

**Exploring Teachers' Beliefs and Practice Regarding Children's Creativity
in Visual Art from Three to Six Years Old in Riyadh, The Kingdom of
Saudi Arabia**

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Since this study based on how culture may influence people's creativity, I am honoring my roots and my culture in this study by naming the preschools after the most important places in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The first one is Makkah, the first holy city in Islam, and what represents me as a Muslim lady. The second is Ad-Diriyah, the foundation and capital of the first Saudi State in 1727, and what represents me as a Saudi Lady. The last preschool is Bad' Bin Arfaag, where my roots and grandfather came from, and what represents me as Dosari lady. Finally, I named all the Saudi teachers after plants that grow in the Saudi deserts representing the natural beauty of my home country.

Abstract

This qualitative study aimed to explore preschool teachers' beliefs and practices regarding preschool children's creativity in the visual arts in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has neither a programme at preschool nor a university course designed to support children's creativity, which could pose a problem for preschool teachers when defining what creativity is and how to support it.

The research was based on the theories of Bourdieu, Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky (Bourdieu, 2010; Vygotsky, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Routledge, 2016; Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018; Reunamo et al., 2014), which assert that cultures and societies have an influence on children's development, especially their creativity.

For this case study, three methods were developed and applied in four sequential phases with 11 teachers in three cases of preschools in Riyadh. The methods were semi-structured interviews (first and fourth phases), observation (second phase), and a photography task (third phase). The study revealed that the teachers agreed that children's development is influenced by their culture and society. However, the teachers were uncertain about the definition of 'creativity'. Teachers' beliefs led their practice in supporting the creativity of the children, which reflected several barriers that teachers face, some of which are not easy to overcome. These barriers were a source of inspiration for the teachers to discern what to advise policymakers.

This research can help educators to explore definitions of children's creativity and support it with the use of the observation schedule developed in this study to observe children's creativity. It can also help teachers define what policymakers could provide for them to support children's creativity in preschools. Finally, this research could inform further studies in the area of creativity, especially through the use of the methods developed for this study as there may be a lack of applicable research methods related to this subject.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Rationale for the Study

This study focuses on creativity, which is considered a difficult area for research study because of its complexity and may, according to Vygotsky (1967), lead to incorrect ideas about what creativity means, like linking it to giftedness or talents, for example. Creativity is often viewed as consisting of different elements or concepts. For example, Cheung and Mok (2013) argued that creativity has a broad conceptual meaning, and is not restricted to a limited meaning, such as intelligence, personality or imagination (this is discussed further in the literature review; see section 2.2, page 8). The study is not designed to provide to a specific definition or concept of creativity but instead explores what creativity has been defined in the literature and focuses on early years practice and, in particular, the visual arts in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Specifically, the focus is on what preschool teachers believe creativity to be and how they support the creativity of children aged three to six in visual art in Riyadh.

There are many reasons for choosing *visual art activities* as the focus when researching children's learning and creativity development. First, when researchers study creativity, they tend to look at it according to different aspects, but not through visual art, as in the studies of Holmes et al. (2015), Howard-Jones et al. (2002) and Holmes and Romeo (2013). Holmes et al. (2015) studied the relationships between social play, children's language abilities and creativity in preschool children in the United States. The research found a strong relationship between creativity and certain kinds of social activities, such as solitary, onlooker and parallel-aware play. More engagement with these kinds of play correlated with lower scores in creativity. Howard-Jones et al. (2002) examined creativity in playtime activities among 52 children aged six to seven in the United Kingdom and found that allowing freedom of choice in social play motivated children, which, in turn, positively affected their creativity. Holmes and Romeo (2013) studied gender, social play, language abilities and creativity in preschool children aged three to six in the United States and found a clear relationship between these factors. For example, girls tended to play more cooperatively than boys (Holmes and Romeo, 2013). However, these studies did not

address creativity from the perspective of visual art activities, which makes the current study a valuable addition to the area of creativity since it addressed a gap in the field.

Second, there have not been many studies into children's creativity in general (Leggett, 2017), which explains why Prentice (2000) argued that there might be a strong need to understand and study creativity. Hence, it is worthwhile to explore the relatively unstudied field of creativity in children, especially in art activities, where there are gaps, such as teachers' beliefs and practices in children's creativity in art. Therefore, this study explored teachers' beliefs about and support for creativity in visual art for children aged three to six.

Third, according to Reunamo et al. (2014), Vygotsky's theory argues that the culture of a society influences the creativity of its children. Similarly, according to Lilly (2014), culture may influence the way that creativity is supported in education. As the current study was conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and its current educational system for early childhood education programmes is relatively new, it is important to mention briefly where creativity in young children is evident in the Saudi education system.

The first public Saudi preschool was established only in 1967 (Ministry of Education, n.d.), and teaching and supporting creativity in general or in a certain area like art in the early years, as a module, has not yet been done in the Saudi Arabian education system – neither in universities nor in teachers' preparation programmes during service. This lack of teaching, supporting and preparation may lead to teachers' beliefs about and understanding of creativity in visual art being very limited (Cheung and Mok, 2013). However, it is likely that creativity in general will be taught by 2030, in conjunction with the government's plan to improve it in children and youth (Vision 2030, 2016). Thus, Saudi Arabia is a valuable context in which to study the use of visual art activities as one aspect of creativity in preschools as they relate to developing students' creativity. This study explored, before the 2030 government implementation deadline, the reality of supporting creativity in visual art in Saudi preschools when Ministry of Education does not consider creativity in their educational programmes or curriculums. Likewise, this study considered the effects of Saudi culture, which is largely defined by the Islamic religion and its traditions, on Saudi children's creativity in visual art.

Creativity, in general, is vital for children's development (Vygotsky, 1967). Children's minds are especially sensitive to changes in their early years (Lytton, 1971), since, according to Ceausu (2016), they are in a determinative stage. In other words, children learn faster than adults, and their ways of thinking are shaped in childhood more quickly and easily than in adulthood. Thinking about creativity as something that can be improved makes childhood the obvious time to provide support for children to become creative adults. According to Robinson (2006) and Bartel (2008), children may lose their high level of creativity when they become adults. In line with this, Ceausu (2016) claimed that early childhood is an important period during which to improve creativity into adulthood, and if children do not have the chance to improve their creativity in childhood, it will be hard to improve when they are adults. Leggett (2017) and Claxton et al. (2005) claimed that four to six years is the peak of creativity among young children. Therefore, supporting children at an early age may help them develop their creativity, which reinforces the value of studying creativity and, in particular, visual art activities among preschool children aged three to six in Riyadh.

According to Sharp (2004), creativity in general is an essential human characteristic. Larson and Miller (2011) and Eckhoff (2011) argued that creativity is one of the skills essential for students' success in the twenty-first century. Robinson (2006) agreed with Meyer and Eilifsen (2017), arguing that creativity is as essential as literacy in education, and both should be supported, improved and viewed as having the same level of importance. Therefore, creativity should be part of the educational system (Meyer and Eilifsen, 2017) to reflect its benefits for society, as it is an essential skill for this century.

According to Reunamo et al. (2014), creativity plays a central role in the development and improvement of various aspects of society. Similarly, according to Hennessey and Amabile (2010), creativity is a significant factor that drives civilisation and the development of economies, science, societies, art and culture. It is crucial for developing the nation's level of education (Huang and Szente, 2014). Similarly, in research that studied preservice teachers' perspectives regarding creativity, Eckhoff (2011) found that teachers believe creativity leads to novel outcomes for people, societies and social and peer groups. In line with this, the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education's (NACCCE) report (1996) asserted that the

cultural development of society would benefit from fostering and supporting children's creativity. Moreover, as Ariffin (2014) pointed out, although many issues surround us in daily life that creativity can help solve, we fail to recognise them. Runco (2004) added that creativity plays a vital role in evolutionary changes because creative ideas may lead to evolutionary outcomes. Therefore, certain benefits that creativity brings to people will manifest in society. All of these observations highlight the importance of supporting creativity and the role those educational systems play in positively influencing children's creativity. This is especially the case, since creativity in young children has not been sufficiently studied (Leggett, 2017). Thus, the focus of the current study was on creativity in young children.

The focus of this thesis was chosen in part because the art corner is one of the most stable and permanent features of Saudi preschools, to which children in the selected age range have access during their indoor playtime (Ministry of Education, 2015). Art activities in preschools are considered to be the most effective kind of activity for supporting creativity in children (Kerem et al., 2001); art depends on creativity (Vygotsky, 1967; Prentice, 2000), since creating artwork requires some level of imagination and creativity. Similarly, Craft (2003, 2011) emphasised that educators, policymakers and art specialists believe that art supports the development of children's creativity. Aligned with this, Pavlou (2013) argued that art education helps develop creativity in individuals. The NACCCE report (1996), Key (2005), Zakaras and Lowell (2008) and Craft (2003, 2002) all argued that there is a clear relationship between art activities and the development of creativity in young children. The above references do not mean that art is the only way to express creativity, but instead reflect what a NACCCE report (1999), Vygotsky (1967), Prentice (2000) and Craft (2003, 2011) all concluded: creativity is dependent on the arts, and since art is a fertile area for creativity, it was important to study creative visual art activities in young children.

1.2 Context of the Study

The current research was conducted within the context of the Saudi education system, particularly early childhood education. It is relevant to mention that I noticed during my

reading that there is a lack of Arabic references to the history of the Saudi education system, which limited the variety of sources available for this thesis.

In 1961, the first preschool opened in Saudi Arabia as a private entity and thus had no formal connection to the Saudi Ministry of Education or its policies and curriculum (the official website of the Saudi Ministry of Education, no date). This sparked concern about the role of early childhood education in Saudi Arabia. At that time, the Saudi education system was divided into the Ministry of Knowledge, which oversaw boys' education from primary school through university, and the Girls' Education Department, which oversaw the same range of education for girls only, but early childhood education for both boys and girls. In 1966, the Girls' Education Department established a semi-public preschool, available exclusively to children of the preschool's employees in Riyadh (Sobahe, 2017; Ministry of Education, no date), and then founded two more in 1967 in Dammam and Ahsa (Aljabreen and Lash, 2016). Then, in 1977, the department began establishing public preschools around the country (Aljabreen and Lash, 2016) in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Ministry of Education, no date). In 2002, the Girls' Education Department and the Ministry of Knowledge merged to form the Ministry of Education, which oversaw early childhood education through to high school for both boys and girls. In 2016, the Saudi Ministry of Education merged with the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education, becoming the current Ministry of Education (the official website of the Saudi Ministry of Education, no date), which is interested in Saudi early years education as well as all other phases of education in Saudi Arabia. In 2019, female teachers started to teach boys in public primary schools from six to nine years old, although it was allowed for private primary schools for boys to do so from 2010 (Ministry of Education, no date).

In terms of the nature of preschools in Saudi Arabia, and more specifically their teachers, the education system in Saudi Arabia is separated by gender from the middle of primary and secondary through to the high school level and at universities. Female teachers teach both genders in preschool, as well as in some primary schools. From many primary schools through university, however, female teachers teach girls, while male teachers teach only boys from primary to high school.

Early childhood education in Saudi Arabia is now divided into two phases. The first is called nursery, which is provided for children from birth to three years old. This phase focuses more on caring than on teaching and educating (Aljabreen and Lash, 2016). The second phase is called preschool, where children aged three to six are taught and provided with learning experiences to improve their skills. The preschool curriculum includes self-directed learning through the incorporation of indoor and outdoor playtime and direct teaching from the teachers to young children, which is already specified by the Saudi Ministry of Education. The preschool curriculum is set up in educational units, each of which focuses on a particular subject, such as water or sand (Alqassem et al., 2016) and lasts one to three weeks.

There are currently two kinds of preschools in Saudi Arabia: public and private. Both receive their curricula from the Saudi Ministry of Education, but private preschools are allowed to provide additional education, such as foreign languages. In all Saudi preschools, where teachers provide early childhood education for children aged three to six, children are encouraged to create artworks during indoor playtime in art corners in classrooms. Kroflic (2012) argued that the experience of engagement that teachers provide can help children express their feelings and thoughts through their artworks. For instance, having children paint and describe their paintings can help them convey their thoughts and emotions about a specific subject.

Creativity in general and visual art in particular have not been officially taught in any phase of the Saudi education system. There is no part of the current curriculum that involves teaching creativity in general or in visual art, providing a creative curriculum for art or any other area, nor does it link to another existing curriculum, such as creative writing. According to Beghetto (2010), researchers have identified many barriers to teaching creativity, such as teachers' practices and beliefs about creativity. These kinds of barriers may influence how children receive support in developing their creativity, particularly in visual art.

This study aimed to address the aforementioned research gap by exploring the beliefs of Saudi preschool teachers in Riyadh and their support of creativity in visual art in preschool children aged three to six.

Chapter two provides a critique of the literature in relation to the research in focus. This is followed by the methodology chapter, where the approach and methods used in this research, including a pilot study, are presented. The results follow this chapter, through the three preschool case studies in chapters four, five and six. Chapter seven provides a data analysis and discussion, and the conclusion follows in chapter eight.

Chapter 2

The Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This study explored preschool teachers' beliefs regarding children's creativity in art and how they support it in Riyadh. In this chapter, a definition of creativity, child development, theoretical considerations, visual art in the early years, supporting creativity and teachers' beliefs will be explored.

In order to obtain a general overview of this research, it was important to read and analyse a wide range of academic materials. The following keywords were used in combination to search the literature: young children, children, pre-schoolers, kids, teachers, educators, preschools, schools, creativity, art, visual art, teachers' beliefs, teachers' perspectives, teachers' practice, cultural influence, social influence, Bourdieu, cultural capital, Vygotsky, and Bronfenbrenner. Several databases were used in the searches, for example: Web of Science, ERIC (Education Resources Information Centre), PsycINFO, and Scopus as well as Google scholar and University of Leeds library website. Although I preferred recent journal articles, I tried my best not to limit my search in a certain parameter, therefore, I continually watched, read and listened.

2.2 Definition of Creativity

This section discusses creativity and the many ways in which it can be defined. I approached this by exploring the diverse definitions in the literature that reflect realities and to obtain a better grasp of them and understand them. At the end of this chapter, I reflect on these definitions by defining them from my perspective as a researcher and my understanding of creativity. I also found it helpful to compare these definitions with the teachers' definitions, as presented in the later Data Analysis and Discussion chapter.

There is no well-known or widely used definition of 'creativity', as researchers have failed to come to an agreement on what it means precisely (Ceausu, 2016). Fawcett and Hay (2004) and Yildirim (2010), claimed that creativity has several definitions.

Similarly, according to Akerman and Puikkonen (2013), defining creativity is a matter of considerable debate among researchers, while Eckhoff (2011) argued that defining creativity is a challenge, especially since it has a certain level of ambiguity. Throughout the Cambridge Handbook of Creativity (Kaufman and Sternberg, 2010), its contributors agreed with Vygotsky’s (1967) translated work of Imagination and Creativity in Childhood and Sharp (2004) that the definition of creativity is complicated. Over the years, numerous dissimilar and complex ideas have been presented in research (Ariffin, 2014; Liu, 2007). In line with this and within the specific context of education, Prentice (2000) argued that there is no definition of creativity that is universally accepted. Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) argued that there is a lack of research in the field of creativity, and most of the existing studies do not define creativity or its nature, whether it is related to mental abilities or psychology. In this light, creativity may still be considered as an unknown area of study, and this consideration supports Glaveanu’s (2011) claim that creativity is an unidentified area, that still can be viewed as a new area of research. Furthermore, Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) claimed that creativity is a growing area of research. The stature of this area of research can explain why, researchers have defined creativity in several different ways (NASUWT, The Teachers’ Union Report, 2017). To arrive at a suitable definition of creativity for the current study, Figure 2.1 represents all the definitions of creativity discussed in the literature.

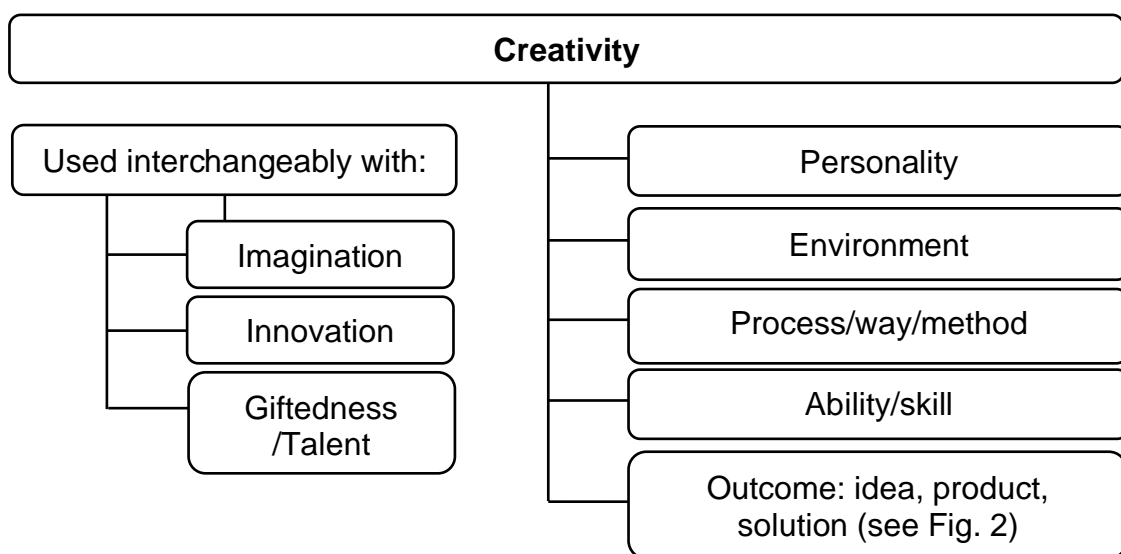


Figure 2.1 The definitions of creativity derived from the literature review conducted for the present thesis.

Figure 2.1 demonstrates that creativity can be defined by six categories. First, creativity can be defined by the various terms or concepts often used interchangeably with creativity. An example of this is the term 'imagination', which according to Sharp (2004) is one of the common components among researchers for defining creativity. Another term, according to Mishra and Singh (2010), is 'innovation', which is used to mean to adopt an idea and develop it into something more original. This aligns with Wood et al. (2021), who defined creative products as either innovation or developing something that already exists. The use of terms interchangeably in place of creativity depends on the user's interpretations and personal judgements of these terms. However, personal judgements may lead to a misunderstanding of the exact meaning of creativity. If imagination is used interchangeably with creativity, it may not provide a full description of the concept. Therefore, to further develop the field of research concerning creativity, it is important for this and future studies to use a particular definition of creativity.

Giftedness and talent are other concepts that may be used interchangeably with and mistaken for creativity. Mellou (1996) and Sharp (2004) claimed that there is a difference between being creative and gifted. Prentice (2000) suggested that gifted and talented children make up only a small percentage of a nation's population. According to Carroll and Howieson (1991), education established for gifted children is provided based on a child's examination results and is intended to recognise and test children who have been identified as gifted, specifically by scoring 130 points or above on an intelligence quotient (IQ) test (Roeper and Ruff, 2016). Similarly, according to Porter (2005), Worrell and Erwin (2011) and Berman et al. (2012), gifted or talented children are those who test above the average ability level of their age group for a certain skill. However, according to Ceausu (2016) and Eckhoff (2011), creativity is unrelated to intelligence, and the 1996 report of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE) stated that all children are capable of creativity. According to Fawcett and Hay (2004) and Sharp (2004), all children are creative, and creativity is not associated with talent or being gifted. In line with this, Vygotsky (1967) and Yildirim (2010) argued that creativity can be noticed in all children following birth. This is in comparison with giftedness, which is not a trait found in everyone. For the purpose of this thesis, I might argue that creativity has no relationship with talent or giftedness. It is present and basic in all individuals (Meyer

and Eilifsen, 2017; Vygotsky, 1967; Piske et al., 2017; Sharp, 2004; HMIE's report, 2006; Wood et al., 2021), and this emphasises the importance of supporting it in all children. This is especially true if creativity is seen as a life skill, which is the view held by Cheung and Mok (2013) and NASUWT, The Teachers' Union's Report (2017).

Other authors state that creativity may also be defined by a person's personality or environment. In terms of personality, according to Craft (2002), creativity is based on the imaginative nature of the person in question. Similarly, Feldhusen and Goh (1995) defined a creative child as one who is active and who has an active imagination. At the same time, Hook and Tegano (2002) stated that a creative person is someone who is free to express and free to accept and reject based on their preferences. These concepts define creativity as an aspect of one's personality that is about a specific person. In other words, the description of someone as imaginative may vary among different people and cultures. Different people may see a certain individual differently.

Davis (2004) argued that creativity is based on a creative environment. According to Davis (2004) and Wood et al. (2004), creativity can be described as a *creative press*, which means the existence of social and psychological environments. Smith (1996) and Wood et al. (2004) clarified that creativity not only means being in an environment that supports creativity; it also means being encouraged using specialist methods of teaching. A person's environment might support creativity by offering flexibility about roles, duties and traditions. This flexibility may encourage the people of a nation to create (Davis, 2004), which is in agreement with my perspective. In the end, people living in these environments may be more creative than those living in more stifling environments. To differing degrees, all people are influenced by their environments. Accordingly, definitions of creativity, whether dependent on individuals or the environment, are linked because social and psychological environments are composed of groups of individuals.

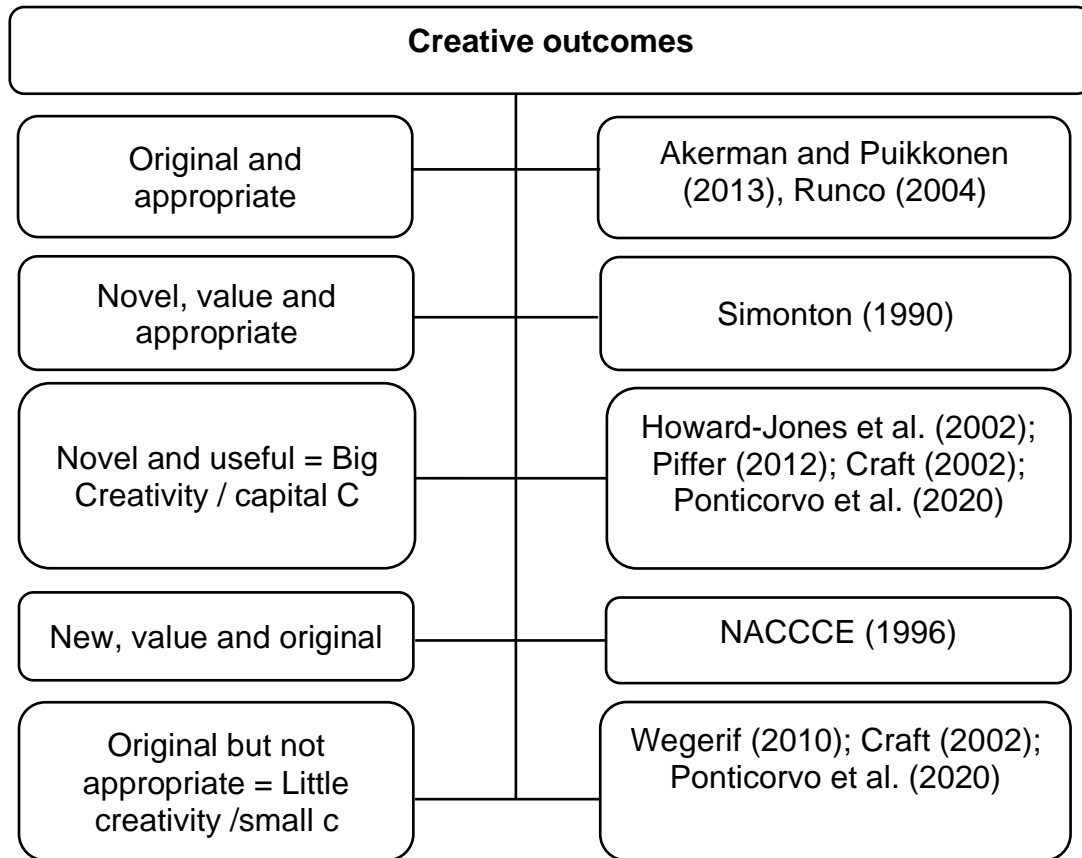


Figure 2.2 The definition of creative outcomes

Piffer (2012) claimed that the definition of creativity is more relevant to what is being produced than to individuals. This concept is another defining category of creativity called outcome (Figure 2.2). The outcome of creativity may be products, solutions, or ideas (Hennessey and Amabile, 2010). According to Wegerif (2010), creativity is a product that is original but not necessarily appropriate or useful. According to Ponticorvo et al. (2020), this kind of creativity is called '*small c – small creativity*', which is found in everyday life activities and may be new only to an individual, not to everyone. Similarly, Craft (2002) described a creative product as being original only with '*little creativity – small creativity*'. However, according to Cheung and Mok (2013), Craft's (2002) description would be arguable since any inappropriate idea would be creative. However, other features, as well as being original, novel, and new, define a creative product (Figure 2.2 above). For example, according to Howard-Jones et al. (2002) and Piffer (2012), a creative product is both novel and useful. Craft (2002) identified these kinds of results – being novel and useful – as '*big C – big creativity*'. Similarly, Ponticorvo et al. (2020) defined creativity as an activity that leads to producing an outcome that is new and valuable with '*capital C – capital creativity*'. The definitions of Ponticorvo et al. (2020), Craft (2002), Howard-Jones et al. (2002) and

Piffer (2012) are in line with those of Runco (2004) and Akerman and Puikkonen (2013), which described creative results as the product of a combination of ideas that are both appropriate and original. In other words, creativity is a work that has been improved and is both novel and appropriate. Simonton (1990) agreed that a creative product is both novel and appropriate but added the criterion of value. Cheung and Mok (2013), however, argued about the meaning of ‘being valuable’, which involves usefulness. Therefore, the NACCCE’s 1996 report, which adds value to the already established conditions of creativity, newness, and originality, agreed with the definitions of Howard-Jones et al. (2002), Piffer (2012), Runco (2004), Akerman and Puikkonen (2013) and Simonton (1990). Consequently, one can conclude that creative products are original and valuable. This takes into consideration that the meaning of being original is to be new and novel and that the meaning of being valuable is to be appropriate and useful. This argument summarises the definition of a creative outcome and divides it into being either original or original and useful (Figure 2.3). Therefore, for further analysis of the current study, the summary of Figure 2.3 refers to the definition of creative outcomes in the Data Analysis and Discussion chapter.

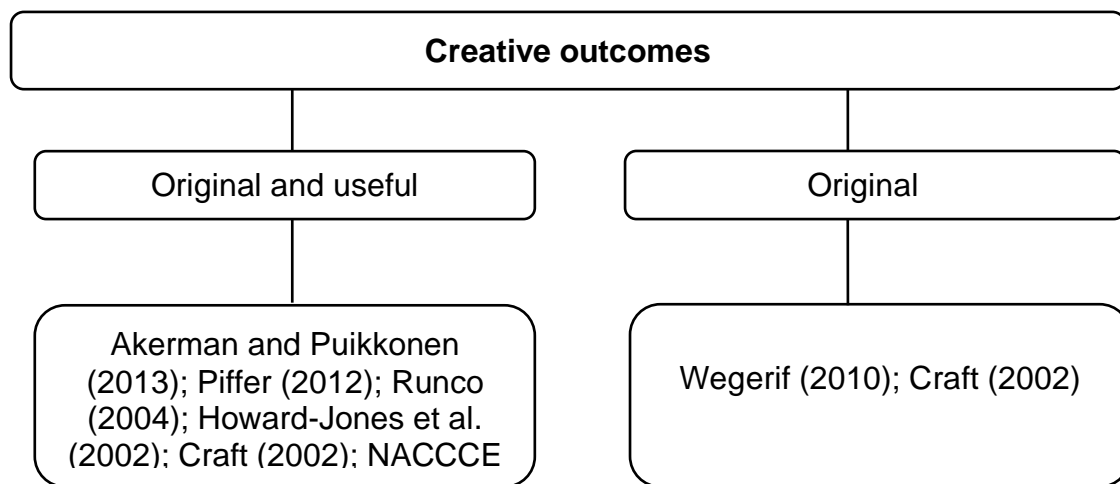


Figure 2.3 A summary of the definition of creative outcomes.

Further definitions in the literature describe creativity as a process (see Figure 2.1, page 9). Smith (1996) defined creativity as the process of being unique, novel, and spontaneous. However, Prentice (2000) provided slightly different details and described creativity as a method for creating something new that involves imagination and invention. Similarly, Sternberg (2003) defined creative thinking is a way of thinking

and creativity has the same meaning as creative thinking. In line with this, Urban (1991), Sudarsana (2010), Yates and Twigg (2017), Paulus and Nijstagg (2003), Wood et al. (2004) and Trilling and Fadel (2009) also claimed that creativity is a process. They argued that creativity is the encouragement of original thinking and imagination that leads to the creation of something original. According to these definitions, the process of thinking leads to new and original outcomes. Additionally, Robinson's 2006 TED Talk regarding traditional educational methods adds the concept of value to this definition. According to Robson and Rowe (2012), outcomes can be ideas or objects.

The last definition of creativity presented in Figure 2.1 above (see page 9) is a skill or ability. Mishra and Singh (2010) argued that creativity is the ability to create new and fresh ideas. Aligned with this, and according to Havigerova et al. (2016), creativity is an ability that develops through experience and is reflected in the creation of creative products. The consideration of creativity as an ability or skill is the most contemporary definition, according to Yildirim (2010). Therefore, one could argue that the definition of creativity is a mental skill or ability that every child has, which leads to the achievement of original and useful outcomes and requires support from an early age; this is the definition used in this study.

In summary, drawing on the concepts discussed in this review, I define creativity as a mental skill that is available in everyone, which differs according to interests and can be supported by environments from an early age to achieve original and useful outcomes. I might argue that using only the term *creativity*, as opposed to using it interchangeably with alternative terms, can help build future studies as a foundation for the field. Figure 2.4 below explains this in more detail.

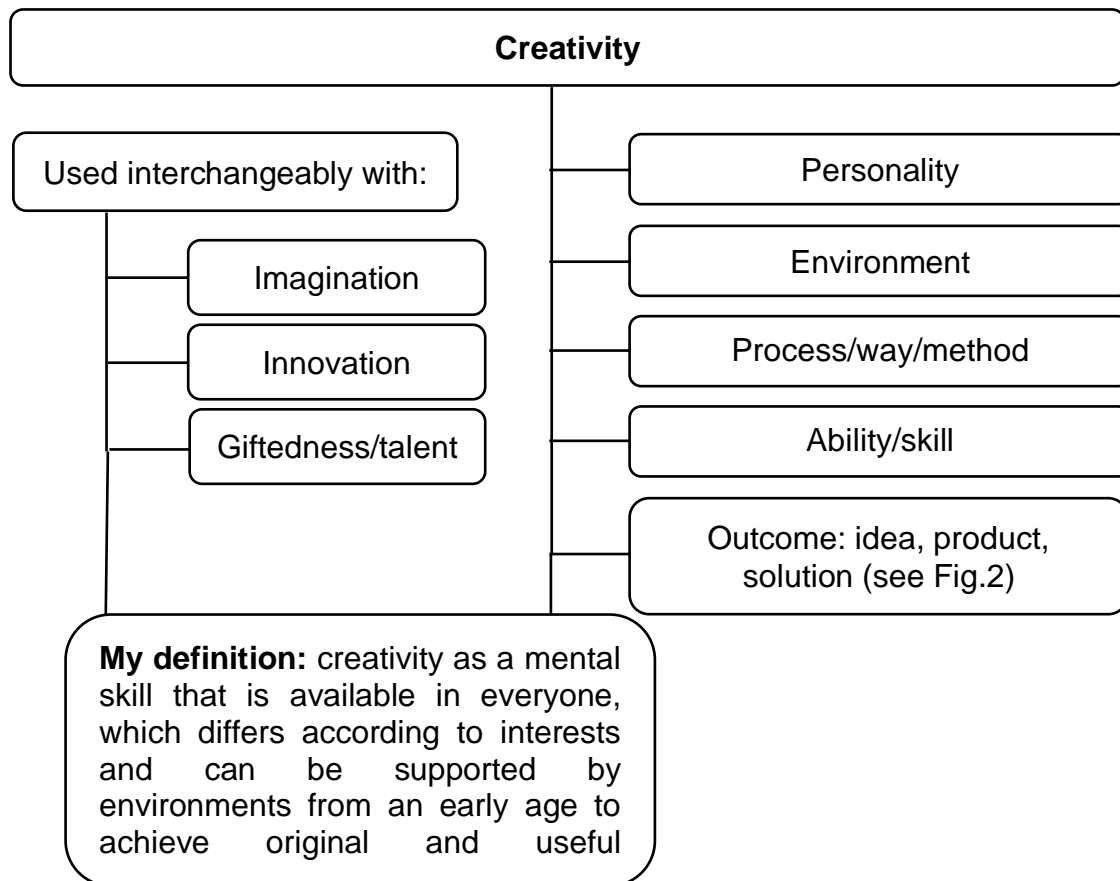


Figure 2.4 The definition of creativity to be used in the thesis and how it is formed from existing categories in the literature.

2.3 Child Development

This section of the literature discusses child development in terms of brain development and how we, as educators, can help children develop their creative thinking skills. It is important to include the concept of how a child's brain develops, because this helps to understand how it is linked to the early years. This research will be considered from the perspective of an educator's rather than a biologist, clinician or neuroscientist. In the second section, I focus on social development and its influence on children's creativity.

2.3.1 Brain Development and its Relationship to Creativity

In this section, I will first discuss the human brain structure and what we know about it. Second, I will discuss cognitive functions, including creative thinking, cognitive abilities and the processes involved in producing creative ideas. Third, I will discuss how the early years are a sensitive period for the development of children's creativity. Then, I will explain how children typically develop through play, including art, and the stages of artistic development.

According to Groom et al. (2014), the human brain structure is capped by the cerebral cortex, which is the uppermost outer shell in which most of the superior cognitive processes take place. The cerebral cortex is composed of two hemispheres, the right and left, each of which performs certain functions (Siegel and Bryson, 2011; Groom et al., 2014). The right hemisphere handles emotions and nonverbal communication, while the left hemisphere handles logic and language (Siegel and Bryson, 2011; Groom et al., 2014). Each hemisphere is composed of four lobes (Eysenck and Keane, 2020) that are densely interconnected, which is arguably how all of these lobes work together in a single cognitive process (Groom et al., 2014). For example, doing an activity or forming a reaction, such as making facial expressions when thinking about something, can be processed by different lobes from both hemispheres. However, any damage to one of these lobes will affect any function that is processed by that lobe (Groom et al., 2014).

Children are born relying on the right side of their brains (Siegel and Bryson, 2011) until they start making sense of the world around them from the age of two years old, which is when they start to ask and wonder, using 'why' and 'how' (Chouinard et al., 2007; Siegel and Bryson, 2011; Hickling and Wellman, 2001). This change is evidenced through research showing that children around the age of two typically have larger vocabularies when they talk compared to when they start talking around the age of 12–18 months (Weisleder and Fernald, 2013). They use these vocabularies to have conversations with their caregivers, thereby expanding their understanding of the world around them. Frazier et al. (2009) and Hickling and Wellman (2001) argued that children ask questions such as why and how as a way of looking for explanations. According to Chouinard et al. (2007), Hickling and Wellman (2001) and Siegel and Bryson (2011), these questions help preschool-age children develop the left sides of their brains, which contain all cognitive functions. Young children's brains develop mainly

through interactions with their parents, which helps build young children's brains when they are at the peak of flexibility (Centre on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2007). In other words, children's brains at this age absorb information around them through communication within environments, which makes their brains flexible and easy to shape as well as formed with good knowledge and skills. For optimal development, Siegel and Bryson (2011) stated that adults, as caregivers, should help children engage with the left side of the brain as much as possible to develop children's cognitive functions. I would argue that this approach should also be applied through the education system to develop young children's brains during their early years. This focus on the early years is due to the crucial importance of this period in a child's lifetime and how sensitive children's brains are to benefiting from and being harmed by the surrounding environments.

However, since creativity is primarily the right side's responsibility (Lindell, 2011; Mihov et al., 2010), focusing only on developing the left side of the brain may negatively affect the development of creativity. Robinson (2006) and Ponticorvo et al. (2020) stated that around the age of five, which is the beginning of formal and traditional schooling, children's creativity tends to decrease when education focuses on logic and academic progress. Therefore, our education system should provide a balanced curriculum to support the development of the two sides of the brain during the early years and afterward to keep brain skills strong and developed. This support can happen through providing educational materials, activities, time and freedom, which help children to develop their cognitive functions on each side of the brain. It can also help to develop the two sides of the brain during their interactions through the corpus callosum (Hoptman and Davidson, 1994), which is responsible for connecting both sides (Bloom and Hynd, 2005).

Several cognitive functions need to be supported during a child's early years. According to Fisher et al. (2019, p. 18), 'cognitive functioning refers to multiple mental abilities, including learning, thinking, reasoning, remembering, problem solving, decision making and attention'. Since the focus of the study is on creativity, I will discuss creative thinking as one of several kinds, such as practical thinking and analytical thinking, which are noticeably different (Sternberg, 2003). According to Sternberg (2003) and Robson (2012), creative thinking is a way of thinking that is defined as creativity, since they both have the same meaning. Urban (1991), Sudarsana (2010), Yates and Twigg (2017), Paulus and Nijstag (2003), Wood et al. (2004) and Trilling and Fadel (2009)

have all stated that creativity is a process of thinking that leads to original outcomes. In terms of children, their creativity is what Craft (2002) referred to as 'little creativity', which is what occurs in everyday life and leads to the creation of some original outcome that might be new to them – children – but not to adults. Therefore, it is important to mention that the ontological position of the study is to explore the different realities of this area of study in terms of how complex and varied the definition of creativity is among researchers (see chapter three section 3.3 pages 54-55 for further discussion about the ontological position). I argue that what researchers define as creativity may also apply to creative thinking. It could also apply to ways of supporting creativity through supporting creative thinking, which will be discussed in the section supporting creativity by the Ministry of Education later in this chapter.

In his widely cited book, which may now be considered an outdated source, Guilford (1967) stated that creative thinking requires several abilities that need to be supported and evoked to culminate in creative outcomes, as follows: elaboration, flexibility, originality and fluency. Guilford (1967) defined elaboration as the ability to think in detail, while flexibility is the ability to change the direction of one's thoughts. Originality is the ability to create novel ideas, and fluency is the ability to produce a flow of ideas (Guilford, 1967). Even though it may be considered an outdated source, Shah and Gustafsson (2020) used Guilford's Alternative Uses Task (1967) in their recent study, in which fluency, originality, flexibility and elaboration were evaluated in order to investigate the influence of age, gender and school on children's creative thinking abilities. This example shows how Guilford's (1967) study is still a valuable source in the field of creativity. Therefore, I would argue that understanding these four abilities and encouraging them are important because they represent the necessary foundation for strengthening creative thinking in children, which confirms the need for educators to evoke and encourage these abilities.

In his book, which is considered a key source on APA PsycNet, where it is cited more than 800 times, Wallas (1931) stated that the process of creative thinking to produce a creative idea goes through four stages. The first is preparation, which refers to understanding an issue or task and gathering information about it (Wallas, 1931). The second stage is incubation, during which a person who is trying to reach an outcome starts to think about it unconsciously (Wallas, 1931). In the third stage, which is

illumination, some ideas begin to be reached and realised (Wallas, 1931). For example, when someone suddenly receives an idea, they often refer to that moment by saying that it occurs to me or that it crosses my mind. The last stage is verification, in which the person starts to test the validity of their idea (Wallas, 1931). However, these stages were developed and enhanced by Osborn (1953, cited in Sitorus and Masrayati, 2016, p. 111), who updated these into seven stages for creative thinking to produce a creative idea: 'orientation, preparation, analysis, ideation, incubation, synthesis, and evaluation'. These two stages created by Wallas and Osborn indicate that achieving a creative idea may take longer than expected. According to Sitorus and Masrayati (2016), they both reflect the same meaning and aim. Therefore, with training in and support for the four abilities that were developed by Guilford (1967) and discussed above, the two processes of creative thinking can be hastened and strengthened.

Children's creative thinking develops from the ages of two to six (Yalcin, 2015) compared to when they become adults, since our creative thinking develops highly when we are children and decreases throughout our lives (Sharp, 2004). During early childhood, while making sense of the world around them (Yalcin, 2015), children ask and wonder a great deal (Chouinard et al., 2007; Siegel and Bryson, 2011; Hickling and Wellman, 2001). In Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education's report (HMIE) (2006), teachers explained that young children are creative because of their unconstrained ways of viewing the world around them. I would argue that these ways of looking at the world are at their peak before entering school, whereupon creativity decreases. According to Robinson (2006) and Ponticorvo et al. (2020), children's creativity tends to be negatively affected by the education system due to the emphasis on logic and academic progress in learning that is given to children in schools; this negative influence on children's creativity reaches their imagination. Because according to Lindqvist (2003), Vygotsky referred to creativity interchangeably with imagination, since it is the foundation of every creative activity. For example, during morning lessons in Saudi preschools, children are taught about key facts of life that are linked to water, sand, earth and food. Focusing only on providing knowledge and facts and increasing their educational interests without involving imagination may lead to a neglect of imagination and have a negative influence on creativity. This result could be understandable, since Sharp (2004) linked the term imagination to creativity, as it

is one of the common components among researchers for defining creativity. Based on my experience, I would also agree that when preschool children start to focus only on facts and knowledge of the world around them, this may have a negative influence on their imagination and creativity, as well as their mental development. Therefore, the educational system should support creative thinking skills in young children and older adults. This type of support is important because mental development decreases the ability to be imaginative when children become older and start to engage more with facts only. However, this does not mean that one should be prioritised over the other, since they both may be needed in life, and they can interact sometimes and be mutually exclusive, depending on the kinds of provided activities. In other words, educational systems can engage with facts and imagination by balancing them to help children make sense of the world and be imaginative in order to be creative. For example, this can be accomplished by encouraging children to engage with facts and use their imagination through problem-solving activities, play and artwork.

In relation to the discussion above, Robinson (2006) identified another basis for the two given reasons. According to Robinson, the reason children tend to lose their creative potential when they become older is that traditional educational systems do not recognise the importance of creativity in early education. In addition, an educational system that provides only structured lessons may have a negative influence on children's creativity (Jaquith, 2011). This is especially true when schools fail to offer children opportunities to express their creativity (Eason et al., 2009). In other words, the absence of an educational system that supports children's creativity may lead to a decrease in the level of their creativity. In preschool education, young children tend to have more freedom than when they are in primary school or higher, and this freedom in preschools helps maintain children's creativity at higher levels compared to when they are older. For example, Meyer and Eilifsen (2017) stated that in Norway's educational system, creativity is seen as important because it develops a sense of wonder in children. These reasons support Roeper and Ruff's (2016) claim that psychological studies of creativity have found a strong link between the development of creativity and the early years of individuals and their experiences in kindergarten. Therefore, based on Roeper and Ruff's (2016) argument, providing a climate of support for creativity should start from early childhood and continue at all levels of education. This is especially important, since creativity encourages

individuals to maintain their original ways of understanding the world (Ferrara, 2010) and not to be restricted to other ways of thinking or to endorse them. How to support creativity will be further discussed later in this chapter.

Play and unrestricted art activities tend to help children develop their creative thinking and skills (Sharp, 2004). Aligned with this, Robson (2012) argued that play supports creative thinking, for example, by solving problems that children may face during play through creating solutions by themselves. Sharp argued that educators should allow more play and free art activities for children to develop their creative thinking skills. Creative thinking development can be noticed when children's artistic expressions and creations develop from lines, scribbles and disorganised ideas to drawing clearer and more organised pictures (Yalcin, 2015). During my experience, I noticed that children who are offered art materials at home before they attend preschool are able to create more advanced outcomes in their artwork compared to children who have just started to learn how to use them, even though they are of the same age. For example, the experienced children tended to use more art materials like water-colouring, brushes, sponges or clay and its tools in a better and more advanced way without help from their teachers. However, children who have a new and first experience at preschools need more help or explanations on how to use the materials most of their time. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987), who are key authors in the area of art development and are often cited, explained that artistic development in children's lives develops through five stages. First, the scribbling stage develops from the ages of two to four. Second, the pre-schematic stage develops from the ages of four to seven. Third, the schematic stage develops from the ages of seven to nine. Then, the dawning realism stage develops from the ages of nine to eleven. The last is the pseudo-naturalistic stage, which develops from the ages of 11 to 13. Since the focus of the study is on children's creativity in visual art from three to six years, the age of the children is divided into two stages. Therefore, the focus of the study will explore the first two stages, the scribbling stage and the preschematic stage, as both cover the period from two to seven.

In the scribbling stage, children's artwork starts to become more organised and controlled, and they start to name what they are making or drawing as they use their imagination (Lowenfeld and Brittain, 1987). In the following stage, pre-schematic children start to draw humans and body figures, as well as objects, from their environments, and their artwork

becomes more recognisable. At this stage, children start to explain what they have made. From my experience working with children, these stages of artistic development are noticeably reflected in children. Also, by the time children become older in the second stage and last year in preschool (three to six years old), they talk more about their artworks to their peers and teachers during and after doing the work. It is also noticeable in their artwork at the ages of four to six that they draw and create artworks that are influenced by their realities. Some examples will be presented in the Findings chapters – chapters four, five and six where each case will be presented separately in its chapter - and analysed and discussed in the Data Analysis and Discussion chapter.

In summation, a child's brain development plays an important part in creativity, and how developing the child's brain and focusing on both sides of the brain is valuable in strengthening all kinds of skills that are processed by both the right and left sides. Also, creative thinking requires four abilities and goes through four stages to process and reach creative outcomes. However, according to Robinson (2006) and Ponticorvo et al. (2020), creativity tends to lessen around the age of five because of the kind of traditional education systems that children encounter when they start school. Therefore, educators should focus on allowing children to learn more through play and art activities since they learn better through these activities, with the understanding that artistic development goes through different stages throughout children's lives.

After discussing a child's brain development, which includes the structure of the human brain, creativity, and children's artistic developmental stages as they are all related and cover children's brain development, it is important to move to social development, which influences children's creativity.

2.3.2 Social Development and its Relationship to Creativity

Children grow up in societies that have their own cultures that exert an influence on children and their development. According to Harkonen (2007), in ecological systems theory, now called bioecological systems theory, Bronfenbrenner emphasised that a child's development is influenced by the society in which he or she grows up. This influence occurs when children engage and interact with people and things in their surrounding environments. Ecological systems theory has four layers that exert an

influence on a child's development, since the child is the centre of concentric circles. These concentric circles are the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Darling, 2007). Each layer contains different influencers who play roles in the child's development through their interactions with each other. In the microsystem, the influencers on the child's development include the Home: parents, siblings, peers and the child; the religious setting: peers, adults and the child; the Neighbourhood: peers, adults and the child; and the school: peers, teachers and the child (Penn, 2005). The microsystem in which a child lives (Christensen, 2010) is considered the layer closest to the child with which the child interacts directly (Ryan and Paquette, 2001). The mesosystem is the next layer, where home, school, religious setting, and neighbourhood interact together, while the exosystem is the following layer, which involves the school board, local industry, media, local government and parents' workplaces (Penn, 2005). The last layer is the macrosystem, where the influencers are dominant beliefs and ideologies (Penn, 2005), which refers to the influence of social and cultural aspects on a child's development (Harkonen, 2007). In my opinion, the macrosystem encompasses Vygotsky's theory that children's creativity is influenced by the culture of their society (Reunamo et al., 2014), and culture may influence how creativity is supported in education (Lilly, 2014). The macrosystem is also accounted for by Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, which refers to a group of symbolic factors, such as manners, tastes, skills or clothes in a society's culture (Bourdieu, 2010; Routledge, 2016). These symbols have a strong value in cultural capital (Mikus et al., 2020) because they enable children to learn through their societies about aesthetic perceptions in their cultures, both consciously or unconsciously (Rosario and Collazo, 1981). In line with this, Hammond (2014) argued that cultures can form children's preferences in terms of colour. For example, when mothers choose pink clothes for their daughters and blue clothes for their sons from an early age, children start to unconsciously learn the meaning of these colours and what they represent in their societies. Although children are influenced by the contents of the microsystem because of their direct interaction with it, they are also influenced by their mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem because of their indirect interaction through their homes and schools, for example. Harkonen (2007) also claimed that children and environments have an influence on each other. This influence eventually leads to children having a strong relationship with the culture of their society.

