions his/her and that there is no suitable environment to develop creativity through play.

Keywords : creativity, preschool children, preschool environment, play method

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