On Figure 2.1 (page 9), which was discussed earlier, we can see that environments are among the categories that define creativity, which means that environments play a vital role in influencing individual creativity. Huntsinger et al. (2011) believed that teachers and parents – adults – in each culture view creativity in art differently, and children receive this view through the kinds of experiences that the adults provide for them. Similarly, according to Moran and John-Steiner (2003), Vygotsky claimed that developing creativity is based on internalising cultural tools, such as language and social interactions between people. According to Vygotsky (1979), people are influenced by their environment through social interactions within the environment around them and through it and it becomes part of each human's life. Also, according to Reunamo et al. (2014), in Vygotsky's theory, culture affects creativity in various ways. For example, George and Zhou (2002) argued that negative factors can sometimes have a positive effect on creativity. At the same time, the creativity of children who show a high level of creativity but are less attached to their cultural rules can be negatively affected, as Bayanova (2014) argued. Bayanova's (2014) argument is that being attached to cultural rules may prevent individual creativity. For example, according to Cheung (2017), children in China face difficulties in acting creatively because of cultural features and influences on them, while it is easier for children in the West to do so. These differences are a result of the nature of Western societies, which are described as 'a liberal individualist society', according to Cheung (2017, p. 73). At the same time, some features of Chinese culture, such as being 'more associated with collectivism, conformity, interdependence, social harmony and social order can act to suppress creative behaviours' (Cheung, 2017, p. 73), are likely to restrict a child's creativity. Huntsinger et al. (2011), in contrast, argued that Chinese culture, which believes children can be taught how to draw, reflects the high level of their children's creativity. However, in American culture, people do not believe children can develop their drawing skills naturally, which negatively affects their children (Huntsinger et al., 2011). It could be argued here that when Chinese culture believes that children should be taught creativity, this reflects on their skills. However, the nature of a culture such as that of China may have an effect on children's creativity. The special nature of each culture and the belief regarding what makes creativity in a particular society, make each society unique, given their respective cultural contexts. Furthermore, the nature of creativity in children should not be generalised because the definition may vary from one society to another. Moreover, a society's culture may

value certain kinds of creativity like science and ignore others like art (Huntsinger et al., 2011), because a culture can influence how creativity is supported in education (Lilly, 2014). Therefore, creativity in children can be analysed as a product of the respective societies' institutions. This is because children are considered producers of creativity in their cultures (Reunamo et al., 2014), which may confirm that children are affected by their cultures and societies. This is particularly so since the social, cultural and environmental contexts can be seen in a child's creative artwork (Eckhoof, 2011).

Along with societies and cultures, teachers have an influence on children's creativity through their interactions with children in preschools. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979; 2005) there are three kinds of social networks and interactions, which consist of the observational dyad, joint activity dyad and primary dyad. According to Capurso (2015), an observational dyad is the basic form, and it happens when someone pays attention to another person's activity, like when a teacher asks a child a question. An observational dyad leads to a joint activity dyad, which occurs when a group of people cooperate in doing an activity together (Capurso, 2015). For example, a group of children cooperates in tidying up the art corner after finishing their activities. The final level is the primary dyad, which happens when people share feelings and thoughts, and this influences their behaviour (Capurso, 2015). For example, when a teacher reminds her children of the rules of the classroom and asks them to follow them, the children may be continuously aware of these rules and consequently may behave accordingly, even when the teacher is not present, or the children are in a different space in the school. Usually, during art-making time in the classroom, either the observational dyad or the joint activity dyad is dominant. When the teacher observes what children do with their artwork (observational dyad), this kind of interaction allows children some freedom of choice and enables them to work independently. The other kind of interaction occurs when the teacher joins the children in their artwork (joint activity dyad), where the teacher may lead the process of making the artwork. Hallam et al. (2011) claimed that when teachers lead children to develop their artistic skills during the art experiences they provide for the children in the class, they help children learn the value of art in their culture. In my opinion, teachers apply a culture's principles and knowledge about the life of the culture to children while they are creating artwork. According to Hallam et al. (2011), a culture's values are transmitted to children through the curricula that they study in schools. However, not all teachers' interactions and

influences have positive effects on children. According to Roeper and Ruff (2016), when a teacher interacts with children frequently, it can be seen as interfering with the children's learning. I would argue that children's creativity could be limited by teachers' interactions and influence during their art making by overdirecting the children's efforts. Thus, in my opinion, children should have plenty of freedom when they are making art to express their own creativity without being directed by someone else.

Not only do teachers in preschools have an influence on children, but peers also influence each other when they are making art together, as they can be in observational, joint and primary dyads. According to McLennan (2010) and Hallam et al. (2011), children criticise, reflect on and internalise new knowledge about their artwork and life when they are creating art with other children, which has a subsequent effect on their understanding of the world and how they interpret reality. I might argue that these kinds of gathering and engaging with each other over artwork could have an influence not only on children's understanding, but also on the artwork they produce. For example, children could make some comments on their classmates' artwork during the process of creation, which could eventually lead to changing the outcomes of the artwork. According to Thompson (2002), children influence one another while engaging in making art by giving suggestions and making compliments. Although children are influenced by interactions with peers and teachers, the focus of the current study is on teachers' interactions with children while working with art. This is because of the position that teachers have in terms of being able to adjust, impact and make decisions on how to support children's skills and art. It is important to mention that this does not underestimate peers' influence, but they are not in the position of supporting children.

2.4 Theoretical Considerations

After discussing child development and the potentially substantial influence from the surrounding environment, I would like to clarify the theories that define the path of this thesis. However, it is first important to explain that the theories are useful as lenses through which to look at the data gathered from the cases to explore teachers' beliefs and practices regarding young children's creativity in visual art. Therefore, the theories were useful for comparing my data with the literature rather than as a framework

because of my ontological and epistemological positions (see chapter three, pages 54–56 in where I discussed my ontological and epistemological positions), and because this is a case study design that used a reflexive thematic analysis. After completing the thematic analysis, I will point out connections to existing theories. After that, I will recognise and use these theories as a lens through which to view the data and compare each case, which means that the themes are not driven from the theories and are not determined using a theoretical framework. That is, the data from the three cases drove the outcomes. This process will be explained in chapter three, which discusses the methodology, and in chapters four, five and six, where the cases will be presented and analysed and discussed in chapter seven.

Vygotsky's theory argued that every human is creative, even young children (Lindqvist, 2003), and that their creativity reflects cultural factors (Reunamo et al., 2014). Similarly, according to Lau, Hui and Ng (2004), creativity should be linked to culture in each society. Therefore, a creativity programme should be appropriate to the culture of the society to which it is applied, since translating a programme from a different country that has a different culture may be problematic (Cheung, 2017). Another point is made by ecological system theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005), which argued that child development and society are linked. This means that a child's development is influenced by their society through direct and indirect interactions between children and the environment in which they grow up (Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018). Bourdieu's theory (2010) was based on his belief that cultural practices are productions of society – home and school – and activities like art, for example, which indicates that cultural capital is related to social class and social development. From my point of view, these three theories suggest the same idea: Children are affected by the surrounding environment and societies. Yet Vygotsky's theory (1979) emphasised how a society's culture affects children's creativity. Since these theories are the most relevant ones for this study, the focus of study will be based on the theories of Bourdieu, Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky – see Figure 2.5. In particular, how the microsystems of preschools and the mesosystem connecting microsystems influence children's creativity in art, and how far the macrosystem of societal culture indirectly influences children's creativity through schools reflects a chain of influence.

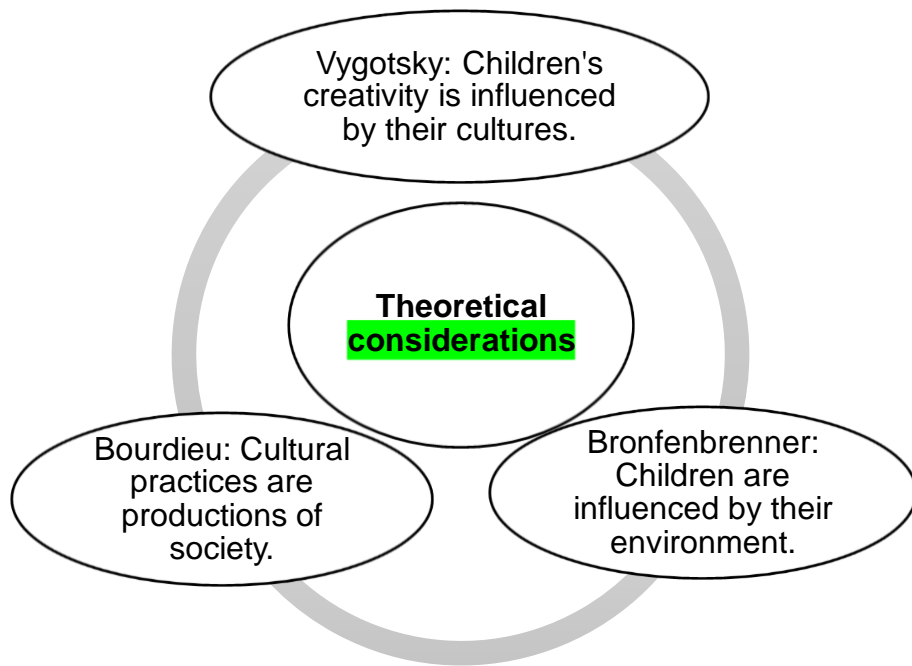


Figure 2.5 Theoretical considerations to be used in this thesis

Because the definitions of creativity cannot be applied to children and cannot be tested, the creativity of young children has not been well studied (Leggett, 2017). There are several reasons for this lack of research. First, young children's creativity tends to achieve outcomes that are described as *small c creativity – little creativity*. According to Ponticorvo et al. (2020), *small c – little creativity* is found in everyday life activities and may be only new to an individual, not to everyone. Because young children's outcomes tend to be familiar to adults but new to the young children themselves, this leads to a failure in testing whether they are useful and new, which, according to Craft (2002), is considered *big C creativity – capital C creativity*. Second, definitions of creativity are complex (Vygotsky, 1967; Sharp, 2004). This thesis aimed to address this research gap by studying preschool teachers' beliefs regarding the visual art creativity of young children aged three – six years and the approaches used by preschool teachers to support creativity based on the theories of Bourdieu (2010) and Vygotsky (1979), as well as Bronfenbrenner's theories (1979; 2005). The three theories advocate that how an individual develops within a culture's environment has a great influence on them. Third, because Vygotsky's theory emphasised that social settings should be involved in research when studying the development of humans (Hallam et al., 2011), this study was conducted in Riyadh, Saudi Arabian preschools.

Overall, the research gap was addressed regarding what preschool teachers believe and how they support creativity in the visual art of young children aged three–six years.

2.5 Visual Art in the Early Years

2.5.1 Underpinning of Visual Art and its Relationship to Creativity

This study explored children’s creativity in visual art to address the lack of studies on children’s creativity in general, as described by Leggett (2017), and based on my literature search. Most studies on children’s creativity have studied creativity generally or in play, such as those by Holmes et al. (2015), Howard-Jones et al. (2002) and Holmes and Romeo (2013), as discussed in the introduction. Since this study explored children’s creativity in visual art in the Saudi preschool learning curriculum, I first discuss the important relationship between art and creativity found in the literature and how this strong relationship can influence children’s creativity using art activities. Second, I discuss the different kinds of art activities that are available for children in preschools, followed by the kinds of materials that can be used in art and why they are important. Finally, I present the Saudi preschool curriculum in relation to art and its activities and materials.

As observed in the extant literature on creativity, a strong relationship exists between creativity and art in young children. As noted by Lindqvist (2003), Vygotsky’s theory regarding imagination and creativity stated that art is as important a foundation for creativity as science and technology. According to Prentice (2000, p. 148), ‘creativity is central to the arts’, which may explain why the terms ‘art’ and ‘creativity’ are so often used interchangeably. In fact, Cheung and Mok (2013) asserted that when researchers try to define creativity, tradition appears to link it directly to art. In other words, the historical assumption of defining creativity as art is embedded as a belief. Aligned with traditional beliefs, Ariffin (2014) conducted a qualitative study with four preschool teachers using interviews and observation methods and found that teachers believed that creativity was only linked to art, further supporting these traditional assumptions. This close association between creativity and art reflects much of the research and the important mutual roles played by the two (Prentice, 2000; Owen et al., 2016) in achieving original outcomes in art.

Furthermore, Hui et al. (2015), Pavlou (2013) and Eckhoff (2011) argued that creativity in young children is enhanced and supported through art education, reflecting the importance of art in the curriculum. Different research approaches also reported such beliefs, for example, Diakidoy and Kanari (1999) and Kerem et al. (2001) conducted quantitative studies using questionnaires with in-service and pre-service teachers, and found that art activities were the most suitable methods for supporting and developing creativity in children. Lytton (1971) reported that if different art activities were provided, such as finger painting, more opportunities were created for children, thus implying exploration and discovery can be realised in what they do, how they do it and what resources they use. Various art activities, such as different uses of media and resources, can encourage children to try new things. LeBlance and Linville (2003) recognised that 'art fits naturally with what children love to do' (p. 8). Thus, this study focused on creativity in visual art activities practiced by young children in their preschool classrooms, reflecting the importance of this curriculum area.

With regard to the different kinds of art activities that are available to children in preschools, drawing is considered the earliest and most basic kind of artistic activity (Dziedziewicz et al., 2013). This can be seen in the Saudi preschool curriculum, which recognises drawing as one of the main art activities that must be available in the art corner. Not only drawing activities, however, there are many studies discussing other kinds of artistic activities for young children. For example, LeBlance and Linville (2003), Pavlou (2009) and Ceausu (2016) described the different art activities that children participate in, including making collages, drawing, finger painting, stamping, clay modelling and painting with chalk tempera, watercolours and oil paints. Morgan (1991), in line with LeBlance and Linville (2003), Pavlou (2009) and Ceausu (2016), stated that young children's art programmes should include drawing, painting, printmaking and creating pieces with textiles, clay and wood. This shows the richness of art activities available for providing different options to children in art corners and supporting their creativity (Eckhoff, 2011; Hui et al., 2015; Pavlou, 2013). In the Saudi preschool curriculum, the art corner is permanent, meaning it is in the classroom all year (Ministry of Education, N.D). The art corner includes five permanent artistic activities—drawing, painting, printing, clay and collage (cutting and gluing)—to be provided during the week (Ministry of Education, N.D.) along with any craft-making activities required.

In my experience, some teachers tend to repeat certain kinds of art activities that they provide to children, such as drawing, colouring or collages, for most of the week. Repeating the same kind of art activity may not be inspiring for children. I argue that teachers should provide two different art activities a day for children, instead of only one that is repeated for the whole week. This is especially true since the art corners in preschools are designed to provide two different art activities a day. Diverse art activities inspire children to create more artwork and use more art materials in one activity. For instance, based on my experience, some children only go to the art corner when they are offered crafting activities as well as drawing. Children tend to find crafting more enjoyable than only drawing, so they can combine two activities in one piece of artwork by crafting a piece and then drawing on it. For example, they might craft a crown and then draw stars, hearts and flowers on it. One activity a day may not be enough to encourage children to go to the art corner. Young children should be allowed to create by combining two activities a day, and these activities should be provided for two or three days in a row maximum. This would provide all children in the classroom with an opportunity to use these methods of creating artwork.

The richness of art activity options is as important as the art materials. The use of unfamiliar art materials, such as plastic plates and cups, has been discussed in the literature (Sudarsana, 2010). This discussion suggested that unfamiliar art materials, such as paper plates, plastic eyes and recyclable materials, play an important role in inspiring children to create. For instance, providing paper plates and different kind of colouring and art materials like plastic eyes. Another factor in enriching art materials is by providing recyclable art materials. These kinds of crafting activities can help children learn to use different resources in artistic creativity. Uyanik et al. (2011) noted that these kinds of activities can foster children's creativity and visual perceptions as they try different materials and think of new ideas each time they create. For example, using the bottom of empty plastic bottles of fizzy drink to be decorated by children in order to be used for planting in classrooms as crafting activities, and admiring children's artwork by decorating the classrooms.

This study was conducted in Saudi Arabia, where the curriculum for early childhood education is called the Curriculum of Kindergarten Education (CKE), which is provided by the Saudi Ministry of Education. The only part of this curriculum that this study

focused on is art, in particular, visual art activities such as drawing, painting with watercolours or oil paints, printing, clay, collage – cutting and gluing- and creating crafts using unfamiliar and recyclable art materials, such as plastic plates or rolls of kitchen papers. Although photography is a form of visual art (Eskelinen, 2012; Love, 2015), it was not considered in this study as it is uncommon in Saudi preschools. This may be due to limited budgets in preschools, as well as the fact that only female teachers are allowed to teach children in preschools, and they do not wear their hijabs inside because there are only female teachers and children there.

Indoor playtime in which children go to the art corner lasts 45–60 minutes. Each child is allowed to spend 20 minutes of this time in the art corner and gives up their chair to another child if there is a waiting list to enter the corner. Based on my experience, the art corner is the most popular corner for all children. Some boys tend to avoid going to the kitchen section in the roleplay corner, for example, which suggests that they come from a traditional background and see preparing and cooking food as feminine work. One of the boys in my classroom in 2011 was pulled out of the kitchen section by his friends, who said, 'Do not go there, it is for women'. Boys tend to prefer the art corner to create and express their feelings or thoughts. For example, a young boy who loves football might draw a boy playing football and colour his clothing in the colours of his favourite football team, while a young girl is more likely to draw a lady wearing a dress that tells a story about her. The art corner is somewhere every child can go to express their thoughts and feelings, regardless of their identity or background. I have also noticed that when children create in the art corner, it gives them a feeling of accomplishment. This attracts all children to create and display their artwork regardless of the results of their creations, which makes the art corner popular all year. The popularity of the art corner was described by Kindler (2010), who stated that children tend to enjoy art more than other activities.

In summary, it appears that creativity has a strong relationship with art, and art activities can enhance children's creativity in the early years, according to the literature discussed above. Different art activities and materials can be used to develop children's creativity. These art materials could be familiar like watercolours, unfamiliar like paper plates or recyclable like empty plastic bottles. The Saudi preschool

curriculum was described in relation to the art corner and its activities, and this corner is shown to be popular among young children.

2.5.2 The Importance of Visual Art in the Early Years

In this section, I first discuss the value of art in children's development through creating and learning. I then discuss how art can help children develop their mental skills, such as decision making and problem solving, followed by how art can help develop their social skills. After this, I discuss how art can help children express their inner thoughts and feelings, as well as how it can influence their self-image and moods.

Although Piffer (2012) claimed that children's creative artistic products may not be useful compared to adults' creative artistic products, Leggett (2017) clarified that, though they may not be useful to society in general, art is still considered one of children's rights. Specifically, living a cultural life and engaging in arts activities are based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF United Kingdom, 1989). Similarly, according to Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015), children have the right to create through art. Art can help learners create their own views of the world and show their understanding and expression as individuals, which are important in children's development (Davis, 1999). Children in schools learn through their art experiences as well as through direct lessons, which, by providing a variety of art activities for children, can help them develop their skills. Because of the vital role that teachers play, they are responsible for providing educational experiences that influence children's development (Holmes and Romeo, 2013). Thuketana and Westhof (2018) suggested that visual art should be added to or adjusted to be a larger part of the curriculum, as it helps to support different skills, such as mathematics, problem solving, language and social skills. For example, cutting paper plays a role in developing children's writing skills (LeBlance and Linville, 2003) through the development of the hand muscles that are needed for handwriting. Similarly, it can help children develop and enhance their language skills when working on and presenting their artwork and speaking about their ideas and experiences in creating such pieces. According to Brouillette et al. (2014), art tends to reflect positively on children's language skills. Similarly, art can help learners enhance their learning of a foreign language by developing their speaking skills (Al-Busaidi et al., 2022). They

also obtain some basic skills and develop their taste in aesthetics via colours, shapes, dots, lines and materials (Ceausu, 2016). Because of the value and development that art offers children through creating and learning, it is important to include sufficient focus on visual art in the curriculum from early childhood education onward.

The benefits of art include children's mental development. According to Bentley (2011), art is closely linked to everyday experiences and ways of living, including decision making. Children can learn about making choices when they are creating an artwork (Thuketana and Westhof, 2018) because they have to choose different art materials and when, why, where and how to use them. As Pavlou (2009) asserted, when children engage in art activities, they must make a number of decisions in terms of what artwork to create and how to create it: 'When children could not adjust the materials to their ideas, they tried to adjust their ideas to the materials' (Pavlou, 2009, p. 148). In other words, art helps children develop their realisation of how to create their artwork in 'a realistic way' (Pavlou, 2009, p. 147). Sudarsana (2010) supported this theory, noting that artwork is a creative product resulting from a process that must be framed by the choices the child makes in terms of when to act, how to act and how long an action will take.

A quantitative study by Bowen et al. (2014) involved 3,811 students from grades 3–12 visiting a museum for an educational experience led by educators who were trained to use a constructivist-based learning method. The study (Bowen et al., 2014) used a survey completed by the students after visiting the museum. This was followed by asking the students to analyse artwork that was new to them by answering questions relating to the images. The study aimed to explore whether showing students some examples before analysing artwork would influence their development of critical thinking. The study suggested that when students engaged in art activities at the museum before taking the survey, it helped them develop their critical thinking skills when they analysed other artwork after that. Similarly, based on Tommie de Paola's semi-autobiographical picture book *The Art Lesson* (1989), Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015) found that art could help children develop self-reflection, critical thinking and problem solving. Based on my experience working with children, I would agree that art activities should be considered cognitive exercises that develop children's cognitive development. This cognitive development includes problem solving and decision-

making in art activities, such as choices about what materials they should use and how to use them effectively.

Regarding social development, according to Kroflic (2012), artistic experiences are not only ideal tools for developing children's mental development but also their creative, sensitive and prosocial behaviours within their social and natural environments. Hammond et al. (2015) described prosocial behaviours in children as appearing in their normal everyday acts, such as allowing another child to use their toys or lying to protect another person. For example, children could work together to create a card for a classmate who had been away for a while. According to Thuketana and Westhof (2018), such forms of engagement can also take place through observation and communication. Chang et al. (2013) conducted a quantitative study in Taiwan that suggested that when adults talk with children about their local culture and history, the children may benefit from engaging in visual art activities as learning techniques. Art can be used to help children learn about history, local culture and people in their society and develop their social skills. Thus, art is important in children's development, and providing them with artistic experiences in preschool education can support them in many aspects of their development.

Considering children's inner-selves, art tends to play an important role in children's expressions of their feelings and thoughts. Several authors (Dunn-Snow, 2001; Kroflic, 2012; Vygotsky, 1971) have written about the importance of applying art activities in educational settings through the curriculum in the early years and have found that providing children with artistic experiences can help them express their inner selves in artwork. For example, Vygotsky (1971) stated that the inner thoughts and feelings reflected in children's artworks are usually not expressed in everyday life. Ceausu (2016) claimed that children reflect on and express their understanding of the world through artwork. Smith (1996) specifically claimed that children's drawings can be messages without written words. In line with this, Fawcett and Hay (2004) found that drawing is a tool that children use to communicate with others. For example, children may draw pictures that reflect their worries about new siblings or their fears of being abused by adults. This explains why Wright (2010) considered drawing activities to be a meaningful voice for children to express their thoughts and feelings.

According to Vygotsky (1971), putting feelings into objects is the purpose of art. In line with this, Chang et al. (2013) argued that observing the creation of visual art reveals an individual's feelings – for example, a painting of a sunny day in spring may be an expression of relaxation and happiness. Sharp (2004) also viewed creativity as related to personalities, emotions and thought. Transferring feelings and thoughts into artwork that reflects the artist's happiness, depression or sadness is one goal of art. Wright (2010), Vygotsky (1971) and Kroflic (2012) agreed that inner expressions benefit from artistic activities. Based on what I noticed during my work with children, I agree with the above argument that children benefit from art activities by expressing what they think and feel about. This use of art activities shows the important role that art plays in helping children express their feelings and demonstrates the value of art in their lives.

Using art activities can positively influence children's self-image. This influence appears in three ways in which art activities tend to influence children's self-image, how they see themselves and their moods. First, according to Szekely (2006), using a pair of scissors when creating artwork is valuable, and children must be trusted to use scissors for cutting paper and not, for instance, their hair. I argue that the value of using scissors is not limited to the purpose of creating artwork. Teaching children how to use scissors safely can help them feel trustworthy enough to use them safely. This feeling of being trusted may have a positive effect on children's self-confidence. Vahter (2018) stated that art activities in general tend to influence children's self-confidence. Therefore, when children are allowed and learn how to use scissors safely, that may have a positive influence on them to feel trusted to use scissors in their activities, as they are a tool used often in crafting.

Second, in a study conducted by Liu (2007) with third-grade students in elementary schools in China suggested that children who see themselves as artists produce more creative artwork than others. In my experience, children who are supported to create because they have potential see themselves as artists and are motivated to create more artwork because they believe this is what they should do. Thus, children can see themselves as artists when supported by adults during their early years, which can build their self-confidence. Adults' support is thus a necessary social influence. This

influence may affect how children see themselves as artists and how they create their art.

Third, Kindler (2010) argued that providing art experiences for children and decorating their classrooms with their own art supports their artistic creativity by showing them that their creations are valued. For example, choosing a theme of sea life that is related to Water, the educational unit of the month and decorating the classroom based on this theme using children's artwork. These artistic activities allow children to work cooperatively with their teacher and enjoy decorating their classroom instead of relying on the teacher to decorate it. According to Kindler (2010), children tend to enjoy engaging with art and art materials more than other activities. Decorating the classroom also gives them an opportunity to be responsible for their classroom's appearance and become attached to it. Engaging in visual art activities reflects positively on their feelings of self-confidence as they enjoy the time spent on their art activities (Vahter, 2018).

The above three discussed ways can be used and applied to help children believe that they are creative and to enhance their level of creativity in visual art. They can also help adults focus on developing children's psychological health in healthy and creative environments by encouraging them to engage in activities that positively influence them.

In summary, art plays an important role in developing children socially, mentally and physiologically. Therefore, to the extent that creativity is reflected in children's artwork (Sudarsana, 2010), studying the general associations between creativity and art especially in young children, is important for enriching the field of art creativity in young children. According to Hui et al. (2015), only a few studies have researched the field of art creativity in preschool children. I agree with Hui et al.'s claim, based on the lack of resources I found from the beginning of this study in 2018 until the end of writing this chapter in 2023. This deficit in the literature reinforces the need to study art activities and young children's creative efforts. Therefore, the current research explored creativity and visual art in art corners in preschools in Riyadh. I also explored the extent to which Saudi culture influences children's creativity in visual art.

2.6 Supporting Creativity

2.6.1 How to Support Creativity by Ministry of Education through Teachers

Support for creativity should begin in the early stages of education (Chae, 2003; Yildirim, 2010). Although teachers are responsible for transferring knowledge and setting the standards needed to foster children's creativity in classrooms (Chien and Hui, 2010; NACCCE, 1999) and to support young children's creative abilities (Ceausu, 2016), doing this may be a challenge for most of them (Piske et al., 2017). Therefore, teachers should be supported in understanding the meaning of creativity (Jukic, 2011; Piske et al., 2017) and should be trained and guided by governments or ministries of education because these are the kinds of organisations that are mostly responsible for providing education and its development in countries. Therefore, this section will discuss what the Ministry of Education may provide for teachers to provide better education that helps to support children's creativity, since ministries are responsible for providing the guidance, curricula, knowledge and materials that teachers follow.

The Norwegian Ministry of Education suggests that being guided by a government that believes in the importance of supporting creativity in young children may help teachers be creative and supportive (Meyer and Eilifsen, 2017). The Norwegian Ministry of Education also believes in play and creativity as essential factors for children's development and states that teaching methods must foster the creativity and curiosity of children and provide them with the full knowledge they need (Meyer and Eilifsen, 2017). The Norwegian Ministry of Education also believes that teachers must be sensitive to pre-schoolers' sense of wonder (Meyer and Eilifsen, 2017). Also, they train them to find the balance between freedom and structure during their work with children because they need to know the necessary skills to be creative (Cheung, 2017). For example, asking questions, experiencing, and exploring (Eason et al., 2009). Moreover, teachers need to know how to generate positive feelings and behaviours regarding creativity and encourage children to express their creativity with enthusiasm (Jukic, 2011). According to Tugrul et al. (2014), the level of children's creativity increases when children are taught by creative teachers. When teachers are creative, they value their students' creativity (Eason et al., 2009). Therefore, Cheung and Mok (2013) argued that it is fundamental that policymakers and educators support

teachers, particularly in expanding their beliefs about creativity. Another example is that some other governments, such as China, may believe in creativity but fail to design educational strategies and methods to support it in children, because they also believe that the definition of creativity is still not complete and well defined (Vong, 2008). Failing to design for and define creativity may not foster children's creativity because methods are not well designed and cannot be applied to reach the target of fostering children's creativity and thereby increase it. Therefore, a government's plan for supporting creativity in young children should meet the strategies that are already applied in schools by teachers to cooperate and reach the desired target. Also, based on my experiences in preschools, I would argue that teachers should be provided by ministry of education with rich training and guidance to help them be creative before evaluating teachers' practice by other educators. In particular, factors like years of experience, position, school type and qualifications may not help teachers in their support for children's creativity if they do not have a programme of creativity to support and train them (Cheung and Mok, 2013). This is especially true if they have not studied at university before.

It is believed that because school environments play a significant role in developing children's creativity (Mellou, 1996), it is valuable for teachers to consider their classrooms' environments (Pavlou, 2013) and for managers to consider schools' environments (Dane et al., 2011). Both are conducive to improving children's creativity (Carroll and Howieson, 1991), which develops through interaction with their environments (Canning, 2013). However, according to Vahter (2018), teachers believe that such environments inspire the best when children are given enough time to create. Importantly, for children to have high possibilities of developing successfully (Thuketana and Westhof, 2018) and learning how to engage with society (Eason et al., 2009), the classroom environments should be safe and secure. In particular, their environments influence children, which may be positive or negative. Additionally, learners should be encouraged to be part of their own learning process (Prentice, 2000; Meyer and Eilifsen, 2017), since creativity develops in supportive learning environments (NACCCE, 1996; Vygotsky, 1967). According to Smith (1996), teachers cannot teach children how to be creative but can support them by providing three appropriate elements: environments, activities and attitude. Moreover, according to Mindham (2005), teachers should provide materials, techniques and choices for the

children. An environment that provides the above appropriate elements would help children's creativity to flourish.

Another important factor in providing support, besides training teachers and setting up environments, is the nature of the curriculum. According to Ornstein (1987, p. 212), a curriculum is 'a written document which includes strategies for achieving desired goals or ends' and how to guide learners' experiences. Thus, it is important to provide a curriculum in which creativity can develop (NASUWT, The Teachers' Union's report, 2017; Larson and Miller, 2011; Sudarsana, 2010). However, teachers need to find a balance between freedom and structure (Cheung, 2017) to support creativity in art, Jaquith (2011) suggested allowing children to make choices whenever possible. According to Roeper and Ruff (2016) and Cheung (2017), providing a level of freedom within structured lessons can create a climate that supports creativity and prevents children from falling into aimless activities when they run out of ideas. For example, using a structured lesson to teach children about a certain subject and allowing them to do activities that they want to do later can offer the balance that is necessary between structured lessons and freedom. According to Alkus and Olgan (2014), strict rules can be a barrier to supporting children's creativity in schools. Thuketana and Westhof (2018) argued that making children responsible for what they choose from activities and allowing them to choose is valuable for fostering education, and it helps teachers to be aware of what children need. Based on my observations while I was training, I would argue that being free to choose the kind of art activity may lead to the freedom to practice ideas, which could eventually lead to creative artwork. Moreover, allowing and encouraging children to make suggestions in their lessons highlights the importance of a flexible approach while helping them develop and improve their abilities. This kind of freedom allows for the maximisation of creativity development in education (Prentice, 2000). Thuketana and Westhof (2018) conducted a qualitative study involving 25 South African children with the aim of observing whether group work encourages children's decisive behaviour and self-confidence in children, which suggested that allowing children to choose their art activities had a positive influence on their self-confidence and behaviour. Moreover, climates that allow children to make suggestions (Roeper and Ruff, 2016), ask questions, have experiences and explore and create, may lead to a creative life and enrich their skills (Eason et al., 2009). According to Runco (2004), maintaining a flexible approach is vital for supporting

creativity, as flexibility and freedom are closely associated. In my opinion, when children involved in the educational process are both information receivers (i.e., they receive from their teachers) and information senders (i.e., they provide suggestions, answers and questions to their teachers), it helps children to be more effective in the educational process by suggesting some ideas for their lessons. It is important to avoid treating children as empty vessels that should be filled with information and ignoring their creative potential (Eason et al., 2009). Thus, it is valuable for children to be given structured lessons, as well as a level of freedom and flexibility, to develop their creativity through this combination. Children who have freedom of expression in their thoughts and feelings are able to reveal their creative abilities (Hook and Tegano, 2002).

Another factor that influences children's creativity and that can be observed during the creation of artwork is focusing on the outcome rather than the process. Teachers are asked through the guidance provided by the Ministry of Education to encourage children to create artwork related to the subject of the day. This requirement tends to put teachers under pressure to help children make the required artwork as a sign or result of the children's understanding of the subject of the day. However, this pressure tends to make teachers focus on the product rather than the process. An example of being less flexible and focusing on the result could be found in creating artwork that represents the Great Mosque of Mecca in Saudi Arabian preschools. The Kaaba is a building known for its cubic shape, is covered with black fabric, and has golden writing at its peak. However, providing a model to be copied or encouraging children to paint the Kaaba accurately may be viewed as too much of a focus on the product rather than on the process. Yet, there is nothing in the Islamic religion that prevents depictions of the cover of the Kaaba with a different design.

According to Jaquith (2011), focusing more on the product rather than the process negatively affects the skills needed for creativity, for example, original thinking and problem-solving (Urban, 1991; Sudarsana, 2010; Yates and Twigg, 2017; Paulus and Nijsttag, 2003; Wood et al., 2004; Trilling and Fadel, 2009). In line with this, Wood et al. (2021) argued that the process of making artwork is important and related to creativity. Therefore, according to Fawcett and Hay (2004) and Eason et al. (2009), educators should focus on the process of improving children's creativity and how they

create, rather than on the products that the children produce. Ideally, adults should value children's creative products because of the role they play in supporting the development of children's creativity (Leggett, 2017). However, according to McLennan (2010), focusing only on the product of art prevents children from being encouraged to create artwork that represents their personal understanding of themselves, their environments and the world. According to Vahter (2018), being forced to copy or offer a visible model could limit the progress of children's creativity and cause all children's artwork to look the same. Children need to focus on how their products reflect the progress of their development. Being focused on the process of making artwork by children leads teachers' interactions with children to take the form of observational dyads, which, as discussed earlier, Bronfenbrenner (1979; 2005) identified as one kind of influential in child development. Arguably, however, a joint dyad may be more important for child development in general than an observational dyad because it allows for more interactions between adults and children.

However, in terms of creativity and child-led activities, this may lead to a teacher influencing children's creativity through interactions. For example, in my experience, I have noticed that a teacher who spent a lot of time with children during an art activity asked children about their works, explained to them how to use tools and gave them some suggestions tended to have more influence on the children than a teacher who only observed them with minimum interactions. Therefore, a joint-activity dyad seems may limit freedom and has a negative influence on children's creativity in art, which makes an observational dyad is more suitable for developing creativity, as it allows more freedom in terms of supporting creativity than a joint-activity dyad. However, in general, a joint activity dyad is more important for child development. I might argue that mixing these two types of dyads in school would help develop children's creativity in art and in other aspects, but an observational dyad will help them during art activity.

Another key feature in supporting the creativity of children is risk taking and allowing them to make mistakes. Teachers and students may feel worried about going beyond their usual limits and taking risks, as they may be seen as unprofessional educationally. The Norwegian Ministry of Education allows teachers and children to take risks and encourages them to make mistakes (Meyer and Eilifsen, 2017). According to Urban (1991), allowing children to take risks and be unconventional helps

them develop their creativity and become original. Encouraging children to go beyond boundaries and venture to do something new could influence their ways of thinking and, eventually, the outcomes of their work, even if they sometimes make mistakes. Robinson (2006) argued that children need to make mistakes because they cannot achieve something original without doing so and trying again. Fawcett and Hay (2004) argued that educators should challenge children in their provided experiences. For example, allowing children to try different materials and colours without being interrupted by their teachers' directions could allow them to experience new things. According to Dane et al. (2011), exploring new ways of creating is a way to foster creativity. Thus, I might argue that to support creativity, it is essential that children be given sufficient freedom, be encouraged to make mistakes and that teachers take a flexible approach to teaching. Supporting creativity in young children helps build and strengthen their general potential for creativity. According to Vygotsky (1967), it is important to support children's creativity because it plays an important role in children's development.

In terms of supporting creativity, especially in art, and as children have the right to express themselves through art (Shulsky and Kirkwood, 2015), it is important to find ways to support children in their art practises in their classrooms. For the successful creation of art, several points need to be addressed. The classroom should provide enough time and rich materials, be organised and reorganised, be accessible and reflect the local culture and city (McClure et al., 2017). Moreover, the school should provide art books and allow children to decide what to do with their work, display it or not, finish it now or later, take it home or save it, and beyond that, provide enough space (Shulsky and Kirkwood, 2015). Moreover, teachers should value the diversities in young children in terms of their abilities, interests, ideas, and ways of presenting their thoughts and feelings through artwork (McClure et al., 2017). Furthermore, teachers should listen, observe, and reflect on children's artwork and use different forms of documentation to keep records of progress on the children's artwork (McClure et al., 2017). According to Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015), teachers can create galleries from children's artwork, design the walls in their classroom, post some children's artwork online or create a children's artwork book to be published. Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015) also suggested that the teacher could invite local artists to class to give children the chance to admire the artists' works. Another suggestion by Shulsky

and Kirkwood (2015) which could be applied by teachers is presenting a piece of artwork that a child made and its model in order to encourage children to find the differences and similarities, besides linking the child's piece of artwork to the surrounding world. It is my view that these kinds of suggestions are worth trying and applying by teachers to encourage children to engage creatively in art.

2.7 Teachers' Beliefs

Educational settings such as preschools are based on three important features – namely, children, teachers and curricula – which, in Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979; 2005), are represented as the layers of microsystems and mesosystem. According to Setiawan (2017), teachers play a crucial role in developing children's potential, as they are close to children in schools. McLennan (2010) claimed that teachers play a major role in changing the future by educating and providing children with valuable experiences through the creation and discussion of artwork. Aligned with this, McArdle (2012) believes that teachers' efforts make a difference in educating children in terms of the amount of knowledge that can be gained. Setiawan (2017), McLennan (2010) and McArdle's (2012) arguments reflect the need to guide teachers' practices and beliefs in creativity because of the vital role that teachers play and the potential that can be developed and applied in their practices.

Stipek et al. (2001) conducted a quantitative study using various methods involving 21 mathematics teachers of 437 students of mixed ethnic backgrounds from grades four to six in elementary schools in Los Angeles. The study used a survey on a scale from one to six, which was completed at the beginning and end of the year, to collect data about the teachers' beliefs. Subsequently, the researchers video-recorded two periods of instructional time to collect data about practices and administered a questionnaire to the teachers. The same study used a survey to be completed by the students at the beginning and end of the year, composed of three questions rated from one to six, asking how much they enjoyed mathematics. From the data gathered from the survey and videotapes, the researchers found that when teachers believed they needed to control the teaching process, they tended to focus on correcting students instead of helping them understand the topic, thereby lowering the level of creativity in the teachers' practices. Therefore, this study suggests that teachers' practices in their

classrooms are related to their beliefs. The link between teachers' beliefs and practices that Stipek et al. identified can potentially be applied by and reflected on by all teachers, regardless of their area of teaching and age of students. Jukic (2011) explained Stipek et al.'s (2001) findings by saying that teachers tend to influence children in the way they encourage children's creativity, which depends on how teachers view it. Jukic's argument agrees with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education's (HMIE) report (2006), which found that teachers may have different beliefs regarding creativity.

The differences in teachers' beliefs about creativity depend on the idea that teachers are influenced by their cultures, since creativity is valued differently in each society (Taylor and Rogers, 2001). This is especially true for educational systems that do not provide curricula to support creativity. According to Cheung and Mok (2013), when creativity is not part of the education that teachers provide for the early years and is not part of the school curricula that the teachers studied, their understanding will be limited and insufficient to provide the needed support. For example, when teachers view creativity in young children as giftedness or a skill, this belief will guide their practices, which may influence children's creativity. Teachers will be driven by their beliefs, which may be influenced culturally in terms of how important creativity is and how to support it. Because teachers' beliefs are a critical factor in learning and teaching experiences (Kupari, 2003), it is vital to understand these regarding creativity (Alkus and Olgan, 2014). Accordingly, this study focuses on teachers' beliefs and how they support creativity in visual art among young children.

Although few studies have been conducted in the area of creativity regarding teachers' beliefs, I highlight some international studies in different contexts related to this study. According to Eckhoff (2011), identifying the beliefs of teachers regarding children's creativity is vital to knowing the potential implications of applying programmes designed to support children's creativity. For example, Chien and Hui (2010) conducted a study with Chinese-speaking teachers from Shanghai, Hong Kong and Taiwan. They used focus group interviews developed by Chien, Wang and Chen (2001) involving 71 teachers. Fourteen interview questions were divided into the following categories: '1. Core concepts on creativity and its development in the context of early childhood. 2. Curriculum, teaching and learning. 3. School and organisational

input. 4. Administration and policy. 5. Ecological dimensions' (Chien and Hui, 2010, p. 53). The data gathered from these interviews were used to create a questionnaire that involved five categories: 'demographic data, influential factors of creative performance, factors of creative performance, ecology of creativity education, and barriers and improvements to creativity education' (Chien and Hui, 2010, p. 53). Eight hundred seventy-seven preschool teachers from the three countries participated in the questionnaire. Chien and Hui (2010) found an association between developing children's creativity and teachers initially believing in the role they play in support of children's creativity, which is supported by receiving a curriculum and teaching strategies from a government that echoed this belief.

Similarly, in China, educators' understanding of creativity arguably can have a direct influence on children's creativity through their practices (Huang and Szente, 2014). However, Huang and Szente's (2014) suggestion was based on reviewing the literature using mainly books and journal articles, most of which are from the 90s onwards, that provide knowledge about creativity in China. Even though this was a suggestion, it seems applicable because teachers' beliefs have been shown to be related to their ways of supporting children (Stipek et al., 2001). This argument can potentially be applied to any setting where a teacher believes that creativity is linked to giftedness, for example, and that it is not a skill that every child has, which may lead to a failure to support all children's creativity in the classroom. In line with that, Hui et al. (2015) conducted a mixed methods study in Hong Kong with 790 young children, 217 parents and 65 teachers in seven kindergartens and nurseries. To collect quantitative and qualitative data, Hui et al. (2015, p. 317) used the 'Story-Telling Test (STT) and the Test for Creative Thinking–Drawing Production (TCT-DP), parents' ratings of the students' behavioural characteristics and teacher questionnaires, classroom observations and focus group interviews with the teachers and artists'. The study aimed to evaluate children's gains in creativity and their teachers' implementation of art education. Based on using the Test for Creative Thinking–Drawing Production (TCT-DP) form A and B twice, pre-test and post-test, Hui et al. found that teachers' beliefs about art and creativity in children are vital factors in supporting creativity. In particular, when an art form, drama and visual art were shown to children and taught by professional artists and teachers, children's verbal and figural creativity were influenced positively (Hui et al., 2015). Chien and Hui's (2010) and Hui

et al.'s (2015) studies suggest that the cultures in these Asian countries tend to value creativity. This valuation reflects the interests of their researchers' studies on creativity, which could help to develop their countries' education systems by impacting the results of the conducted studies. It also supports Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 2005) theory, which argues that a child's development is influenced by the social environments in which they live and through the interactions that happen in the layers of ecological systems. In the last layer of ecological systems, which is called a macrosystem, the influences on the children of a society's beliefs and ideologies are indirect (Penn, 2005). In cultures such as those of Asia that value and believe in the importance of creativity, the systems' atmospheres have an indirect influence on their inhabitants. For example, researchers would be interested in studying creativity that leads to an impact on their education system, and the influence would transfer through interactions to reach the closest system to a child's life in the microsystems.

The Reggio Emilia approach is an example of how environments can influence children's development. This approach was developed in Italy and is now used internationally, for example, in the United States (New, 2007) and Sweden (Magnusson, 2021). In this approach, the teacher's role is to encourage children to present their different views instead of suppressing them (Alkudhair, 2014) and to listen to them during everyday practices and projects (Fernndez Santn and Feliu Torruella, 2017). This approach leads teachers to respect children's learning processes and discoveries, which encourages them not to exert control over them (Alkudhair, 2014; Fernndez Santn and Feliu Torruella, 2017). Since there is a relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practices (Stipek et al., 2001), this can arguably mean that what teachers believe is the most important aspect of their role and the practice they will apply and can be reflected in their actual practice. For example, if a teacher believes it is important for all the children in her classroom to create artwork that is related to and represents the main topic of the week, she will request that all the children create and make sure they finish the artwork. In the Reggio Emilia approach, teachers focus on the learning process, not the outcome, and on the children, not the topic of the day (Fernndez Santn and Feliu Torruella, 2017). The Reggio Emilia approach allows children opportunities to create while their teachers observe. Applying this approach to visual art activities would allow children a chance to create their own artwork using their own ideas without copying from a model and

would give the teachers a chance to observe what children can create to show their potential creativity. For example, by providing various art materials to children to create their own favourite marine animals instead of asking them to create following a model of fish. Children can create their own marine animals by relying on what teachers presented to them during the morning lessons, when teachers teach children about a specific daily topic using models and photos. Therefore, it is important to design a programme or approach that guides teachers' roles and interactions with children to allow the children to create without the teachers' direct influence.

Teachers play a role in supporting creativity through how they interact with children. Teachers do this in different ways, such as 'giving instruction, making suggestions and giving advice, and judgement and evaluation' (Madani et al., 2017, p. 11). However, not all of these methods of interaction have positive effects on a child's learning development. A mixed methods study using a questionnaire, interviews, observation and documents' analysis by Madani et al. (2017) found that teachers' interactions with children during art and design classes can have a positive effect when teachers evaluate children's artwork, but a more negative effect on children's creativity when teachers use direct instruction. Madani et al. (2017) argued that using instructions to direct children is considered the worst kind of interaction, which can negatively affect children's creativity. This is in comparison with evaluation, which has a less negative effect on their creativity. The kind of effect seems to be related to the kind of interaction, which may be related to the level of background support that teachers receive. I would argue that a lack of support may cause teachers to grope for ways to support children's creativity or to be limited and directed in their ways of supporting. Teachers could try to plan what they think is a useful environment or way of interacting, but this could lead to negatively affecting or impeding a child's development. Moreover, teachers' interactions with children during the artistic process could distract the children from their own ideas and feelings, which might negatively affect the final work. Therefore, children could benefit from an environmental approach in which teachers focus on the process of children's learning and organising an environment that is accessible for children to learn by themselves, such as the Reggio Emilia approach (Fernndez Santn and Feliu Torruella, 2017).

Vygotsky developed a theory called social constructivism based on his belief that knowledge develops through interactions between individuals through social interaction (Amineh and Asl, 2015). Vygotsky believed that social interaction is part of the learning process in which learners work jointly to develop their understanding and knowledge, which makes this approach a strongly effective one for classroom use (Powell and Kalina, 2009). In the social constructivism theory, learning is child-led, and the teachers' roles are to make knowledge accessible and provide activities and experiences (Liu and Chen, 2010). Children in classrooms that use this theory are allowed to discover knowledge and experiences in which they can show their understanding in different ways, such as using their own words to describe something or ask questions (Liu and Chen, 2010). Social constructivism theory and the Reggio Emilia approach seem to be related to Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 2005) ecological systems theory (1979; 2005), because they all focus on the importance of the environment and social interactions for children's development and understanding of the world. They are also related to Bourdieu's theory (2010), in which he argues that cultural practices are productions of society, such as at home and school. Activities such as art, for example, show that cultural capital is linked to social class and social development. Furthermore, they are related to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (1979), which emphasises how a society's culture affects children's creativity. I would argue that the theories of Bronfenbrenner (1979; 2005), Bourdieu (2010) and Vygotsky (1979), along with those of the Reggio Emilia approach (Fernandez Santn and Feliu Torruella, 2017; Alkudhair, 2014) and social constructivism theory (Liu and Chen, 2010; Amineh and Asl, 2015), all allude to the same idea. That is, all suggest that the surrounding environment and societies play a vital role in children's development and learning. Therefore, designing an approach that is influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach or providing it to children could allow children to improve their learning process and help teachers understand and guide their roles. Therefore, it is important to explore and understand teachers' beliefs regarding creativity because of the important roles they play in supporting children's creativity.

Another reason for exploring teachers' beliefs is that teachers need to be helped to be aware of how to foster creativity (Cheung, 2017) and play their roles effectively. Cheung and Mok (2013) claimed that to actualise the development of creativity properly in preschools, teachers' beliefs about creativity should be understood; such

an understanding of their beliefs is a promising starting point when planning policies and curricula, and the more is known, the better will be the influence that can be applied. It can be difficult to attempt to support creativity if teachers believe that it is restricted to a certain concept, such as intelligence, while creativity has a broad meaning (Cheung and Mok, 2013). Therefore, as a part of knowing how to foster creativity, it is important to know and help teachers know what creativity means because the learning experiences that children have will be based on teachers' beliefs about it. According to Stipek et al. (2001), there is an association between teachers' beliefs and their practices, which leads to Roeper and Ruff's (2016) observation that teachers' practices influence how they set the atmosphere for promoting children's creativity. It can appear that creating a supportive climate for children's creativity is linked to teacher's beliefs and practices.

Another reason for exploring teachers' beliefs concerns whether they face issues that they believe will challenge children when developing their creativity. Eckhoff (2011) stated that teachers face difficulties in their support of creativity since it is hard to find a balance between supporting creativity, knowledge and play-based and child self-learning experience styles. Moreover, Cheung (2017) argued that a structured curriculum and time limitations affect teachers' ways of fostering children's creativity, because children need to finish creating their artwork within a limited time and the content of the day's subject. Further issues that may affect teachers' support are the following: 'teachers' own pedagogical limitations, large class size, the pressure of expectation from primary teachers and parents and lack of resources' (Ariffin, 2014, p. 461). According to Jankowska and Gralewski (2022), there is generally a link between the child-parent relationship and creating a climate that supports creativity. In line with this, Lilly (2014) claimed that parents can play a significant role in supporting children's creativity by creating a rich home environment for their children. Moreover, it is expected that parents who value creativity will support their children's creativity more than parents who do not (Pugsley and Acar, 2020). Teachers may face issues in their teaching of children; thus, these kinds of issues need to be addressed and resolved as a way of helping teachers and young children. Therefore, Vong (2008) argued that governments should believe in the role of teachers' and parents' beliefs regarding creativity by supporting teachers because a diversity of beliefs helps to develop an understanding of creativity in the context of society. In other words, not

only is it important for governments to consider parents' beliefs about creativity, but also teachers' because teachers will be leading the programmes of creativity that are often designed by their government.

According to Ariffin (2014), only a few research projects have studied how teachers' beliefs can affect creativity, especially in young children. My own search of the literature was conducted between 2018 and 2023 and was not limited to specific types of publications, dates, databases or keywords; rather, I was trying to gather as many sources as possible. Although there has been an increase in the number of research projects that have studied creativity in general in terms of teachers' beliefs and practice since 2014, I would argue that it is still not a rich area of study, mainly since it seems there is less interest in teachers' beliefs and practice in young children's creativity in visual art. This limitation appears to make the area of teacher's beliefs in young children's creativity in visual art understudied as well as creativity in general. Therefore, the studies conducted by other researchers are not enough to explore and provide a wide and deep understanding of the influence of teachers' beliefs on children's creativity in art, which reflects the need to develop this area. In addition, studies of teachers' beliefs about creativity in general have shown numerous similarities and few dissimilarities among different parts of the world (Cheung and Mok, 2013). For example, studying creativity in general without focusing on a specific area that is related to creativity like art or using different methods of collecting data about early years programmes. Therefore, it is important to explore teachers' beliefs about children's creativity in visual art and their ways of supporting it in Riyadh, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

In summary, this chapter has considered six broad areas of literature – see Figure 2.6 below- to provide a foundation from which to develop the current study and to answer the two following research questions:

1. What do preschool teachers in Riyadh believe creativity means in visual art in children between three and six years of age?
2. How do preschool teachers in Riyadh support creativity in visual art in children between three and six years of age?

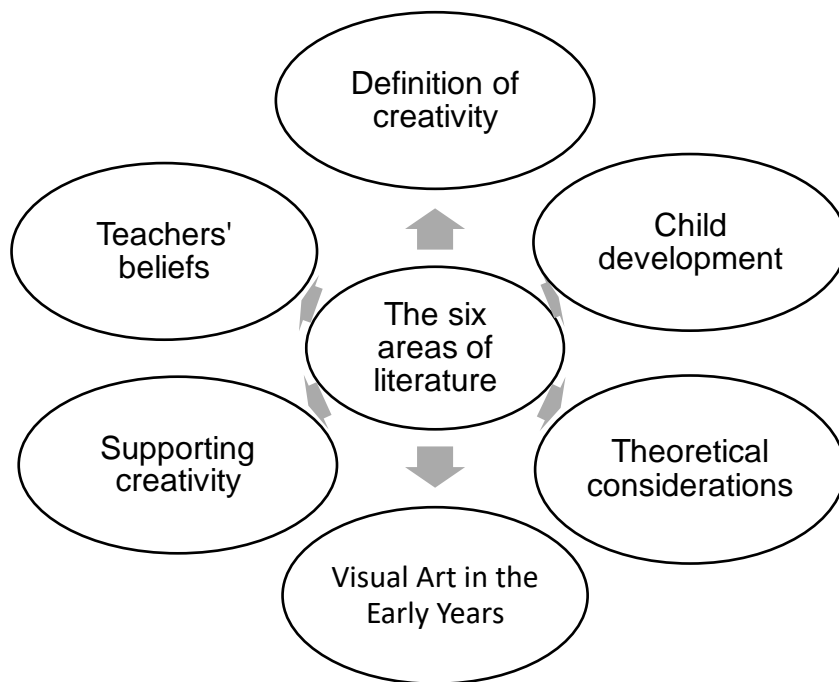


Figure 2.6 Areas of literature considered in the development of the thesis.

1. Definition of creativity

- Defining creativity is complex.
- There are different ways of defining creativity in the literature is to explore all diverse definitions (see Figure 2.1, page 9).
- My definition and understanding of creativity accompany all diverse definitions that define creativity as, a mental skill, available in everyone which differs according to interests and can be supported by environments from early age in order to achieve original and useful outcomes (see Figure 2.4, page 15).

2. Child development

- Brain Development and its Relationship to Creativity
- Social Development and its Relationship to Creativity

3. Theoretical considerations

- The study is informed by three theories: Bourdieu's (2010) Vygotsky's (1979) and Bronfenbrenner's (1979; 2005).

4. Visual art in the early years

- Underpinning and relationship to creativity
- The importance of visual art in the early years

5. Supporting creativity

- How to Support Creativity by Ministry of Education through Teachers

6. Teachers' beliefs

- Teachers' beliefs lead their practice in the classroom, and it can be influenced by the teachers' culture and environment like social constructivism theory and the Reggio Emilia approach.

After discussing the literature review and presenting the gap in the field that needed to be addressed and studied, it is important to discuss the methodology of the study in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins with a restatement of the research questions for the main study and then discusses the research design, with a focus on the ontological and epistemological positions of the study along with the chosen design of the study. Next, I will discuss the pilot study, in which I will reflect on the methods and implications of the main study. Then, I discuss the methods used in the main study and offer some observations on the choice of methods in previous studies and the three innovated methods in the four phases that I applied to this study, as well as procedures for data collection and the participants in the main study and sampling methods. This is followed by a data analysis section, which provides an in-depth analysis of the main study data. Finally, I will discuss the ethics, reliability and validity of the study.

3.2 Research Questions

This study explored the ways in which preschool teachers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, believe in and support creativity in children between the ages of three and six years through visual art activities. The research addressed the following questions:

1. What do preschool teachers in Riyadh believe creativity means in visual art for children between three and six years of age?
2. How do preschool teachers in Riyadh support creativity in visual art for children between three and six years of age?

3.3 Research Design

To situate this study within the wider research literature, I will now discuss my position as a researcher in terms of the study's ontological and epistemological positionings. First, I define the meanings of ontology and epistemology. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2012), Farrow et al. (2020) and Thomas (2013), ontology is a means for

studying reality and existence in the world. Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) argued that four ontologies exist: realism, internal realism, nominalism and relativism, each of which views reality differently. According to realism, truth is singular; facts exist and can be demonstrated (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). For example, researchers who study planet Earth believe that it is spherical in shape and that facts about it can be demonstrated. In terms of internal realism, this means there is truth, but it is unknown, and though facts are real, they cannot be easily attained (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). In the view of nominalism, truth as such does not exist, but facts do, as they are created by people (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). In contrast, relativism means that truth is multiple, and facts are based on individual perspectives (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). All four ontologies that researchers use as guides when conducting a study differ in how they view reality.

In this study, I have chosen relativism as my ontological position since, as a researcher, I see the world as having many truths and is multiple and complex. As explained above, a researcher who takes a relativist position assumes that there is no single truth (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). According to Scotland (2012), there is a different truth for each person, which researchers recognise. In this study, I assume that teachers have differing beliefs and ways of supporting children's creativity in visual art. This assumption is based on the fact that creativity is not taught in Saudi Arabia, and there is no training for professional development regarding creativity in visual art that might influence teachers' perspectives. Therefore, it is likely that there will be many different views that may result in different methods of supporting children's creativity in general and visual art in particular. A contributing factor is the absence of a prescribed curriculum that allows time, space and flexibility for teachers to support children's creativity overall. Furthermore, this area of research is still relatively new, so the evidence base and understanding of creativity are still in the early stages. In other words, if creativity is an area that is under development, there may be a lack of teaching regarding creativity for future teachers in universities, as well as training support for current teachers. Therefore, it is likely that teachers will have different beliefs and ways of supporting children's creativity in visual art. Consequently, that makes relativism the most suitable position for the study to take when comparing other positions that see reality differently.

Epistemology refers to the study of a specific reality (Thomas, 2013; Farrow et al., 2020), whereby researchers use research methods to learn about the area being studied. According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2012), epistemology has different ways of studying the world. There are two principal epistemological positions: positivism, which uses quantitative data, and interpretivism, which uses qualitative data (Lofrida et al., 2014; Thomas, 2013). In positivism, reality exists beyond humans' influence, and researchers study a phenomenon objectively without trying to affect it (Abdul Rehman and Alharthi, 2016). In the case of this study, reality is influenced by an environment that includes humans and context, as there are different truths when it comes to teachers' beliefs and ways of support in children's creativity. Therefore, the positivist position is not suitable for the purpose of this study.

In terms of interpretivism, Mukherji and Albon (2015) define it as a position that allows the researcher to obtain in-depth data about a certain topic for which people explain their different views and meanings for what they do. This position allows researchers not to make a judgement or generalisation and to give special consideration to the idea that multiple descriptions of and meanings for individual behaviours may exist. Similarly, according to Roberts-Holmes (2005), this paradigm is used by researchers interested in the complex interactions among individuals. The interpretivist paradigm is subjective, and it includes different 'understandings, feelings, values'; therefore, truth is not single but multiple (Farrow et al., 2020, p. 15). In this study, I used an interpretivist paradigm, as it fits the purpose of the study by allowing for the exploration and in-depth case studies of three preschools that reflect the epistemological position. According to Scotland (2012), a case study design is one of the interpretive methodologies used to conduct an in-depth study when the researcher uses open-ended interviews and observation as methods to gather qualitative data. This interpretivist philosophical paradigm helped to investigate the research questions. In this case, the analysis of the qualitative data consisted of the researcher's interpretations (Scotland, 2012). The three cases are explored further in chapters four, five and six.

Since this study uses a case study design, it is important to discuss different kinds of case studies. Hakim (2000, p. 59) argued that a case study design is 'the most flexible'. Hakim (2000) and Yin (2009) argued that a case study is a design for conducting an

in-depth study of a person, community, event, group, population, city or subgroup of people. In line with this, Bryman (2012) claimed that the design of a case study involves an intensive study of the case. Moreover, it is particularly suitable when a researcher wants to study a subject that is unknown to understand a group of people or community well (Kumar, 2014). Since the study explored preschool teachers' beliefs and practices in supporting children's creativity in art in Riyadh preschools, I argue that the case study design is the most suitable for the study's purpose compared with other qualitative research designs, such as historical or phenomenological.

There are different types of case studies (Robson, 2011), which is in agreement with the arguments of Hakim (2000) and Yin (2009) that there are case studies of individuals, communities, social groups, organisations and institutions, roles, events or relationships. This research focused on preschools in Riyadh to study their teachers' beliefs and how they support children's creativity in visual art. Therefore, the most appropriate type of case study is 'organisations and institutions', which studies schools, workplaces or trade unions (Hakim, 2000). In this study, there are three cases of three preschools, each case presented separately in chapters four, five and six. Within each preschool, I compared and presented the data that were gathered from interviews and observations for all teachers, while in follow-up interviews, I presented each teacher separately as I compared what each said regarding the artwork of different children that she chose.

According to Kumar (2014), because the case study design generates in-depth data, it is suitable for conducting research in an unknown or developing area of study. Therefore, the nature of the study was exploratory research, which explores a new area or an area that has not been well defined and can be studied to gain a better understanding (Bhat, 2019). According to Stebbins (2001), researchers who use exploratory research methods do so to have more knowledge about certain people, behaviours, situations or methods based on worthwhile reasons for exploration. This definition reflects the need to explore in depth the ways preschool teachers believe in and support children's creativity in visual art based on the theories of Bourdieu (2010), Bronfenbrenner (1979; 2005) and Vygotsky (1979), who argued that cultures and societies exert an influence on children's development and creativity. Moreover, as

there are only a few studies in the area of children's creativity (Leggett, 2017), the research design takes a qualitative approach to obtain a full understanding.

It is the research design that leads researchers through their research in terms of the techniques used to collect and analyse the data (Yilmaz, 2013). The design of the study was a case study that, according to Kumar (2014), is usually closely related to a qualitative approach. The study used a qualitative approach, which focuses on understanding how people experience the world (Crouch and Pearce, 2015). According to Kumar (2014), the qualitative approach allows a researcher to obtain deep data about what people value and think, as well as their attitudes. Albon and Mukherji (2015) stated that qualitative researchers are generally interested in obtaining additional information about small groups. Furthermore, according to Crouch and Pearce (2015), qualitative research methodologies are designed to explore topics in greater depth while focusing on a selected group.

3.4 Pilot Study

3.4.1 Introduction

Piloting a study requires gathering data from a small number of participants prior to the main study to examine whether the topic, research questions and research methods that are used to collect the data (Roberts-Holmes, 2005) are suitable and the methods are able to gather data and answer the research questions. Piloting also helps to examine the planned method for analysing the data. Since schools started in September 2019 in Riyadh, it was easier and more convenient to conduct the pilot study in England. In addition, given the rules of the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia Cultural Bureau of London, the time to collect data in Riyadh was limited. Therefore, I chose to conduct the pilot study in October 2019 in Leeds. In this section, the aim of piloting the methods, pilot study's procedure and participants, pilot study results and reflection on the methods and the implications for the main study will be discussed.

3.4.2 Aim of Piloting the Methods

Each phase was undertaken to ensure that the methods were suitable for gathering the data needed for the main study. In terms of the interview (see Appendix A, first interview, phase one, first version, page 283) I wanted to ensure that the questions were understandable and easily answered and to test how long it may take to conduct each interview. In terms of the observation framework (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289), which was created before conducting the pilot study, I ensured it was tested in terms of its use, the length of time needed and the level of detail the observation could provide about the practice. Piloting the observation framework helped to develop the final framework to later be used for the main study in Saudi Arabia. In addition to the two methods used in each phase, the number of chosen artworks and the questionnaire (see Appendix A, follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293) were also tested by allowing the teachers to choose up to six photos of the children's artwork to be added to the questions. The number of pieces of artwork chosen as suitable for teachers to choose was piloted to ensure that they were effective and adequate. The questionnaire was also piloted to ensure that the questions were understandable and able to elicit fully detailed answers from the teachers about their beliefs about creativity in the children's artwork and the influence of culture on the children's creativity.

3.4.3 Pilot Study's Procedure and Participants

Month	Activity	Result
July	Contacted two nurseries	Asked to contact them later in the middle of September.
September	Contacted the two nurseries and other nurseries in Leeds	No teachers agreed to participate.
October	Continued to contact nurseries in Leeds and around Leeds.	In the second week of October, four teachers agreed to participate.

Table 3.1 Timeline of approaching teachers to participate in the pilot study

As is clear from Table 3.1 above, I tried to contact teachers in advance in Leeds nurseries in July to plan to collect the data for the pilot study in September. The nurseries that were contacted asked to be contacted again in the middle of September. I again contacted the nurseries, but as September 2019 was the first month of the academic year and most of the teachers' nurseries were working on assignments, no teachers agreed to participate in the pilot study. By the second week of October 2019, a nursery had agreed to allow a visit to their school and to speak with the teachers. By the end of October 2019, four teachers in one nursery had agreed to participate in the study in three phases.

The procedure for collecting the data for the pilot study was as follows:

First day:

1. On the day I arrived at the nursery, I met the manager and talked about the research and the process of piloting it.
2. After receiving organisational consent approval, the manager talked to her staff to see if any of them were interested in participating in the study. Subsequently, three teachers joined the study (see Appendix F, ethics approval, page 302).
3. I met each teacher separately. I allowed each enough time to read the information sheets (see Appendix B, page 295) and sign the consent forms (see Appendix C, page 298), then start the interview when she was ready.
4. At the end of each interview, a day in the following week for conducting the observation was chosen. I also provided the teachers with information sheets (see Appendix B, page 295) for the parents of children in their classrooms to inform them that observations of the children's teachers would be conducted and to ask if they preferred their children not to be present during the observations. The parents had a week to return the information sheet with their responses.
5. Between conducting the interviews and observations, the three interviews were transcribed.

Second day:

1. On the day chosen for the observation, one teacher was absent, and the two other teachers had to do their observations for providing children with

time to do artwork in the outdoor area because their arrangements for the day did not work out as had been planned.

2. I had to do the two observations based on the teachers' availabilities and took photos of the children's artwork to be added to the two questionnaires and sent them.

Third day:

1. By the end of the same week, I contacted the nursery again to rearrange an appointment with the teacher, who was absent on the day of the observation and to confirm that the observation could be conducted indoors.
2. I did the third observation, interviewed a fourth teacher, and then observed her indoors.
3. Questionnaires were sent to the third and fourth teachers, including the photos they chose and asked to complete the questionnaires within one week.

In the English nursery in Leeds, I managed to conduct four interviews, four observations – two had to be outdoors but the other two were indoors – and one completed the questionnaire, all of which were analysed to test the chosen method of analysis whereby the data would be presented later. These were followed by a Skype interview with a Saudi preschool teacher in Riyadh to review and test the most recently updated version of the interview.

All four of the English preschool teachers who participated in the study had been working with children for five years or more, with a qualification of Level Three in Childcare. However, one of the teachers also has a first degree in Sociology and another one is doing her first degree in Primary Education. All of the teachers were teaching children from three to four years old in a nursery in Leeds. The fifth teacher was a Saudi national who has a degree in preschool education and has been working with children for more than ten years in a private preschool in Riyadh. I approached her through Skype to do the first interview.

3.4.4 Pilot Study Results

The data of the pilot study for four English teachers' interviews are analysed below using the process of Braun and Clarke (2006), for example, open coding, which shows whether the collected data answered the research questions properly.

1	Read and re-read all of the data to ensure familiarity.
2	Code all of the data and link with related codes.
3	Create themes from the related codes.
4	Review the themes.
5	Define and name the themes.
6	Write the report of analysed data.

Table 3.2 Analysing the data using the process of Braun and Clarke (2006).

The research questions are:

1. What do preschool teachers believe creativity means in visual art in children between three and six years of age?

2. How do preschool teachers support creativity in visual art in children between three and six years of age?

Based on the analytical techniques of Braun and Clarke (2006), Gibbs (2011a and 2011b) and Woodall (2016), I first read and reread all of the gathered data to become familiar and engaged with it. Second, I looked for codes that were related to the research questions and linked them with other related codes (see Appendix H, An example of one of the codebooks for data analysis, Makkah preschool, page 304). Third, I gathered all groups of codes under a specific theme (see Appendix H, An example of one of the codebooks for data analysis, Makkah preschool, page 304). Then, I reviewed and named the themes. For example, in the answers to the second research question, which was about supporting children's creativity in visual art, there were seven themes at the beginning. Then, after reviewing and naming the themes, I reduced the number of themes to five.

Although the main aim of piloting the methods was to ensure they were effective, the collected data from the four English teachers' interviews were analysed to test the manual thematic analysis approach and whether the approach would gather answers from the data. For example, I used a codebook (see Appendix H, An example of one

of the codebooks for data analysis, Makkah preschool, page 304) to help me gather codes and create themes from the main study data. The data below shows how effective the chosen approach was, as I did not need to do further study and an intensive reading to analyse the data of the main study, because I had already done that after the pilot.

3.4.4.1 The Results of the Interviews

The answer to the first research question

In terms of the first research question, which is *What do preschool teachers believe creativity means in visual art in children between three and six years of age?*, five focuses were identified, where each one has a maximum of two themes.

Focus: Teachers' Beliefs in Creativity in General

Theme: Freedom and Diversity

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4
Freedom of expression in different ways	Have the opportunities to use imagination, resources	Expression of interests in different ways	Doing what they want to do

Table 3.3 Teachers' beliefs regarding creativity in general in the pilot study

Table 3.3 shows that the teachers argued that the meaning of creativity is being free and expressing imagination in different ways using different resources. All of the English teachers stated that freedom of choice and creation are reflections of creativity. Teachers 1, 3 and 4 agreed on '*in different ways*' or '*paths*', which shows the importance of diversity besides freedom in the meaning of creativity.

Focus: Teachers' Beliefs in Creativity in Visual Art

Theme: Ideas, Imagination and Development

The four teachers expressed two beliefs about creativity in visual art. Teachers 2 and 4 believed that creativity in visual art means using imagination and knowing what they are making, even if their creations have no clear image. For example, Teacher 2

answered “*I’m drawing my mummy*” and “*you know it is just marks on a paper*”. She also believes that when children show development in their artwork, it is a sign of creativity in art.

Theme: Use of Different Art Materials

Teachers 1 and 3 believed it is the use of different art materials. For instance, Teacher 3 answered, ‘*The children just get everything out; use all of the colours*’.

Focus: Signs of Creative Artwork

Theme: Interest

All the teachers agreed that when a child has an interest in doing the artwork and the activities are child-led, this is a sign of creativity. Two teachers added that using different art materials is a sign of creativity in artwork.

Theme: Meaning of Artwork

Some teachers believed that talking about the meaning of their artwork, expressing their thoughts and creating some artwork at home are signs of children’s creativity in visual art.

Focus: Every Child is Creative in Visual Art

Theme: All Children Are Creative with Different Interests

Teachers 2 and 3 argued that children are creative but along different paths, such as writing, making art or playing with cars. For example, Teacher 3 answered, ‘*Every child likes to be creative in their own way*’.

Theme: All Children are Creative in Art

Teacher 4 believed that all children are creative in visual art, as they need it to express themselves. Similarly, Teacher 1 argued that all children are creative when they do their artwork, but some like art more and choose to create without needing to be persuaded.

Focus: The Personality Traits of Creative Children in Visual Art

Theme: No Certain Personality Traits

Teachers 1, 2 and 4 believed that there are no certain personality traits for creative children.

Theme: Messy or Not

Although Teacher 2 answered that there are no certain personality traits, she also claimed that *'some of them don't want to be messy'*. In contrast, Teacher 3 argued that children who like to be messy are creative in visual art.

In sum, from the data regarding the answer to the first research question, it is clear that the teachers mostly shared the same belief about children's creativity, which is based on freedom of expression in diverse ways. In visual art in particular, creativity consists of using different art materials and knowing what to make. Or to put it another way, all children are creative in different ways and any child can be creative in visual art.

The answer to the second research question

In terms of the second research question, which is *How do preschool teachers support creativity in visual art in children between three and six years of age?*, eight focuses were identified where each one had a maximum of two themes.

Focus: Supporting Children's Creativity in Visual Art

Kinds of Support	Number of teachers
Planning activities	3
Display	2
Encouraging children	2
Accessible art materials	2
Show parents the children's artwork	2

Table 3.4 Supporting Children's Creativity in Visual Art

Theme: Material Support

Table 3.4 shows the kinds of support that teachers provide for children's creativity in visual art. Most of the four teachers supported the children by planning diverse activities for them, while half of them made art materials accessible. However, Teacher 4 added, *'We do a big thing on children's choice'*. Regarding the art materials that support creativity in visual art, the four teachers agreed on the art materials, which can be brushes, colours, pens, papers, sponges, rulers, glitter, glue, popsicle sticks, feathers and recycled items, such as cereal boxes.

Theme: Nonmaterial Support

Half of the teachers supported children's creativity by displaying the artwork, encouraging the children and showing parents the children's artwork.

Focus: Curricula for Creativity

Theme: Early Years Foundation Stage Document

In terms of the curricula, all four teachers followed the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) document to support children's creativity in visual art. Three of the four teachers (Teachers 2, 3 and 4) confirmed that they planned the activities weekly and followed the planning sheets that they set up every week in their classrooms. Teacher 1 added, *'but for the one who is passionate about it, I don't think there is something'*.

Focus: Barriers to Supporting Children's Creativity

Theme: Struggling with Barriers but Satisfied

Regarding the barriers to supporting children, each teacher provided their own examples. These included a lack of organisation, not knowing what children are interested in, shortness of staff compared with the large number of children, limited budgets, running out of resources quickly, messiness and the difficulty of young teachers in understanding the EYFS document. These barriers show the kinds of struggles teachers face in their support. However, most of the teachers felt satisfied with the level of support that the children received, while Teacher 4 thought it could be improved.

Focus: Teacher's Influence

Theme: Positive Influence

The four teachers were asked if they thought the teachers' influence was generally positive on the children's artwork creation. Teachers 1 and 3 generally thought that it was.

Theme: Not a Positive Influence All the Time

Teacher 2 thought that the teacher's influence was sometimes positive, while Teacher 4 did not agree. Teachers 2 and 4 argued that teachers may have a negative influence on children's artwork and that children should create what they want. For example, Teacher 4 answered, *'Let's say I went to the art area, and I said today we are going to make snowmen; not all children want to make snowmen'*.

Focus: Teachers' Interactions

Theme: Verbal Interactions

In terms of the teachers' interactions, most of the teachers (Teachers 1, 2 and 3) interacted with children by asking questions as well as making suggestions for the children to do. Moreover, the teachers interacted with the children by awarding them when they did something good.

Theme: Non-verbal Interactions

Teacher 4 interacted with children by doing activities with them, being around them in the art corner and displaying their artwork.

Focus: teachers' Suggestions for Policymakers

Teacher 1	Teacher 2	Teacher 3	Teacher 4
- Detailed art section in the EYFS	- Allowing activities to be child-led - Being open-minded - Not a set curriculum	- Different resources - Going by children's imagination	No advice

Table 3.5 Teachers' suggestions for advising policymakers

Table 3.5 shows that Teachers 1, 2 and 3 wanted to advise policymakers, while Teacher 4 believed that what is available for supporting is enough and provides good guidance. It should be clear from the teachers' answers that they shared some points.

Theme: Child-led or Teacher-led Activities

Teacher 1 advised the provision of a detailed art section with the outcomes for each kind of activity. However, Teacher 2 advised not to have a set curriculum, but to be open-minded and allow for the activity to be child-led. Similarly, Teacher 3 advised following the children's imaginations in their artwork by providing different art materials.

Focus: Cultural Influences

Theme: Cultural Influence on Children's Creativity

Three teachers (Teachers 1, 3 and 4) believed that culture has an influence on children's creativity in visual art. In particular, Teacher 4 believed that the influence could be on the choice of colours. This influence, according to Teachers 1 and 3, can be in the form of TV characters and Santa or what children do on their holidays or on the weekends.

Focus: Resources in Society

Theme: Public Places

Regarding the available resources in society, all four teachers believed that such resources existed. One of the teachers (Teacher 1) believed that the resources were limited, as can be seen in the teachers' answers. Teachers 2 and 4 agreed that a park is a resource, while Teacher 2 agreed with Teacher 1 that the library is a resource, along with museums and galleries. Teacher 3 believed that church activities were resources for children's creativity in visual art.

In sum, from the data regarding the answer to the second research question, it is clear that most of the teachers tended to support children's creativity by planning art activities. They also believed that children's interest in making artwork is a sign of creativity. Moreover, the teachers tended to believe in the positive role that teachers

can play by supporting children and how a culture can influence children's creativity in visual art. At the same time, half of the teachers advised policymakers to allow child-led activities and follow the children's imagination. In terms of a culture's influence and resources in society, three teachers out of four believed that cultures have an influence on children's artwork, and all of them believed there are resources in society to support children's creativity in visual art.

After presenting the collected data and reviewing and reflecting, it was decided that the same methods of presenting and processing an analysis would be used later in the main study after applying the needed changes to the methods to gain deep and rich data.

3.4.5 Reflection on the Methods and the Implications for the Main Study

3.4.5.1 Interview

According to Castillo-Montoya (2016), it is important that interview questions are understandable. I noticed the importance of asking understandable questions while conducting the first three interviews. Based on the teachers' reactions, some of the interview questions were not easy to understand. For example, some questions were easily and quickly understood and answered, while other questions caused the teachers some confusion and hesitation. Accordingly, while conducting the interview, I had to reword those questions and clarify what they meant. Later, I reworded the ambiguous questions to be more easily understood. For example, the fourth question was: *What do you think creativity means?* The first three teachers tended to answer the question as meaning creativity in young children, not in general. Therefore, the question was changed to: *What do you think creativity means in general?* Also, the fifth question was removed, as it elicited an answer like one from the sixth question, which was *How would you describe visual art in the creativity of children?* This question was also reworded to be *How would you describe children's creativity in artwork?* Similarly, the following two questions, *How do you support children's creativity in artwork in your classroom?* and *How does your preschool support children's creativity in artwork?* were combined, as the participants tended to repeat their answers when they answered the questions. This combination made the question *How do you support children's creativity in artwork in your classroom and school?*

Further editing was done by replacing the word *indicators* with *signs* and the word *promote* with *support*. Also, the phrase *visual art* in all the questions became *artwork* to make them more understandable. One of the questions that was also hard to understand consisted of two parts: *To what extent do you interact with a child who shows creativity in visual art in the art corner?* and *What does that interaction involve?* Therefore, the question was reworded to be: *How do you interact with a child who shows creativity in visual art in the art corner?* Castillo-Montoya (2016) argued that the interviewer should focus on a certain topic and then move on to another one. Therefore, questions should be arranged by topic. To address this, the sequence of questions about supporting children's creativity in artwork was rearranged to be better organised. Finally, after reviewing all the questions in each version, the number of main questions was reduced. In the first version (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, first version, page 283), there were 22 main questions, in the second version (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, second version, page 284), 21 main questions and in the third version (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, third version, page 286), 20 main questions.

The style of asking the interview questions in the three interviews tended to be more structured and fixed than semi-structured, as had been originally planned (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, first version, page 283). The interview started with easy questions, such as about background and education, which, according to Leech (2002), is a good point to begin. Then, I moved to the questions about teachers' beliefs and practice. During these interviews, I tended to just ask the questions without adding any sub-questions or probes to gain richer data from the teachers' answers, which resulted in the transcripts of each of the three interviews being three pages maximum, which was less than anticipated. Therefore, I reviewed the whole process and style of the questions, and then I interviewed the fourth teacher. In the fourth interview, I ensured that it was possible for the questions to be more semi-structured to obtain more details by adding sub-questions and probes during the flow of the interview based on the teacher's answers. Leech (2002) stated that researchers can use sub-questions to obtain rich information during semi-structured interviews, which encourages participants to talk more. Although most of the sub-questions (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, second version, page 284) were about making sure I understood what the fourth teacher was trying to say and clarify her

answers by the amount of data that was given, it was evident that adding sub-questions made a difference as the transcript of the fourth interview became five pages comparing to each teacher before. Therefore, I did further work on the style of the interview by adding 18 sub-questions that could be asked during the interviews (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, third version, page 286) to obtain further details and encourage teachers to talk beyond the 20 main questions. Another reason was to ensure that the sub-questions that were added did not change the subject of the interviews.

The fifth interview was conducted with a Saudi teacher using Skype to ensure that the translation and the new version of the interview remained effective after adding sub-questions. Only two main questions were deleted because the teacher repeated her answers to these two questions, as did the four teachers before her. The two main deleted questions are: *Could you describe what you see in children's artwork that reflects their culture?* and *How do you interact with a child who shows creativity in artwork in the art corner?* One further question needed to be clarified. The question, *What are the available resources in Saudi society for supporting preschool children's creativity in artwork?*, became: *Besides schools, what are the available resources in Saudi society for supporting preschool children's creativity in artwork?* The result of the fifth interview was an almost one-hour interview, which made it the longest interview and had the richest data. The final version of the interview schedule included 18 main questions and 16 sub-questions that were suitable to be asked and answered within 30–60 minutes (see Appendix A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287).

3.4.5.2 Observation

The first draft of making the framework of the observation tool consisted more of making notes than completing tables. To avoid missing any information, the framework was changed to consist of two tables and an information-filling section, which enabled the gathering of rich data during the observations. However, a few revisions were made to the framework before applying the observation tool based on the data gathered from the interviews. For example, before piloting the observation method, the point of *Are the resources accessible?* in the information-filling section was added, as it was adjusted after the interviews were conducted. In the same section, the two

points of the *Type of school* and *Teacher level* were removed, as unnecessary. Moreover, the point about *The theme of the classroom* was added after the observations and questionnaire were conducted to provide a better understanding of the artwork if these were related to the theme or the subject of the week.

3.4.5.3 Children's Artwork

Considering the number of chosen photos, the highest number of artworks created during the observation was five. When the teachers in the pilot study were asked to choose up to six pieces of artwork, they tended to choose all of the pieces that the children had created. Choosing all the pieces of artwork may have caused them to select even pieces of artwork that they did not consider creative, which did not seem effective. Therefore, the teachers in the main study were asked to limit their choices of the children's artwork that they believed to be creative to be up to three.

3.4.5.4 Questionnaire

Semi-structured questions were used in the questionnaire method (see Appendix A, follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.1, page 291) to which the teachers' choices of artwork were added and sent to them individually. From the experience of piloting the study, it is clear that the questionnaire tool and the number of chosen photos was not effective. The participants agreed to take part in the questionnaire phase and did not withdraw; however, I had to ask many times if they could complete the questionnaires so they could send them to me, which was stressful and time-consuming for everyone involved. I had to postpone analysing the completed questionnaires until I could confirm that all the completed questionnaires had been received. Each time I contacted the teachers, they always seemed too busy to complete the questionnaires. However, they did not withdraw, but told me they were going to complete them and send them to me. Moreover, giving them one week to complete the questionnaire may have been the reason for them to postpone completing the questionnaire and then forgetting to complete it. Therefore, I had only one completed questionnaire, and based on that, the teacher did not seem to understand the questions or how to complete the questionnaire. For example, although all of the children's artwork were similar in terms of idea, design and colours, for each photo of the piece of artwork, the teacher answered the same question

differently, which made it seem the teacher was confused about the meaning of the question. However, during the semi-structured interviews, I was able to confirm that the teachers understood the questions because I could directly observe and comment on their understanding of them. Furthermore, I allowed the teachers in the pilot study to read the questions before starting the interviews, as some of them needed to think about their answers in advance, which helped provide me with rich data. Therefore, after finishing piloting the methods, I decided to change the questionnaire into a short follow-up semi-structured interview and reword the eight main questions, five for each piece of artwork and three for all of the chosen artwork (see Appendix A, follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293). Six sub-questions were added for the purposes of the interviews.

Based on what is discussed above regarding the outcomes of piloting, the chosen phases were a semi-structured interview, observation and the use of up to three pieces of children's artwork to stimulate teacher's conversation in the context of a short follow-up semi-structured interview. These phases comprised a schedule of three days based on the teachers' availability and without asking them for further contributions. The above amendments were made with the intention of using the revised methods during the main study, which was conducted within 45 days – based on the given time from the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia Cultural Bureau in London to collect the data in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia – beginning in January 2020 and continuing until February 2020.

3.5 Methods in the Main Study

The aim of this study was to explore preschool teachers' beliefs about and support for young children's creativity in visual art in Riyadh. Therefore, the chosen methods needed to be able to obtain in-depth data to explore the different truths of this area. However, most methods for collecting data in the creativity area of research, where few of these areas in the field of creativity have been studied (Prentice, 2000), tend to be limited to a maximum of two methods or adapted from other studies. This section discusses the choice of methods in previous studies in the area of teachers' beliefs and practices in creativity in comparison with my innovation of the three methods of collecting data applied during the four phases of this study.

3.5.1 Reflection on the Choice of Methods in Previous Studies

A few studies have examined creativity with regard to in-service teachers' beliefs about creativity in young children, which is the main aim of this study. For example, Kerem et al. (2001) and Vong (2008) applied an interview method to collect data about teachers' beliefs. Alkus and Olgan (2014) mentioned that they applied focus group interview questions designed by Aslan and Cansever (2009), who did not mention how they had obtained their questions. Eason et al. (2009) used a scale designed by Kay Bennett Shanahan at the University of Tennessee called the Early Childhood Creativity Rating (ECCRS). Eason et al. (2009) used the rating scale to explore private and public teachers' perspectives on children's creativity, which could be considered a limitation as it does not provide wide, in-depth data to display the different realities. In contrast, other studies have used two methods to investigate the topic area: teachers' beliefs in creativity. For example, Chien and Hui (2010) used focus group interviews developed by Chien, Wang and Chen (2001) involving 71 teachers. The data that were gathered from the interviews helped create the context of a questionnaire that was completed by 877 teachers. Similarly, Ariffin (2014) and Aljashaam (2017) used both observation and qualitative semi-structured interviews. Aljashaam (2017) used the two methods to explore teachers' perspectives on creativity in Saudi Arabia. I would argue that using two methods to explore teachers' beliefs would provide more in-depth data than using only one method.

Another area of creativity that has been studied by researchers is teachers' actual practices and the challenges they face. Three studies examined this area, starting from one method, and then two and three methods. First, Yildirim (2010) conducted qualitative research by examining the teachers' guidebook and programme of early childhood education for children aged from three to six years old. The examination was based on a checklist created by the researcher to assess the degree of creativity applied in early childhood education. In the same area but using two methods, Cheung (2017) investigated the practices of three preschools in China using interviews followed by the observation of in-service teachers to identify the challenges of promoting creativity. In the same year, Meyer and Eilifsen (2017) used three methods to conduct a study in the area of creativity that focused on preservice teachers' – early childhood studies students – actual practices and their challenges in Norway. The

researchers used a questionnaire, an online end-of-course evaluation and old survey data that were gathered by Meyer and Reigstad (2009) on pre-service teachers.

In the same area, the challenge of supporting creativity, a study conducted by Leggett (2017) used seven methods of collecting data with in-service teachers that were designed by other researchers. These were 'observations (Boudah, 2011), digitally audio recorded interactions between educators and children, field notes (Yin, 2003, 2011), researcher memos (Charmaz, 2014; Lempert, 2007), artefacts, photographs and audio recorded focus group sessions' (Leggett, 2017, p. 848). As Leggett's (2017) study is the only one that used more than three methods for collecting data, I would argue that it is likely that it was able to obtain a better idea of the challenges that educators face in their practice compared to other studies that relied only on one or two sources of data. This better idea of challenges comes from using different methods that offer a wider picture of the topic (Noble and Heale, 2019), and in the case of Leggett's (2017) study, the use of three methods or more for collecting data enabled triangulation and enriched the study.

For pre-service or trainee teachers, Eckhoff (2011) studied how these teachers viewed the nature and role of creativity in terms of current issues using two methods. Eckhoff (2011) used a questionnaire designed by Diakidoy and Kanari (1999) and a qualitative examination of the Creativity Learning Community designed by Lave and Wenger (1991). Similarly, regarding the number of methods and area of study, Yates and Twigg (2017) and Tugrul et al. (2014) studied the beliefs of trainee teachers – that is, Early Childhood Studies students – in terms of their own creativity in the classroom. Yates and Twigg (2017) and Tugrul et al. (2014) used two methods. In Yates and Twigg's (2017) study, a questionnaire and a self-reflection sheet were administered after the participants engaged in creative activities. Tugrul et al.'s (2014) study also used two methods, although these were different, consisting of an interview and the Torrance Test of Creativity, A and B forms created in 1966 (Wallach, 1968). Similarly, Ata-Akturk and Sevimli-Celik (2023) conducted a study to investigate pre-service teachers' beliefs using two methods to collect data: a questionnaire to examine pre-service teachers' beliefs and an instrument to examine support for creativity education. The two methods were developed by other researchers, including Diakidoy and Kanari (1999), who developed a questionnaire that was used by other researchers for their

studies. However, a study by Cheung and Mok (2013) looked at the creativity of in-service teachers by using only a questionnaire to collect data. It could be argued that studies that used one or two methods for collecting data, whether researching pre-service or in-service teachers' creativity, could be seen as limited. The limitation is that researchers would not have had enough sources of data to rely on to triangulate the data for the studies, which helps to increase the validity of the study (Carter et al., 2014).

After looking at the studies that examined in-service and pre-service teachers' beliefs and practices regarding creativity, it is clear that none of them created a context of more than three methods to explore teachers' beliefs and practices regarding creativity, as does the current study. However, using a method developed by other researchers may not be suitable for the new context in which it will be applied, and this may mean searching in the same gap of study. For example, Holmes et al. (2015) and Holmes and Romeo (2013) both studied creativity, play and language in preschool children. Both studies used three methods each, with six methods in total; four of them were the same and were applied in the same specific context of the group of children who were mostly of European-American ethnic heritage in the USA. According to Prentice (2000), many areas in the field of creativity have yet to be studied. Moreover, many cultures in the USA, for example, have not been studied. Therefore, it is important to create methods of measurement that are appropriate to the culture in which a study may be applied and to conduct further research in different areas of creativity that involve different cultural contexts. Researchers could obtain more accurate data and conduct a study in a new area if they designed their own research methods that fit the context of the study. Besides creating methods that lead to studying a new area of research and fit the culture and society – the context of the study – the kinds of methods and approaches used in studies are very important. Including interviews and observation methods in qualitative research could provide more in-depth data and a clearer image of the realities of supporting creativity in children of all ages in schools. At the same time, quantitative research can use measurements but may not provide the in-depth data needed to explore the area of creativity. However, this approach could be a step prior to conducting studies in the field. For example, exploring a specific topic in creativity, such as curricula, in early years education using a questionnaire involving a large sample size to explore the

characteristics of curricula in a country. Following this, exploring the same topic but more in-depth using teachers' daily preparation documentation and observation with a smaller sample size in a city, for example.

In the current study, I chose the methods to collect the data and then designed the process of applying them sequentially in four phases. Following that, I created the context of each method to apply them in four phases, which increased the level of the methodological contribution of my study. Applying three methods across four phases helped to explore the different and complex realities, and since my ontological position is relativism, this means that the existing truths are different and complex (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012). Using three methods in four phases helped to provide a wide view of the explored area and in-depth data in which teachers shared their beliefs and practices based on the epistemological position of interpretivism, as explained by Mukherji and Albon (2015), which I chose. The application of the three methods into four phases allowed for triangulating and enriching the study data (Noble and Heale, 2019; Carter et al., 2014). Therefore, in this study, three methods of collecting data were created and implemented into four phases sequentially using a qualitative approach to explore the different teachers' beliefs about creativity in visual art in young children, specifically in terms of the culture and society's influence on the children. The three methods were semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions for the first and fourth phases and non-participant observation for the second phase. The second phase was followed by taking photos of the children's artworks for the third method in order to use them for the last phase, which was the follow-up interview. In the following section, the three methods applied in the four phases are discussed.

3.5.2 Three Innovated Methods in Four Phases

Since the aim of the study was to explore preschool teachers' beliefs about and support for young children's creativity in visual art in Riyadh, there was a need to obtain in-depth data. To obtain in-depth data and reflect on previous studies, a case study design was chosen to conduct the study using a qualitative approach, and three methods of collecting data were applied in four phases. These methods of collecting data and methodology helped to clarify the varieties of participants' experiences and understanding of the world using their own words. Therefore, in-depth data were generated, and the stage was set to understand peoples' lives and affairs through

open-ended questions in interviews and observations (Yilmaz, 2013). The data for this study were collected using several methods: initial semi-structured interviews, observations, follow-up semi-structured interviews and photographs of children's artwork. The methods were applied in four phases, and the processes were sequential, using initial semi-structured interviews, observation and photos of all the children's artwork followed by short semi-structured follow-up interviews. The data were collected using an initial semi-structured interview (see Appendix A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287), followed by observation (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289) of the selected participants. At the end of each observation, photos of the children's artwork were taken based on each teacher's selection of up to three children's artworks. The participating teachers were interviewed in a short follow-up semi-structured interview that asked about the children's artwork (see Appendix A, follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293). The three kinds of methods for the four phases – interview, observation and taking photos – are discussed below.

3.5.2.1 Open-ended Semi-structured Questions in the Interviews

In the study's first and fourth phases, the data collection methods were interviews using open-ended questions (see Appendix A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287 and follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293) with voice recordings. According to Robson (2011), an interview is a common method for collecting data in social research, which involves a researcher and one or more of the participants by asking them questions and receiving answers. Kumar (2014) added that interviews should be conducted for a specific purpose. There are three types of interviews in terms of structure: unstructured, semi-structured and structured (Robson, 2011). In this study, I used one-to-one semi-structured interviews to gain in-depth data and was able to ask questions and explain what a question meant when there was a need to clarify any point that was not clear to me or the participants. According to Albon and Mukherji (2015), a semi-structured interview is more flexible than a structured interview. Moreover, a semi-structured interview contains the possibility of limiting discussion during the interview as opposed to one that is unstructured (Robson, 2011).

Open-ended questions were used in both interviews. According to Albon and Mukherji (2015), Yilmaz (2013) and Basit (2010), open-ended questions allow researchers to obtain rich data from participants who are able to respond using their own language and means of expression. Kumar (2014) argued that this method enables participants to share their perceptions, beliefs, feelings and experiences. Hence, the participants were able to clarify their own beliefs and methods for supporting creative visual art among preschool children, thereby helping to answer the research questions.

Robert-Holmes (2005) argued that tape recording helps researchers focus on the discussion during the interview because it is impossible to write down everything that is said during the interview. Therefore, there was a need to tape record all of the interviews with the participants using a recording device. Robson (2011) argued that an interview that is shorter than 30 minutes might not be valuable and longer than 60 minutes may dissuade the participants from taking part in the research. The participants who were interviewed in the study were preschool teachers who tended to have busy school days. Therefore, each interview took up to 60 minutes for the first interview and up to 30 minutes for a short follow-up interview at the end of their participation (see Appendix F, ethics approval, page 302), in which the teachers were asked about the chosen artwork after the observations.

3.5.2.2 Observation

Non-participant observation generally provides researchers with a greater chance than other approaches of learning about people's behaviour within a specific context (Maxwell, 2013). Moreover, it enables researchers to observe complex interactions in social settings (Marshall and Rossman, 2011). Kumar (2014) argued that observation is the most appropriate method for collecting data on group interactions. The non-participant observation consisted of taking notes regarding creativity-related teaching practices, with two tables and an information-filling section.

Each participant was observed once, depending on the teacher's comfort and willingness to participate. The observations lasted for the full duration of indoor play, which was usually between 30 and 50 minutes in the art corner and was restricted to classrooms. Saudi preschool classrooms' indoor play areas are usually divided among six play corners: Discovery, Blocks, Home, Library, Cognition and Art (see Figure 3.1),

but observations were conducted only in the Art corner. As this study aimed to explore preschool teachers' creativity-supporting interactions with young children during visual art activities, observation was an appropriate data collection method.

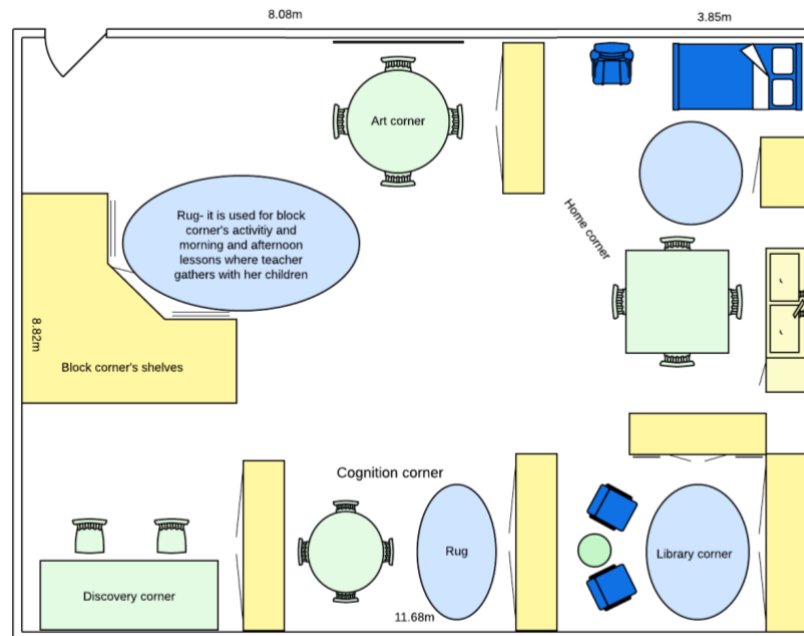


Figure 3.1 A floor plan for the preschool's classroom in Saudi Arabia where I worked.

3.5.2.3 Children's Artwork

Two tables and an information-filling section (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289) were used to record each observation. At the end of each observation, I asked each teacher to choose up to three pieces of children's artwork that she believed demonstrated creativity. Each teacher chose two to three pieces of artwork. The photos were added to the short follow-up interview to question each teacher about the artwork that she had chosen. The purpose of this was to understand their beliefs, obtain an explanation of creativity in visual art based on these pieces of artwork and investigate whether they believed there was an influence from culture and society or from the teachers on the children's creativity. Enosh and Ben-Ari's study (2010, p. 153) claimed that any way of reflecting accurately on a specific point involves 'a state of mind and an active engagement', and this reflection helps to understand the social contexts that link back to the values, beliefs, experiences and interests of the

participants. Since the aim of the study was to explore preschool teachers' beliefs and ways of supporting children's creativity in visual art and the extent of Saudi cultural influence on children's creativity in this area, this short follow-up interview about the children's artwork provided valuable information for the study. This reflection also helped to gather in-depth information and clarify any differences that appeared in the data (Enosh and Ben-Ari, 2010).

It was noticed that, after collecting the required data, these methods of collecting data reached and provided a high level of in-depth data. These rich data show the variety of truths and help to understand this area of the study regarding teachers' beliefs and practices about children's creativity in visual art. The results of this study show how the methods were carefully developed to fully answer the research questions. These outcomes emphasise how these methods of data collection were carefully chosen because of their appropriateness for qualitative data collection (Basit, 2010), the context of the study and the ontological and epistemological positionings in the study.

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

As can be seen in Figure 3.2, the data collection procedure for the proposed study consisted of three steps. First, an approval letter was obtained via email from the Saudi Ministry of Education (see Appendix G, page 303) to obtain permission to approach the preschools. Second, I visited the preschools to provide the head teachers with the approval letter (see Appendix G, page 303), information sheets (see Appendix B, page 296), and consent forms (see Appendix C, page 298), and to be allowed to meet with teachers. Third, I met with the preschool teachers during their free time to present the study and provide informational sheets (see Appendix B, page 295) to the teachers containing the researcher's name, the title of the study and the reasons for undertaking the study. Signed consent forms (see Appendix C, page 298) were collected from the participating teachers.

1. The Saudi Ministry of Education approached via email	2. Head teachers approached in person	3. Preschool teachers approached in person
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Figure 3.2 The process of approaching Saudi preschool teachers.

During the initial visits to the preschools, interviews were scheduled with the teachers who were willing to participate in the study. Observation sessions were then scheduled with the participants based on the study's time frame and the participants' availability after conducting the interviews. Information letters (see Appendix B, page 295) for parents regarding the observations were distributed to the heads of the preschools in advance of the observations. The letter contained information on the study and informed parents that their children's teachers were participating, and included a box to tick if the parents were willing for their children to be present. If the parents were not willing, then the children could be sent to different corners for play-based learning in the classroom and could do different activities rather than be present in the art corners. However, all the heads of preschools claimed that there was no need to send it to the parents, since the focus was on the teachers and no children were in any photos. After observations and taking photos of the children's artwork, the teachers chose when they wanted to be interviewed for the short follow-up interviews.

3.7 Participants in the Main Study and Sampling Methods

In most cases, qualitative studies draw on participants who have experience with certain phenomena (Bell, 2011). Therefore, I chose a sampling method that is usually suitable for qualitative studies, which use open-ended interviews as a collecting method, such as the purposive sampling method, which is also used for judgment sampling (Etikan et al., 2016). In purposive sampling, researchers purposefully choose participants who are experienced in the study's area of focus (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). According to Etikan et al. (2016), there are seven kinds of purposive sampling methods: maximum variation, homogeneous, typical case, extreme/deviant case, critical case, total population and expert (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). It is important that expert sampling be defined, as it is the one most suitable for the study. According to Etikan et al. (2016), expert sampling is used when a study may be lengthy because a researcher needs experts to study a new area in order to determine whether it merits further study. For this qualitative study, since creativity is considered a developing area of study (Kaufman and Beghetto, 2009; Glaveanu, 2011), expert sampling was the most suitable method to gather data on teachers' beliefs and practices regarding children's creativity in visual art. Therefore, I invited preschool

teachers who were qualified in early years' education with at least a first degree from private and public preschools in Riyadh, which indicated that they were trained and experienced in working as preschool teachers and well-grounded in early years' education. I also made sure that the teachers usually teach children from three to six years old and are considered to be experienced in the study's area of exploration. This invitation helped to collect their beliefs and practices since private preschools have greater authority to provide additional curricula in support of children's creativity in visual art in it is required.

Regarding the size of the sample, according to Kumar (2014), the sample for a qualitative study has no specific size, as it is based on reaching a level of data saturation from the researcher's perspective. Therefore, 11 teachers agreed to participate in all phases of the study. Although the number of participants may seem small and not reflective of the entirety of the teachers' experiences and thoughts, it provided deep and rich data about the subject of the study. This result agreed with Yilmaz's (2013) argument, which stated that a small number of participants can provide rich data about the area of study. Accordingly, Bell (2011) argued that it is important to involve participants in social research to share their experiences as co-constructors.

All the eleven teachers who agreed to participate in the study were asked to be interviewed (see Appendix A first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287) and observed (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289) during their work with the children, but the main focus was on the teachers' practices. They were then interviewed in a short follow-up interview (see Appendix A, follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293) to discuss the children's artwork.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews (see Appendix A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287), the scheduled observations (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289) and the follow-up interviews (see Appendix A, follow-up

interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293) were analysed based on manual thematic analysis to engage more closely and directly and be familiar with the data in comparison with NVivo. Braun and Clarke (2017, p. 297) described thematic analysis as ‘a method for identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning (“themes”) within qualitative data’. These themes were built by codes that were linked to the research questions. Similarly, Braun and Clarke (2006: 79) defined it as ‘a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail’. This definition reflects the intentions behind the use of thematic analysis in this study, as the technique contributes to explaining and identifying the collected data. According to Braun and Clarke (2017), thematic analysis is used to understand participants’ experiences, views and feelings. As the research questions focused on preschool teachers’ perceptions and methods of supporting children’s creativity in visual art, a thematic analysis method was used to answer the research questions.

The data of the main study were analysed using the process of open coding, used in most case studies, for example, recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006), which was used earlier to analyse the pilot data to determine whether the collected data would answer the research questions correctly. Based on the analytical techniques of Braun and Clarke (2006), Gibbs (2011a and 2011b) and Woodall (2016), the first phase of this analysis included reading all of the data numerous times to ensure my familiarity with the methods, as re-reading helped to shape the ideas about creativity, and it was helpful to take notes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Each interview question was analysed separately from the other questions. The second phase was to gather the initial codes to understand and highlight certain characteristics of the data (Nowell et al., 2017) that linked them with codes related to the research questions and the literature review (Bryman, 2012), using shared ideas to create themes from each group of related codes. For example, interview questions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 16 and 17 were related to the first research question, while interview questions 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 were related to the second research question (see Appendix H, an example of one of the codebooks for data analysis, Makkah preschool, page 304). Therefore, all the answers to the interview questions that led to answering the first research question will be answered later. Next, the same process was used to answer the second research question. For instance, Table 3.6 below gives the answers to

interview question number four, which is related to the first research question, while Figure 3.3 is an example of the process it details (see Appendix H, An example of one of the codebooks for data analysis, Makkah preschool, page 304).

Interview Questions	Initial codes gathered from teachers' answers	Final codes after grouping from all the answers to the question	Initial themes	Final themes
<p>What do you think creativity means in general?</p>	<p>Alrimth: <i>Something unusual, creating new things from usual things.</i></p> <p>Alartaa: <i>Showing inner feelings and thoughts. Everyone has intelligence in a certain area.</i></p> <p>Alharml: <i>Ability, way of focus, answering, thinking, movements, early signs of leadership skill, insisting on their opinions, demanding what they want, building something and imagining what it is, talking about their work and themselves, thinking about things that are above their age.</i></p>	<p><i>Intelligence in everyone, thinking and concentration</i></p> <p><i>Abilities and movements</i></p> <p><i>High level of self-confidence, determination and leadership</i></p> <p><i>Showing feelings and thoughts through expressing</i></p> <p><i>Using their imaginations</i></p> <p><i>Creating new things out of ordinary art materials</i></p>	<p><i>Mental abilities</i></p> <p><i>Physical abilities</i></p> <p><i>Good personality</i></p> <p><i>Expressing themselves</i></p> <p><i>Imaginative</i></p> <p><i>Creating original outcomes</i></p>	<p><i>Mental abilities</i></p> <p><i>Physical abilities</i></p> <p><i>Good personality</i></p> <p><i>Expressing themselves</i></p> <p><i>Creating original outcomes using imagination</i></p>

Table 3.6 Coding and defining themes for interview question number four.

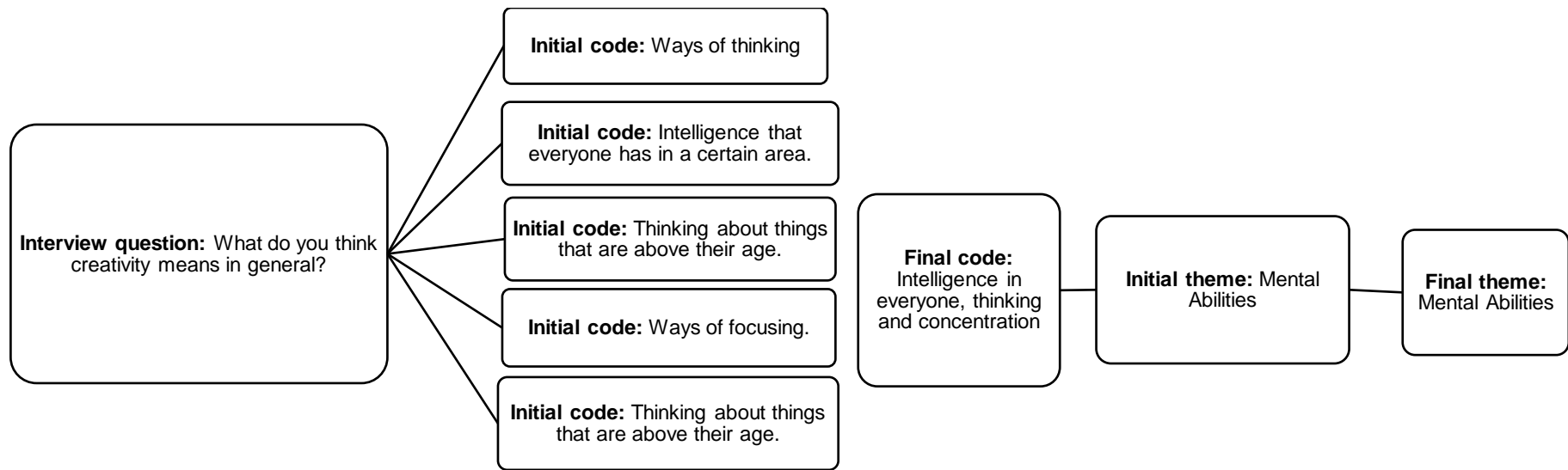


Figure 3.3 An example of the process of coding and defining one of the themes.

The coded data, which have a similar focus, will then be linked with related codes. An example is presented in Table 3.6, where colours were used to link related codes and themes, while Figure 3.3 shows the process of coding and defining one of the themes. In the third phase, initial themes were created after all the groups of codes had been gathered to create themes that would be drawn solely from the data; therefore, it was important to review them (Robson, 2011). By this time, the final themes had been named and defined (see Table 3.6 for an example). The last phase reports all of the collected and analysed data in a narrative commentary, leading to answering the research questions.

To understand how the research questions are answered later, it is important to know that the interview phase answers both research questions. The observation phase, however, answers only the second research question, and the follow-up interview answers the first research question. Each preschool's data was presented to answer the two research questions separately in chapter four, five and six. Later, the three preschools were compared in terms of the teachers' definitions and practices in chapter seven where the data analysis and discussion are.

3.9 Ethics

Research studies have the potential to negatively affect participants. Therefore, according to Albon and Mukherji (2015), researchers should consider ethical issues that may affect participants. The guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2011) are helpful to researchers in this regard, and these guidelines were followed in the current study. To ensure compliance with ethical guidelines, the study participation methods were intentionally chosen to prevent harm to the participants. Accordingly, informational sheets (see Appendix B, page 295) containing the researcher's name, the title of the study and the reasons for undertaking the study were provided to the head teachers and preschool teachers during the first round of site visits. The information sheets also contained information about the reasoning behind participant selection, the right of participants to withdraw from the study, the methods used to secure participant data, the benefits of study participation and the ways in which participants could take part in the study. Teachers were given

the option of taking the time to decide if they wanted to participate, but they decided immediately. The time frame was based on the maximum time – six weeks, given by the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia Cultural Bureau in London – that I was permitted to be in Saudi Arabia, for collecting data in Riyadh.

A copy of the consent form (see Appendix C, page 298) was provided to confirm the teachers' willingness to participate in the study, which was intended to ensure that the teachers were not pressured to participate by either the head teachers or the researcher. Teachers were assured both verbally and in a written statement on the consent forms (see Appendix C, page 298) that they had the right to withdraw from the study up to two months after their participation and without providing a reason. As there were also observation and short follow-up interview phases of study participation, which may have put pressure on the participating teachers, I gave each teacher the right to choose whether they were comfortable participating in all study phases or whether they preferred to participate in only one phase, as indicated by check boxes on the consent forms.

Regarding the design of the interviews that were used in the first and fourth phases (see Appendices A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 288 and follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293), the questions were designed in a way that allowed the participants to easily answer the questions while providing the data necessary to answer the research questions. The design was intended to avoid the difficulties and stress of understanding the questions for the teachers. Moreover, as participating in the study was based on the teachers' willingness, the teachers had the right not to answer any questions that they found stressful for any reason. They could refuse to answer without giving any reason. I considered it more stressful for some teachers to be interviewed, observed and then interviewed again as a reflection of the first interview and observation. Therefore, I assured the teachers that they could participate whenever they were available during the six weeks of data collocating.

Since ethical issues can occur during the observation phase, the observations were limited to indoor playtime, which lasted between 30 and 50 minutes to limit the time spent in each teacher's class and to avoid additional stress for the participants. The teachers were informed that observations were being conducted to share their

classroom experiences and that the study was not judging their teaching effectiveness. In terms of children being present during the observations, I had already preparatorily sought parents' approval (see Appendix D, page 300) based on my approved ethics form (see Appendix F, page 302), although they were not the focus of the observations. However, due to the preschools' policy whereby data were collected regarding seeking parents' approval when teachers were being observed, the headteachers – who, in this context, were the gatekeepers – in accordance with Canning (2013) informed me that there was no policy in this regard. Accordingly, all observations could be conducted without the parents' approval. It is important, though, to mention that, in other contexts, I would seek parents' approval and follow my approved ethics form if it was required by the preschools' policy. However, in the contexts in which the data were collected, I kept in mind that if the children felt unhappy or unsure about being observed, they would go to their teachers. However, all the children were very comfortable during the observations; in fact, some of them were happy when they realised their teachers were showing me their artwork and talking about it with me, so they engaged in the conversations. In this study, as a native of Saudi Arabia, I was able to avoid culturally specific ethical issues through my understanding of Saudi culture and society. Therefore, I chose methods that fit with Saudi culture and avoided, for example, video-recording observations. It would also be impossible for male researchers to have access to female departments during school time. Therefore, as a female researcher, I had access to preschools and was able to approach female teachers to collect data.

All the collected research and participant data were stored on a locked site on my iCloud account and my university email account on OneDrive. In addition, the participants' anonymities were preserved. The data were shared only with my supervisors, and data translations from Arabic to English were performed without changing or editing the original content, since I did all the translations.

3.10 Reliability and Validity

In order to ensure the quality of a study (Cypress, 2017), reliability and validity are two aspects (Schmidt et al., 2000) that qualitative researchers need to consider when

designing a study, including methods of collecting data and analysis results. Based on what has been discussed before regarding relativism as my ontological positioning and interpretivism as my epistemological positioning, this section will discuss the reliability and validity of this study.

3.10.1 Reliability

Grossoehme (2014) and Polit and Hungler (1995) defined reliability as the level of consistency that a research method is designed to explore. Similarly, according to LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (1998), Mason (2002) and Schmidt et al. (2000), reliability refers to the consistency of research methods. Holloway and Todres (2003) used the term *consistency* when they were referring to reliability because it (reliability) was a term that they chose not to use. They explained that the research questions, the methods of collecting and analysing data and the results of the study need to fit the chosen design of the study, which shows a consistency in the study. Accordingly, in this study, using a case study design, I chose three methods – interviews, observations and photos of the children’s artworks – applied in four phases to answer the two research questions. I collected the data of my three cases from two private preschools and one public preschool to explore in depth how preschool teachers define and support children’s creativity in visual art. Each preschool data -case- was presented separately in the following order: semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions, observation using a schedule and an information-filling section. At the end of each observation, I asked each teacher to take photos of their children’s artworks based on their choices that illustrated creativity, which I used as a stimulus in the last phase of the follow-up semi-structured interview using open-ended questions. Using different methods of collecting data and presenting each preschool data separately to compare between teachers and within each of them helped to triangulate the data, which led to showing how the data had been corroborated (Silverman, 2017). According to Mason (2002), since the paradigm of the study is interpretivist, the major challenge is to avoid inventing and mispresenting data. Therefore, I translated and transcribed the data, and then I used codebooks (see Appendix H, page 304). An example of one of the codebooks for data analysis is that for Makkah preschool – where I coded the data and created themes in order to present each preschool case in depth and separately and orderly, which reflects the deep

process of the case study phases. This led to in-depth data that reflected the different truths of teachers' beliefs and practices regarding children's creativity in visual art.

In terms of designing the methods, according to Silverman (2017), in order to increase the reliability of the findings of a qualitative study, a researcher needs to design the interview method questions carefully and pilot them to ensure the reliability of the methods. For example, research questions should not be asked directly (Silverman, 2017). However, the chosen methods should be able to gather answers to the research questions. During the design of the methods, I ensured that the questions in the two interviews (see Appendix A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287 and follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293) were clear and easy to understand, and included open-ended questions so that the teacher could answer them without needing to ask more questions to clarify or obtain further answers.

Regarding the observations (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289), I avoided video recording these because in Saudi society, education is mostly separated by gender. Furthermore, women in Saudi Arabia wear hijabs, so female teachers would refuse to be filmed since they do not wear hijabs inside preschools because it is a female only environment. Therefore, I used tables and notes and ensured that the tables were designed to gather all the needed information during the observations in order to cover every area of the observations in detail, even though each participant was unique. I was also able to apply observation methods to collect data from the different environments of England and Saudi Arabia.

The methods above were tested during a pilot study in Leeds, as described in detail above in this chapter, before collecting the main study data in Riyadh and were not changed significantly after the pilot study. In this way, I ensured that the methods would gather strongly similar findings and not differ significantly if they were applied again to the same preschools' teachers and would generate an in-depth understanding of the case study. However, according to Carcary (2009), since this was a qualitative study, it is important to mention that teachers could reflect on their practices and beliefs and understand the topic if the study was done again. It was also conducted with a few of the teachers who reflected on their answers by planning for the future, changing or explaining their answers during one of the phases, or during

the next phase. However, that did not affect the reliability of the study, since this practice is common in the life sciences (Carcary, 2009), and data were collected, analysed and presented in depth and with consistency in order to show how, in the interpretivist paradigm, people have different understandings, practices and truths.

3.10.2 Validity

Cypress (2017) stated that there is no fixed definition of validity that can be used internationally. However, in his view, validity in qualitative research means being able to explore and ask questions to ensure accuracy in the study topic. Therefore, all methods, processes and ways of reaching data should be appropriate in the context (Leung, 2015) in order to answer the research questions and show the different realities or truths that participants have. Since there is a different truth for each person that is recognised in relativism (Scotland, 2012) – my ontological position – a valid study would be able to show the different truths of the topic that is being studied using the study design, the methods of collecting the data and the process of analysing the data. This qualitative study explored the different truths in depth of how preschool teachers in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, believed in and supported creativity in visual art activities in children between the ages of three and six.

The data were collected using three different methods divided into four phases in order to capture teachers' beliefs and practices. The methods were as follows: in the first phase, open-ended interviews were conducted to collect teachers' beliefs about children's creativity in visual art (see Appendix A, first method, phase one, fourth version, page 287). In the second phase, non-participant observations were conducted with field notes to collect data about teachers' practices regarding supporting children's creativity in visual art (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289). In the third phase, photos of children's artwork were used in the fourth phase of follow-up interviews (follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293), using open-ended questions prompted by the artwork. All four phases and the three methods used reflect a valid way of exploring the different truths of the beliefs and practices of preschool teachers. Through designing and developing the interview questions (see Appendix A, first interview, phase one, fourth

version, page 287, and follow-up interview and artwork, phase three and four, section 1.3.2, page 293) I ensured that the questions were phrased in a way that could be answered by Saudi and British teachers and were able to gather in-depth answers that included teachers' beliefs, approaches and values. Regarding the observation framework (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289), I was aware that the designs of the British (for the pilot study) and Saudi preschool classrooms were different; therefore, I made sure that the observation (see Appendix A, observation, phase two, page 289) method was valid. Combining three data collection methods provided the opportunity to obtain valid in-depth data, which showed the participants' different beliefs on a specific topic and increased the study's level of validity (Albon and Mukherji, 2015), thereby supporting how the research questions were answered. The results were not reflective of all Saudi preschools in Riyadh, but rather provided insight and understanding into how three sets of preschool teachers defined and supported artistic creativity in children between the ages of three and six years differently.

After discussing the methodology of the study including the research questions, design of the study, pilot study, how the methods were created and developed, how the data were collected and analysed, the following chapter number four will present the first case, followed by the second and third cases in chapters five and six separately.

Chapter 4

Results

Case one: Makkah Preschool

4.1 Introduction

In Makkah preschool, which is the first case of this study, I asked the same questions and used the same observation tables and field notes. Next, I presented the pieces of artwork that the teachers had chosen as creative artwork for them to answer the follow-up interview questions. All the data in this case answered the two research questions: 1- What do preschool teachers in Riyadh believe creativity means in visual art for children between three and six years of age? 2- How do preschool teachers in Riyadh support creativity in visual art in children between three and six years of age? The data presented in the interviews represent the teachers' beliefs by answering questions 4 to 9 and 16 and 17, while questions 10 to 15 provide answers about their practice (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287). The data from the observations represent the teachers' practices. In terms of the follow-up interviews, the data are the reflections of the teachers' beliefs and practices.

To understand and underline the characteristics of the data, initial codes were gathered from the collected data. They were then linked with other codes that were related to the research questions and the literature review and had similar focuses, which led to the final codes. These final codes were grouped based on the ideas they shared to create the initial themes. These were redefined repeatedly through re-reading to reach the most suitable final themes that accurately represented the data (see Section 3.8 Data Analysis in chapter three for further discussion). The final themes are discussed and presented below, under each focus identified from the collected data in each method. Later, the data will be analysed and discussed in chapter seven, along with the two other cases from chapters five and six.

4.2 Context of the Case

4.2.1 Teachers

Three teachers (Alrimth, Alartaa and Alharml) participated in the study at Makkah preschool. Two of them have been working for less than a year with children from the ages of three to four years old, which makes them non-experienced teachers, while the third teacher – Alharml – has been working for nine years as a preschool teacher and is teaching children from four to five years old. All three teachers have bachelor's degrees in early childhood education, which makes them qualified for early childhood education.

4.2.2 School

This is a private preschool in Riyadh, the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As a private preschool, the school is funded by the fees that parents pay to enrol their children. Private preschools are allowed by the Saudi Ministry of Education to add any additional curricula along with the basic subjects required by the Ministry. Private preschools are popular in Saudi Arabia because most Saudi families, even though they are middle class, prefer their children to study in private schools, which provide better learning environments.

4.2.3 Children

Children in this preschool are considered middle class, as is the majority of the Saudi population. The ages of the children in the observed classrooms ranged from three to five years. There were 12 to 13 children in each classroom that was observed.

4.3 Interview Results

4.3.1 Focus: Teachers' Definition of Creativity in General

1- Theme: Creating original outcomes using imagination

Alrimth defined creativity as '*something unusual, creating something from usual things... something new*'. This can be linked to a part of what Alharml defined creativity as: '*I usually feel that in art corner and blocks corner when he builds something and imagines, you know? When he says "I think this building is high I did that, and I did this"*'.

2- Theme: Mental abilities

Alartaa defined creativity by saying, *'I know there are six kinds of intelligence, and they became seven or eight... but anyway, everybody is creative in a certain area and has all of these kinds of intelligence, but some kinds are higher than others like mathematics, art, spatial. Anyone is creative in what they like; anything I like, I will be creative at it'*, which, as a definition, makes intelligence a synonym of creativity that can be used interchangeably.

Alharml's definition of creativity is wide, which is *'how a child focuses on things... ways of thinking... and thinking about subjects that are above their age'*.

3- Theme: Physical abilities

Alharml's definition further extended to *'I think in terms of children, it is abilities of course... movements.'*

4- Theme: Leadership

Alharml also stated that creative children exhibit leadership skills by saying *'you see him as a leader from the beginning. I think he is a creative'*.

5- Theme: Expressing themselves

Expressing themselves is another theme that can be gathered from teachers' answers. For Alartaa, creativity means to *'express someone's feelings and thought'*. Similarly, to Alharml, a creative child insists on their opinions and demands what he wants, shows different levels of answers to questions and talks about themselves and their works: *'When he says (I don't like this) he insists... when he comes to you and says I want to do that... how a child answers... talks about himself you think he is creative comparing to his level, he is above the level of his peers... he says I think this building is high and I did this, and I did that I think he may be a creative'*.

From the data above, it seems clear that the three teachers have different definitions of creativity, which reflect how varied and complex the definition of creativity in research is in reality, yet two of them defined creativity using various terms, such as intelligence and children expressing themselves, according to Alartaa.

4.3.2 Focus: Describing Children's Creativity in Art According to Teachers

1- Theme: Self-directed activities to create original artwork using available materials

Alrimth believed that creativity in visual art is an activity that is led by children themselves from the beginning to create something new using the provided art materials; this occurs, she says, *'when I provide them art materials and they create something'*. Alharml also agrees with her, saying, *'a creative child ... creates something that may not across your mind'*.

2- Theme: Perfection and accurateness of making artwork

Alartaa believed that creativity is revealed by the level of perfection of making artwork. For example, *'When a child draws perfectly, it means he is creative; when they use clay to create something and they shape it very well, this is creativity. Perfection is creativity'*. Alharml also added, *'his paint is so accurate'*.

3- Theme: Children reflecting themselves and their lives through artwork using matching colours and being imaginative

While Alharml agreed with the other teachers, she also thinks creativity is based on many factors. For example, *'His painting also reflects him, what he lives ... full of imagination ... his colours, his choosing of colours'*. Alharml added a point, which slightly contradicted one of the elements that she described earlier regarding making an accurate painting, and added, *'Sometimes the paint is not really clear but the colours, the chosen colours are beautiful and match each other'*. This shows that the chosen colours are more important than accuracy when it comes to making a creative artwork.

4- Theme: Expressing their artistic needs and thoughts

Alharml also added the act of requesting extra colours and talking about their plans. For example, *'I don't want only one colour of clay, I want one or two more'*.

In sum, the three teachers described creativity in visual art in children as being imaginative, accurate and perfectionist when creating artwork. Also, leading artwork activities and reflecting on themselves and lives through their choices in colours.

4.3.3 Focus: Signs of Creativity in Children's Pieces of Artwork

1- Theme: Advanced level of making artwork compared to peers

Alartaa argued that *'perfection is a sign'*, while an advanced level of making artwork in comparison with peers is another sign of creativity in children's artwork. Alrimth partly agreed with Alartaa, saying, *'They are able to draw characters and faces while others can't, but I don't know if I can call it creativity, but their level is advanced compared to their peers, I think'*. It seems that Alrimth was assuming the kinds of signs that show perfection.

2- Theme: Expressing their ideas and reflecting themselves through art

These two parts in the above theme seem related because of the teachers' opinions. Alrimth argued that having ideas and knowing what to make is also a sign of creativity in visual art. However, she clarified that *'There aren't many chances to create artwork freely using the materials. This is why I can't tell what a sign can be'*. However, Alrimth also argued that *'there was a chance to create artwork, but it was based on a model'*. She also argued that *'When a child reflects their personality in the artwork despite the model, it is a sign of creativity'*. In my opinion, providing a model to follow allows no freedom for children to create artwork, and it prevents self-reflection on their process of creation. Alharml partly agreed with Alrimth that reflecting their personalities through their artwork is a sign of creativity. For example, *'If she has an issue even when she cries in the morning when she draws something, it is clear the painting reflects her feelings. She expresses her feeling in the art corner; she enjoys it. I think if she has something, she expresses it in the art corner'*.

3- Theme: Being passionate, imaginative and talk about their artwork

Alharml added further signs, such as exhibiting passion and imagination, and talking about their artwork. *'She only likes the art corner; when I see her at the art corner, I*

find she is acting happily. If she finds pens, she will draw and paint. She draws very well. Sometimes she paints and sometimes if there is clay, she will imagine and make a pizza. She will imagine a happy face and comes to me: "Teacher, look. It is a happy face". It is actually not a happy face, but she imagines it is.'

4- Theme: Ways of using art materials

Alharml also believed that creativity appears in showing distinct ways of holding pens, handling clay, and choosing colours. For instance, *'even the way she holds a pen or forms of clay and when she uses them, it is perfect. You know children; when they start at the beginning of the year, they usually don't really know how to use them. She knows how to use them, and she makes a perfect form'*.

It can be noticed from the data above that there are four signs of creativity in children's pieces of artwork that are similar to the previous focus. The four signs include having an advanced level of making artwork, reflecting on themselves and their ideas despite the model. Also, being passionate about art, being imaginative and talking about their artwork and how they use art materials, which is the fourth sign.

4.3.4 Focus: Potential for All Children to be Creative in Art

1- Theme: All children are creative in art, as creativity includes no difficulties

Alartaa had a clear and simple perspective about this point. Alartaa argued that this is because *'Art is too easy. What is art? When a child holds a pen and starts to paint or draw, it's easy. Every child needs to have a sense of art and skills in art. So, I think it's true'*. It seems that Alartaa believed that every child is creative since art is easy and children need to have good taste and skill in art. Having a sense of art may mean the child has good taste in art or the basic understanding of art and artwork, while having a skill in art may mean being involved more deeply with artwork and art in general. Although there may be differences between the two meanings, Alartaa believed that every child needs them, which makes them creative.

2- Theme: Not all children are creative in art, as creativity requires high level of skills and passion

In the second theme, Alharml and Alrimth partly agreed that not all children are creative in art. Alharml's perspective, though, was somewhat divided, as she partly agreed that *'at a child's level, you may say that'*, but then she argued *'but there are always individual differences between children; creativity is creativity, telling him he is creative? No, it is different; when you see his painting is different, his colours are different, his drawings are different, then this child is creative'*.

She further adds that *'There are children who don't like the art corner. Why would we say they are creative in art?'* However, she also argues that *'Children always have a sense of art. When a child starts to draw, this is a sense of art; he loves these things. But is he a creative child? No'*. It seems that Alharml was a difference between having good taste in art and understanding the basics of art and being creative, as being creative is a more advanced level than just having good taste in art, which is opposite to what Alartaa said above.

Alharml further argued that *'his lines, the way of holding colours, pens, thoughts, imaginations'* are the criteria to identify whether a child is creative or not. However, holding pens may be based on practice, and it is normal for a child of this age – four to five years old – to hold pens and whether the child is used to holding pens to draw and write at home before they go to preschool.

In contrast, Alrimth believed a creative child is one child out of many. She further adds that *'I think not any child can have creativity, but every child is special in themselves and productions and personalities; I mean, they reflect on their artwork. But creativity? No'*.

Defining whether all children are creative in art may seem complex and variable at the same time among teachers in preschools since teachers observe children and are not able to examine children's abilities and interests without providing any guidance for the teachers.

4.3.5 Focus: Teachers' Descriptions of a Creative Child's Personality Traits in Terms of Positive and Difficult in Art

1- Theme: Positive personality traits

Most of the teachers' answers described creative children as having more positive personality traits. These include acting like a responsible adult, being a sociable person, generous, a leader, independent and skilled in art. Alharml described a creative child in her class by saying, *'She has a really good personality. She likes to choose by herself ("I want this colour; I am wearing this"). I think her mother is supporting her in that'.* In my opinion, this level of freedom of choice that the child has may contribute to becoming independent. Despite this, Alharml further added that the student is a bit stubborn: *'I remember when she was younger, she was a bit stubborn; she has her own mind. Even now when I try to persuade her to do something... she sticks to her decision, but I think she is now less stubborn than before'.* I think this may reflect sticking to her decisions and showing a level of independence in her. For instance, *'She has her own things that describe her personality, like colours, not like other children. She has her own personality and choices'.* Alharml added, *'She likes to take care of a baby. Although she is the youngest child in the class, she likes to act like is she is an adult'.*

According to Alrimth, *'a sociable person, a leader, likes all other children, likes to share compared to others. His level is higher than others in art.'* Alartaa, in the same class, partly agreed with Alrimth that being a leader is one of the personality traits that another creative child has. However, she described the child with other difficult personality traits, which will be described below.

2- Theme: Difficult personality traits

In the same class, Alartaa described a different kind of creative child as being competitive: *'likes to be the first'*, is impatient, *'wants everything now and quickly and if he does not get it now, he will be upset'*, is naughty and does not apologise: *'I usually tell him when we make a mistake we think what we did wrong and we say sorry but it takes him so long to say sorry. It is like he has pride. But I wait and I don't talk to him until he says sorry but after a while. I told his mother about his personality, and she agreed, but she said she can't deal with him. She breaks her roles for him. She says, "I can't wait for him to say sorry, so I go to him"',* and he is stubborn. It is clear that this child has become very disruptive, is stubborn, and does not apologise because of his mother's way of dealing with his mistakes. The child knows he can do whatever he

wants, and in the end, his mother apologises to him for his mistakes when he becomes upset.

To summarise, the diversity of teachers' beliefs regarding the personality traits of creative children may show the possibility of not having a clear description of creative children according to teachers. The reason may be related to the subjectivity that teachers' beliefs were based on relating on their experiences. Also, some teachers may not be able to describe a creative child, like in Alartaa's example when she described the child as having pride and being stubborn.

4.3.6 Focus: Teacher's Role Influences Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Positive

Alartaa believed that the role is always positive, and she clarifies that by saying, *'because I can always support him even if he just draws a line. I can say you're creative, which encourages him to be creative. I may be able to direct his attention to somewhere where he can be creative from what I just said and show his creativity'*. Alartaa believed that through direct support and encouragement, the teacher's role can always be positive.

2- Theme: Negative and positive

While Alartaa above believed the teacher's role is always positive, Alrimth, who shared the same classroom and teaches the same children, has a different perspective, but it also depends on teachers' direct support and encouragement. For example, Alrimth said, *'It can be positive when I support but it can be negative if I neglect, or I do not care or support them'*.

AlharmI, from another classroom, partly agreed with Alrimth. AlharmI believed that it is *'not necessary, but I think teachers are essential in supporting children... if I see a child who likes art and they don't find support from me, they may leave it. If I support them, they could be creative or maybe gifted'*. However, at the same time, she believes that teachers do not play a negative role in children's creativity in art, as she argues, *'it depends on children's personalities but in general, teachers' personality influences*

more'. She talked about how her teachers made her hate some subjects, and she doubted if they had been different teachers, it would have made any difference. Then she changed her mind, saying, a *'teacher's personality, her support for children and her concern has an influence on children. Sometimes, you will see teachers who don't bother themselves to care, or they don't have any knowledge. All of these will have an effect. Whoever has a teacher who is aware is a lucky child'*. Alharml's argument may reflect the importance of the teacher's personality, knowledge, and awareness in having a positive role.

It is clear that the three teachers had different views regarding their roles in supporting children's creativity. While one of them believed that the teacher's role is always positive and another believed it depends on teachers' practice, the third could not decide what she thinks until she had time to reflect on her practice.

4.3.7 Focus: Potential of Children's Artwork Being Affected by the Culture of their Society

1- Theme: Culture influences on children's creativity in art

For the first time, the teachers' responses were similar. The similarity between the teachers' agreement regarding the high influence of culture on children's creativity may support the educators' arguments. The three teachers all believe that culture has an influence on children's creativity. Alrimth gave an example: *'Sure, I have a child in mind. I could say their family is concerned about his education, and he has a good level of information. He always has something new to say compared to his peers; even in his artwork, his level is advanced'*. In the same classroom, Alartaa said, *'It can be, yes, a child who has a rich influence culture will be creative in his artwork, can draw animals, fishes. Sure, there will be a difference'*. Alharml believed it is true by '80%', as she argued that *'When you have a creative child who paints very well but he used to live in the desert, what is he going to paint? Desert, camels, sun, clouds. This is what he saw. But when he sees new materials, his creativity may increase'*.

4.3.8 Focus: Available Resources in Saudi Society for Supporting Preschool Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Media and the Internet

Alartaa believed that media and social media are resources. She further added that *'Society has been changing to be better in terms of supporting skills and interests.'*

2- Theme: Family and School

Alartaa believed the family is a resource in society to support creativity. Alharml partly agreed that the family is a resource, as are schools: *'For children, only schools and families.'*

3- Theme: Bookshops and public libraries

Alrimth believed that King Abdul-Aziz Public Library in Riyadh offers free activities for children. She also added, *'There is a good deal of support in the society but not enough. I used to work in a bookshop, and we provided art activities.'*

4- Theme: Approachable resources

Alartaa believed that *'media and families are easy'* to approach for assistance.

5- Theme: Lack of family's interests and expensive

From Alrimth's experiences, the resources in Saudi society are unapproachable and expensive. According to her, *'I used to work in a bookshop, and we provided art activities that are cheap, but families found it expensive and unnecessary. Although I have seen children were creating amazing artwork.'* She further added, *'not easy; not everyone is able to pay and not everyone appreciates art even if they are able to pay for it'*.

In sum, it is clear from the teachers' responses above that there is a lack of resources, plus the resources for supporting children's creativity in art are largely unattainable in Saudi society because of the high expenses or lack of parents' interest.

4.3.9 Focus: Providing a Curriculum to Support Children Who Show Creativity in their Artwork

1- Theme: Absence of curriculum

The three teachers confirmed that there is no curriculum for supporting children's creativity in art in their private preschool, although their private preschool has the right to have one as an additional curriculum to what is provided by the Saudi Ministry of Education.

2- Theme: The importance of a curriculum

Alartaa argued that one should exist: *'It should be from this age; it is shameful that there are some children who are creative. It's better to give a chance from this age; it can have an influence on them'*. Although she believed that supporting creativity in art should start from the age of three, Alartaa did not suggest taking this step to the manager of the private preschool, as she thought, *'they know better'*.

4.3.10 Focus: Methods of Supporting Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom and School

1- Theme: Describing children's completed artwork

Alrimth praised the children's finished artwork: *'I only describe the artwork by saying I like it, it's beautiful'*.

2- Theme: Provide different material and ideas

Alharml provided different kinds of art materials and ideas. For example, *'If a child is creative in painting, I will provide them different colours. I will provide them with stuff that helps them with drawing. I help them with creating crafts; maybe they will know how to match colours or use collage... when you provide different kinds of materials for drawing, painting, clay, collage cut with new ideas, you will support the child to create something new; he may be inspired by you'*.

3- Theme: Inspiring children with artists

To inspire children, Alartaa suggested playing a video about artists and galleries: *'tell them that we may be artists if we have some paintings that can be presented somewhere'*.

4- Theme: School's lack of support

Regarding the school's support, Alrimth and Alartaa argued that the school only once ran an art gallery, while Alharml stated that the private preschool refuses to provide some kinds of materials as they are expensive, even though it is a private preschool and their fees are high, which shows a lack of support.

Although they agreed on the school's lack of support, they strived to do what they think is best for supporting children, and each teacher promoted different activities.

4.3.11 Focus: Types of Materials Support Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Painting

Alrimth believed that painting shows children's creativity. In line with this, Alartaa preferred to provide watercolours and brushes for free painting and working in clay with tools. Alharml partly agreed with Alrimth and Alartaa that painting shows children's creativity, as it *'gives freedom'*.

2- Theme: Recyclable materials

Alrimth stated that she provides recyclable materials for children to support their creativity in art.

3- Theme: Collage

Alharml and Alrimth agreed on the use of collages. However, they have different beliefs regarding collage. Alrimth clarified that *'children show their creativity more while using collage.'* On the other hand, Alharml argued that a collage is not the right kind of art material to support creativity. Alharml thought that collage making limits children's creativity, which makes it unsuitable for supporting creativity: *'I don't like collage much. It is good for matching the colours, but it does not help in creativity. Collage limits children.'*

4- Theme: Drawing

Alrimth and Alharml provided children the chance to draw. Alharml believed that

drawing *'gives freedom.'*

5- Theme: Clay and its tools

Alartaa and Alharml agreed that clay supports children's creativity. Alharml clarified that it *'gives freedom'*.

6- Theme: Crafts and collage limit children's creativity

Alrimth argued that making crafts limits children's creativity. She clarified that *'There is no chance to have free creating as there always must be a model to follow or painting or drawing'*. While Alharml argued that Collage limit children's creativity.

4.3.12 Focus: Teachers' Satisfaction with the Level of Available Support for Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Dissatisfaction regarding levels of support

Only one theme arose here as none of the three teachers is satisfied with the level of support that children receive. For example, Alrimth marked her satisfaction to be *'three out of ten; to be honest, I focus on handling things rather than focusing on creativity. There are things that for me are more important'*. Similarly, Alartaa stated that *'I think I need to do more, although I work hard, but I still need to do more. I see myself as, yes, I'm a new teacher, have just got the job, I'm still learning, it is not the level I want. Still, I need to learn, still there is something to get. So, I am not satisfied, there is something inside me still that has not got out yet'*. Alharml, meanwhile, believed that *'Whatever you do, you want to do more; what you do, you will find a child who is a challenge for you and more creative than the other children ... I don't think you will be satisfied when he leaves at the end of the year that you have not supported him. You will feel you have not done enough because under the circumstances and lessons and limited time for playing indoors.'*

4.3.13 Focus: Barriers to Support Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom

1- Theme: Limited time

Alrimth described her barriers of time limitation by saying, *'I don't have time to focus on one corner... You have 20 children in a class, and you want them to have enough time and visit all educational corners. It's hard; limited time for the child in each corner. So, they have limited time, not me. It is 40–45 minutes.'*

2- Theme: Lack of materials

Alrimth and Alharml agreed that the lack of materials is a barrier. According to Alrimth, *'there are not many materials.'* Alharml further explained the difficulty of overcoming the barrier by saying, *'When the school does not provide, it is hard for you to do that ... We have a lot for drawing and painting. But we don't have new materials. We always repeat the same. Nothing is new. We can replace them, but still, we are limited. It is hard to renew and provide. So, I may not offer everything at once, sometimes clay, painting, collage. Sometimes we add glitter as a way of changing but in the end, they are all the same materials.'* Although theirs is a private preschool that requires high fees and is supposed to provide an outstanding education, Alharml believed *'it is hard for the school to provide for all of these children. We have a big number of children in the school in each class and these cost a lot'*.

3- Theme: Overcrowded classrooms

'Having a big number of children' is one of the barriers that Alrimth struggled to overcome.

4- Theme: No barrier

Alartaa, who shared the same classroom with Alrimth, believed that no barrier exists to supporting children's creativity, although she clarified earlier that she is not satisfied with the level of support that children receive. According to her, *'I don't think there is anything that would be a barrier to stop me from supporting children's creativity'*.

4.3.14 Focus: Advice to Policymakers for Setting Up a Curriculum for Supporting Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Provide different materials and methods

Alrimth advised policy makers to provide a clear and well-structured plan for art corners, as she argued, *'the art corner is based on the teacher's effort'*. Accordingly, the plan should be one that *'allows us to try more than one method and be ready for the teacher to use, should explain in detail what teachers can do, not waiting for the teachers to figure it out how to do them besides what they are doing daily. It is going to be a burden ... provide art materials.'* In line with that, Alharml also advised the provision of different materials. Despite the fact that Alrimth and Alharml were working in a private preschool where providing art materials should not be an issue, they are struggling with a lack of art materials, as their private preschool does not seem to provide what teachers and children need. Moreover, Alrimth and Alharml expected the Saudi Ministry of Education to provide them with the materials they need.

2- Theme: Extra lessons

Alartaa advised adding an extra 20–60 minutes per day for a drawing lesson only as an example, *'adding 60–20 minutes a day for a drawing lesson only, and the rest of the activities remain in the art corner'*. Although adding an extra lesson of this duration may seem the teachers' role, teachers in Saudi preschools cannot add an extra lesson without having permission from preschool headteachers, at least. There are timetables to follow and changing them may affect the process of learning in the entire preschool. Therefore, adding lessons must be approved. Similarly, Alharml suggested, *'It would be good at the beginning of the year if each teacher selects children who she thinks are creative or gifted, any children who need support, in order to have an extra lesson for half an hour or on a certain day to be an open day. And make these parts of the programme to support creativity'*. Moreover, Alharml advised to *'add educational corners outdoor like the ones indoor and provide educational instruments'* in order to be used by teachers to teach children or by children themselves for self-learning.

3- Theme: Opening galleries, running competitions, and exchanging experiences

Alrimth also advised policymakers to set up art galleries to display children's artwork and allow children chances to talk about their artwork. In line with making events outside of preschool, Alharml advised running competitions and giving awards between schools and exchanging experiences between schools set up *'during a*

certain time'. She believes, *'It is good to update and exchange experiences. Updating and learning new experiences come from exchanging experiences by visiting new schools. When I visit a school and see how they support creative children using new methods, I could apply these methods in my schools'*.

4- Theme: Experts' support

Alrimth advised to *'have artists, not teachers to evaluate children's artwork and receive help from experts in creativity in art'*.

In sum, it appears that despite the fact that Saudi private preschools have the right to have their own additional curriculum besides what is required by the Saudi Ministry of Education, the above data show the diverse kinds of suggestions that reflect what the private preschool teachers believe they need and wish to receive from policymakers – not their own private preschool – to help them support children's creativity in art.

4.4 Observation Results

As explained in the Methodology chapter in section 3.5.1 (see pages 74-77) and section 3.10.1 (see page 91-93), the observations, along with the other phases and methods, offered a strong triangulation of the collected data.

4.4.1 General Information about the Classrooms

As mentioned above, three teachers (Alrimth, Alartaa and Alharml) participated in the study at Makkah preschool. Two of them – Alrimth and Alartaa – have been working with children between the ages of three and four years old, while the third teacher, Alharml, is teaching children from four to five years old. The three teachers had 30–45-minute observations.

The three observations seemed to have many common points, especially in terms of the classrooms and the art corners. Therefore, these common points will be explained below before explaining the points that varied. Regarding the corners, there was one table with up to five chairs for children and a chair for one of the teachers when she

wanted to be close to the children in the corner. The corner was occupied by four children all the time while there were up to eight children playing at the other corners. In classes where children were aged three – four years old, there were two teachers in the class, and only one was in the corner most of the time for observation and to direct the children. In the class where the children were aged four – five years old, there was only one teacher in the class, and she spent time between the corners to observe the children. All three classrooms have an organised environment, and rules are displayed on the walls with the themes of the educational unit, which was Health and Safety.

4.4.2 Specific Information about the Corners

This section will present the observations in detail, such as how children worked, available activities, the activity of the day, art materials and so on.

4.4.2.1 Focus: Kinds of Available Activities in the Corners

1- Theme: Different but limited kinds of art activities in the corner

In the classroom where children were aged from three to four years old, they only made crafts and coloured drawings such as of a firefighter. In contrast, in the classroom where the children were older and may be familiar with the school environment, there were more choices like painting, collage, clay modelling and drawing.

2- Theme: The corner is full of art materials

The two classrooms where the three observations were going on have big similarities between them and all of the two corners in the two classrooms were full of materials that were needed for the available activities at the corners.

4.4.2.2 Focus: Accessibility of all the resources

1- Theme: Resources are accessible

All the resources and art materials for the above kinds of activities were accessible to children.

4.4.2.3 Focus: The Activity of the Day

1- Theme: Limited activities for the day

There was only colouring, making crafts and clay. The main common activity was making crafts. Two teachers – Alrimth and AlharmI – added either colouring or clay besides making crafts. All the ideas of making crafts were related to the educational unit of the week, which was about health and safety. The second activity that was provided by AlharmI was playing with clay of bad condition. For example, *‘AlharmI and the children found clay solid as it was old, so she looked for new and soft clay in the school, but she did not find any. So, the children used the old one’*.

2- Theme: Lack of freedom to reach the art materials

Even though the children could see and approach the art materials in the corner, they were not allowed to choose the art activity of the day. For example, during the observation for Alrimth, *‘a child came in and asked to paint on the board; however, the assistant teacher redirected his interest from painting using sponges to making a craft that is related to the educational unit by saying wait until you make the craft first. Later after the child finished and he came to ask for painting again, the main teacher – Alrimth – redirected him to colour a drawing for a firefighter ... then directed him where he can display – on the board that is inside the classroom not outside as outside is for crafts only. When the child came back and asked for another drawing to colour, Alrimth told him he is only allowed to colour one.’* All three activities in the three observations were chosen by the teachers for the children.

3- Theme: Directed art activities

Alrimth did not provide a model for the idea of a craft that she wanted the children to make. However, she explained to the children how to make it and directed them throughout the session. In contrast, Alartaa and AlharmI provided examples for the children to follow, as well as directing the children’s work. For example, AlharmI *‘asked*

some children to do the craft artwork for the educational unit then showed them what their peers did to copy that. She explained and directed their works’.

It seems from the above data that the children were not free to create their artwork. Children were limited to certain art activities and were not allowed to access the art materials and were directed in their creations.

4.4.2.4 Focus: Displaying Boards for Children’s Works

1- Theme: use of boards to display children’s artwork

Each classroom has two boards, one inside in the corner to display children’s paintings and drawings. Another board, which is outside, is mainly for crafts that are related to the educational units they are learning about at that time.

4.4.2.5 Focus: How a Child Starts their Artwork

1- Theme: Teachers’ invitation

Alrimth invited children to make crafts. For example, she *‘invited more children who were confused and helped them to do the artwork’.*

2- Theme: Teachers’ redirection of children’s interests

Alartaa, who was the assistant teacher for Alrimth at that time, stepped in and redirected a child’s interest from painting using sponges to making a craft by saying *‘wait until you do the craft’.* After the child had done the craft and asked to do the painting, Alrimth *redirected his interests again from painting using sponges to colouring a firefighter’s image, and when he finished and asked for another drawing, Alrimth refused, saying you can only make one’*

3- Theme: Children’s will to create

During the observation of Alrimth, AlharmI and Alartaa, some children entered the corner as they wished to make crafts. A child in Alartaa’s classroom insisted on doing her artwork by breaking the rules for capacity of the corner and refused to wait when Alartaa told her to.

4- Theme: Teacher's requirement

AlharmI asked children who had not made crafts that were related to the announcement of the educational unit this week to make crafts, as each child had to do one and place it on the board of the announcement.

In most cases, the teachers were more of a reason for the children to start their artwork than the children's will to create.

4.4.2.6 Focus: Child/Children Speak about the Artwork to Anyone/Themselves

1- Theme: Talking about their artwork during activities

In Alrimth's observation, only one child expressed how much he loves the colour blue, while other children spent their work in silence or listening to the teacher's suggestions and directions. In contrast, during Alartaa and AlharmI's observations, children talked about their artwork while they were working, which may have been because there was less interaction between the two teachers and the children, and they left the children for some time by themselves to talk. For example, during Alartaa's observation, *'children interacted with each other and reminded each other of not using the other children's colours.'* However, during AlharmI's observation, children were allowed to use the same solid clay freely, which enabled them to create different forms while they were talking with each other. *The children suggested to make a pizza, then later they thought it looked like a rose. One child made a spaceship ... then a blackberry dessert and said, "Do you want to eat a blackberry sweet? It's true we can't eat clay"*.

4.4.2.7 Focus: The Way of Teacher's Interaction with a Child/Children

1- Theme: Directing children's artwork

Alrimth's interactions tended to be more about giving suggestions for helping children how to make their artwork, which seemed to be directing them. For example, *'Alrimth described how to glue, suggested colours to use, suggested the way of making the artwork, asked children if they wanted to do certain things, encouraged to colour, explained to children why they were not able to colour because the glue is all over. Alrimth reminded the children what to do first for better results and sharpened pens for children, but one child did by herself'*. Moreover, Alartaa *'showed children a model,*

explained how to make a firefighter's hat ... told some children to paint the edges of the hat'. Alartaa's interaction was less compared with Alrimth, who teaches the same children, which can be related to the simple idea of craft and how each teacher presents the artwork model.

2- Theme: Complimenting the children

Alartaa tended to compliment the children while they worked. For example, *'I like how Faisal is painting his hat. wow, beautiful. You are an artist'*. Alharml did the same but with children who were one year older. For example, she *'commended each time a child showed her something by saying "Wow, a beautiful spaceship" or "I like it"'*.

Alrimth tended to describe the children's finished artwork by making a compliment. This way seemed to help children be able to talk about their artwork. Alrimth also complimented a child who *'did the artwork following her own way'*. However, Alrimth *'directed her by asking her to choose a stick to add it and said "beautiful", which encouraged the child to add more eyes.'*

3- Theme: Reminding children of the rules

Alrimth kept reminding children about the rules all the time. In contrast, Alartaa did not follow the rules that she had established and told the children to follow. For example, During Alartaa's observation *'children came in until the corner had no available chair, so Alartaa asked other children to wait. One of the children brought a chair from another corner and made a space for herself. The teacher did not remind her of the capacity of the corner, which was four children working at the table; instead, she reminded the child of the rule of putting her card at the entrance and helped her to do this'*. Alartaa seemed to be confused about following the rules of the classroom, as she allowed the child to break the rules. At the same time, that may seem a skill of problem solving that the child has. Alhrmal also reminded the children who were playing with clay about the rules.

4- Theme: Asking questions

Alhrmal asked the children who were making crafts of first aid kits about the names of what goes in the first aid kit. This idea of craft was related to the topic of the educational unit and was required to be made in order to be display on the announcement board

of the educational unit. Moreover, while children were making pizza using clay during Alharmal's observation, she *'asked the children about the toppings and they said olives.'*

It appears that the teachers interacted with children in different ways, such as questions, compliments and directing and reminding of the rules.

4.4.2.8 Focus: How a Child Finishes their Artwork

1- Theme: Decided to finish

Most of the children in Alrimth and Alhrmal's classrooms finished by themselves, with those in Alhrmal's specifically finishing at the end of the time. For example, by the end of the time Alhrmal's observation *'One child said, "Tomorrow I will make fries", another child said, "I will make salad" and the teacher said, "Tomorrow I will bring new clay"'. The teacher announced, "Time is over, and it is time to start tidying the classroom"'*.

2- Theme: Helped to finish

Although it was at the end of the session, Alrimth invited a child and did not allow her to take her time to do the artwork; instead, she helped her to finish. For example, *'Alrimth invited a child by the end of the time, helped her to make the artwork, removed the materials while the child was trying to finish and left her and came back to help to display her artwork'*. Alartaa helped the children by showing them how to do the last part of the artwork.

3- Theme: Forced to finish

One child continued to paint until Alartaa said, *"You are finished, Lulu", and took her artwork to dry'*. Alartaa told the children to tidy the classroom, and those who had not finished could complete their work tomorrow.

The above data show that, although most of the children decided to finish, there were cases where children were rushed to finish, and others were forced to finish.

4.5 Photos of Children's Artwork and Follow-up Interview's Results

As explained in the Methodology chapter in section 3.5.1 (see pages 74-77) and section 3.10.1 (see pages 91-93), the photos of the children's artwork and the follow-up interviews, along with the other phases and methods, offered a strong triangulation to the collected data.

The three teachers were asked to choose up to three pieces of artwork that they believed were creative artwork for taking photos in order to use the photos for a follow-up interview. All the focuses in the follow-up interview data in the section of *specific discussion for each artwork* are related to the first research question. Each teacher's photos and comments will be presented individually with their photos followed by a comparison at the end in section *General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher* before moving on to the next case in chapter four.

4.5.1 First Teacher – Alrimth

4.5.1.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher



Figure 4.1 Alrimth's children's artwork

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

The idea of the artwork seemed to be related to the topic of educational unit which was Health and Safety.

1- Theme: Not following the model

Alrimth provided a model for the artwork, which represented a tooth with eyes and sticks. However, two children did not follow the model. For example, Alrimth believed that *'The number of eyes, the tooth is upside-down, and it looks like a fish or something different'* are the signs of creativity in the first artwork (see Figure 5.1).

2- Theme: Paying attention to details

Alrimth believed that being accurate with the details is a sign of creativity. For instance, *'Well organised and tidy, the stick is in the middle'*, and since the child who did the second artwork was a boy, *'the eyes have no colours or eyelashes.'* The first child, however, chose eyes that had eye shadows and eyelashes. Also, in the first artwork, the child matched her colours of eyes and the stick. *'The colours are matched'*, which her teacher believes is a sign of creativity.

3- Theme: Comparing the child's artwork level to other children's artwork levels

Alrimth's judgment was based on comparing the second child's artwork level to other children. She explained, *'It is a sign of creativity compared to the other'*.

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a cultural influence on the children's artwork

Regarding the first artwork, Alrimth believed that *'colour choice reflects she is a girl.'* This is also her opinion for the second artwork, where the child was a boy. She believed that *'His choice of colours... He did not choose eyelashes or colours.'*

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no social influence on the children's artwork

Alrimth believed that society has no influence on the two children's creativity.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is teachers' influence on the children's artwork

Alrimth believed that her interaction with the two children had an influence on their artwork. Regarding the first artwork, Alrimth said, *'If you notice how many eyes she*

used. She did what she wanted. Generally, I think this kind of artwork is directed. I am sure there was an influence from me. Because, for example, I showed her the sticks and asked her to choose one. So, I was telling her what to add'. Although Alrimth knew it was a directed artwork, she was thinking of suggesting further ideas to make the artwork. For example, 'There was no space to suggest if she wanted to colour the tooth'. Regarding the second artwork, Alrimth said, 'I have too much influence on him. As I said, this artwork is directed, not free. I showed him the sticks and asked him to choose one. So, I was telling him I want you to add a stick and eyes. So, there were directions, but he chose the number of eyes and how to put them; it was up to him'.

4.5.1.2 General Discussion About All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative:

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first one

According to Alrimth, the most creative artwork is the first one, which is shown above earlier.

2- Theme: Deriving different outcomes from the main idea of the artwork.

Alrimth's view was based on the ability to create different outcomes from the model that was provided for the children. *'She made something new; it looks like a fish, tooth or tulip'*. Even if the child did not understand what the model meant, Alrimth though viewed it as a creative artwork: *'I do not think she knew it was a tooth'*, as the child made what she wanted regardless of the model that was in front of her.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Providing more materials

Alrimth claimed that the first child who made the most creative artwork, *'if I would provide her more materials, she will create something beautiful'*.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: More time and materials

Alrimth claimed that *'More time ... use more than one stick, tooth to see what she can make.'* This is because time and materials are limited.

2- Theme: The chance to make more than one artwork

Alrimth believed that as a way of providing better support, she would *'allow her to make more than one'* artwork.

4.5.2 Second Teacher – Alartaa

4.5.2.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

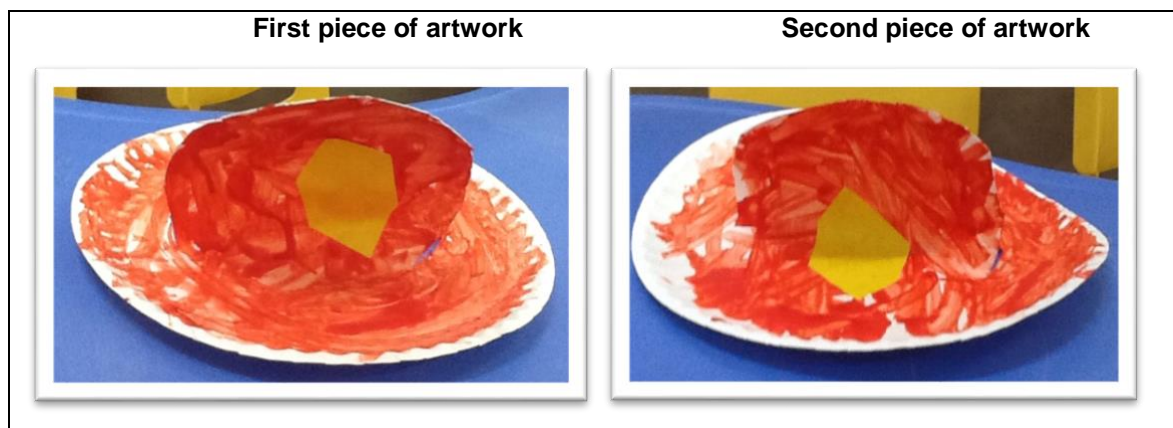


Figure 4.2 Alartaa's children's artwork

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

The idea of the artwork seemed to be related to the topic of educational unit which was Health and Safety.

1- Theme: The idea of activities

When Alartaa talked about the second artwork, she argued that *'The problem is the idea that this artwork is boring'*.

2- Theme: The outcome of art production

Talking about the first artwork, Alartaa believed *'Other children left spaces in their hats that they did not paint. But she painted one side; it was kind of perfect.'* Similarly, regarding the second artwork, she said, *'I think because of the way he painted, it is good. Other children's paintings were just painting. This one and the other one are the best'*.

3- Theme: Lack of art materials

Alartaa talked about the first artwork, saying, *'There was only one colour; I did not offer other colours. They were all the same'*.

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no cultural influence on the children's artwork

Regarding the two pieces of artwork, Alartaa argued that she does not think culture has an influence on children. For example, *'I do not know. Children are all the same, whether they have different cultures or not'*.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There may be social influence on the children's artwork

For the first artwork, Alartaa did not mention if there was any influence on the children's creativity. While for the second artwork, Alartaa believed that her compliment had an influence on the child's artwork. Alartaa's answer may seem arguable as she did not think that her compliments to the first child who made the first artwork may be considered a social influence, although she believed that was the case when I asked her about the second artwork.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is teachers' influence on the children's artwork

Alartaa made some compliments to two children, and she believes that had an influence on their creativity. Regarding the first artwork, for example, she claimed that *'I did influence, you saw me when they were painting. I said some compliments to them. She may like compliments so became excited about painting.'*

4.5.2.2 General Discussion about all the Pieces of Artwork

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first one

Alartaa believed that the first artwork shown above is the most creative one.

2- Theme: Managing to finish the artwork

According to Alartaa, she chose the first artwork because *'she painted most of the artwork'*.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Allowing freedom helps to create creative artwork

Alartaa believed that freedom is a way to encourage creativity. For example, Alartaa knew that she *'limited the children's choices'* by giving them *'colours and the other material'*. She argued that *'I did not allow them freedom to create. I think if I have given them freedom, they will create'*. The reason behind the lack of freedom according to her was the need to control what children at the age of three can do. She pointed out that *'At this age, I have to limit their choices because they make a mess'*.

Alartaa's answer shows that she already knew the limitations of this idea of artwork and what was going to happen during the observation.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Nothing to add

Alartaa believed that since the art corner is full of materials and *'everything is available'*, there is no need to add anything. However, she mentioned earlier the importance of freedom to create a creative artwork.

4.5.3 Third Teacher – Alhmal

4.5.3.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

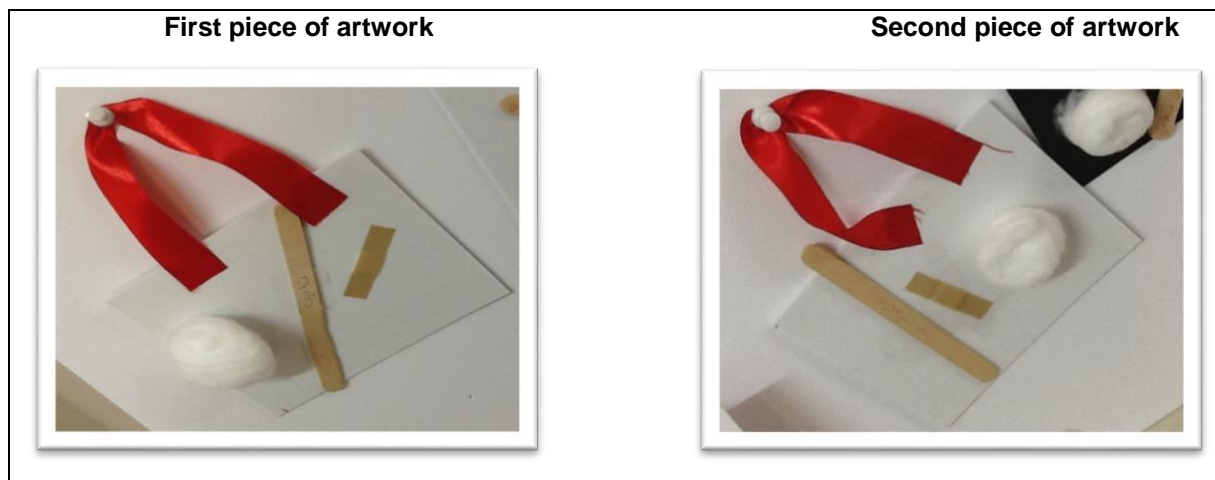


Figure 4.3 Alhmal's children's artwork

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

The idea of the artwork seemed to be related to the topic of the educational unit, which was health and safety. Alhmal answered the question regarding the two pieces of artwork, as she believes they share the same idea and outcome, although she was asked about the first one first.

1- Theme: The artwork is an announcement for the educational unit

Alhmal believed that *'There is no creativity in these two photos, to be honest. They are an announcement of the educational unit ... I showed them a model to make exactly like it.'*

2- Theme: Creativity is based on freedom and matching things

Alhmal viewed creativity as freedom for making artwork: *'I was limiting the child, and creativity is based on freedom like creating things, matching things.'*

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alhmal believed that there is no cultural influence on children's creativity.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no social influence on the children's artwork

Alhrrmal believed that there is no social influence on children's creativity.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no teacher influence on the children's artwork

Alhrrmal believed that she did not influence on the children's artwork as she made an arguable statement. For example, she said, *'No, I gave them freedom, and materials. If I was accurate, then yes, but no, I was not. I allowed them to make them, like this one is upside-down. But I was limiting them with the shapes and materials.'* However, in her answer to the first question, Alhrrmal explained that she showed the children a model of the other children's works, which were on a board in the art corner, when she was trying to explain to them the idea of artwork; however, she does not believe her interaction had any influence on the children's artwork. Alhrrmal believed that presenting a model in front of them all the time has effects on children's creativity. For example, *'if there is a model in front of children, this affects their imaginations: "my teacher wants this, so I will make it"'*.

Alhrrmal answered this question differently compared to her answer to the first question in terms of freedom and providing a model.

4.5.3.2 General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: No creative artwork in these two

Alhrrmal though believed that there is no creativity in the two pieces of artwork that she chose to talk about. Alhrrmal's answer to this question can be predicted based on her previous answers.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Providing materials leads to supporting creativity

One of the ways that Alhrmal thought creativity can be supported is by providing materials. For example, Alhrmal stated that *'I can give them the materials they need and tell them that I want to make a first aid kit and I need your help'*.

2- Theme: Use of imagination without providing a model

The second way is by using imagination. According to Alhrmal, *'If I have not given them a model and asked them to imagine what a first aid kit looks like, the children can use their imaginations. This can create creativity. They can create new ideas for the first aid kit, add more things or remove others.'*

Alhrmal's answer may show what is missing and the weakness that could be improved to support children's creativity.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Present only the idea of an artwork without a model

According to Alhrmal, *'I honestly just noticed that I limited their choices with one model. I should have said, "I want to make a first aid kit" and provided the materials they need, bringing more art materials and changing the shape of the kit. It can be a circle. It can inspire the children's imagination'*.

2- Theme: Encouraging children to bring materials from home

Alhrmal stated that *'If I want more creativity, I can ask them to bring their own materials to put it inside the kit. Children can create by bringing things from home'*.

3- Theme: Allowing some changes

According to Alhrmal, it is important to keep some fine details. For example, *'We can keep the red crescent as it is, but we can change the kit's shape'*.

4- Theme: Changing the design of the corner

Changing the decoration in the art corner is an idea that Alhrmal believed could provide better support children's creativity. According to Alhrmal, *'Dividing the corner and the board into two sections, boys and girls. Or changing the colours of the corner'*.

Another idea that Alhrmal believed could provide better support is by *'Adding a theme to the board, like a road to inspire them or like a doctor to put all the kits around, for changing'*.

5- Theme: Running competitions

Another idea that Alhrmal suggested is *'adding another table to have a competition. It is good to have a competition at the art corner, especially if we have assigned an educational unit. Two tables, two groups, the same materials but the outcomes will be different. If I have a competition, a child may want to make something more beautiful. The competition will be without winning and losing. It will be just for making new artwork'*.

6- Theme: Children are influenced by their peers

Alhrmal confirmed the idea of their peers' influence on children's creativity by saying, *'Some children copy other children's artwork; some children look at what other children did before and make something like it. Other children like to make something new to have a different artwork.'*

4.6 Conclusion of Makkah Preschool Teachers' Data

To sum up the data that were gathered from Makkah preschool, the three preschool teachers showed diversity in their perspectives in relation to children's creativity in visual art and to creativity in general and the signs of creativity. Moreover, the teachers' views in relation to creative children's characters and the signs of creativity in children's artwork and the belief that all children are creative in art also differed. However, they all agreed that children's artwork is influenced by their culture, although they partly agreed with the available resources in Saudi society.

Regarding supporting children's creativity, in the interviews, all three teachers agreed that they do not have any curriculum to support children's creativity. Therefore, they do not have enough to offer, apart from art materials, which means none of them are satisfied about the level of support they provide for the children. This is especially true with the different barriers that every one of them is facing. Two of them agreed that the teacher's role is not always positive. All three teachers advised policymakers

differently, which can show how much teachers need support and guidance from policymakers.

Regarding observation, the teachers directed all children's artwork by presenting them with models, explaining to them how to make the artwork, and interacting with them all the time. Also, the artwork's ideas were related to the educational unit they were studying.

Regarding the photos of the artwork, the children's artwork seemed similar to each other, as the children were following a model. In terms of the follow-up interviews, all three teachers seem to realise that they were directing children all the time and there is a lack of creativity in their artwork, which reflects the teachers' influence more than cultural influence. Two teachers believed that they can improve their support for future artwork in order to provide better support for children's creativity, as they found some suggestions for improvement.

Chapter 5

Results

Case Two: Ad-Diriyah Preschool

5.1 Introduction

In Ad-Diriyah preschool, which is the second case of this study, I asked the same questions and used the same observation tables and field notes. Next, I presented the pieces of artwork that the teachers had chosen as creative artwork for them to answer the follow-up interview questions. All the data in this case answered the two research questions: 1- What do preschool teachers in Riyadh believe creativity means in visual art for children between three and six years of age? 2- How do preschool teachers in Riyadh support creativity in visual art in children between three and six years of age? The data presented in the interviews represent the teachers' beliefs by answering questions 4 to 9 and 16 and 17, while questions 10 to 15 provide answers about their practice (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287). The data from the observations represent the teachers' practices. In terms of the follow-up interviews, the data are the reflections of the teachers' beliefs and practices.

As it was explained previously in section 4.1 introduction in chapter four, the same process of identifying codes and themes was followed in this chapter. The final themes are discussed and presented below, under each focus identified from the collected data in each method. Later, the data will be analysed and discussed in chapter seven, along with the two other cases from chapters four and six.

5.2 Context of the Case

5.2.1 Teachers

Four teachers (Alnafl, Alsheeh, Alos haz and Alshari) participated in the study at Ad-Diriyah preschool. All four preschool teachers have 5–18 years of experience working as preschool teachers with children from the ages of four - six. Three teachers have bachelor's degrees in early childhood education, and one has a master's degree in

early childhood education, which means that all four teachers are qualified in early childhood education.

5.2.2 School

This is a public preschool in Riyadh, the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As a public preschool in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the school is funded by the Saudi Ministry of Education, and its curriculum is what is required by the ministry. Therefore, all teachers follow the same curriculum.

5.2.3 Children

Children in this preschool are considered middle class, as is the majority of the Saudi population. The ages of the children in the observed classrooms ranged from four to six years. There were 11 to 17 children in each classroom that was observed.

5.3 Interview Results

5.3.1 Focus: Teachers' Definition of Creativity in General

1- Theme: Making something enjoyable

According to Alnafl, when she usually finds that a child *'is good at something, so I support it. It is what he loves, like drawing. I can also support him by contacting his family if he is at a good level.'* Alnafl believed that a child could benefit from this support when he is older, for example, if a child is interested *'in blocks so he can be an engineer when he becomes older'*.

2- Theme: Creating something new, unusual, and developed

Alshari defined creativity as *'something unusual ... something new, not something common. Something special and inventive has not been presented.'* Alshari added later, *'It is an idea that has been improved and created and each time the child does it differently.'* In line with this, Alsheeh believed that creativity is *'making something new or updating something old; unusual creation of something by a human'*.

3- Theme: Making a new plan

Alsheeh had many thoughts on what creativity is and one of them is '*a new plan of work*'.

4- Theme: Talent

Aloshaz believed that '*Creativity is based on talent*', while Alsheeh was uncertain whether creativity is a talent or not. For example, when answering this question, she explained it as a talent. However, later she said they are different, and said that '*This is not creativity, this is a talent*'; later when answering another question about supporting creativity, she said, '*I find he has a talent ...*'. It may show that Alsheeh had a confused understanding of what creativity is and cannot clearly express her thoughts about it.

From another angle, Alnafl answered this question with the belief that creativity is a talent. However, a few days later and while I was interviewing her during the follow-up interview, the last phase, she told me that she had thought about it and now she believes creativity is different from a talent.

5- Theme: Imagination

Aloshaz answered that creativity occurs '*When a child imagines ... draws something, you will not realise what he means by this ... when you ask him, he will say this is sun, but it is not*'.

6- Theme: Creating something that is needed, helpful and a solution

According to Alsheeh, creativity is when a child '*creates a solution, need of something, creates something to help*'.

7- Theme: Mental process

Alsheeh believed that creating something new or updated is related to mental processes and development. For example, she answers that creativity is '*Going beyond ordinary limits of child mental development. A mental process for making something new or updating something old.*'

The seven themes identified in the interviews with the four teachers in the second case exemplify the variety and complexity of creativity, both in a research context and in reality, which was also the case for the three teachers in the first preschool. However, each of them defined creativity using various terms.

5.3.2 Focus: Describing Children's Creativity in art According to Teachers

1- Theme: Self-directed activities

Aloshaz defined creativity in art by saying it occurs *'When they share clay and play together, and you are observing them'*.

2- Theme: Create original artwork using new methods

According to Alnafl, creativity in art occurs *'when he creates something using new ways and new forms, not what he is asked to ... his own ways'*. Similarly, Alshari stated that when she provides *'art materials for children and they create unpredictable things that impress you'*, this shows creativity in art.

3- Theme: Imagination

Aloshaz stated that creativity in art is *'when they imagine things and you as a teacher can't realise them'*.

4- Theme: The outcome of a new artwork matches its description

Alsheeh had different thoughts regarding what creativity in art can be. For example, *'I can't define and judge it until a child describes it to me. When a child's explanation matches his painting, this is children's creativity in art.'*

5- Theme: Describing a familiar artwork differently than what it used to be known for

Alsheeh also defined creativity in art by saying, *'when he creates something new or describes a familiar artwork differently than it used to be known for'*.

6- Theme: Copying another artwork or a model is not creativity

Alsheeh also believed that when a child follows a model of an artwork, then it is not creativity in art, *'because he just copied it'*. In line with this, Alshari believed that a *'child who has no creativity copies another child's artwork or does what they saw'*.

7- Theme: Changing the idea of the presented model is creativity

Alshari also believed that *'when they add to the idea that we presented to them, this is creativity'*.

5.3.3 Focus: Signs of Creativity in Children's Pieces of Artwork

1- Theme: Advance skills of using colours and collage

According to Alos haz, signs of creativity in children's artwork are '*the colours, how they paint, colours' gradation. They paint houses in sequence*'. In line with this, Alnafl believed that the '*way of painting*' is one of the signs of creativity. Similarly, Alnafl defined signs of creativity in children's artwork as when children use '*collage, they use it professionally, bearing in mind the colours.*'

2- Theme: Describing artwork

Alsheeh stated that when a child '*draws lines and names them and they have meaning for her*' then this is a sign of creativity.

3- Theme: Reflecting their feelings

According to Alsheeh, when a child '*expresses her feelings through her drawings*', because '*it is an unlimited way*' of expression, then it is a sign of creativity in art.

4- Theme: Painting nature

Alos haz defined signs of creativity in children's artwork as when children '*paint nature, mostly trees, roses, sun*'.

5- Theme: Having and updating ideas

Alnafl thought that signs of creativity can appear in ideas. Along the same line, Alshari claimed that '*Who changes the provided idea, ... do their artwork by themselves, using their ideas*'. Then they show signs of creativity.

6- Theme: Need for and use of more materials

According to Alshari, when a child '*uses more materials, looks at what are on the shelves, is not satisfied with what he has on the table*', then these are signs of creativity.

The teachers here acknowledged different signs of creativity in children's artwork, but only two signs were agreed on by two different teachers: advanced skills of using colours and collages and having and updating ideas.

5.3.4 Focus: Potential for All Children to be Creative in Art

1- Theme: All children are creative in art because their artwork is meaningful to them

Alsheeh believed that all children are creative in art. She argued that *'A child may not do something but draws a line that has meaning to him. From his perspective, this can be creativity with time ... support'*.

2- Theme: It depends on children's interests

Alnafl and Alos haz did not believe that all children are creative in art. However, each teacher gave a different reason. For example, Alnafl stated that *'There are individual differences... Some are creative in mathematics, others in imagination, painting'*. She further adds that *'Other children don't have the art sense'*, which may mean the child has good taste in art or the basic understanding of art and artwork.

Alos haz, however, believes that all children are creative in art because of their interests. For example, *'Some children don't like to go to the art corner ... they like to create something using clay but avoid other art activities.'*

3- Theme: With support, all children are creative in art

In contrast, Alshari thought it depends on the home environment. For instance, children who *'have not seen coloured pens or watercolours before can show their creativity after a while, but who already knew these before and come from rich home environments and whose parents are interested in art, these children can continue their creativity in the school'*. Alshari's argument shows that children might be creative with support by providing them with materials and allowing them some time to be creative.

Two key conflicting beliefs come into focus here, either all children are creative, or only 'some' children are. This resonates with the conflict of teachers' personal beliefs I highlighted in the literature review (see page 45 for further details).

5.3.5 Focus: Teachers' Descriptions of a Creative Child's Personality Traits in Terms of Positive and Difficult in Art

1. Theme: Positive personality traits

Aila, Alsheeh and Alos haz described creative children as having positive personality traits. For example, Alshari believed that a creative child is bold and a thinker, while Alsheeh described creative children as being *'active, calm, sociable, willing to except other people's suggestions to improve, likes to try'*. Alos haz also described creative children with other positive personality traits, such as being *'Smart, sensitive, asks a lot of questions, like where is the teacher?'* However, Alos haz gave a debateable description by saying, *'the way they hold the pens is correct'*. Holding pens can be seen as normal for their age – four to five years old – because it may be based on practice, whether the child is used to holding pens to draw and writing at home before they go to preschool.

On the other hand, Alnafl described creative children as possibly having positive and difficult personalities. Some examples of such positive traits include being *'quiet, bold'*. Alnafl believed that the *'home environment helps and the way of raising a child'*. An example of this is Alnafl's comment that *'We had a child who came from a rich home environment. Once she was sitting alone in the outdoor playground and I asked her what are you doing? She said, "I am meditating." "What do you meditate?" "I meditate about Allah's creation." She was meditating on an insect she found inside the playground outdoors.'*

2. Theme: Difficult personality traits

Only Alnafl who described creative children as they can have difficult personality traits by being *'shy, stubborn'*

5.3.6 Focus: Teacher's Role Influences Children's Creativity in Art

1. Theme: Positive and negative

Interestingly, all four teachers – Alnafl, Alsheeh, Alos haz and Alshari – agreed that the teacher's role is not always positive. For example, Alnafl explained it in detail, saying, *'It depends on the teacher and her readings and education and how she takes care of children and embraces them.'* Alnafl believed that a teacher's role becomes negative when a teacher *'always forces children to do something exactly as the sample and believe in something'*.

5.3.7 Focus: Potential of Children’s Artwork Being Affected by the Culture of their Society

1. Theme: Culture influences on children’s creativity in art

All four teachers agree that culture has an influence on children’s creativity in art. In particular, all the teachers agree that the home environment and where a child comes from can have an influence, while some of them add specific details on how culture can have an influence on children’s creativity. For example, according to Alnafl, *if ‘a child comes from a close-minded home environment, it could be affected a lot’*. Similarly, Alsheeh believed that *‘It can limit children rather than make them creative’*. Moreover, Alohaz argued that *‘A child who lives in a village is not the same as a child who lives in a city. Some children in my class do not know all the colours’ names, like grey, apricot and beige. Children who live in the capital city are different because they go out and see things.’* Alohaz also added another factor that plays a role in the cultural influence, which is parents’ education. For instance, a child *‘who has educated parents is different from one who has not. It is different if the mother is educated.’* Alshari agreed with Alohaz that parents play important roles in children’s creativity, saying that it matters *‘if their mother is interested in their education or not’*. Alshari also expressed how art can reflect children’s lives, saying that *‘art reflects their culture and their feelings and thoughts and everything a child gets through it: the home environment, the social-economic level, where they come from; it is like a mirror’*.

5.3.8 Focus: Available Resources in Saudi Society for Supporting Preschool Children’s Creativity in Art

1. Theme: Media and the Internet

Alnafl believed that resources are available in Saudi society for supporting preschool children’s creativity in art, such as *‘TV shows instead of film cartoons, like “I am a Researcher.” It helps children to support creativity, talent shows. Also, media like television.’* Alshari believed that YouTube is also an available resource for supporting preschool children’s creativity in art. Therefore, using technology in preschools is considered an available resource in Saudi society for supporting preschool children’s

creativity in art. According to Alnafl, *'Why not do homework by an iPad instead of on papers? When a child finds an answer by himself, he would learn better.'*

2. Theme: Family and School

Alnafl believed that family and school can be available resources only when they *'direct children's attention'*. However, Alnafl also believed that not all schools are supportive: *'it depends on teachers; some are supportive, and others are not, just waiting for the end of the day'*.

3. Theme: Workshops, clubs, and centres

All the teachers agreed that clubs, workshops, and centres are available resources for supporting preschool children's creativity in art. Besides what Alnafl mentioned earlier regarding the available resources, she also believes that workshops can be an available resource. In line with this, Alohaz claimed that workshops and courses are the only available resources. Similarly, Alshari believed that private educational centres are the available resources in Saudi society.

However, Alsheeh only provided some ideas that could be applied to have available resources to support creativity in art, such as *'Opening centres ... activate neighbourhood centres in creativity in art, like King Salman Science Oasis. Or neighbourhood clubs that are run in schools now in the afternoon to offer special programmes. Also, to activate workshops for children in art'*.

4. Theme: Expensive, limited, and unreliable

According to Alohaz, the workshops, courses and clubs that are available now are expensive. Alshari agreed that they are expensive, but she also points out that some people may not trust who teaches and supports the children in private educational centres. For example, *'they are expensive, and they are not always available. Mostly they are like preschools but in summer. Most people are not able to enrol their children. Otherwise, they may not trust who teaches and supports the children. There is nothing public.'*

According to Alsheeh, the only workshops that are available now are limited to *'science; nothing in these workshops is related to creativity in art'*. Therefore, Alsheeh

provided a solution to encourage people to enrol in art workshops after opening them by suggesting *'providing free workshops at the beginning and then charge'*.

The teachers' answers highlight a consensus in the lack of resources made available to them and the limitations in general of the current resources that are available in Saudi society.

5.3.9 Focus: Providing a Curriculum to Support Children Who Show Creativity in their Artwork

1. Theme: Absence of curriculum

Alnafl, Alsheeh and Alohaz answered that there is no curriculum for supporting children's creativity in art.

2- Theme: The programme's ideas are old and insufficient

Alshari believed that there is not enough guidance for the preschool education curriculum. For example, *'In the programme guidebook there are ideas, but they are not new. They support but within the curriculum, without much interest in art. I don't think they are enough.'*

5.3.10 Focus: Methods of Supporting Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom and School

1- Theme: Approach children's families

Alshari and Alsheeh believed that approaching creative children's families is a way of supporting such children. For example, according to Alshari, *'I can approach families if I notice a creative child to suggest a centre to support their child'*. Although Alsheeh thought all children are creative, she says if she has a creative child, she gives some ideas, such as *'Suggest some evening centres for the family or websites, videos on YouTube to present ideas to him, lead the family through things like these.'*

2- Theme: Turn a child's paintings into a story

Aloshaz talked about a project that she did with a creative child after being inspired by a workshop that she attended by saying, *'I supported him to make a story out of his painting and I gave his mother the story at the end of the year. He was talking about space. Painting aliens. So, behind each painting we wrote the story of it with the child. The story was from the child's own imagination. I only wrote it down. We came together on a title. That child completed the story to be 10 pages within a term. Then we ran a gallery about stories; we displayed it, then we gave it to his mother.'*

3- Theme: School art activities

Alnafl believed that what they do in school while celebrating international days and running a programme where art activities happen can be supportive of children's creativity in art. Similarly, Alsheeh believed that the group activities the school provides are one way of supporting children's creativity in art.

4- Theme: Provide different materials

Alshari and Alsheeh claimed that providing materials is a way of supporting children. However, Alshari provided materials to the children in her class, while Alsheeh believed that she would provide materials if she knew that there was a creative child in her class, although she argued earlier that all children are creative.

5- Theme: Improve the level of questions

According to Alsheeh, the next step after providing materials to a creative child who shows improvement would be to *'improve the level of questions to be deeper'* when interacting with the child.

6- Theme: Priority for using the art corner

Alsheeh thought allowing a creative child to choose which corner they are going to use in advance and allowing them more time would be one idea for supporting a creative child, if she has one in her class.

7- Theme: Adding some art-related activities to other corners

Another idea that Alsheeh thought she would do if she had a creative child is to add art activities to other corners in the class, saying *'I can add devices, some videos from YouTube in the discovery corner, mix colours to at least have an idea if he does not have the chance to go to the art corner, and when he goes to the art corner, he can try them.'*

8- Theme: Borrowing books from school

Another idea that Alsheeh thought the school could do is lend books that are related to art to creative children. However, she thinks it is hard to apply this idea.

9- Theme: Show and tell, then display

Aloshaz used this way to support children's creativity in art. For example, *'Display their artwork inside the class and outside, to be honest. If the artwork is beautiful and special, I display them outside. Why not?'* Even if a child makes an artwork at home and brings it to the school, Aloshaz would *'present it, children see it, talk about it and display it inside and outside'*.

Similarly, according to Aloshaz displaying outstanding artwork in the waiting room of the school is a way of supporting children's creativity *'so who ever come to the school can see them. Then they cover it with plastic, until now, it has been there since last year, with the children's names and dates.'* However, Aloshaz stated that nothing has been done this year by the school.

10-Theme: Absence of school support

Alshari claimed that the school makes no effort to support children's creativity and supporting children's creativity in school could occur only in class by the teacher if she interested.

To sum up, the data show how teachers struggle to support children's creativity in art. However, Alsheeh only provided ideas that she did not do, although she thought she would do them if she had a creative child. However, at the same time, she thinks that all children are creative, which may reflect a contrary perspective.

5.3.11 Focus: Types of Materials Support Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Recyclable materials

Alshari and Alnafl believed that using recyclable materials in artwork shows children's creativity in art. Alnafl gave some examples, such as *'buttons, paper rolls, sand and sawdust'*.

2- Theme: Painting and colouring

All four teachers claim that painting and colouring are the kinds of activities that show children's creativity. For example, according to Alshari and Alnafl, all kinds of colouring show children's creativity. However, Alnafl emphasised that coloured pencils are *'closer to nature for me than Folmaster colours, wax crayons, colours and watercolours ... and children prefer coloured pens more'*. In contrast, Alos haz believed that painting using watercolours with sponges or hands shows children's creativity in art. Further, Alos haz argued that painting using board stands, if the school provided these, would show children's creativity in art. Als heeh agreed with her regarding that, which she claimed while answering another question.

3- Theme: Clay

Alnafl claimed that clay shows children's creativity; however, not all children are creative in using clay.

4- Theme: Collage

Alos haz and Alshari agreed that collage making is one of the activities that support children's creativity in art.

5- Theme: Cutting activities

Alshari stated that cutting activities where children use scissors support children's creativity in art.

6- Theme: Influence of Western movies

Als heeh's ideas of how to support children's creativity tend to be influenced by Western movies. For example, *'adding headphones in the art corners to play sea sounds and bird songs and the art materials to work, this is a chance for meditation'*

while a child paints ... do like the artists that we watch in movies, that is what make them creative'. It seems that Alsheeh had forgotten that actors act in the movies, and they may not be creative in art.

7- Theme: Influence of nature

Alsheeh shared some ideas that she thinks could support children's creativity when making art activities for meditation, such as being outdoors, using headphones to listen for sounds of nature, like birds sounds.

8- Theme: Influence of lack of support during childhood

According to Alsheeh, if a teacher provides for her children what she dreamed of having as a child, that will support the children's creativity. For example, *'Just do what you like to do when you are a child. I wished to have something like this when I was a child wearing headphones and do like the artists that we watched in movies.'*

9- Theme: Influence of morning lessons

Alnafl stated that free painting and inspiring children in the morning allows their creativity to appear: *'Children become creative when you provide them with papers and inspire them with an idea during the morning lesson (directed learning) ... creativity becomes clear during painting because children have freedom.'*

The themes reported here reflect how strongly the teachers in the second case believe that not only good or appropriate art activities can encourage creativity in children, but also that outside factors influence children's production of artwork.

5.3.12 Focus: Teachers' Satisfaction with the Level of Available Support for Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Dissatisfaction regarding levels of support

Alsheeh and Alshari were not satisfied with the level of support that children receive. Alshari's dissatisfaction is related to the limited time and kinds of ideas that she has, but they are not related to the lesson, which causes difficulty when she tries to apply them. For example, she says, *'No, I am not satisfied. I can do more; I do now, but I*

want more, I like new ideas; I gather them, but sometimes they are not linked to the lesson of the day. I don't have enough time.' Alsheeh's problem was related to providing suitable materials. For instance, 'You always must provide the materials that are suitable, and they are not available in the school. And as a teacher, it is hard to provide the materials all the time. If I work harder, I will do better.' It is clear that both Alshari and Alsheeh believed that they can do more work and support children more than they are able to do.

2- Theme: Satisfaction regarding level of support

Alnafl and Alos haz, on the other hand, feel satisfied with the level of support that children receive. For example, according to Alnafl, 'I do what makes me feel satisfied and comfortable.' Alos haz, on the other hand, thinks that though the support is 'Not excellent, it is very good. The level of children in my class is not excellent; they are very good. There are only three girls who are creative'.

The four teachers in this case used different evaluations regarding their level of support; two of them were satisfied, while the other two were not.

5.3.13 Focus: Barriers to Support Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom

1- Theme: Limited time

Alnafl and Alshari stated that limited time is a barrier for them to support children's creativity. For example, when Alnafl did not have enough time to support a creative child, she usually re-approaches them at a different time. For instance, during their free time in the school or outside the preschool at home.

2- Theme: Lack of materials

Alos haz and Alsheeh struggled with the lack of materials. For example, according to Alos haz, 'We need board-stands ... I think a child becomes more creative standing; the child is a bit restricted, sitting on a chair, but when he is standing with a wide paper, when he is standing, I think there will be more creativity.'

3- Theme: Overcrowded classrooms

According to Alsheeh, the large number of children in the classroom is a barrier, since it *'leads to having a lot of children at the art corner at the same time'*.

4- Theme: Absence of teacher guidance

Alshari struggled with knowing the suitable way to support children's creativity by saying, *'I don't know how to support creative children, but I try. I am not specialised in creativity. There are things that I do not know. Maybe I do not support it in a good way.'*

5- Theme: Work pressure

Alsheeh claimed that work pressure is a barrier to supporting children's creativity. This is especially the case since *'creativity can't appear without pleasure. But when people are trying hard, they will not think about creativity, just about their needs.'*

6- Theme: No freedom

Alnafl believed that teachers are controlled by the rules of the school, but instead they should be given freedom, since they need it just like the children do.

All four teachers agreed that they face barriers to supporting children's creativity but highlighted a range of issues they believe they share.

5.3.14 Focus: Advice to Policymakers for Setting up a Curriculum for Supporting Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Establish a programmes

According to Alnafl and Alshari, they would advise policymakers to provide programmes for them. Similarly, AlosHaz recommended providing help from experts in order to know how to support children's creativity in art. For example, *'Providing teachers who are specialised in art. They will be more knowledgeable than preschool teachers. For example, as a preschool teacher, my skills and knowledge are limited. So, provide a teacher who is specialised in art, at least once a week for mixing colours,*

or learning to draw a certain thing. It is also good for us – teachers – to learn from them.'

2- Theme: Raise families' awareness

Alnafl emphasised the importance of raising family awareness because *'some families believe it is not important that children paint very well. They don't take it seriously.'*

3- Theme: Update the rules and renew art materials.

Alnafl argued that the rules have not been changed since she started working; therefore, they need to be updated in order to allow flexibility, freedom, and less directed learning: *'Instead of 30 minutes, it can be 15 minutes'* for morning lesson. Similarly, Alsheeh advised policymaker to renew art materials in the corner.

4- Theme: No mixing of special needs children with ordinary children during directed lessons

According to Alnafl, *'During the morning and afternoon lessons (directed learning), ordinary children are distracted by children with special needs because they cannot follow the rules you set up, and ordinary children usually interrupt me during the lesson when they find the other children are not following the rules.'*

5- Theme: Selecting creative children to do projects with teachers

Alnafl suggested selecting creative children to do creative projects with teachers in certain areas of creativity, explaining all the details so they could know what to do instead of just asking teachers to make a creative project in general. It seems that Alnafl had gotten used to the idea of being told what to do, so when there is no explanation, she feels lost.

6- Theme: Setting up and visiting galleries

Alsheeh suggested visiting art galleries, watching people's experiences and meeting with artists who are happy to work with children. In the beginning, these services could be free, until parents can see if their children are interested, then they can be charged. Along the same lines, Alshari suggested running galleries in schools and preschools using children's artwork instead of taking them home immediately. This would also make the school part of supporting children's creativity in art, not only at the art corner.

7- Theme: Provide different tools and meditation

Alsheeh advised to provide books and headphones to listen to beautiful sounds as a way of meditation before painting.

8- Theme: Outdoor education

Alsheeh suggested having some classes outdoors in nature. Similarly, Alohaz suggested having classes outdoors in nature. However, she thinks she cannot apply this because it needs space, and she does not have enough in the school yard.

9- Theme: Trips to educational centres

Alohaz argued that *'going out for the trips to educational centres where there are workshops in art'* is worth having in their school.

It would seem them that teachers are in agreement, that different kinds of ongoing advice would be helpful to support and guide them with a range of methods in supporting children's creativity in art.

5.4 Observation Results

As explained in the Methodology chapter in section 3.5.1 (see pages 74-77) and section 3.10.1 (see pages 91-93), the observations, along with the other phases and methods, offered a strong triangulation of the collected data.

5.4.1 General Information about the Classrooms

As mentioned above, four teachers (Alnafl, Alsheeh, Alohaz and Alshari) participated in the study at Ad-Diriyah preschool. Two of them – Alnafl and Alohaz – have been working with children between the ages of four and five years old, while the other teachers – Alsheeh and Alshari – were teaching children from five to six years old. The four teachers had 30–50-minute observations.

The four observations seemed to have many common points, especially in terms of the classrooms and the art corners. Therefore, these common points will be explained below before explaining the points that varied. Regarding the corners, there was one table with up to eight chairs for children. The corner was occupied by up to eight children all the time while there were up to eight children playing in the other corners. In Alnafl and Alshari's classes, where children were aged four – five years old, there were up to two teachers in the class, and only one was in the corner most of the time for observation and to direct the children. In Alsheeh and Alohaz's classes, where the children were aged five – six years old, there were three teachers in the class and three teachers in the corner most of the time for observation and to direct the children. All four classrooms have an organised environment; however, only two of the classes – Alnafl and Alohaz's – were rich environments, while only Alnafl's class was where the rules were displayed on the walls. The theme of the educational unit – My Country – was expressed in each of the classrooms' environments on the walls and inside the corners, though not enough in Alshari's.

5.4.2 Specific Information about the Corners

This section will present the observations in detail, such as how children worked, available activities, the activity of the day, art materials and so on.

5.4.2.1 Focus: Kinds of Available Activities in the Corners

1- Theme: Different kinds of art activities in the corner

Alnafl and Alshari had some art activities that were available at the art corner to do, like working in clay, drawing, and painting. Alnafl was the only teacher who had collage activity at her art corner, while Alshari was the only one who provides craft-making activity. Alsheeh had only drawing activity at her art corner, while Alohaz provided different kinds of colouring, chalk and a catalogue.

2- Theme: The corner is full of art materials

Alnafl, Alohaz and Alshari's art corners were full of art materials.

3- Theme: The corner is not full of materials

Alsheeh's art corner was not full of art materials.

5.4.2.2 Focus: Accessibility of All the Resources

1- Theme: Resources are accessible

At Alnafl and Alohaz's art corners the resources were accessible for the children.

2- Theme: Resources are not accessible

At Alsheeh and Alshari's art corners the resources were not accessible for the children.

5.4.2.3 Focus: The Activity of the Day

1- Theme: Limited activities for the day

The main activity in all four observations was making crafts. In Alohaz's classroom, there were not enough beads and the wires for making bracelets were defective, leading children to struggle and ask for help and materials. For example, a child asked for purple beads, but there were none.

Regarding extra activities, Alohaz provided clay activity and drawing on black paper using chalk, Alsheeh added a colouring activity and Alshari added clay. Alsheeh's craft-making activity was limited to the provision of only a pink water colour. Another limitation was at Alohaz's second activity, where the amount of clay was both insufficient and solid, as it was old, so the children could not make anything out of it. Later, this old clay was removed and replaced with more space for making bracelets – the first activity. However, Alnafl provided all the necessary clay tools and soft clay to the children, so they found the activity enjoyable.

2- Theme: Directed artwork activities

All the craft-making activities were directed either by providing a model, like Alnafl and Alshari, or by explaining how to make the artwork, like Alsheeh or the training teacher at Alohaz's classroom, besides reminding the children of the rules.

For example, Alnafl also explained to the children how to make the artwork and reminded them of the rules before starting to play in the educational corners, then provided them with a model. Alsheeh also explained the rules and the ideas of artwork, asking questions of the children before they went to the educational corners. She then told them, '*You can do whatever you want.*' However, she asked two children to shake their papers to move the colour, which may seem to contradict what she said before.

3- Theme: Lack of freedom

All the activities were chosen by the teachers for the children.

It would seem that, not unexpectedly, all children were limited to certain art activities and not allowed to access the art materials while teachers directed in their creations.

5.4.2.4 Focus: Displaying Boards for Children's Works

1- Theme: Use of boards to display children's artwork

Each classroom has two boards, one inside in the corner to display children's paintings and drawings. Another board, which is outside, is mainly for crafts that are related to the educational units they are learning about at that time.

5.4.2.5 Focus: How a Child Starts their Artwork

1- Theme: Teachers' invitation

Alohaz invited a child to draw using chalk.

2- Theme: Children's will to create

All the children started making their artwork based on their wish to do so.

5.4.2.6 Focus: Child/Children Speak about the Artwork to Anyone/Themselves

1- Theme: Talking about their artwork during activities

In all four classrooms, the children talked about their artwork while making them. For example, a child in Alshari's classroom reminded her peer of what the teacher said regarding not overusing plastic eyes with clay so other children could use some. Another example was at Alnafl's art corner, where children interacted with each other during their artwork about their artwork. For example, one child said that his artwork was '*so beautiful*' and when a child started singing, then all the other children sang with her. In Alos haz's art corner, children interacted with each other, even helping to tidy the table.

5.4.2.7 Focus: The Way of Teacher's Interaction with a Child/Children

1- Theme: Directing children's artwork

Alnafl reminded the children about colouring the pictures before gluing the sticks and how to glue them, while Alsheeh helped a child to do the artwork. Alsheeh spent all her time at the section where children were making crafts and redirecting them with questions, which helped children who were at the other section to draw freely and talk to each other.

2- Theme: Complimenting and encouraging the children

Alnafl complemented the children by saying, '*Well done, Khaled, you returned the colours to their place*' and encouraged others by saying '*try, you can do it*'. Alos haz also encouraged the children when they were starting their artwork by saying, '*I want to see your creativities; I want to see the best drawings.*' When a child said about her drawing, '*It is ugly*', Alos haz said, '*No, it is beautiful.*' Alshari asked the children to make her beautiful things out of clay.

3- Theme: Reminding children of the rules

Alshari asked the children not to overuse the plastic eyes so all the children could use them. Similarly, Alnafl reminded the children of the rules for sharing the art materials.

This made a child ask her to set up an hourglass to count his limited time, which tended to be 15 minutes.

4- Theme: Asking questions

Alsheeh kept asking the children who were making their artwork on her table about the artwork and the process of making them all the time. Alnafl, however, interacted with the children a few times, asking questions like *'How do you feel?'*

5- Theme: Helping them to finish their artwork

After Alsheeh asked the children to finish their artwork so others could come in and they left to wash their hands, she asked her assistant to write the children's name on their artwork and put their artwork on the board outside instead of making them do that. Alshari helped a child to remake what he made using clay, which took the shape of a person; because the time had ended, she helped another child to complete his airplane and use some glue.

The four teachers used different ways of interacting with the children, in most of which the teachers complimented and encouraged the children.

5.4.2.8 Focus: How a Child Finishes their Artwork

1- Theme: Decided to finish

Most of the children in Alnafl and Alshari's classrooms finished making their artwork when they wanted to, while all the children finished making their artwork at Alos haz's classrooms. One child asked his teacher, Alsheeh, to take their artwork to the next section and draw more around the edges of their papers; when Alsheeh allowed her, another child did the same.

2- Theme: Forced to finish

Some children at Alnafl, Alsheeh and Alshari's classrooms had to finish because the time ended. For example, Alsheeh told the children, *'We have to give our friends a chance'*, so the children left the corner to wash their hands after they cleaned their places. Alshari did not give children a five-minute notice before the time ended, which made the children finish their artwork.

5.5 Photos of Children’s Artwork and Follow-up Interview’s Results

As explained in the Methodology chapter in section 3.5.1 (see pages 74-77) and section 3.10.1 (see pages 91-93), the photos of the children’s artwork and the follow-up interviews, along with the other phases and methods, offered a strong triangulation to the collected data.

The four teachers were asked to choose up to three pieces of artwork that they believed were creative artwork for taking photos in order to use the photos for a follow-up interview. All the focuses in the follow-up interview data in the section of *specific discussion for each artwork* are related to the first research question. Each teacher’s photos and comments will be presented individually with their photos followed by a comparison at the end in section *General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher* before moving on to the last case in chapter six.

5.5.1 First Teacher – Alnafl

5.5.1.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

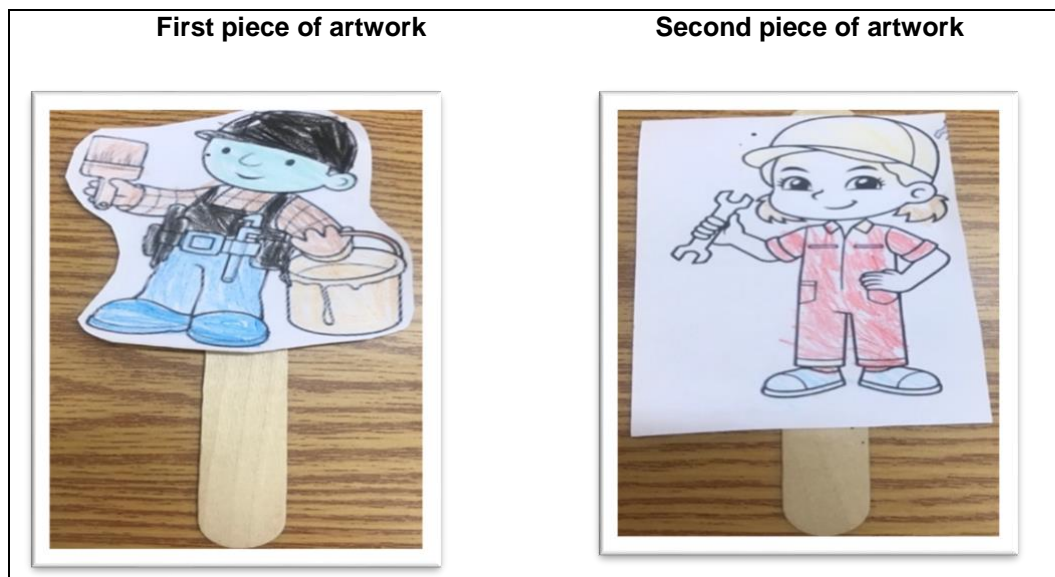


Figure 5.1 Alnafl’s children’s artwork.

Focus: reason for choosing the idea of this artwork

- 1- Theme: Artwork’s idea was related to the lesson of the day

According to Alnafl, this artwork' idea was related to the lesson they had earlier that morning, which was about different kinds of careers.

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

1- Theme: Ways of using colours and glue

Alnafl believed that matching colours, colouring within the lines and using glue reflect creativity in the artwork in both the first and second pieces of artwork.

2- Theme: The outcome

Alnafl believed that the outcome of the first artwork is showing a creative artwork.

3- Theme: Comparing the child's level to that of themselves and others

Alnafl compared the children's level to other children's and themselves before. For example, she compares the first child's artwork to what other children did and compares the second child's artwork to herself before. As she explains, *'it used to be awful, but we accept children's artwork the way they are'*.

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alnafl believed that there is a cultural influence on the two pieces of artwork.

2- Theme: Link between culture's influence on children's feelings that reflects on their artwork

Alnafl has a strong belief that there is a cultural influence on children's feelings, which eventually will have an effect on children's artwork. For example, the second child was calmer than she used to be, which, according to Alnafl, may be related to something going on in her house; therefore, she completed her artwork by herself.

3- Theme: Variety of artwork's ideas

Alnafl added two female characters and two other males so each child could choose what represented them. Each child chose what represented themselves. For example, the boy – first artwork- chose a male character while the girl -second artwork- chose a female one.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a social influence on the children's artwork

Alnafl believed that there is a social influence on the two pieces of artwork.

2- Theme: Link between society's influence on children's feelings that is reflected in their artwork

Alnafl had a strong belief that there is a social influence on children's feelings that will eventually be reflected in children's artwork. For example, according to Alnafl regarding the first child, *'I think his family is the most influential in terms of the colours he chose for the hat and the face. I showed them before the hats for each job and the painter was yellow, but he chose black, or his feeling; he was not there during the lesson, and he may be upset.'*

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is teachers' influence on the children's artwork

Alnafl believed that her interactions with the two children have an influence on the two pieces of artwork through compliments and encouragement, like *'try, you can do it'*.

5.5.1.2 General Discussion about all the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first one

Alnafl believed that the most creative artwork of the two is the first one.

2- Theme: Ways of colouring and matching colours

According to Alnafl, the way the first child matched the colour of the brush and the paint and chose more than one colour shows he is more creative than the second child.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Using collage and glue for the same idea

For the same lesson, which focused on resources like the oil and gold of Saudi Arabia, Alnafl would add collage so children can make different characters for related jobs and glue them onto a map of the Kingdom to show where these jobs are mostly located as a way of reflecting better support for children's creativity.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Nothing to add

Alnafl believed that there is nothing to add to the art corner, as it is well stocked with art materials.

5.5.2 Second Teacher – Alsheeh

5.5.2.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

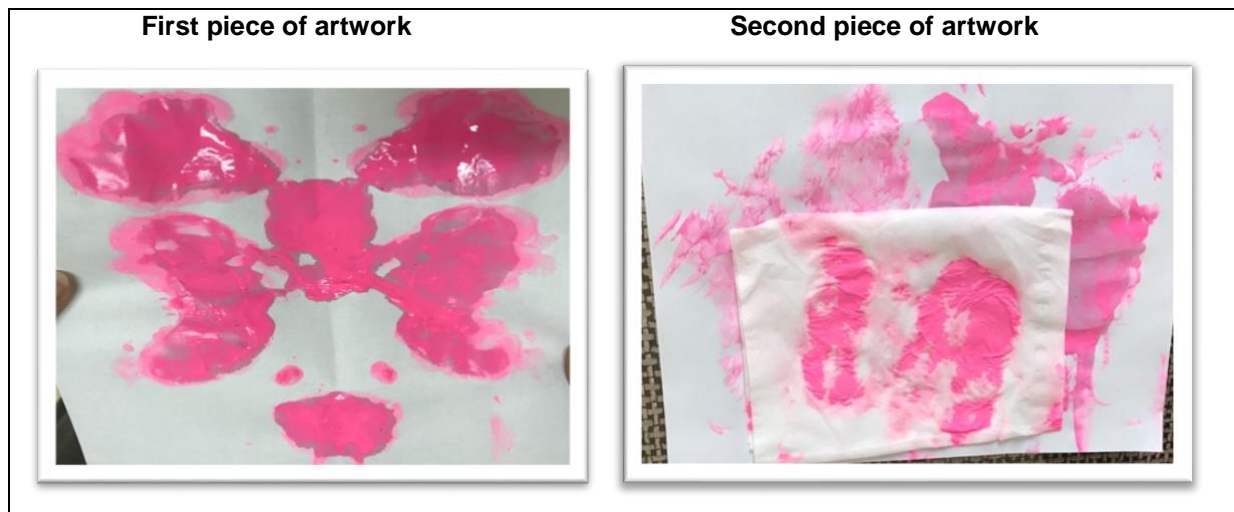


Figure 5.2 Alsheeh's children's artwork.

Focus: Reason for choosing the idea of this artwork:

1- Theme: Allows freedom

Alsheeh believed that this idea allows children to have freedom while they are making artwork, as it does not limit their abilities. However, Alsheeh was interacting and asking children all the time, which seemed to disturb the children while they were working.

2- Theme: Children love printing using watercolours

Another reason behind choosing this idea of artwork, which Alsheeh clarified when I asked her about the second artwork, is that children love printing and stamping using watercolours.

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

1- Theme: The outcome of an artwork

According to Alsheeh, the outcome of the first artwork reflects the creativity in it, as *'the result came out as something known, and this depends on my judgment not the child's. He thinks he made and used his options, but I chose it because it came out as a butterfly.'*

2- Theme: Acceptance of whatever unexpectedly happens while making the artwork

Another point where Alsheeh believed creativity appears in this artwork is adaptation and accepting what happens to the second artwork. For example, according to Alsheeh, the second child *'wanted to wipe his hand, but the tissue fell down on the paper and he liked it and kept it like this. He was not upset because of what happened. Yet he tried to make it right and liked the result. So it may be that one of creativity's signs is being able to adapt or turn what unexpectedly happens to be positive.'*

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alsheeh believed that there was no cultural influence on children's creativity on these pieces of artwork.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no social influence on the children's artwork

Alsheeh believed that there was no social influence on children's creativity on these pieces of artwork.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is teachers' influence on the children's artwork

Alsheeh believed that there is an influence from her interaction with the children that is reflected in the children's creativity in this artwork. For example, regarding the first child, Alsheeh clarified that *'My questions were inspiring him to think what to do using only the paper and colour without the other tools. Because I asked him not to use the tools and try to make something, some children folded the paper, others shook it, others used their fingers.'* While with the second child, she interacted less, which may explain why the child just accepted what happened and did not try to do anything as he was free to do what he wanted.

5.5.2.2 General Discussion about all the Pieces of Artwork

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the second one.

According to Alsheeh, the most creative artwork is the second one.

2- Theme: Adaptation and accepting whatever happens is a sign of creativity.

Alsheeh clarified her reason for choosing the second artwork as the most creative one because the child accepted what accidentally happened to his artwork while he was trying to clean his hand.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Providing more art materials

Alsheeh believed that in order to make this artwork provide better support for children's creativity, she would add more art materials, such as *'balls for them to puff them to move and see what can happen using colours or making extra holes on each side of straws to see what can happen when a child puffs. Adding more colours, small stones, sawdust'*.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children’s creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Adding more art materials and space

Alsheeh suggested some ideas that she thinks can be applied, such as *‘Adding more materials and renewing them continuously while keeping the old ones so children can build on their experiences to develop them ... add more space.’*

2- Theme: Allowing children to develop their artwork

Alsheeh believed that *‘The teacher can keep children’s artwork on shelves, and if a child wants to develop his artwork, then he can’*

Alsheeh also suggested having a section for printing or a class for art activities where children go twice a week, but she thinks these two ideas cannot be applied.

5.5.3 Third Teacher – Alos haz

5.5.3.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

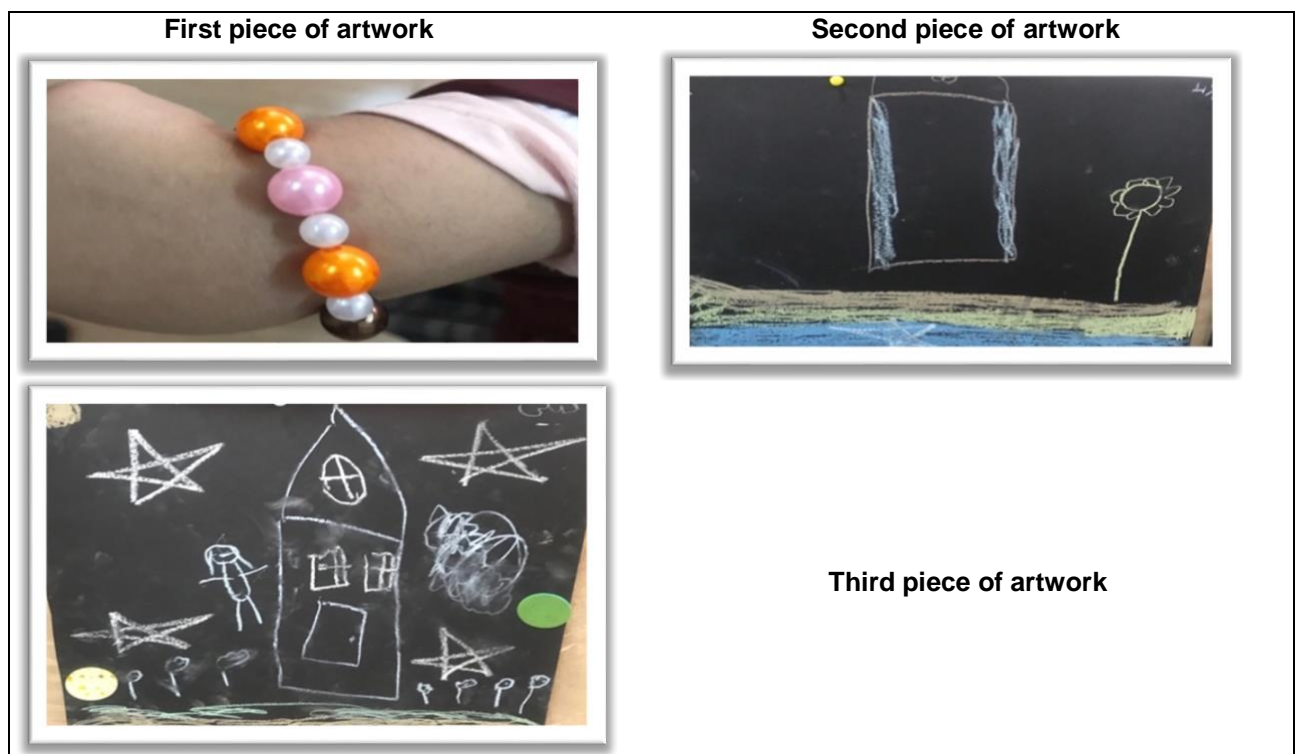


Figure 5.3 Alos haz’s children’s artwork

Focus: Reason for choosing the idea of this artwork

1- Theme: Children love doing them

Aloshaz chose these ideas of artwork because she thinks children love making them, whether it is making bracelets or drawing on black paper using chalk.

2- Theme: Allow creativity and better outcomes

Another reason for choosing these ideas of artwork according to Aloshaz was that it allowed children to show their creativity in art and better outcomes for their age, which is five years old.

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

1- Theme: Organised and accurate artwork

Aloshaz believed that creativity was reflected in the artwork by being accurate and organised. For example, in the third artwork, the child drew in detail. Also, in the second artwork, the child was organised and accurate in terms of details. Similarly, for the first artwork, the child was considering sizes and colours while making the bracelet.

2- Theme: The choice of colours

Aloshaz believed that creativity was reflected in the choice of colours in the second artwork, where the child drew a picture of the sea, sand, trees and the moon.

3- Theme: Choosing the idea of the artwork

Another point where creativity was reflected in the artwork was shown in the second artwork, where Aloshaz believed that the child knew what she was drawing. According to Aloshaz, the child was *'not just drawing randomly. Even when I asked her, she told me "This is sand, sea"'*.

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a cultural influence on the children's artwork

Aloshaz believed there are many ways where children's creativity become influenced culturally. One through travelling to somewhere where there is a sea had an influence on the second child's artwork. According to Aloshaz, *'I think because of travelling, because she drew sea; there is no sea in Riyadh. So, her family plays a role.'* Another

cultural influence according to Alos haz was through foreign films, as for the third artwork the child drew a Western house.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a social influence on the children's artwork

Alos haz believed that there is a social influence on the three children's artwork through their peers, families, and the school.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no teacher influence on the children's artwork

Alos haz believed that there was no interaction with the three children; she was only observing them after having provided the materials and explained to the children how to make them. According to Alos haz, her only interactions were by complimenting children after they finished their artwork and asking them about these.

5.5.3.2 General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first one.

Alos haz rated the three pieces of artwork as the first one as the most creative artwork, then the second one then the third.

2- Theme: Accurate artwork

Alos haz believed that the first artwork was the most creative one because the bracelet was not done randomly, as the child was accurate when she was working on it. Then the second artwork, which was chosen because '*she knew what she was drawing at that time*'. The last one was the third artwork, which was '*full of things*', which made it the least creative one of the three.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Adding more art materials

Aloshaz believed that adding more art materials, such as *'more wires and beads with different colours, and different colours of chalk and papers'*, would be a better example to support children's creativity in art.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Specialised teacher in art

According to Aloshaz, having a specialised teacher in art would help the children to be creative.

2- Theme: More time

Aloshaz talked earlier about the lack of time, and she thought, *'I see creativity, but only if we give them more time. Because time is limited and short for two different pieces of artwork a day.'*

3- Theme: Adding different art activities

Aloshaz clarified that she has a lack of cutting activities and adding more of them would be a good idea. Also, during the first interview, she talked about the need for a board stand, which is now available in her class whenever they need it, as it is removable because there is not enough space.

5.5.4 Forth Teacher – Alshari

5.5.4.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

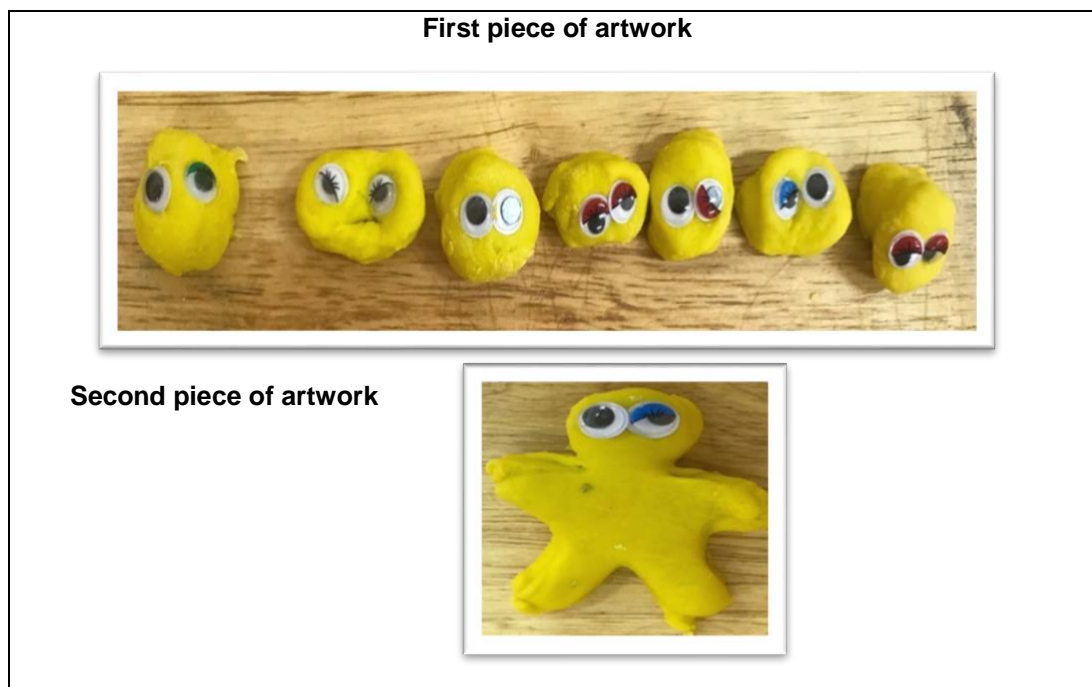


Figure 5.4 Alshari's children's artwork

Focus: Reason for choosing the idea of this artwork

1- Theme: Strength children's hand muscles

Alshari claimed that *'I want children's muscles to be stronger'* by using clay.

2- Theme: Children like it because it allows them freedom of creation

Alshari believed that children really enjoy clay as *'they do not get bored with it. They would spend an hour playing it. Sometimes I have to set up an hourglass for them so other children can play.'* The reason behind this enjoyment, according to Alshari, is that *'they have freedom to make whatever they want and shape it as they like. There are no limitations or process to follow.'*

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

1- Theme: New

Alshari claimed that making something new is a sign of creativity that is reflected in the first artwork, as she thinks, *'In the beginning, I thought he is making a worm but later he put eyes on each one.'*

2- Theme: Accurate

Alshari stated that being accurate may be a sign of creativity in the second artwork.

3- Theme: Acceptance of whatever unexpectedly happens while making the artwork

Alshari stated that creativity appears in this artwork in the form of adaptation and accepting what happened to the first artwork. For example, according to Alshari, the first child *'accidentally made a mouth in this face, but after he noticed that he liked it and made it bigger. It is like he found something new in this.'*

4- Theme: Being the first person to use new art materials

According to Alshari, the second child was the first one who used the plastic eyes.

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alshari believed there is a cultural influence on the first artwork through iPad, TV, or Netflix. According to her, *'Maybe he was influenced by a film cartoon, story, or trip to make these faces. Because most of the children's films and cartoons now are like this. I watch them with my own child on Netflix. They are weird; the characters don't talk at all, they don't have mouths, they just move, and I don't like it. They are similar to this... His intention was not to add mouths, but he added it on one accidentally and it had an effect on the face's shape, but he did not add mouths on the other faces.'* What Alshari was talking about is Minions which is a film cartoon for children where most of the characters in the film look like the first photo.

2- Theme: There is no cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alshari stated that there is no cultural influence on the second artwork.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a social influence on the children's artwork

Alshari believed that there is a social influence on the two pieces of artwork. For example, for the first artwork, *'his mother provides art materials for him at home, and*

he continues in the classroom. He knows how to use them.' For the second artwork, *'the school has influence on this; he may have seen it with other children and tried it'.*

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1. Theme: There is teacher influence on the children's artwork

Alshari claimed that her interaction had an influence on the two children. This was done on the first artwork through her compliments that supported the first child and made him excited to make more and do well. On the other hand, she directed the second child by telling him *'to press more so it cut the clay and remove the rest'*. Alshari also believed that *'providing the eyes helped'* the first child in his artwork, which may be a way of inspiration.

5.5.4.2 General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first one

Alshari believed that the first artwork is the only creative one since the second one has *'no creativity; a lot of children can make it'*, but she chose it because *'it is the only one available'*.

2- Theme: It is all the child's idea

The reason why Alshari believed that the first artwork is the only creative one is *'because without any advice or suggestion, he made it creatively, without any suggestion. It was his idea, and not what I expected.'*

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Adding more art materials

Alshari claimed that she could add some glitter, different kinds of fabric, sticks and collage with clay but she was focused on the other artwork that day.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Adding more art materials and art activities

Alshari stated that adding more art materials with clay, painting and sharing drawing activity on a big sheet of paper at the art corner would help to provide better support for children's creativity.

5.6 Conclusion of Ad-Diriyah Preschool Teachers' Data

To sum up the data gathered from Ad-Diriyah preschool, all four preschool teachers showed diversity in their perspectives in relation to children's creativity in visual art and to creativity in general, as well as the signs of creativity. Regarding creative children's characters, the teachers tend to believe that creative children have more positive characters than difficult ones. The four did share agreement on the belief that all children are creative in art and agreed that children's artwork are influenced by their culture, although they only partly agreed with the available resources in Saudi society.

Regarding supporting children's creativity, in the interviews, all four teachers agreed that they did not have any curriculum for this purpose. Therefore, they did not have enough to offer, apart from art materials for activities and interacting with children and approaching their families. Half of the teachers were satisfied with the level of support they provided for the children, although all faced different barriers. All four teachers agreed that the teacher's role could be positive and negative at the same time. All four teachers advised policymakers differently, which shows how much teachers needed support and guidance from policymakers.

Regarding the observations, the teachers directed all children's artwork by either presenting them with models or explaining to them how to make the artwork and interacting with the children in different ways. In addition, only one of the artwork's ideas was related to the educational unit they were studying.

Regarding the photos of the artwork, the children's artwork seemed different from one another's artwork. In terms of the follow-up interviews, all four teachers tended to have an influence on the children's artwork in addition to cultural and social influences. All

four teachers believed that they were able to improve their support for future artwork in order to provide better support for children's creativity, as they found some suggestions for improvement.

Chapter 6

Results

Case Three: Bad' Bin Arfaag Preschool

6.1 Introduction

In Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, which is the third case of this study, I asked the same questions and used the same observation tables and field notes. Next, I presented the pieces of artwork that the teachers had chosen as creative artwork for them to answer the follow-up interview questions. All the data in this case answered the two research questions: 1- What do preschool teachers in Riyadh believe creativity means in visual art for children between three and six years of age? 2- How do preschool teachers in Riyadh support creativity in visual art in children between three and six years of age? The data presented in the interviews represent the teachers' beliefs by answering questions 4 to 9 and 16 and 17, while questions 10 to 15 provide answers about their practice (see Appendixes A, first interview, phase one, fourth version, page 287). The data from the observations represent the teachers' practices. In terms of the follow-up interviews, the data are the reflections of the teachers' beliefs and practices.

As it was explained previously in section 4.1 introduction in chapter four, the same process of identifying codes and themes was followed for chapters five and six. The final themes are discussed and presented below, under each focus identified from the collected data in each method. Later, the data will be analysed and discussed in chapter seven, along with the two other cases from chapters four and five.

6.2 Context of the Case

6.2.1 Teachers

Four teachers (Albakhatri, Alqrqas, Alqaysom and Alkhozama) participated in the study at Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool. All four preschool teachers have three-seven years of experience working as preschool teachers with children from the ages of four–

six. All the four teachers have bachelor's degrees in early childhood education, which makes them qualified for early childhood education.

6.2.2 School

This is a private preschool in Riyadh, the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. As a private preschool, the school is funded by the fees that parents pay to enrol their children. Private preschools are allowed by the Saudi Ministry of Education to add any additional curricula along with the basic subjects required by the Ministry. Private preschools are popular in Saudi Arabia because most Saudi families, even though they are middle class, prefer their children to study in private schools, which provide better learning environments.

6.2.3 Children

Children in this preschool are considered middle class, as is the majority of the Saudi population. The ages of the children in the observed classrooms ranged from four to six years. There were 14 to 18 children in each classroom that was observed.

6.3 Interview Results

6.3.1 Focus: Teachers' Definition of Creativity in General

1- Theme: Imagination

According to Albakhatri, creativity is linked to children's imaginations. For instance, '*I see creativity as satisfying children's desire to know by imagination.*'

2- Theme: Curiosity and creating something new

Albakhatri believed that '*some children have curiosity, which fosters creativity in children. They like to ask questions, and you answer them. They offer new and beautiful ideas. They may use simple materials, but in the end, you find an amazing drawing. I think this comes from their curiosity. How they see things, imagine, and listen during the day's lesson. Their questions satisfy their desire to know, and then*

they draw you a complete picture.' In line with this, Alkhozama believed that making new things using the same materials is an example of creativity.

3- Theme: Importance of being supported from home

Albakhatri argued that supporting children is important in building their self-confidence and improving their creativity. For example, *'Most of them do not have self-confidence. You may find she has done a great painting, and she asks you, "Is it nice? No, it is not." Then she tears it up. Families play a big role. They don't show any interest in her. Or they laugh at her paintings, which breaks her... Some children, because of their home environments, you will not think they are creative, because they have nothing to do at home, their families do not support them to do something, so they have no sense of creativity. These children are really creative and need so much support, which encourages me.'*

To support this child, who has no self-confidence, Albakhatri *'displayed their artwork on my shelves in the class to make them feel proud'*. In her experience, supporting such children *'makes them so happy. Now, every day, the girl goes to the art corner to make something and hands it to me.'*

According to Albakhatri, *'Other children who have no support from families and have no interest, you will find them creating nothing. Even at the art corner, you will find them confused, holding a pen, looking at their peers' work and copying it ... it depends on their home environments.'*

4- Theme: Advanced level of skills

Children can demonstrate an advanced level of skills in different ways. For example, according to Alqrqas, demonstrating clever ways of thinking and having nice handwriting. Similarly, Alqaysom argued that creativity *'is when you compare a child's skills to his peers, you find them different and outstanding'*. Alqaysom stated that it is difficult for mothers to know whether their children are creative or not, as there may not be other children around to compare their children to.

The four themes above reveal how the teachers in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, as well as the other preschools' teachers, hold a variety and complexity of creativity definitions regarding creativity.

6.3.2 Focus: Describing Children's Creativity in Art According to Teachers

1- Theme: New, beautiful, or unusual outcomes

Albakhatri believed that when a child creates beautiful ideas, such as an amazing drawing using simple materials, this represents creativity in art. Alqrqas, however, stated that creating something unusual is creativity. Similarly, Alkhozama described creativity in art as taking place when a child makes an artwork that *'looks the best'*.

2- Theme: Self-directed art activities and imagination

Albakhatri explained, *'They imagine something and then do it. Sometimes, it is not for themselves but for their parents: "It is for my mother." He creates something, that he loves it only for his mother.'* Albakhatri's comment shows that creativity appears when a child participates in an artwork activity using their imagination, which allows them to create something they love.

3- Theme: Talking about what they think they made in their artwork

According to Albakhatri, *'When I ask them about their artwork, they answer differently than what I expected. They had an idea but could not put it into the artwork. But they think they did it.'*

4- Theme: Drawing and ways of using colours

Alqrqas believed that drawing and the use of colours show creativity in children's artwork.

In line with that, Alqaysom stated that creativity consists of *'drawing a character in a way that is more realistic. Using colours in a way that is more realistic as well, like trees in green and sky in blue. This is creativity to me.'*

6.3.3 Focus: Signs of Creativity in Children's Pieces of Artwork

1- Theme: Having advanced skills in art-making activities

Albakhatri, Alqrqas and Alqaysom agreed that having advanced skills in making artwork is a sign of creativity. However, each teacher finds this skill in certain aspects of making art. For example, in painting, according to Albakhatri, while to Alqrqas, it is in drawing and to Alqaysom, it is coping in relation to the child's age.

2- Theme: Being passionate

Albakhatri and Alqrqas believed that if a child loves painting and drawing, it is a sign of creativity.

3- Theme: Outstanding outcomes

As Alqaysom stated, *'Drawing characters from their reality, I see it as creativity when a child draws his mother and father, house, family'*, which he says is a sign of creativity. For Alqrqas, it is making a completed paint and *'every day a new artwork ... she chooses beautiful colours.'* Similarly, Albakhatri argued that mixing colours represents a sign of creativity.

4- Theme: Making understandable ideas through artwork

Alkhozama stated that a child demonstrates creativity when *'making a story out of his drawing. I could understand the story without explaining it to me. This is a sign of creativity.'*

5- Theme: Creating creative artwork using recyclable materials

According to Alkhozama, *'creating using recyclable items that I provide in amazing ways'* is a sign of creativity.

From the data presented above, it appears that there are five signs of creativity that teachers can find in children's artwork. However, they mostly agreed on three signs: having advanced skills, being passionate and having outstanding outcomes.

6.3.4 Focus: Potential for All Children to be Creative in Art

1- Theme: Not all children are creative in art

Alqrqas and Alqaysom agreed that not all children are creative in art.

2- Theme: With support, all children are creative in art

Alkhozama believed that all children are creative in art when they are provided with materials and have a supportive environment. In line with this, Albakhatri argued that all children are creative in art if they have support.

6.3.5 Focus: Teachers' Descriptions of a Creative Child's Personality Traits in Terms of Positive and Difficult in Art

1- Theme: Positive personality traits

The four teachers tended to describe creative children as having positive personality traits. For example, Albakhatri described them as being competitive, bold, independent, and careful about what they say. As Albakhatri said about one student, *'If I ask her during the lesson, she will not answer, but she will answer if she raises her hand. She has the answer, but she does not want to say it. We still don't know why. But after she listens to all children's answer, then she answers.'*

Alkhozama mentioned other personality traits, such as being *'imaginative, paying attention to what is around them. If I ever forget something routine, she always reminds me.'* Alqaysom described being stable as a personality trait that has not been mentioned before.

There are some characteristics on which two teachers agreed. For example, Alqrqas and Alqaysom agreed that being quiet and polite is common, while Alqrqas and Albakhatri found that being loveable and being the favourite child in the classroom are also common combinations. Albakhatri and Alkhozama also stated that being sociable and curious about everything was common.

2- Theme: Difficult personality traits

Albakhatri also described some creative children as having difficult personality traits, such as, *'The problem is most of them do not have self-confidence. You may find she has done a great painting, and she asks you, "Is it nice? No, it is not." Then she tears it up.'* Alqaysom and Alqrqas, however, agreed that being shy is a common personality trait among creative children.

6.3.6 Focus: Teacher's Role Influences Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Can also be negative

Albakhatri, Alqrqas and Alqaysom all agreed that the teacher's role does not always positively influence children's creativity in art. According to Albakhatri, *'Some people can help them; others may be disturbing for children. If you help them, you will not think children can create, and you want their creativity to come from them. It is good to help them when they need help, but not every time.'* Similarly, Alqrqas believed that when a teacher *'asks, "What did you do? What is this?" to a child, he or she is likely to think, "I did not do well" and "Nobody knows what I am doing." It can have a negative effect.'*

2- Theme: Is always positive

In contrast, Alkhozama believed that the teacher's role always has a positive influence.

6.3.7 Focus: Potential of Children's Artwork Being Affected by the Culture of their Society

1- Theme: Culture influences on children's creativity in art

All four teachers agreed that the culture of a society has an influence on children's creativity in art in many ways. For example, these include home environments, football teams, experiences, travelling and school. According to Alqrqas, *'I have a child who drew his mother praying but sitting on a chair because she has knee problems. Thus, home environments have an influence on drawing ideas. When drawing, sidewalks and streets are always grey, black and yellow; this is what they see. So, yes, it has*

effects.’ In line with this, Albakhatri stated that *‘you can look and compare between two children who come from different home environments in terms of their productions. Despite your support for them, one of them will continue making artwork, and the other will spend his time playing with his iPad without any productions.’* Similarly, Alqaysom believed that the family’s lifestyle can have an influence on children’s creativity; as he said, *‘When a child has experiences, travel and a generally more open life, maybe his level of creativity is higher than a child who is always at home playing with his phone or PlayStation. I don’t think this kind of limited life can make a child creative.’*

Another way of being influenced is through a favourite football team, according to Albakhatri, who thought *‘their football team also has an influence on their choice of colours, like when a child is a fan of Alhilal; his favourite colour is blue or yellow for Alnasser’.* Alqrqas also added how school can influence children, saying, *‘If you notice a child at the beginning of the year, his artwork will be different.’*

6.3.8 Focus: Available Resources in Saudi Society for Supporting Preschool Children’s Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Public library and events

All four teachers rely on different resources in Saudi society, such as centres and events. According to Alkhozama, these include the Riyadh International Book Fair, which runs once a year, the corners in some malls and the Misk Academy programme. Alqaysom also mentioned the King Abdul-Aziz Public Library in Riyadh.

2- Theme: Expensive centres

Albakhatri, Alqrqas and Alqaysom stated that centres are expensive, especially specialised centres.

3- Theme: Lack of family interest

According to Alqaysom, *‘At King Abdul-Aziz Library, there are some activities to support talent. These kinds of activities and programmes are not well known among families, perhaps because families are not interested in them. Although King Abdul-Aziz Library activities are free of charge, some centres charge small fees while others*

are expensive, and I think the amount of charge does not reflect the service that children receive because it depends on the staff. But I think if families are interested, it will not be an issue, and not many families look for centres to support children's talents.' This shows that accessible resources are available in Saudi society that could be used if families are interested in creativity in art.

6.3.9 Focus: Providing a Curriculum to Support Children Who Show Creativity in their Artwork

1- Theme: Absence of curriculum

The three teachers confirmed that there is no curriculum for supporting children's creativity in art in their private preschools, although these have the right to have one as an additional curriculum to what is provided by the Saudi Ministry of Education.

6.3.10 Focus: Methods of Supporting Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom and School

1- Theme: Observe the children

Albakhatri supported her children in class by observing them without disturbing them so that they could be creative while creating artwork.

2- Theme: Show, tell and then display artwork

Alqrqas allowed a creative child to *'talk about her drawing to her peers'* as a way of supporting children's creativity. In line with the show-and-tell method, Albakhatri and Alqrqas displayed children's artwork as a way of supporting children's creativity in art. For example, according to Albakhatri, *'I display their artwork on my shelves in the class to make them feel proud. This makes them very happy. Now, every day, the girl goes to the art corner to make something and hands it to me.'* Similarly, Alqaysom, Alqrqas and Albakhatri stated that their school has big boards in the yards where children's creative artwork is displayed.

3- Theme: Interact one-to-one

Alqrqas and Alqaysom used one-to-one support with children who showed creativity when making artwork. For instance, according to Alqrqas, *'We talk about her drawings, and I encourage her, and take a photo of her drawing or when she is drawing.'*

4- Theme: Provide materials

Albakhatri and Alkhozama provided all kinds of materials to the children to help them show their creativity. For example, Alqrqas stated that she must *'renew the art corner weekly in terms of the kinds of materials.'* Another example from Alkhozama is that *'We change the kinds of colours every three days. Mixing chalk and water can also show their creativity, as does painting using brushes and sponges. Last week, we had the educational Food Unit, so I added plastic forks for them to use instead of brushes. The children said they did not work, but I asked them to try. Then, a girl showed the children how to use one and started to paint a tree and the sun; she was creative. I once added small wooden sticks, and one child made a hedgehog, which I did not expect.'*

5- Theme: Test the children's abilities

Albakhatri argued that the school chose only outstanding children and they had them tested instead of testing all children. Alqaysom had the experience of having the school test two children in her class, which did not lead to a useful result. Alqaysom explained that *'the school had two children from my class; one was creative at drawing, and another child was fluent in Arabic. And made them do a test for creativity in general with someone who is qualified at giftedness... stuff like that, and the test, I think it was not related to their areas. And they gave them a book that had exercises and questions, such as what the differences are between this and that. I have to work with her one-to-one during the day until the end of the year. At the end of the year, I returned the book, and that was it. I don't really see where the support is. But they said they were gifted. I was not satisfied with their support.'*

6- Theme: Take photos of artwork

Alqrqas took photos of the children's artwork in order to display the photos in the class and the school boards as a way of supporting them.

7- Theme: Approach the children's families

Alqaysom found that approaching the family is an important way of offering support. Therefore, she spoke of one child who *'told her mother about her creativity; she did not know this about her daughter before then. I still keep in touch with her mother twice a week. Her mother sends me photos of the child's drawings, and her drawings are now everywhere in the house.'*

8- Theme: Keep a record of the children's artwork

According to Alqaysom, keeping a record of drawings will help a child maintain their *'giftedness, so I will keep a record of her drawing, and each week I will send a paper that shows how to draw an animal or a house and allow her to practice at home if she wants, as it is not obligated, and I do not force her to do anything, ever. The child has been enjoying it since then. Each week, she draws something and brings it back to me.'*

9- Theme: Take the children on trips to make artwork

According to Alkhozama, the school once supported children's creativity by taking the children on *'a trip to a park and encouraged the children to pick up stones and leaves. Later, each child had a box in the art corner full of what they had picked up and used it to make an artwork. Like drawing a trunk and using a leaf to complete a tree'*.

The data suggest that teachers try to use possible and available ways to support children's creativity, although this may involve them in certain struggles, as they need the school's support.

6.3.11 Focus: Types of Materials Support Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Clay and its tools

Albakhatri and Alqaysom believed that clay and its tools allow children to show creativity.

2- Theme: Recyclable materials

Alkhozama provided tea bag tags as art material to inspire children to be creative about using them.

3- Theme: Colouring

According to Alqaysom, she encouraged creativity by *'allowing different kinds of colours, not just coloured pens, at least two kinds a day'*. However, Albakhatri stated that the use of coloured pens most clearly demonstrates creativity.

4- Theme: Compressed cork

Alkhozama stated that children like compressed cork, as *'they either draw on it or use it'*.

5- Theme: Collage

According to Alqrqas and Alqaysom, collaging awakens children's creativity. For example, Alqaysom stated that the *'diverse shapes of collage allow children to imagine more strongly'*.

6- Theme: Every child has interests

Albakhatri argued that every child has interests that make them different from each other. For example, according to Albakhatri, *'some children can be creative at clay but not at drawing. They can make different shapes, but their drawings are simple. Every child has their own interests.'*

6.3.12 Focus: Teachers' Satisfaction with the Level of Available Support for Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Satisfaction regarding the level of support

Alqaysom was satisfied with the level of support that children receive. According to her, *'I do what I can, so I am satisfied. I have liked drawing since I was a child, and I remember that my teacher encouraged me to draw only with compliments. I promised myself since then to support any child in whom I see creativity, because it can have a good influence on them one day.'*

2- Theme: Dissatisfaction regarding levels of support

Alqrqas, Albakhatri and Alkhozama, in contrast, were not satisfied with the level of support that children receive. Alqrqas was not satisfied, as she believes that *'I need more, and I don't want to be satisfied, because if I would be, I would stop. I always need to provide more support.'* However, according to Albakhatri, *'Whatever I do, I feel I can do more. Each year, I say to myself, this year I will find more creative children among the children in my class, but until now, I don't think that I have reached the level that will make them creative.'*

The majority of the teachers in this preschool believed that they could do more work and support children to the degree that they wished.

6.3.13 Focus: Barriers to Support Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom

1- Theme: Lack of family's awareness

Albakhatri and Alqrqas argued that children's home environments can be a barrier to supporting children's creativity if families are not interested in children's creativity in art.

2- Theme: Lack of art materials

Despite the fact that Alkhozama said that the school provides many things, she has found that the lack of educational materials is a barrier. However, she overcomes this by providing what is needed with recyclable items.

3- Theme: Work pressure

Alqaysom stated that work pressure was a barrier for her to support children's creativity.

4- Theme: Restricted to a daily programme

Sticking to a restricted daily programme prevented Alqrqas from supporting the children's creativity.

Like the other two cases, the teachers in this preschool have different issues that they face in supporting children's creativity.

6.3.14 Focus: Advice to Policymakers for Setting up a Curriculum for Supporting Children's Creativity in Art

1- Theme: Provide more workshops for teachers

According to Albakhatri, *'I like to have workshops. There are some, but not many.'*

2- Theme: Decorate schools with the children's artwork

Alqrqas recommended *'decorating schools with children's artwork. I wish the children could draw and paint on one of the walls. I think it's very good. One of the school's walls from outside... this is a kind of support.'*

3- Theme: Establish a programme

Alqrqas and Alqaysom advised having a programme to support children's creativity. For example, Alqaysom said, *'I suggest dividing children into groups based on their abilities. Creativity appears not only in drawing; there are other areas, such as creating shapes using clay, so children need suitable materials to be more creative. Allow one lesson a week at least to practice. It also has an influence on children's personalities.'* Similarly, Alqrqas wished that *'there is a programme for creativity from the ministry so teachers can always follow it. They don't have to look things up. The teachers studied children's early years; they did not study creativity and art. If there is a programme, it will help them to support the children's artistic creativity.'*

4- Theme: Provide different art materials

Alkhozama believed that it is good to make preschools more enriching with art materials, since there is no programme.

5- Theme: Give drawing parties

Alqrqas thought that allowing children to have a party for drawing helps children to express themselves, saying, *'I wish we can have a party of colours but not to dress*

up; the purpose is to draw, because drawing helps to express everything. We have one day to paint a big painting. For all of the children in the school'.

The teachers' advice reflects their needs and visions for what they believe could help them support children's creativity in art.

6.4 Observation Results

As explained in the Methodology chapter in section 3.5.1 (see pages 74-77) and section 3.10.1 (see pages 91-93), the observations, along with the other phases and methods, offered a strong triangulation of the collected data.

6.4.1 General Information about the Classrooms

As mentioned above, four teachers (Albakhatri, Alqrqas, Alqaysom and Alkhozama) participated in the study at Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool. All the teachers have been working with children between the ages of five and six years old, except Alqaysom, who is teaching children from four to five years old. The four teachers had observations of 30–50 minutes.

The four observations seemed to have many common points, especially in terms of the classrooms and the art corners. Therefore, these common points are explained below before examining the points that varied. Regarding the corners, there was one table with up to four chairs for the children. The corner was occupied by up to four children all the time, while there were up to 14 children playing in the other corners. In terms of the number of teachers in the class and in the corner, it seems that there were no criteria for how many teachers should be in each class and corner. There were up to three main teachers in the corner, out of up to three main teachers and one training teacher in each class. However, only Alqrqas was in the corner all the time for observation, while the three other teachers were not, which may be because of the age of the children, all of whom were four to five years old in Alqrqas's classroom. During Alqaysom's and Alkhozama's observations, all the teachers in the classrooms gathered at the corners for some time. All four classrooms have an organised

environment without displaying the rules on the walls; however, only two of the classes – Albakhatri’s and Alqaysom’s – are poor environments where there are not enough educational materials. The theme of the educational unit – My Country – was expressed only in Alqaysom’s classroom environment, while the other three teachers had no theme in their classroom environments.

6.4.2 Specific Information about the Corners

This section will present the observations in detail, such as how children worked, available activities, the activity of the day, art materials and so on.

6.4.2.1 Focus: Kinds of Available Activities in the Corners

1- Theme: Different kinds of art activities

Drawing and clay were the two most common art activities that were available at all four art corners, while painting was the second most common art activity, which was available only at Albakhatri’s, Alqaysom’s and Alkhozama’s art corners. However, cutting, and gluing art activities were available at Alqaysom’s and Alkhozama’s art activities. Craft-making and collaging were less common among the art activities since craft-making was available only at Albakhatri’s and collaging was available only at Alqrqas’s art corner.

2- Theme: The corner is full of art materials

Alqrqas’s, Alqaysom’s and Alkhozama’s art corners were full of materials, while Albakhatri’s art corner had art materials that were mainly related to the activity of the day.

6.4.2.2 Focus: Accessibility of All the Resources

1- Theme: Resources are accessible

At Alqrqas’s and Alkhozama’s art corners, resources were accessible to the children.

2- Theme: Resources are not accessible

In Albakhatri's and Alqaysom's art corners, resources were not accessible to the children.

6.4.2.3 Focus: The Activity of the Day

1- Theme: Limited freedom

Alqrqas, Albakhatri and Alqaysom set up the art materials and the kind of activity of the day. In terms of ideas, none of the four teachers provided a model for the children to follow while they were making artwork, which allowed them to choose the ideas for artwork.

2- Theme: Limited art materials for the day

During Alqaysom's observation, the children asked for more materials, as they were struggling with a lack of art materials. Alqrqas and Albakhatri provided only one colour for painting, while in Alqaysom's classroom, *'There was only green colour; when a child asked for another colour, the teacher added red.'*

3- Theme: Different activities for the day

Albakhatri, Alqrqas and Alkhozama provided different art activities for the day. For example, Alqrqas provided drawing, collaging and painting, while Albakhatri provided working in clay, painting and craft-making. Similarly, Alkhozama provided painting materials and craft-making using collage and cotton balls. Alqaysom, however, provided only painting.

Painting was the most common art activity provided by the four teachers, followed by craft-making and collage.

4- Theme: Peer influence

Children in Alqaysom's and Alqrqas's classrooms exerted influence on each other in terms of ideas. For example, during Alqrqas's observation, *'Child 1 drew a rainbow copying an old drawing of her peer that was displayed on the teacher's drawer, and Child 2 did the same. Child 1 wrote English letters on her paper, and Child 2 did the*

same.'

The children in this preschool were limited in terms of materials and activities, but the activities were different. Half of the children influenced each other's ideas.

6.4.2.4 Focus: Displaying Boards for Children's Works

1- Theme: Use of boards to display children's artwork

Each classroom has two boards to display children's artwork, one inside in the corner to display children's paintings and drawings and another outside, which is mainly for crafts that are related to the educational units they are studying at that time.

6.4.2.5 Focus: How a Child Starts their Artwork

1- Theme: Children's will to create

All of the children started making artwork based on their wishes to do so.

6.4.2.6 Focus: Child/Children Speak about the Artwork to Anyone/Themselves

1- Theme: Talking about their artwork during activities

In all four observations, the children talked about their artwork while making them. In Albakhatri's, Alkhozama's and Alqaysom's classrooms, children talked to other children. For example, during Albakhatri's observation, *'one child said, "Look what I drew." Another child said, "I drew a lot of things."* However, in Alqrqas's and Alkhozama's classrooms, the children talked about their artwork to their teachers. For instance, in Alqrqas's observation, this dialogue occurred:

A child: *'This is a ball.'*

The teacher: *'A ball!'*

The child: *'He is playing football and scored a goal.'*

6.4.2.7 Focus: The Way of Teacher's Interaction with a Child/Children

1- Theme: Helping children when they asked for help

Alqaysom and Albakhatri interacted with the children by helping them whenever they asked. For example, in Alqaysom's classroom, a child asked her *'to write the first letter of her name on the artwork, then she completed it'*. However, Alqrqas helped a child make the idea that Alqrqas suggested by folding *'her paper to print the colour on the other side of the paper'*, which she may have done because the child was only four years old and had not tried the idea before.

2- Theme: Complimenting and encouraging children

All four teachers interacted with their children using compliments. For instance, Alqrqas reported that she *'observed the progress of the children's works by saying "wow" each time'*, while Alqaysom and Alqrqas encouraged the children to create. Alqrqas offered another example when she was encouraging children who had just come into the corner, telling them *'To work by saying, "I am so excited about your drawings"'*.

3- Theme: Reminding children of the rules

Alkhozama, Alqrqas and Albakhatri reminded children of the rules while they were working on their artwork or after they finished. For example, Albakhatri said she *'came to remind the children to write the date on their artwork'*.

4- Theme: Asking questions

All four teachers interacted with their children by asking questions. For instance, Albakhatri asked a child, *'What did you draw?'* and allowed her to explain her drawing.

The four teachers used different ways of interacting with children, though most of the teachers complimented, encouraged, and asked the children questions about their artwork.

6.4.2.8 Focus: How a Child Finishes their Artwork

1- Theme: Decided to finish

Some children in all four classrooms decided to finish.

2- Theme: Forced to finish

Some children in all four classrooms were forced to finish because the time had ended.

3- Theme: Reminding them about the time

At Alqrqas's and Alqaysom's art corners, each teacher gave a five-minute notice before the time ended, which induced the children to finish their artwork. For example, Alqrqas '*reminded the children who joined recently and all other children in the class that there were five minutes left*'. Similarly, Alqaysom said she '*told the children about the amount of time that was left and kept telling each child who entered the corner before they started any artwork*'.

6.5 Photos of Children's Artwork and Follow-up Interview's Results

As explained in the Methodology chapter in section 3.5.1 (see pages 74-77) and section 3.10.1 (see pages 91-93), the photos of the children's artwork and the follow-up interviews, along with the other phases and methods, offered a strong triangulation to the collected data.

The four teachers were asked to choose up to three pieces of artwork that they believe were creative works that could be photographed and used for a follow-up interview. All the focuses in the follow-up interview data in the section of *specific discussion for each artwork* are related to the first research question. Each teacher's photos and comments will be presented individually with their photos, followed by a comparison at the end in section *General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher*.

6.5.1 First Teacher – Albakhatri

6.5.1.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher



Figure 6.1 Albakhatri's children's artwork

Focus: Reason for choosing the idea of this artwork

1- Theme: Popularity and showing creativity

According to Albakhatri, *'I know what my children like and attracts them to make artwork, so coloured pens and free drawing show their creative abilities and have an influence on their artwork.'*

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

1- Theme: Shows a variety of ideas

Albakhatri believed that a variety of ideas show creativity. For example, in the first artwork, *'making kites; I think this is creative. Usually, children draw houses, trees, or grass, but she drew a house and this person with a kite. I did not tell her what to do; it was her idea.'*

2- Theme: Uses art materials creatively

Albakhatri viewed the first artwork as creative, since *'at the house there are three eyes; she has a perspective. And the straw, she uses it like a chimney. And this is a rainbow.'*

3- Theme: Is competitive and outstanding

According to Albakhatri, what makes the second artwork creative is the child who *'is competitive. If a child makes something, he or she tries to make something better. He always wants to be an outstanding child. If I say a compliment to a child next to him, he will say, "I will show you something better." He doesn't like to copy other children's artwork. He likes compliments and wants me to express my admiration for his artwork. He also drew a kite, but if you look at the string, he drew it differently; it is coloured.'*

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is cultural influence on the children's artwork

Albakhatri believed that there is a cultural influence on the three pieces of artwork through TV, home environment and pictures.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a social influence on the children's artwork

Albakhatri believed that there is generally a social influence on the first and third children in the form of their peers' influence by drawing houses and rainbows. For example, the third child *'noticed that they were drawing houses and rainbows, so she turned her paper and drew this'*. However, the person in the second artwork is either the child's father or mother which is according to Albakhatri reflects a social influence.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no teachers' influence on the children's artwork

Albakhatri believed that the second child *'supports himself; he does not need someone'*.

2- Theme: There is teachers' influence on the other two children's artwork

Albakhatri believed that she had an influence on the first and third children's artwork by the questions she asked and the compliments she gave other children's artwork. For example, Albakhatri asked the first child, *'what she drew. She told me and then she went back to add something else to her drawing, and this does not happen all the time.'* Apparently, Albakhatri inspired the child to add some more details to her drawing.

6.5.1.2 General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first one, followed by the third and then the second

Albakhatri believed that the most creative artwork of the three is the first one, followed by the third and then the second one.

2- Theme: An artwork which has a clear idea is creative

According to Albakhatri, a creative artwork should have a clear idea, which applies to the second artwork, although the artwork's creator *'can be a creative child, but his idea is not clear'*.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Change the materials based on the children's age and educational units

According to Albakhatri, these pieces of artwork would provide better examples of creativity by *'changing the materials for something that satisfies them ... suitable art materials for a certain age of children, changing the materials every couple of days, and each educational unit has its own art materials'*.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children’s creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Add more cutting and craft-making activities

Albakhatri believed that her plan would include adding different kinds of cutting activities, craft-making and materials to set up the art corner in order to provide better support for children’s creativity in visual art.

6.5.2 Second Teacher Second Teacher – Alqrqas

6.5.2.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

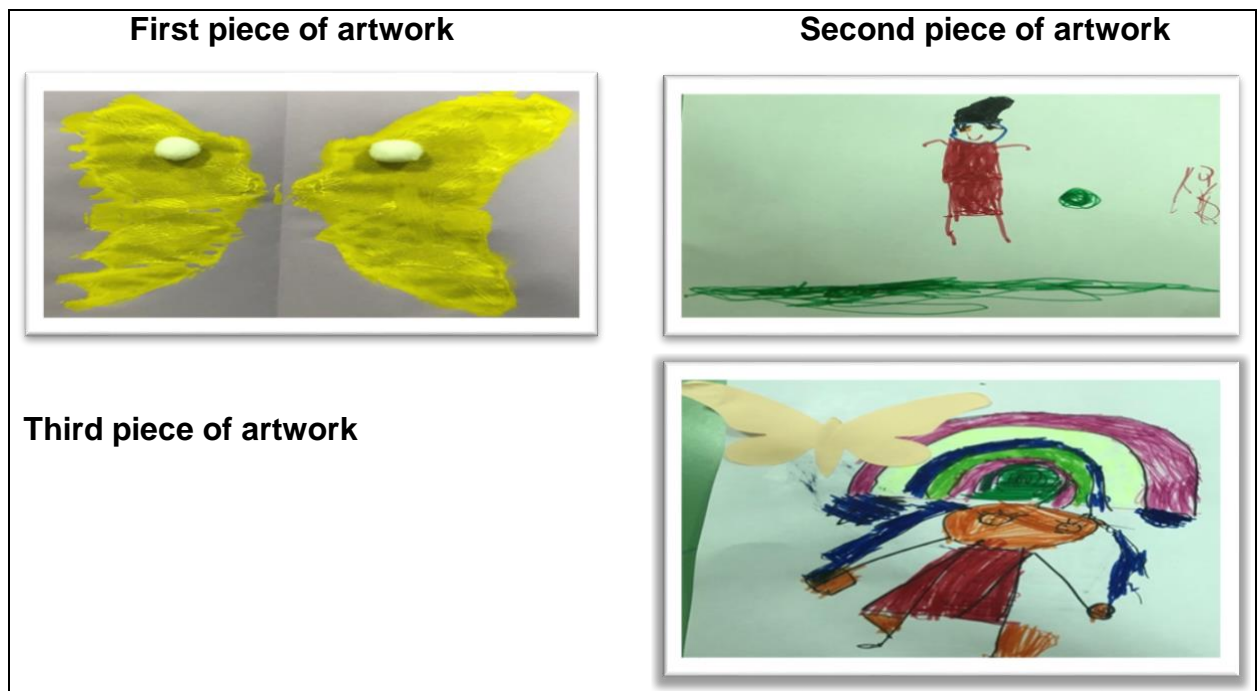


Figure 6.2 Alqrqas’s children’s artwork

Focus: Reason for choosing the idea of this artwork

1- Theme: Activity of the week

According to Alqrqas, children ‘*have been working on these ideas for artwork for two days.*’

Focus: Signs represent the child’s creativity in art

1- Theme: Explains the idea for the artwork in detail

According to Alqrqas, the reason for choosing the second artwork as an example of creativity is that *'he explained it in detail'*.

2- Theme: Edits the idea of the model

Alqrqas believed that not following the model of an artwork reflects creativity in the artwork. For example, the child who made the third artwork added the butterfly to the model that she was following, in addition to the way she used collaging and colours. The child told Alqrqas that she saw the model that another child made, but she was *'going to change the colours. It is a different girl. I just copied the rainbow.'*

3- Theme: Makes something outstanding compared to others

Alqrqas compared the first child's outcome to the other children's artwork. For example, she compared the first child's artwork to what the other children made while doing the same art activity. As she explained, *'This child is the only one who made something out of it. The other children painted around randomly, but they did not realise that they could make something known. She made it and then added two cotton balls. So, this is creativity; she thought of making a butterfly by painting one side and folding the paper to print the colour on the other side.'*

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alqrqas believed that there is a cultural influence on the three pieces of artwork. For example, the second child drew a boy playing football, which is popular in Saudi Arabia.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a social influence on the children's artwork

Alqrqas believed that there was a social influence on the three pieces of artwork through family and friends. For example, the third child almost copied another child's artwork because she loved her, which shows peer influence.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no teacher influence on the children's artwork

Alrqas did not interact with the first and second children; she only complimented their artwork after they finished.

2- Theme: There is teachers' influence on the children's artwork

Alrqas accidentally caused the children to notice a drawing on her locker that was made by one of the children at home while she was talking to the researcher about it. Therefore, many children tried to copy it, apart from the third child, who made a different version. According to Alrqas, *'I told her, "Think of a different idea," and she said, "I will change the colours." I told her that, so she does not copy the child's artwork. So, she changed it by adding the butterfly. But she had already changed the girl before I talked to her.'*

6.5.2.2 General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first one, followed by the second and then the third

In Alrqas's opinion, the three pieces of artwork are most creative in the sequence given above

2- Theme: The most creative artwork is an original work

According to Alrqas, the less creative artwork is a copied artwork, which is the third one, as the child was influenced and inspired by her peer's artwork and *'did not think of the idea'*.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Supporting boys to like art

Alqrqas argued, *'If we support them, they can be more creative. For example, the child who drew the football player; it is rare to find a boy who loves to draw. So, if we support him, he can be creative. He may not be there most of the time because boys do not come to the art corner much. They are usually in the other corners.'*

2- Theme: Adding more art materials

Alqrqas believed that adding *'more collage, glitter, changing the kind of colour and papers'* could be used to reflect a better example of children's creativity in visual art.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Provide cutting activities

Alqrqas wanted to repeat a cutting activity that they did during the first term, which involved *'a big paper where there are different kinds of animals and children can cut out an animal, if they want to add it into their artwork. It was really good.'*

2- Theme: Add practical art materials

Alqrqas suggested adding *'thick papers; they help children in their artwork as they do not tear easily while they are colouring'*.

6.5.3 Third Teacher – Alqaysom

6.5.3.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

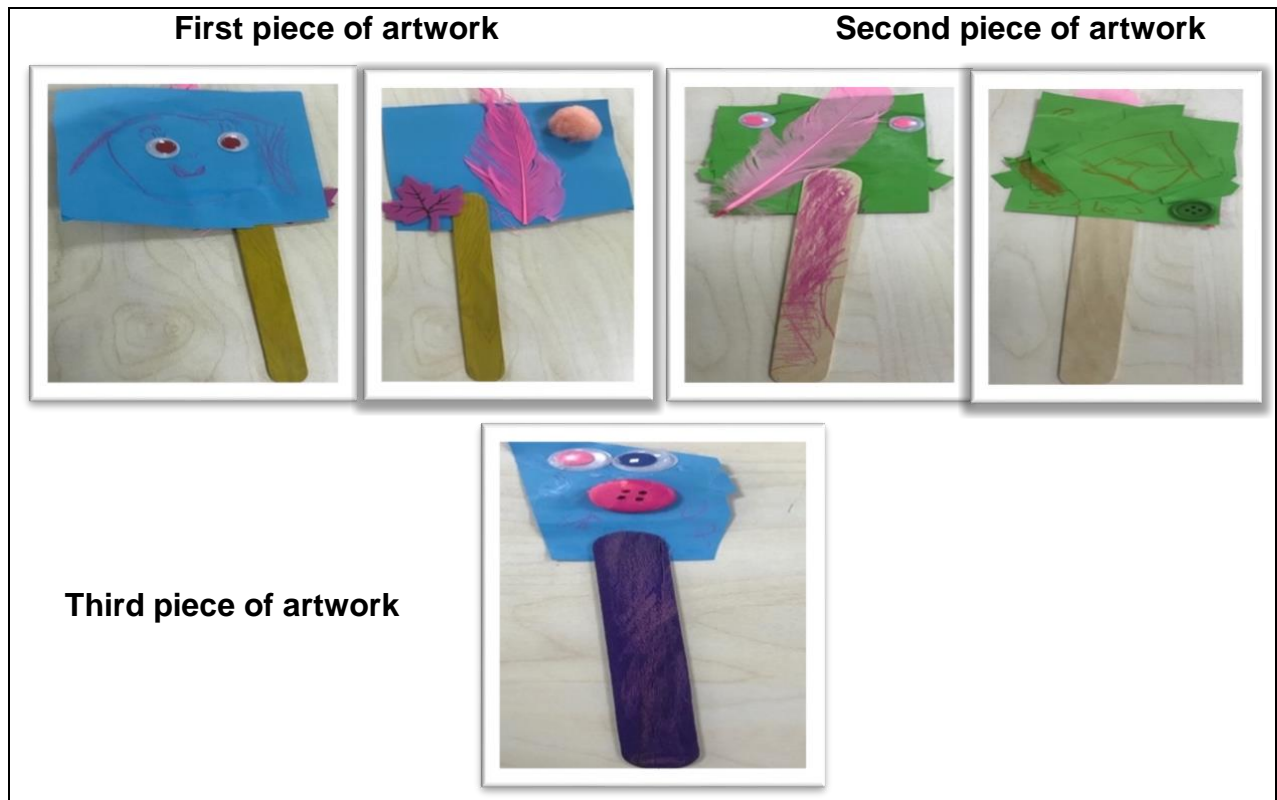


Figure 6.3 Alqaysom's children's artwork

Focus: Reason for choosing the idea of this artwork

- 1- Theme: To inspire children's imaginations with what is available**

According to Alqaysom, *'This artwork's idea is based on using the available materials and children's imaginations.'*

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

- 1- Theme: Is accurate and tidy**

According to Alqaysom, the signs of creativity in the first artwork were: *'Her drawing is accurate, she drew a mouth, face, hair, eyebrows, and the eyes and put them in the right place. And on the back, she put these materials, not on the front, as it may be messy.'*

- 2- Theme: Uses available materials**

Alqaysom argued that using *'the bottom as a mouth'* in the third artwork and *'a feather as a nose and she told me the stick is the body'* in the second artwork are signs of creativity in these two pieces of artwork. For the first artwork, Alqaysom believed the child made a creative artwork, as *'She tried to use more than one thing in her artwork. She used most of the materials.'*

3- Theme: Uses matching colours

Alqaysom believed that matching colours in the third artwork is evidence of creativity.

4- Theme: Is original in creating

Alqaysom compared the second child's artwork to the first child: *' You could see some similarities between this artwork and the first one, but she was not restricted like the other child; she used a feather as a nose and she told me the stick is the body, and on the back, she used the paper pieces to make layers. So, I think she thought before she finished her artwork.'*

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alqaysom generally believed that there is a cultural influence on the first and third pieces of artwork. However, when talking about the first child, she argued that *' We all know children's languages are simple and their thoughts and feelings reflect on their artwork. For children who come from a stable background, their artwork's meaning is clear, while for those who come from an unstable background, their pieces of artwork have more expression. Regarding this child, I have met her mother, and I know how she talks to her. She talks to her as if she is a mature person and negotiates until the child is convinced. So yes, culture can have an influence on children.'*

This shows how Alqaysom agreed with Alnafl in the second preschool case two in chapter five, who believed in reflecting feelings in artwork.

2- Theme: There is no cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alqaysom believed that there is no cultural influence on the second artwork.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is no social influence on the children's artwork

Alqaysom believed that there is no social influence on the three pieces of artwork.

2- Theme: There is a social influence on the children's artwork

Alqaysom believed that there is generally a social influence on the third child.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is limited teacher influence on the children's artwork

Alqaysom believed that she allowed children freedom on that day, especially for the first artwork. However, there were some points where she thinks she may have had an influence on them. For example, Alqaysom clarified that when she was talking about the second artwork, they *'always encourage them to recycle and use the papers that have been used before we can use them again, and do not throw them away. So maybe we – the teachers – have influenced them and she used the paper's pieces to decorate the back of the face.'* Another example is encouraging children to write their initials. According to Alqaysom, *'We always say to them, write your names on your artwork, so when we present them at the end of the week, we know whom this artwork is for. And as we are learning letters, I tell them to write their initials on their artwork.'* This is similar to what the third child did in her artwork.

2- Theme: There is no teacher influence on the children's artwork

Although Alqaysom could not remember what she said or did that day with the three children, she argued that she *'usually describes their artwork when they show them to me, instead of judging their artwork accidentally, like you made each eye a different colour and so on'*.

6.5.3.2 General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the first, followed by the third and then the second

Alqaysom believed that the most creative artwork of the three pieces of artwork is the first, followed by the third and then the second artwork.

2- Theme: The most creative artwork is the result of better drawing skills compared to their peers

According to Alqaysom, the reason behind ranking the three pieces of artwork in this order is mainly because the first artwork shows the child's level of drawing skills compared to her peers. The third artwork is ranked next because the colours match, and the kinds of materials that the child uses. The last is the second artwork, because it is messy.

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Provide more art materials and a plan

Alqaysom argued that these pieces of artwork could reflect a better example of creativity in visual art *'if there was a real support and a plan'*, which includes *'providing more and different materials'*. Alqaysom believed that *'the more materials are provided, the more creative children can be. Children's imaginations will be inspired to make more. If you notice, they are all similar because the materials are limited. But if the materials are different and various, they will be creative.'*

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Provide more practical and different art materials

Alqaysom believed that she would add *'more papers of different colours and art materials. And different kinds of sticks and glue, as children struggle with the kind of glue'* they have now in order to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art if she plans to set up the art corner again.

6.5.4 Fourth Teacher – Alkhozama

6.5.4.1 Specific Discussion for Each Piece of Artwork with the Teacher

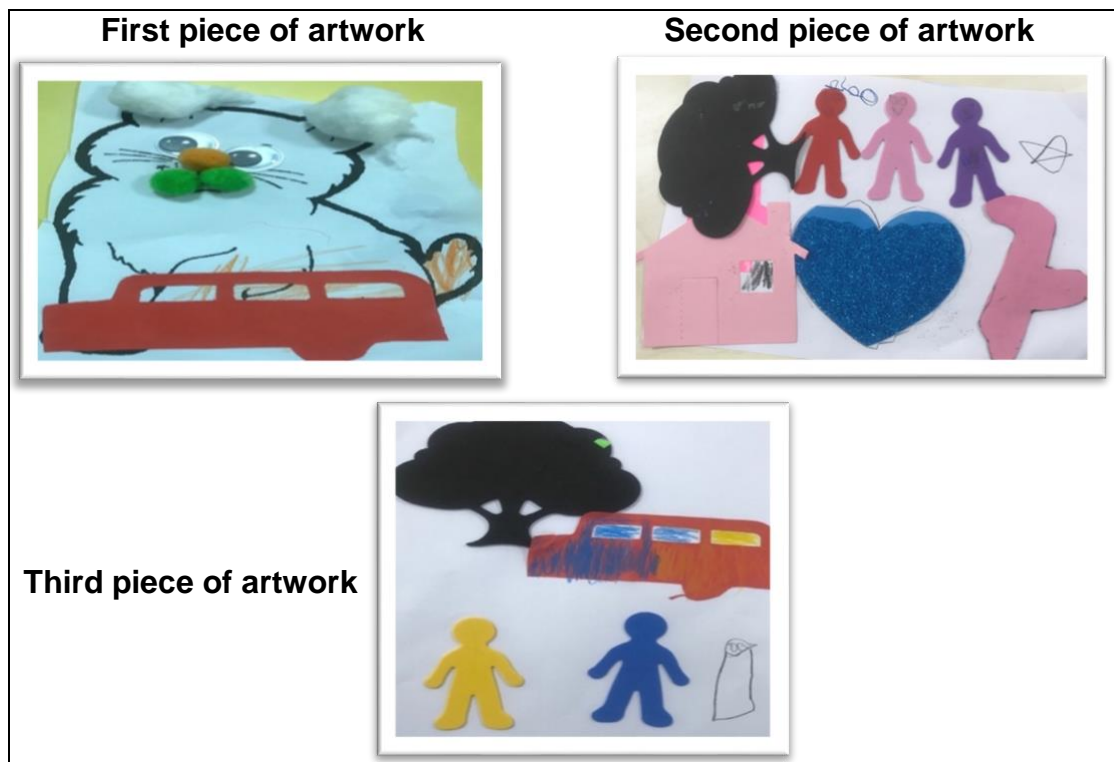


Figure 6.4 Alkhozama's children's artwork

Focus: Reason for choosing the idea of this artwork

1- Theme: A child's idea from home

Alkhozama talked only about the reason for choosing the first artwork. According to Alkhozama, this artwork's idea was from a child who *'brought this idea – a drawing of a cat and some art materials – from home when she was playing the role of a young teacher, and we provided the art materials that they can use. And the cut around the bus was their idea.'*

Focus: Signs represent the child's creativity in art

1- Theme: Ways of using art materials

Alkhozama believed that *'using cotton for making a yellow nose and a green moustache and eyes, then adding the car and saying, "the cat is in the car"'* for the first artwork shows creativity. Creativity in the second artwork, however, shows that the child's *'choice of materials represents how her family is well connected'*. Similarly, in the third artwork, *'the way of colouring the bus and its windows as their family's car'* indicates the child's creativity.

2- Theme: Details

The details of the second artwork include the child's *'her father, herself, her mother, and the baby; her mother is pregnant. And a heart because she loves her family and an airplane in the sky. I asked her about the tree, and she said, "My father always parks our car under the tree at the back of our house." There is a car behind the tree. It was good. I asked her. She said my brother is in my mother's belly.'* All these details represent creativity, according to Alkhozama.

Focus: Possibility of child's culture influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a cultural influence on the children's artwork

Alkhozama believed that there is a cultural influence on the three pieces of artwork. According to Alkhozama, the third child believes in *'the culture of abayah. He did not accept his mother being out without an abayah. For the second child, her mother's style of wearing an abayah was different.'* This shows that the third child drew his mother wearing an abayah instead of using a piece of collage to represent his mother, similar to what he did with himself and his father, which reflects the culture of his own background.

Focus: Possibility of child's society influences their creative artwork

1- Theme: There is a social influence on the children's artwork

Alkhozama believed that there is a social influence on the three pieces of artwork. For instance, the first child's artwork is about a pet in a car, which is uncommon in Saudi society. Therefore, Alkhozama thought that *'her family accepts the idea of pets. Because if a family accepts something, the children will do the same'*. Another example of social influence is shown by the third child, who made an artwork about his family going for a picnic in the desert as they *'always go camping in the desert'*.

Focus: Possibility of teachers' interaction influences this child's creative artwork

1- Theme: There is teacher influence on the children's artwork

Alkhozama believed that her interaction with the second child had an influence on her artwork. For example, *'she said my brother in my mother's belly. I suggested to her to draw him, and she did.'*

2- Theme: There is no teacher influence on the children's artwork

Alkhozama did not interact with the first and third children, as she was not there.

6.5.4.2 General Discussion about All the Pieces of Artwork with the Teacher

Focus: Ranking these pieces of visual artwork from the most creative to the least creative

1- Theme: The most creative artwork is the second, followed by the first and then the third

Alkhozama believed that the most creative artwork of the three is the second one, followed by the first one and then the third one.

2- Theme: ways of representing ideas

According to Alkhozama, the reason for ranking the three pieces of artwork is based 'on the ideas.' For example, *'the second one put an airplane, the car behind the tree, her mother is pregnant, and a heart represents her feelings toward her family. The first one because of the car, the third because of the abayah.'*

Focus: Possibility of enhancing support to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Allow more time for art activities

Alkhozama believed that these pieces of artwork could be supported to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art: *'If there is a certain time for art, children will be more creative for sure. When the teacher and I say there are five minutes left, some children rush to the other corners. Some children visit all corners during the day, while others spend all day in one corner or two.'*

2- Theme: Display artwork with a photo of the original inspiration

Another idea that Alkhozama believed could be used is if they *'put their artwork in a frame or on a board with a picture of a cat.'*

3- Theme: Replace materials regularly

Alkhozama stated that replacing the art materials in the art corner regularly is the only option they have, as they cannot add more materials.

Focus: Possible plan to set up the art corner to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art

1- Theme: Add another table for different art activities

Alkhozama would like to *'add another table, one table for drawing and one for crafts, so children do not mix the two kinds of art activities at the same time. We used to split the table, but it caused an issue with the children; they did not understand the idea, so we removed it.'* According to Alkhozama, the idea of adding another table at the art corner *'is creativity. I like this idea very much.'*

6.6 Conclusion of Bad' Bin Arfaag Preschool Teachers' Data

To sum up the data derived from Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, all four preschool teachers showed diversity in their perspectives in relation to children's creativity in visual art and to creativity in general, and the signs of creativity. Regarding creative children's characters, the teachers tend to believe that creative children have more positive characters than difficult ones. Half of the teachers agreed that all children are creative in art, but they all agreed that children's artwork are influenced by their culture and by the limited availability of resources in Saudi society.

Regarding supporting children's creativity, in the interviews, all four teachers agreed that they did not have any curriculum to support children's creativity. Therefore, they do not have enough to offer, apart from art material activities and interacting with children and approaching their families. Half of the teachers were satisfied with the level of support they provided for the children, although all faced different barriers. Three teachers agreed that the teacher's role could be positive and negative at the same time, while only one believed it was always positive. All four teachers advised policymakers differently, which shows how much teachers needed support and guidance from policymakers.

Regarding the observations, the teachers did not provide any models or explain to the children how to make artwork, but the four teachers interacted with the children differently.

Regarding the photos of the artwork, the children's artwork showed some differences from one another's artwork. In terms of the follow-up interviews, all four teachers tended to have some influence on the children's artwork, while there were always cultural and social influences. All four teachers believed that they were able to improve their support for future artwork in order to provide better support for children's creativity, as they found some suggestions for improvement.

After presenting each case of preschool's data separately in chapters four, five, and six, some of these data will be brought to the following chapter to be analysed and discussed in relation to the literature in order to reach the final key findings of this study.

Chapter 7

Data Analysis and Discussion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter explores and analyses the collected data to reveal the differing, multiple and complex realities among teachers' beliefs and practices regarding children's creativity in artwork. This exploration is based on my ontological position of relativism, which allowed me to recognise a different truth for each teacher (see chapter three, section 3.3, pages 54-55). It is also based on my epistemological position of interpretivism, which allowed me to collect in-depth data to explore the topic of the study and the complex interactions among teachers, including their feelings, behaviours and beliefs (see chapter three, section 3.3, page 56). The chapter consists of three sections: a general background, the first research question and the second research question, wherein the collected data are analysed and discussed along with the related literature. It is important to mention that the data of the study are wider and go to a greater depth compared to the literature. This may be related to the fact that this area of study has been under studied (Leggett, 2017). Therefore, I faced difficulties in making specific links between the data and the literature but have been able to make more general connections to the previous research and relevant theory.

7.2 General Background

The data were collected from three preschools – see Table 7.1 below – of which Makkah and Bad' Bin Arfaag were private preschools and Ad-Diriyah was a public preschool. Each preschool had up to four teachers, and altogether, 11 teachers participated. Ten teachers had bachelor's degrees in childhood education, while only one (Alsheeh) had a master's degree in childhood education. Individually, the teachers' experience ranged from just beginning to 18 years, with Alnafl, Alos haz, Alsheeh and Alshari in Ad-Diriyah preschool (public) the most experienced. These four teachers started their careers in private preschools before they were hired in public

preschools. Generally, teachers in Saudi Arabia begin teaching in private schools, as it is easy to obtain a job there until the Saudi Ministry of Education's annual opening for hiring teachers for permanent positions in public preschools, where teachers eventually accumulate the bulk of their experience. This process explains why the teachers in the public preschools were more experienced than those in the private preschools. All the teachers in Ad-Diriyah and Bad' Bin Arfaag preschools taught children from four to six years old, while only the teachers in Makkah preschool taught children from three to five years old.

Preschool's name	Teachers' names	Type of preschool	Children age	Years of experience	Teachers' qualifications
Makkah preschool	Alrimth, Alartaa and Alhrmal.	Private	Three – five years old	New - nine years	Three have a BA in Early Childhood Education
Ad-Diriyah preschool	Alnafl, Alos haz, Alsheeh and Alshari	Public	Four – Six years old	Five –18 years	Three have a BA in Early Childhood Education and one has a MA in the same area
Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool	Albakhatri, Alqrqas, Alqaysom and Alkhozama	Private	Four – six years old	Three – seven years	Four have a BA in Early Childhood Education

Table 7.1 Summary of preschools' and teachers' experience and qualifications

7.3 First Research Question: What Do Preschool Teachers in Riyadh Believe Creativity Means in Visual Art in Children Between Three and Six Years of Age?

To answer this first research question, I will present my analysis and discuss the findings gathered from the initial interviews, observations children's artwork and from the follow-up interview data.

7.3.1 Focus: Teacher's Definition of Creativity in General

The data under this focus were categorised into four categories according to the extent to which they were common across the preschools. The four categories show the different realities in defining creativity from the teachers' perspectives.

7.3.1.1 Definitions Common among Teachers in All Three Preschools

The teachers appeared to face challenges in defining creativity because of its ambiguity, as reported by Eckhoff (2011). These challenges are understandable because teachers who have not studied creativity at the university level or engaged in professional development may have had limited opportunities to reflect on their understanding of creativity and/or experience articulating the meaning of creativity. In Scotland, as an example, according to Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education's (HMIE) report (2006), teachers had a range of different beliefs regarding creativity. Similarly, in this study, the Saudi Arabian teachers defined creativity in various ways. Five teachers who believed that creativity is achieving new or new and useful outcomes gave the most common definition among the three preschools. These outcomes can be either ideas or objects (Robson and Rowe, 2012). Craft (2002) referred to an outcome that is new and useful as *Big 'C' Creativity*, whereas Ponticorvo et al. (2020) referred to it as *Capital 'C' Creativity*. However, if an outcome is only a new product and is not useful, Craft (2002) referred to it as *Little 'c' Creativity*, while Ponticorvo et al. (2020) referred to it as *Small 'c' Creativity*. Craft's (2002) definition aligns with the five teachers' definitions. For example, Alsheeh in Ad-Diriyah preschool believed that creativity is making a new plan of work and creating something that is needed, helpful and a solution to a problem. Alsheeh's definition is consistent with the definitions of Ponticorvo et al. (2020) and Craft (2002) of *Big/Capital 'C' Creativity*, achieving a new and useful outcome. Similarly, it is consistent with Akerman and Puikkonen (2013), Piffer (2012), Runco (2004), Howard-Jones et al. (2002) and the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education report (NACCCE, 1999), which defined creativity as achieving an outcome that combines being new and useful. However, in Makkah preschool, Alrimth defined creativity as only creating a new outcome, and this aligns with Wegeirif's (2010) as well as Ponticorvo et al.'s (2020) and Craft's (2002) *Little/Small 'c' Creativity*.

The second most common definition of creativity in general is related to mental abilities or/and mental processes. Four teachers from the three preschools agreed with this definition. For example, according to Albakhatri in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, creativity includes '*imagination and curiosity*'. To some extent, the Scottish report (HMIE, 2006) argued that children's curiosity helps them increase their creativity when they ask questions and wonder about an art project. Craft (2002) also suggested that creativity is based on imagination. Another example, according to Alhrmal in Makkah preschool, is that creativity means '*ways of thinking*'. This can be linked to Sternberg's (2003) definition that creative thinking is a way of thinking and creativity has the same meaning as creative thinking. Since this research studied creativity in art, it is important to mention that this definition is in line with Shulsky and Kirkwood's (2015) argument that art helps children develop their mental skills in general, as in mathematics, for example, by knowing shapes.

7.3.1.2 Definitions Common among Teachers in Two Preschools

Four teachers in three preschools mentioned giftedness and intelligence when describing creativity. Alqaysom in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool used the term giftedness interchangeably with creativity. In Ad-Diriyah preschool, Alsheeh and Alos haz suggested that creativity is a kind of giftedness. Alos haz also argued that '*creativity is based on giftedness*', and Alartaa in Makkah preschool believed that creativity is '*intelligence*'. This perspective conflicts with the work of Sharp (2004), Ceausu (2016) and Eckhoff (2011), who argued that creativity is unrelated to intelligence since it is not a level of intelligence that can be tested. Moreover, Mellou (1996) claimed that there is a difference between being creative and being gifted. Whereas Roeper and Ruff (2016) defined a gifted person as someone who achieves a standard score of 130 or above on an intelligence quotient (IQ) test. This contrasts with the view that every child is creative, which is supported by HMIE (2006), Meyer and Eilifsen (2017), Fawcett and Hay (2004), Vygotsky (1967), Yildirim (2010), Sharp (2004), Piske et al. (2017) and Wood et al. (2021). Therefore, I might argue that not every child is gifted, but every child is creative, and creativity does not have the same meaning as giftedness, so these terms should not be used interchangeably.

7.3.1.3 Definitions Common among Teachers in One Preschool

Alsheeh and Alshari in Ad-Diriyah preschool suggested that creativity was the ability to develop something that already exists. This definition can be partly linked to Hennessey and Amabile's (2010) argument that creativity includes developing an original outcome that has value for a group of people or an individual.

Another definition given by Albakhatri and Alqaysom in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool is that creativity is having an advanced level of skill when compared to peers, such as in handwriting. In Makkah preschool, Alartaa and Alhrrmal defined creativity as shown by children who express themselves and their thoughts and feelings; they argued that this form of expression reflects creativity. This can be partly linked to Hook and Tegano (2002), who stated that a creative person is able to express themselves freely and to Sharp (2004), who argued that creativity is linked to personality and emotions as well as thinking skills.

7.3.1.4 Definitions Provided by One Teacher Only

After mentioning the most common definitions, it is important to recognise ideas given by only one teacher. In Ad-Diriyah preschool, Alnafl argued that creativity takes place when a child is making something he or she likes. This partly links to Hennessey and Amabile's (2010) argument that creativity includes developing an original idea, product or solution that has value for a group of people or an individual. It also aligns with Wood et al.'s (2021) argument that creativity can be the development of something that already exists.

To conclude, the teachers' general definitions of creativity can be divided into four categories according to the extent to which they were common across participants and preschools:

1. **Definitions common among teachers in all three preschools:** making new or new and useful outcomes, mental abilities and/or mental processes.
2. **Definitions common among teachers in two preschools:** giftedness.
3. **Definitions common among teachers in one preschool:** developing something that already exists, self-expression, having an advanced level of skills when compared to peers.

4. **Definitions provided by one teacher only:** making something he or she likes.

It is clear that some of the teachers' definitions of creativity align with the researchers' definitions. Nonetheless, the teachers faced challenges in trying to define creativity, which is apparent in the range of definitions provided. My own views on this topic align with those of the teachers who defined creativity in general as achieving a new and useful outcome (Craft, 2002; Ponticorvo et al., 2020) and as something that is different from giftedness (Mellou, 1996), since every human is creative (HMIE's report, 2006; Sharp, 2004; Wood et al., 2021). However, it is important to mention that children's creative products may not necessarily be both new and useful because, according to Piffer (2012), children's creative artistic products are not useful. Although children's creative products are not useful to society (Leggett, 2017), art is considered a child's right (UNICEF United Kingdom, 1989; Shulsky and Kirkwood, 2015) and useful to children as a way of expression and learning (Davis, 1999).

It is also clear that my ontological position of relativism and my epistemological position of interpretivism that I have chosen both helped in exploring the different truths and obtained in-depth data regarding teachers' definitions of creativity and how diverse and complex they are, such as researchers' definitions. These two positions helped me understand the deep realities of this topic and showed how these two positions were the most suitable positions for the purpose of this study (see chapter three for further discussion, section 3.3, pages 54-56).

7.3.2 Focus: Describing Children's Creativity in Art According to Teachers

The data under this focus were categorised into three categories according to the extent to which they were common across preschools. The three categories show the different realities in defining children's creativity in artwork from the teachers' perspectives.

7.3.2.1 Definitions Were Common among Teachers in All Three Preschools

The majority of teachers from the three preschools thought that when a child created new artwork, this showed their creativity in art. According to Alshari, in Ad-Diriyah preschool, a *'child who has no creativity copies another child's artwork or does what they see'*. Alshari added that *'when they add to the idea that we present to them, this is creativity'*. Alshari's definition was reflected in her criteria for choosing the most creative artwork, as she chose a new artwork based on the child's idea. Pavlou (2009) argued that a condition of creativity is consideration of the available materials, so having new ideas and updating previous ideas about an artwork to fit the available materials is creative. In my view based on my professional experience, creativity can also be demonstrated without consideration of available materials, as an idea can be explained prior to the practical process of art making. Another definition, according to Alqrqas in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, was that creativity in artwork occurs when a child creates something unusual. Her definition was also reflected in her choice of the most creative artwork, as she chose what she thought had an original idea – see Figure 7.1.



Figure 7.1 The most creative artwork according to Alqrqas because of its originality.

Similarly, Alnafl in Ad-Diriyah preschool argued that *'When he creates something using new ways and new forms not what he is asked to . . . his own ways'*. For example, a child in Alrimth's classroom created an artwork that was different from the model that her teacher had provided - see Figure 7.2. Alrimth argued, *'I do not think she knew it was a tooth'*, as the three-year-old child made what she wanted, regardless of the model that was in front of her. According to Sudarsana (2010), a creative artwork is a product that is developed from a process framed by a child's choices, such as

when to act, how to act and how long an action will take. Aligned with this, Mishra and Singh (2010) defined creativity as the ability to create new ideas. Therefore, the above example of children's creativity in art can be linked to how creativity is defined in the literature.



Figure 7.2 The most creative artwork in Alrimth's classroom

On the other hand, there were other children who were influenced by the model that their teachers had provided. For example, in the observations of Alartaa and Alhrmal all the children created similar pieces of artwork related to the educational unit of the week because they followed the models. Vahter (2018) argued that providing a model does not help children show their creativity and that it will lead them to have similar artworks. Therefore, it would be helpful for teachers to be influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach, which focuses neither on the outcome nor on the topic of the day. Instead, it focuses on the learning process and children (Fernndez Santin and Feliu-Torruella, 2017). Being influenced by elements of this approach can help teachers develop their practice without the need to receive official approval from the Ministry of Education to apply the whole approach in detail, especially in preschools that are required to follow the Ministry's curricula. This influence could lead to encouraging children to create artwork that reflects their understanding of themselves, their environments and the world (McLennan, 2010). Alhrmal believed that neither of the two pieces of artwork were creative when choosing the most creative artwork – see Figure 7.3.

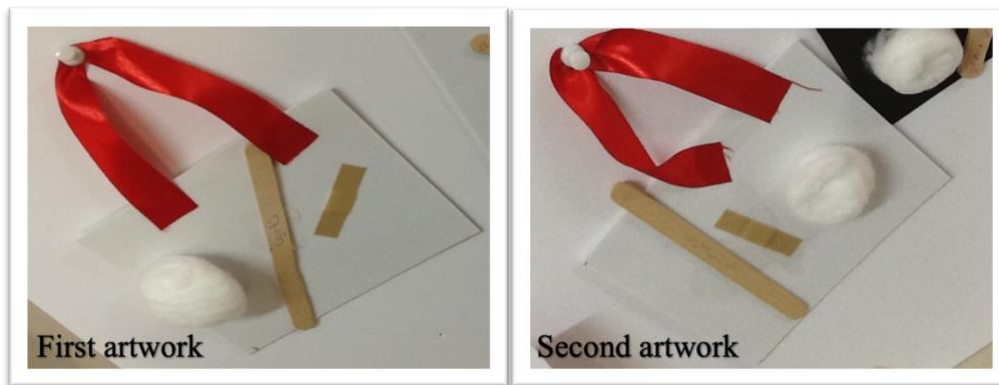


Figure 7.3 Children’s artwork in Alhrmal’s classroom in Makkah preschool

Alternatively, teachers can discuss the idea of a product with children at the beginning to provide an understanding of where children can then lead their art activities by choosing different approaches and materials (Smith, 1996). For example, in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, a child told Alqrqas that she wanted to draw something like what a peer had made days ago – a girl and rainbow – but Alqrqas, her teacher, encouraged the child to edit and not to make a similar artwork to the peer’s. Therefore, the child said she was *‘going to change the colours. It is a different girl. I just copied the rainbow’* – see Figure 7.4. Alqrqas believed that creativity appears when a child uses their own ideas and does not copy a model in detail.



Figure 7.4 The result of changing the original idea in Alqrqas’s classroom in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool

This approach reflects how valuable it is to focus on the process of making artwork, which is related to creativity (Wood et al., 2021) and is therefore more important than focusing on outcomes (Smith, 1996). According to Jaquith (2011), putting more of a focus on the product than the process can negatively affect the development of the skills necessary for creativity. According to Thuketana and Westhof (2018), the

process of making artwork can help children to make choices and lead art activities. This links to the next common definition, shared by four teachers from three different preschools, that creativity in art relates to self-directed activities. Self-directed activities also link to the next common definition, which is that creativity in artwork is the use of imagination, which three teachers from three different preschools agreed upon. According to Sharp (2004), imagination was also one of the common components of creativity among researchers for defining creativity. The three most common definitions given by practitioners in the present study are arguably linked to each other. For example, if a child has a self-directed activity without any model to follow or if they are asked to make a specific artwork and are allowed to use their imagination, this may lead to them making a creative piece of art.

7.3.2.2 Definitions were Common among Teachers in Two Preschools

In two of the preschools, two common definitions were dominant among the teachers. The first, according to Alqrqas and Alhrmal, is that how children use colour reflects creativity in their artwork. For example, Alhrmal specified that matching colours showed children's creativity. These definitions can be linked to originality in products in which children show their own use of colours. According to Wegerif (2010), creativity is a product that is original. Aligned with this, Craft (2002) defined a creative product as being original, with only 'little creativity – small creativity'. Ponticorvo et al. (2020) further described this as 'small c – small creativity'. In their view, creativity appears in everyday life activities – in this case, art – and it may be new only to an individual, including children, and not to everyone. Therefore, during art activities, children may create artwork that leads to an original outcome based on the children's experiences.

The second common definition was that creativity appears when a child describes a familiar artwork differently than it is usually known. This definition was mentioned in the Ad-Diriyah preschool by Alsheeh and in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool by Albakhatri. For example, according to Alsheeh, a child *'drew colourful lines and said, "Here is a flying boy, a happy boy . . ."*. Although Wright (2010) stated that drawing activities can be a meaningful way for children to express their thoughts and feelings, children who are unable to draw a specific picture to express their thoughts and feelings may still use their imaginations to explain what they mean by their drawings, as in Alsheeh's explanation.

Another common definition, but only within one preschool – Makkah – shared by Alartaa and Alhrrmal, was to define children’s creativity in art by the level of perfection and accuracy. Alartaa definition was reflected in her beliefs of the signs of creativity in artwork and her reason for choosing the most creative piece of artwork. This will be explained in detail in the next section.

7.3.2.3 Definitions that were Defined by Only One Teacher

Some definitions were mentioned by only one teacher. For example, Alhrrmal in Makkah preschool argued that creativity in art occurs when children express their artistic needs and ideas. According to her, a child is being creative when he or she says, *‘I don’t want only one colour of clay, I want one or two more’* and *‘his painting also reflects him, what he lives’*. Alsheeh, however, provided a conflicting definition. For example, she first defined creativity by saying, *‘When a child’s explanation matches his painting, this is children’s creativity in art’, such as drawing a house with two big people and describing it by saying these are my parents and our house.* However, she earlier agreed with Albakhatri that creativity in art occurs when a child *‘describes a familiar artwork differently than it used to be known for’*, such as drawing a bird and saying this is me, for example. Although these two conflicting definitions show that Alsheeh did not have a consistent definition of what she thought children’s creativity in art was, this may be understandable. Similarly, in Scotland, according to HMIE’s report (2006), teachers tend to have different and perhaps conflicting definitions of creativity in general. These conflicting definitions of teachers’ definitions can be linked to what is happening with researchers worldwide in their efforts to establish a definition of creativity. According to Vygotsky (1967) and Sharp (2004), creativity is a complicated area for study and researchers face difficulties trying to define it due to the complexity of its ideas. Arguably, if researchers were able to define creativity more effectively, it might help teachers better understand creativity in general and specifically links to it in terms of art. If this occurred, teachers would likely have a better education in universities by being taught about creativity. In most cases, university modules are designed based on the impact of studies conducted by researchers. Therefore, researchers can define creativity and test this definition in studies before teaching it to future teachers, which would help future teachers understand creativity more effectively when they are students.

To conclude, the teachers' definitions of creativity in art can be divided into three categories according to the extent to which they were common across participants and preschools:

1. **Definitions were common among teachers in all three preschools:** a child creates a new artwork, self-directed activities and the use of imagination.
2. **Definitions were common among teachers in two preschools:** use of colours, a child describing a familiar artwork differently than it is usually known and the level of perfection and accuracy.
3. **Definitions were defined by only one teacher:** expressing their artistic needs and thoughts; description matches the artwork.

The definitions of creativity in visual art in young children appeared to be different among the teachers, although some teachers in two or all three preschools held similar definitions in common. Both my ontological position of relativism and my epistemological position of interpretivism helped me explore the different truths and obtain in-depth data regarding teachers' beliefs regarding creativity in visual art, which revealed how diverse these beliefs were among the teachers. If I integrate the definition of creativity in general with the definition of creativity in visual art according to the teachers' beliefs, I could understand the latter as creating a piece of artwork that is original without copying another piece of artwork or model that can facilitate children's development by allowing them to express themselves.

7.3.3 Focus: Signs of Creativity in Children's Pieces of Artwork

The data under this focus were categorised into two categories: skills and emotions, according to the extent to which they were common across the preschools. The two categories are discussed below.

7.3.3.1 Skills

Nine teachers out of 11 from the three preschools agreed that an advanced level of skills compared to their peers is the most common sign of children's creativity in artwork. Six of the nine teachers from the three preschools chose creative artwork because they saw some advanced skills when compared to other children's skills or,

according to Alnafl of Ad-Diriyah preschool, to the child's level at the beginning of the year. Alnafl clarified that the child who made the artwork in Figure 7.5 '*tried her best not to cross the lines while she is colouring; if you compare with her level before, it used to be awful*'. In contrast, Alharml, who was teaching the same age from four to five years old, believed that creativity appears in showing distinct ways of holding pens. For instance, '*even the way she holds a pen ... it is perfect. You know children; when they start at the beginning of the year, they usually don't really know how to use them. She knows how to use them, and she makes a perfect form*'. One could argue that, for a child, it is normal when holding pens not to be perfect at the beginning and not a sign of creativity. However, with practice and support from home and school, children should probably be able to hold pens at this age, since they are starting to learn the alphabet. Besides practice, in a study that Tseng (1998) conducted with 326 Taiwanese children from the ages of 2.5 to 6.4 years, he found that children's mature grips of pens develop when children become older. Among four-year-old children, 75% were able to have mature grips compared to their peers of the same age, whereas at the age of five, 90% had mature grips compared to their peers (Tseng, 1998). Therefore, it could be argued that there may be two factors at play in these differences among children: practice and physical development. There is a difference in terms of being able to hold a pen between a child who is offered pens at home to colour and draw before joining preschools and a child who is not. Children who are offered art materials, including pens to colour and draw at home before they start going to preschools, may seem able to hold pens better because of practice compared to children who have not been offered these materials.



Figure 7.5 The child's artwork who had better skills than before

In terms of advanced skills in comparison to other children, Alartaa in Makkah preschool argued that when she *'provided all tools and clay to him, later he made a perfect shape using the tools. You may think it was made by an adult, but he is three years old.'* Similarly, in her explanation of why she chose the most creative pieces of artwork in the follow-up interview, she argued that *'Other children left spaces in their hats that they did not paint. But she painted one side; it was kind of perfect'* – see Figure 7.6. These statements may be linked to teachers' own beliefs and how they can influence their practice. In Stipek et al.'s (2001) study, teachers who had traditional beliefs that aligned with the textbook-based teaching approach managed their classrooms using traditional practices.



Figure 7.6 The most creative artwork in Alartaa's classroom

Alsheeh, in the Ad-Diriyah preschool, argued that providing a model for copying does not show children's creativity in artwork. Alsheeh's argument can be linked to the

Reggio Emilia approach, which encourages teachers to focus on the learning process, not the outcome, and on the children, not the topic of the day (Fernandez Santin and Feliu-Torruella, 2017). However, according to Alqaysom, copying another picture at this age is an advanced skill, as it is not easy to copy the face of Micky Mouse clearly, which makes her believe it is related to creativity. Whether copying is considered an advanced skill may depend on what children are copying and how well they are copying. For example, if a child is copying from a picture to practise drawing, then it can be an advanced skill compared to their peers. However, if a child is using a model to copy a craft, then it may not require advanced skills, since the craft-making activity tends to be chosen based on the child's age for suitability. For example, Alnafl chose a craft activity that only required colouring and gluing for children four – five years old. In addition, some families provide artistic activities for children at home and practice copying before starting preschool or after preschool during the day, which may lead to an improvement in a child's skills compared to children who do not practice at home. Therefore, a child may be creative in art and have the potential for copying skills but struggle with a lack of the right support to show their creativity. It is important to mention that not all support for practicing copying is good for creativity and learning. According to Vahter (2018), being forced to copy can have a negative limiting influence on children's learning processes and creativity.

Another common sign of creativity reported by the four teachers was that creative children use recyclable materials or more materials than non-creative children do – since teachers tended to believe that not all children are creative in art. According to Sudarsana (2010), a well-established idea within the literature is that using unfamiliar art materials, such as plastic plates and cups, can inspire children to create. Although this sign can be complex and difficult to identify in children's artwork because art materials in general in some art corners are not always accessible, in the follow-up interviews, almost all of the preschool teachers believed that the way of using the available art materials represented creativity in children's artwork. For example, a child in Alnafl's classroom tried to match the colour of the brush with the paint and chose more than one colour for the picture to look colourful and avoid colouring outside the lines. Therefore, Alnafl believed it was the most creative artwork (see Figure 7.7).



Figure 7.7 The most creative artwork in Alnafl's classroom

Another common sign of creativity in children's artwork reported in two preschools – Makkah and Ad-Diriyah – was that children used art to express themselves. For example, by reflecting themselves in their artwork through their ideas or feelings. Alsheeh in Ad-Diriyah preschool stated that this occurs when a child *'draws lines and names them and they have meaning for her'*. This example supports Smith (1996), who claimed that children's drawings can be messages without written words, which links to Sharp (2004, p. 9), who argued that children are supported in using their drawings as a *'graphic language'* to express themselves. Similarly, Wright (2010), Vygotsky (1971) and Kroflic (2012) argued that inner feelings and thoughts benefit from artistic activities. The above argument reflects how art can help children in their development and appeared in some teachers' arguments, such as Alsheeh's, for example.

Teachers in two of the preschools often mentioned idea types as a sign of creativity, which was reflected later in the artwork in all three preschools. This sign of creativity appeared when the children represented a new idea or an update on the model they were given. For example, Alhrmal in Makkah preschool asked her children to make first aid kits, which were related to the topic of the week. According to Alhrmal, the outcomes were not creative because she *'showed them a model to make exactly like it'* without inspiring them to add any changes. Alhrmal reflected Alshari's argument that a *'child who changes the provided idea'* is a creative child. According to Pavlou (2009), having or updating ideas about creating artwork based on the available art materials leads to being creative. However, in Alhrmal's case, she gave the children the

materials and the idea and asked them to create something specific, which did not give them a chance to be creative. If Alhrmal’s children had been inspired to change the idea of the model or were allowed to create more freely using different materials, they might have made some creative first-aid kits that Alhrmal may have defined as creative artworks. For example, three teachers in Ad-Diriyah preschool and two teachers in Bad’ Bin Arfaag preschool chose ideas of artwork that allowed freedom and helped show children’s creativity as a way of achieving creative artwork. Another example of how the types of ideas can represent children’s creativity occurred when Alqaysom compared two pieces of artwork by saying that the second child ‘*was not restricted like the other child*’ – the first one – and continued to say that the second child ‘*used a feather as a nose and she told me the stick is the body, and on the back, she used the paper pieces to make layers. So, I think she thought before she finished her artwork*’ (see Figure 7.8).

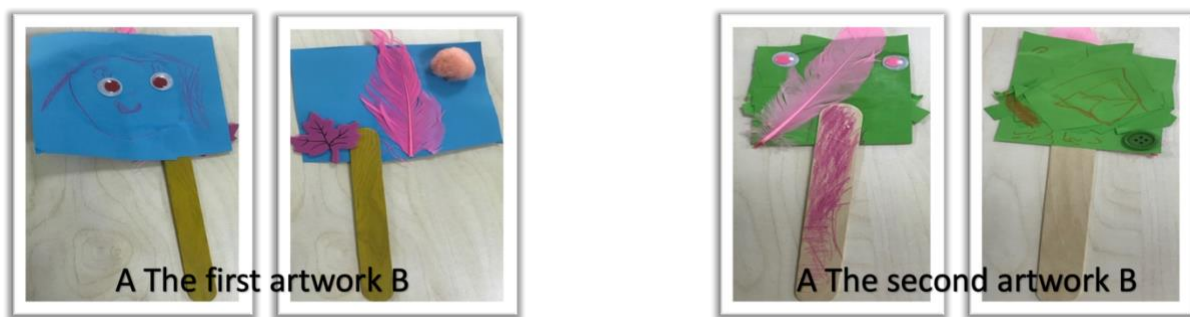


Figure 7.8 The children’s artwork in Alqaysom’s classroom

7.3.3.2 Emotions

Being passionate about art was a common sign noticed in Makkah preschool by Alhrmal and in Bad’ Bin Arfaag preschool by Albakhatri and Alqrqas. For example, according to Albakhatri, signs of creativity occur when a child ‘*loves painting and drawing*’. Accordingly, she chose an idea of artwork that the children loved to encourage them to create. However, the other three teachers in Ad-Diriyah preschool chose an idea of artwork for children that they believed the children loved, but without viewing it as a sign of creativity in artwork. Aligned with this, Sharp (2004) argued that creativity is related to personalities, emotions and thinking. Also, children generally feel happiest when they are making artwork and using art materials (Kindler, 2010),

which means that art reflects positively on children's feelings (Vahter, 2018), which may explain the teachers' arguments.

Another sign is the description of artwork and what it represents based on children's perspectives and emotions. This sign was mentioned only by Alsheeh in Ad-Diriyah preschool. According to Alsheeh the child *'drew lines and named them as what she thought they were. She drew colourful lines and said, "Here is a flying boy, a happy boy . . ."*. Alsheeh continued *'I believe that her drawings expressed her feelings and thoughts. She could not talk very well, but she explained her feelings through drawing.'* Alsheeh's argument aligns with Wright (2010), Vygotsky (1971) and Kroflic (2012), who argued that inner thoughts and feelings benefit from art activities. In other words, according to Vygotsky (1971), reflecting feelings into artwork is the purpose of art. This sign was also evident in Alkhozama's observation: A child used a collage of males to represent her pregnant mother without adding any details to make it clear until she explained to Alkhozama that it depicted her mother and *'said "my brother in my mother's belly" and I suggested to her to draw him, and she did'*. Although Alkhozama's suggestion reflects her influence, the child benefited from art by reflecting her feelings about her family – see Figure 7.9.



Figure 7.9 Child's artwork in Alkhozama's classroom

Although Alkhozama believed it is a sign of creativity when she can understand the story that the drawing a child makes *'without explaining'* and she needed an explanation to understand some details of the above artwork, she found the above artwork to be the most creative artwork. In contrast, in the same preschool, Alqraqs

believed that explaining the artwork's idea in detail reflected creativity in one of the pieces of artwork that she chose, in which a child drew a boy playing football (see the artwork in Figure 7.10). According to Wright (2010), drawing activities can be a meaningful method for children to express their thoughts and feelings. In the case of the child who drew a boy playing football, he reflected his love for the game.



Figure 7.10 A boy playing football by a child in Alqrqas's classroom

Representing a story in a drawing shows the need for '*imagination*', which is a sign mentioned only by Alhmal in Makkah preschool. According to Alhmal, an imaginative child '*will imagine a happy face and come to me: "Teacher, look, it is a happy face." It is actually not a happy face, but she imagines it is*'. Alhmal partly agreed with Alsheeh in Ad-Diriyah preschool in terms of describing artwork and partly agreed with Alkhazama in terms of the need to be imaginative to create a story when drawing. Drawing can also manifest what a child feels. For example, Smith (1996) stated that children's drawings can be messages without written words. Similarly, Fawcett and Hay (2004) claimed that drawing may be a way for children to communicate with others. In the example above, the child drew a happy face according to her and was excited to show her drawing to her teachers, which may show how happy she was and wanted to communicate with her teacher.

Two teachers in Ad-Diriyah preschool believed that accepting and adapting to any issues that arose while creating artwork is a sign of creativity in artwork. Alsheeh, for example, chose an artwork as the most creative artwork because the child accepted what accidentally happened to his artwork while he was trying to clean his hand with

a piece of tissue – see Figure 7.11. This example is supported by Tommie de Paola (1989) and Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015), both of whom found that art can help children solve problems. This is also in accord with Pavlou’s (2009) argument that children try to adjust their ideas to the materials when they cannot adjust the materials by being more realistic in their creations. The child above did not try to fix the issue of the tissue; in fact, he accepted what happened by pressing on the tissue, which led to changing the idea of the piece of artwork and solving the problem.



Figure 7.11 The most creative artwork in Alsheeh’s classroom

Pavlou (2009) argued that children adjust their ideas about art activities to fit their art materials. When a child in Alsheeh’s classroom noticed that a piece of tissue had fallen on his artwork and was printed, he kept it as it was and did not try to remove it. Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015) argued that art helps children develop their mental skills, such as critical thinking and problem-solving. In the example above, I would consider leaving the piece of tissue without trying to remove it in case it might ruin the whole artwork as a solution from the child’s perspective. It could be argued that the child may have liked the look of the tissue, but from observing the accident, he was shocked when the tissue fell down on his artwork. However, because his teacher asked him about what had happened, he answered, ‘The tissue stuck to the paper.’ The short conversation led him to press on the tissue more to stick better because he realised that removing the tissue may ruin the artwork. Especially since that tissue printed its colour underneath and the child was experiencing the new art materials and ways of

making this art activity using a plastic straw, pink watercolour and a sheet of paper. Therefore, the child adjusted the outcome of his artwork by accepting what had happened.

7.3.4 Focus: Potential for All Children to be Creative in Art

Most teachers agreed that all children are creative, but not necessarily in art, which supports Vygotsky's theory that every human is creative regardless of their age (Vygotsky, 1967; Lindqvist, 2003). For example, according to Alnafl, in Ad-Diriyah preschool, *'there are individual differences . . . Some are creative in mathematics, others in imagination, painting . . . other children don't have any art sense.'* This is reflected, to some extent, by the Scottish HMIE report (2006), which stated that all children have creative abilities, but the distinction is that these abilities are not the same in every child.

However, Albakhatri in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool and Alshari in Ad-Diriyah preschool believed that children do have creativity in their artwork, but only when they receive support from their home environments. For instance, Alshari argued, *'It depends on where the child comes from, on the home environment'*. Later, she chose a piece of artwork that had been influenced by the child's home environment as the most creative piece of artwork, in which the child used clay to make the faces of characters in the animated movie *Minions* (see Figure 7.12). *Minions* is a movie whose characters are famous among children in the middle class of Saudi society. When the movie first launched, children were buying toys and school materials that represented the movie and talked about it with their peers inside and outside school. Even now, the movie tends to be famous because many children watch it on Netflix, which is a popular platform in middle class Saudi society for watching movies and shows. This example demonstrates the point made by Bourdieu's cultural capital theory, in which a group of symbols have value for each social class (Bourdieu, 2010; Routledge, 2016) – in this case, the movie *Minions* and watching it on Netflix. This example also supports Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, in which schools at both the micro- and mesosystems, including peers and children, the neighbourhood including peers and children, religious settings including peers and children and home, including siblings

and children, all have an influence on children's development mutually along with adults in each group, such as parents and teachers (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Harkonen, 2007). In addition, it reflects Vygotsky's theory that the culture of a society can influence children's creativity (Vygotsky, 1979; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018; Reunamo et al., 2014), which appeared in the child's artwork by using clay to make popular characters among middle-class Saudi children.



Figure 7.12 *Minions* is the most creative artwork according to Alshari

In contrast, three other teachers from different preschools, Alartaa, Alsheeh and Alkhozama, believed that children are naturally creative in artwork. Alartaa, for example, argued that children are creative in art because it *'is too easy; what is art? It's when a child holds a pen and starts to paint or draw; it's easy'*; thus, anyone can do it. Alartaa's statement matches what she thinks about her children's artwork. For example, according to her, painting all over the hat of a firefighter with a red colour without missing any side is creative artwork. It is clear from the above discussion that not only do the teachers' beliefs about creativity differ but also their definitions. These differences can be linked to a culture's influence. According to Taylor and Rogers (2001), teachers' beliefs about creativity are influenced by their culture, since creativity is valued differently in each culture. Thus, in a culture where creativity is not valued, I may find that teachers neglect children's creativity. According to Jukic (2011), how a teacher supports children's creativity depends on how they view it. In Bourdieu's theory (Bourdieu, 2010; Routledge, 2016), in which cultural practices are productions of society, activities like art suggest the social class of an individual because of what they possess as symbolic, such as manners, tastes, skills or clothes. Therefore, Alartaa, who believed that art is too easy, and anyone can do it, is representative of the type of social class that she comes from, in which art is not truly valued. This

example suggests the importance of the role that society, the surrounding environment and culture play in influencing children's development. This example also aligns with the theory of Bronfenbrenner, who argued that in a macrosystem, which in the ecological systems theory is the last layer (Penn, 2005), social and cultural aspects influence children's development (Harkonen, 2007) through the dominant beliefs and ideologies (Penn, 2005). This influence can remain in children when they become adults. As it does for Alartaa, for example, who viewed creating artwork as an easy activity to do because, for her generation, art class was an extra class in public school where most of the Saudi population studied. Therefore, I posit that some of the study's teachers believed that all children are creative, but not specifically that they could be creative in art, but only with support, while only a few thought that all children are creative in art.

7.3.5 Focus: Teachers' Descriptions of a Creative Child's Personality Traits in Terms of Positive and Difficult in Art

All the teachers in all the preschools described creative children in terms of positive and difficult personality traits, according to their perspectives. In other words, what the preschool teachers thought of as positive and difficult personality traits in creative children in visual art. They also agreed that creative children tend to have more positive personality traits than difficult children. For example, the teachers believed that being bold, sociable, curious, competitive and quiet are positive personality traits that a creative child would have, while they agreed that being too shy to express themselves and stubbornness are difficult personality traits that may also be noticed in a creative child. However, Paek et al. (2019) described creative children without dividing them into positive and difficult personality traits. For example, they described creative people as flexible, hostile, anxious, emotional, and self-confident. I would argue that these descriptions are not all positive since they include 'hostile'. In addition, describing a creative person as emotional may be seen as a difficult personality trait, depending on one's perspective. For example, Albakhatri found that being a competitive child reflected a child's creativity in one of the pieces of artwork when a child was trying to draw a bigger house and added more details than his peer, such as another sun, to compete with the first child's artwork (see Figure 7.13 below). This

amount of detail led Albakhatri to believe that he *'can be a creative child, but his idea is not clear'*. It is clear from the two pieces of artwork that the second child drew two suns, a bigger house, a bigger person and a bigger kite to gain the teacher's attention, as they heard the teacher talking about the first child's skills to me during an observation, which led the children to feel it was a competition. It could be argued that being too competitive may lead a child to fail to focus on what they should make; thus, it may not seem like a positive personality trait from someone else's perspective as their perspective are subjective. Because, according to Vygotsky's theory (Vygotsky, 1967; Lindqvist, 2003), creativity is a skill in every child, I would argue that it would be difficult to describe creative children within certain or limited traits. This difficulty comes from the point that anyone can be creative. For example, some of the teachers described a creative child as bold, while others described them as shy.



Figure 7.13 Children's artwork in Albakhatri's classrooms

Although Alkus and Olgan (2014) and Paek et al. (2019) found that self-confidence is one of the most important traits for creative people, it seems that being in an unsupportive social environment can make a creative child insecure. According to Albakhatri in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, it was common for creative children to feel insecure about their productions. She linked this to a lack of family support and how it played an important role in supporting creative children. Also, according to Liu (2007), children who see themselves as artists produce more creative artwork than those who do not. Supporting children's creativity can tend to help them believe that they are artists who can create and build their self-confidence about their works and themselves. For example, Albakhatri argued that:

you may find she has done a great painting, and she asks you, 'Is it nice? No, it is not.' Then she tears it up. Families play a big role. They don't show any interest in her. Or they laugh at her paintings, which breaks her . . . Some children, because of their home environments, you will not think they are creative, because they have nothing to do at home. Their families do not support them to do something, so they have no sense of creativity. These children are really creative and need so much support, which encourages me.

This example may be related to Paek et al.'s (2019) argument that creative people are anxious and emotional. When a child is not being supported well, this may lead him or her to struggle with a lack of self-confidence, which can elicit anxiety about what adults think of their artwork, or they may become too emotional when the artwork is not liked and appreciated by adults, especially teachers and their families. This example can also be linked to Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory, which highlights the role that society and surrounding environments play in influencing children's development. Specifically, in the first layer of ecological systems, which is called the microsystem and includes the home: parents, siblings, peers and the child; the religious setting: peers, adults and the child; the neighbourhood: peers, adults and the child; and the school: peers, teachers and the child (Penn, 2005). This layer is where a child either finds support in terms of emotions, materials and opportunities or neglects the same aspects from their parents and is what has a positive or negative influence on children's creativity. Aligned with this, Hennessey and Amabile (2010) stated that the surrounding social environment can have a remarkably strong influence on the quality and motivation of creativity, which can eventually be seen in creating and achieving creative outcomes. Similarly, Lilly (2014) argued that parents can play an important role in supporting children's creativity by providing a rich home environment. Furthermore, Hennessey and Amabile (2010, p. 574) stated that most research studies investigating whether creativity can be influenced by positive affect or not have suggested that '*a positive affect leads to a higher level of creativity*'. In contrast, George and Zhou (2002) argued that negative factors might positively influence creativity. For example, an unsupportive environment can unintentionally encourage creative people to create to prove their creativity. However, this argument cannot be linked to any data from this study; the current data are more consistent with Hennessey's and Amabile's ideas (2010).

7.3.6 Focus: Teacher's Role Influences Children's Creativity in Art

Seven teachers from the three preschools did not hesitate to argue that teachers' roles could be both negative and positive at the same time, apart from Alharml, who was not sure at the beginning. Alharml needed to reflect on her experiences as a child and a teacher before she agreed with the seven teachers that teachers' roles could be both negative and positive at the same time. According to Shoffner (2008), reflection on teachers' practice has benefits for a developing teacher's practice and understanding, even though it is uncommon behaviour among teachers. It is clear that Alharml found her view after I asked her many questions during the interview and allowed her to think out loud, as she tended to have a clearer perspective after talking about what she thought. It was also clear that only the four teachers of Ad-Diriyah preschool shared the same belief that a teacher's role could be both negative and positive, which can be considered one of the most realistic beliefs. According to Madani et al. (2017), a teacher's role can have both positive and negative influences based on the nature of their interactions with children. This share of beliefs among only Ad-Diriyah preschool teachers may be linked to the length of experience they had, as they were the most experienced teachers.

On the other hand, Alartaa and Alkhozama from different preschools both believed it is always positive. Although Alartaa believed that a teacher's role is always positive, she controlled children when they were making their firefighter hats by limiting their freedom of choice and overdirecting their work, which caused them to have similar pieces of artwork – see Figure 7.14. According to Madani et al. (2017), teachers can have a more negative influence than a positive influence in their interactions with children when they give instructions.

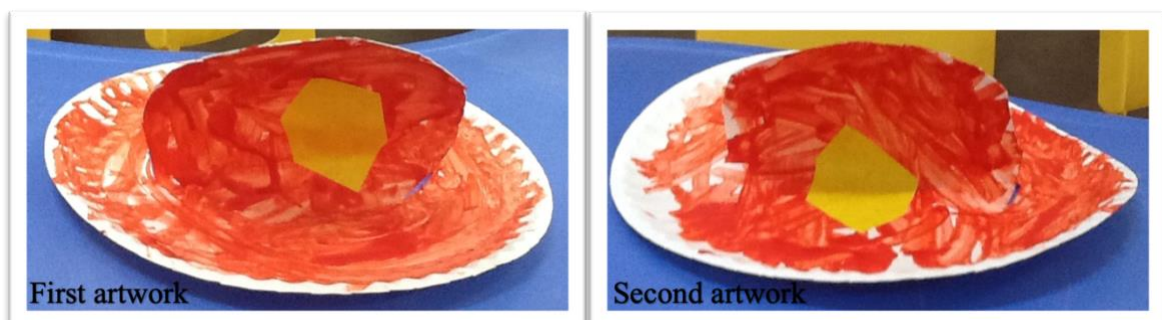


Figure 7.14 Children's artwork in Alartaa's classroom

Most teachers provided directed art activities; for example, in Alartaa's case, she was obligated to do so because of expectations to have all children in the private preschool creating artwork related to the educational unit of the week – health and safety – and display them on the board outside the classroom to be seen by everyone, including the children's mothers. Children's parents in Saudi private preschools are the funders of these kinds of preschools and teachers seem to be obligated to lead children in activities to make them achieve certain outcomes; this is like what Alkus and Olgan (2014) found in their study. When these activities were required and related to the educational unit of the week, I found that most of the artwork that was made during these observations, especially in Makkah preschool, was like each other and the models. According to Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015), art activities can help children understand the world around them by linking their art activities to them in creative ways. Therefore, teachers can use art activities to help children fully understand and learn about their world, but most effectively, by allowing freedom to support creativity. Shulsky and Kirkwood's (2015) argument was noticeable in Makkah preschool. For example, the teachers taught children lessons that were linked to health and safety – the main subject of the week – then provided them with art activities to support this knowledge. According to Alrimth – who used directed art activities to support her lesson about dental care in the health and safety unit, craft-making activities limit children's creativity because they *'always have models'*. According to Alartaa, who taught with Alrimth in the same classroom, *'at this age I have to limit their choices because they make mess'*, since she believed, this would lead to chaos and not creative outcomes. In the follow-up interviews, most teachers in the three preschools believed that their interactions influenced the children's artwork by providing models, for example. This case supports Madani et al.'s (2017) argument that teachers' instructions during art activities can have a more negative than positive influence on children's creativity. Therefore, Roeper and Ruff (2016) and Cheung (2017) argued that structured lessons should be provided with a good level of freedom to support creativity. Nonetheless, structured lessons can have a negative effect on teachers when they support children's creativity (Cheung, 2017). This case may reflect the importance of allowing freedom in activities within structured lessons to achieve a balance that supports children's creativity.

Another example of practitioner influence occurred in Ad-Diriyah preschool. There, Alsheeh believed that her *'questions were inspiring him to think what to do using only the paper and colour without the other tools. Because I asked him not to use the tools and try to make something'* – see the artwork in Figure 7.15. However, she *'was spending all her time asking questions to the group who were making artworks using injections and straws and the children answering all the time. While at the other section of the art corner, there were more children who were drawing freely; the children were talking to each other.'* Although Wood et al. (2021) claimed that asking questions is a way of fostering creativity, Alsheeh appeared to indirectly overcontrol the child's work through her questions. She was with the child all the time, and her questions encouraged the child to do what she was thinking about. According to Madani et al. (2017), teachers' interactions during artwork may have a negative influence on students' productions. Therefore, asking questions can be a sensitive tool for supporting creativity because of the type of questions that may have a negative influence on children's productions of art. If a teacher provides constant direction through her questions, this negatively impacts a child's creativity, and it may reflect Alsheeh's belief that the teacher's role can be negative as well as positive. It would appear that the above examples regarding teacher's influence support the ecological systems theory, in which Bronfenbrenner argued that the school that is in the microsystem, including teachers, can have an influence on children's development (Penn, 2005) through interactions.



Figure 7.15 The child's artwork in Alsheeh's classroom

7.3.7 Focus: Potential of Children's Artwork Being Affected by the Culture of their Society

All the teachers in the study agreed that culture has an influence on children's creativity in general, which supports Vygotsky's (1979) theory that children's creativity reflects cultural factors (Reunamo et al., 2014), such as religion or traditions. Moreover, it supports Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, which argued that child development and society are related, since a child's development is influenced by their society through direct and indirect interaction between children and the environment where they grow up (Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018). It also reflects Bourdieu's (2010) cultural capital theory, which refers to a group of symbolic factors, such as the specific manners, tastes, skills and clothes of a society's culture. For example, in Ad-Diriyah preschool, Alnafl believed that '*a child who comes from a close-minded home environment, it could affect a lot*'. Another example from Alharmal of Makkah preschool was that '*Children who come from educated families and travel a lot and have knowledge and help their children to learn and have experiences are encouraged to be more creative.*' These two arguments support Wood et al. (2021), who argued that culture and social influence are related to supporting creativity.

However, after asking the teachers about 25 pieces of artwork, Alharmal and Alsheeh were confident that there had been no cultural or social influences on the children's artwork. Alrimth and Alartaa, in contrast, were not sure whether there were influences. Although Alartaa argued that '*a child who has a rich influence culture will be creative in his artwork, can draw animals, fishes. Sure, there will be a difference*', in the follow-up interview, she said, '*I do not know. Children are all the same, whether they have different cultures or not.*' On the other hand, the greater proportion of the teachers believed that there were cultural and social influences on children's artwork, which supported Wood et al.'s (2021) argument that supporting creativity is linked to culture and social influence. Moreover, it supported the ecological systems theory, in which the macrosystem, the last layer of the systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Harkonen, 2007; Penn, 2005), has a social and cultural influence on children's development (Harkonen, 2007). This influence is due to the dominant beliefs and

ideologies of a society. It also supported Bourdieu's (2010) cultural capital theory, which argued that cultural practices are productions of society, including what an individual owns as symbolic, such as manners, how someone talks and behaves, their tastes in clothing and colours or activities they do, such as art, all of which suggest their social class. For example, Alnafl in Ad-Diriyah preschool believed that children's home environments have an influence on their choice of colours and their inner feelings. Alnafl explained, *'I think his family is the most influential in terms of the colours he chose for the hat and the face. I showed them before the hats for each job, and the painter was yellow, but he chose black, or his feeling; he was not there during the lesson, and he may be upset'* (see Figure 7.16). This explanation is consistent with Bourdieu and Bronfenbrenner's theories above in terms of a culture's influence on children's personality as well as Sharp's (2004) argument that children's creativity is linked to personalities, emotions, and thoughts. This is also consistent with Vygotsky's (1971) argument that children's inner thoughts and feelings are revealed in their artwork, but not usually expressed in everyday life. Therefore, art activities are useful for expressing inner feelings and thoughts (Wright, 2010; Vygotsky, 1971; Kroflic, 2012). From the discussion above, we can see that there is a link between Bourdieu and Bronfenbrenner's theories and Vygotsky's argument that culture, and surrounding environments have an influence on children's personality, emotions, taste in colours and creativity.



Figure 7.16 The child's artwork which Alnafl thought it was influenced by his choice of colours and feelings.

An example of how culture can influence children differently appeared in Alrimth's classroom in Makkah preschool. Alrimth compared two different kinds of plastic eyes in two children's pieces of artwork. Referring to the girl who made the first artwork, she argued that *'her choices of colour reflect her type of sex, a girl'*, while the second artwork, which was made by a boy, *'his choice of colours, he did not choose eyelashes or colours that girls tend to choose, he chose red'* – see Figure 7.17. This example supports Hammond's (2014) argument that a culture may shape children's preferences in terms of colour. However, I was unable to talk to the child to ask about the colour red because the teachers were the focus of the study.

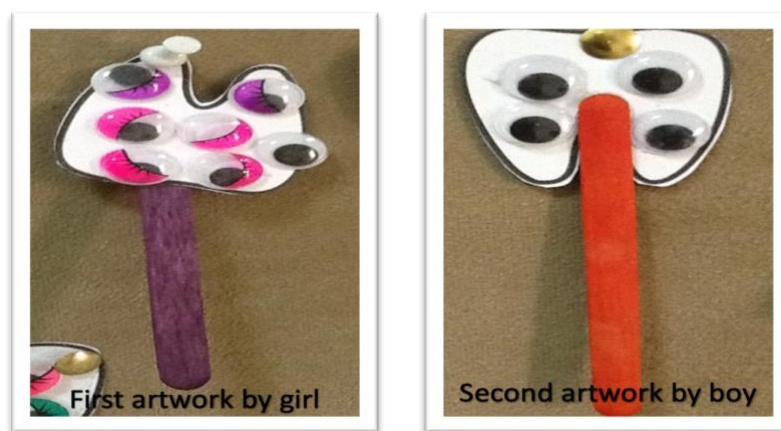


Figure 7.17 The two pieces of artwork that were made by a girl and a boy in Alrimth's classroom

In another example, a child in Alkhozama's classroom drew his mother wearing an abayah – a traditional costume for women in Saudi Arabia – exactly like she wears in real life – see the first artwork in Figure 7.18. However, another child during the same observation used collaging to represent his mother – see the second artwork in Figure 7.18 – as she does not wear an abayah in real life in the same style as the first. The reason behind the differences in how each mother was represented is because the two families have different perspectives about how an abayah should be worn according to the Islamic religion and Saudi traditions. Furthermore, the first child made a piece of artwork about his family camping in the desert and, according to his teacher, his family did this in real life, which made her believe that there was a cultural influence on this child. These examples followed Bourdieu's (2010) cultural capital theory, as the way the children drew their moms wearing different styles of abayas suggested their social class through the style of clothes that the two moms usually wore. It also

mirrored Vygotsky's theory, which argued that children's creativity is influenced by the culture of their society (Reunamo et al., 2014). The cultural influence on children's creativity in art was noticed when they were creating artwork about their families and how their moms dressed in real life. In other words, what children encounter in their daily lives and practice in their culture and society tends to influence their creativity and appear in their artwork. These examples align with the work of Ceausu (2016), who stated that children reflect on and express their understanding of the world through their art. These two examples also show how studying cultural influences on creativity can be 'complex and highly interactive' (Hennessey and Amabile, 2010, p. 588), because each child tried to represent their culture in their home environments. According to Pavlou (2009), art helps children realise how to do their artwork in 'a realistic way'. Therefore, the above examples support the teachers' arguments that children's creativity is influenced by culture.



Figure 7.18 Children's artwork from Alkhozama's classroom

7.3.8 Focus: Available Resources in Saudi Society for Supporting Preschool Children's Creativity in Art

All the teachers in Ad-Diriyah and Bad' Bin Arfaag preschools agreed that clubs, centres, workshops and events are the most available resources in Saudi society for supporting young children's creativity in art. For example, according to Alkhozama, these include '*Riyadh International Annual Book Fair, activities' booths in some shopping malls, Misk Foundation programme*'. Other available resources that Alrimth

in Makkah preschool agreed upon with all the teachers in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool were bookshops and the public library. These included, she said, the King Abdul-Aziz Public Library in Riyadh. Other common resources between these two preschools were the internet, media, and schools, though only three teachers agreed that these were available. AlharmI and Alrimth mentioned the family as an available resource that is common within Makkah preschool; however, Alrimth believed that some families do not appreciate art even if their children are good at it and enjoy it, which makes it an unavailable resource. Like Alrimth, Alqaysom in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool believed that *'At King Abdul-Aziz Library, there are some activities . . . not well known among families, perhaps because families are not interested in them.'* This case supports Pugsley and Acar's (2020) argument that parents who value creativity in general are likelier to support their children's creativity. Another issue besides a lack of the family's interest is the high cost of enrolling in some clubs, centres and workshops. For example, according to Albakhatri, Alqrqas and Alqaysom in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, specialised centres that support children's creativity are expensive. It was notable that none of the teachers in the three preschools mentioned museums as a source for supporting children's creativity. According to Gong et al. (2020), museums are considered a source to support children's creativity, but not traditional ones, in which children cannot touch and engage in new experiences, but museums that are designed for children, referring to them as 'children's museums'. Children's museums are places where children, parents and educators can benefit from activities and workshops instead of formal educational places like traditional museums, libraries, families and parks to support children's creativity (Gong et al., 2020). It may be valuable for societies and cultures interested in supporting children's creativity to establish as many children's museums as possible as a source for supporting children's creativity. This is especially relevant, since this kind of establishment tends to be limited around the world, with around 300 children's museums (Gong et al., 2020), which, in my opinion, is not enough. For example, in Saudi Arabia, there is only one children's museum. It is called Ithra, which means *enrichment* in Arabic, and it was established for children up to 12 years old and their families by Aramco, the oil company in Saudi Arabia (Ithra, 2023). In a country as large as Saudi Arabia, having only one children's museum shows a lack of support for children's creativity, as it cannot be reached by as many families as possible, mainly since it is not in the capital city of Riyadh. Therefore, since the Saudi government is interested in supporting

children's creativity, which is one of its goals in Vision 2030, it should increase the number of children's museums in the country. Furthermore, private companies should not be given the chance to establish them, as this is the government's role to play through the Ministry of Education.

It appears clear that most of the resources available in Saudi society for supporting children's creativity in art, according to the teachers, consist of clubs, centres, workshops and events, followed by bookshops and public libraries. However, most of these resources, such as clubs, centres, workshops and events, are unapproachable for many children, as their costs are high, which shows the need to establish free children's museums in the country that will provide different and numerous experiences for children.

7.3.9 Conclusion of the Answer to the First Research Question

It is clear from the data and discussion above that teachers, as well as researchers, are predictably struggling to define creativity since they have uncertain definitions of the concept. Also, teachers' definitions of creativity in art and signs of creativity in artwork were reflected in the children's artwork that they chose as creative artwork. Almost all the teachers believed their roles could be both negative and positive at the same time.

In terms of creative children, most of the teachers agreed that all children are creative but not necessarily in art. The teachers' argument supports Vygotsky's theory (1967), which states that everyone is creative regardless of age (Lindqvist, 2003). Moreover, all the teachers agreed that creative children tend to have more positive personality traits than difficult ones.

Regarding culture and society, all the teachers agreed that culture has an influence on children's creativity. This reflected the theories of Bourdieu, Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky, which argued that culture, society and the surrounding environment have an influence on children (Bourdieu, 2010; Vygotsky, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Routledge, 2016; Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018; Reunamo et al., 2014). Resources for supporting children's creativity in art in Saudi society are limited and unapproachable because of the high cost of fees.

7.4 Second Research Question: How Do Preschool Teachers in Riyadh Support Creativity in Visual Art for Children Between the Ages of Three and Six?

I will present my analysis and discuss the findings that were gathered from the initial interviews, observations, children's artwork and from the follow-up interview data to answer this second research question. However, before discussing the answer to the second research question, it is important to point out that there is a lack of resources in the literature about supporting children's creativity in general, and in art specifically. This is in comparison to the large number of available resources in the literature about teachers' definitions of children's creativity.

7.4.1 Focus: Methods of Supporting Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom and School

All the teachers in the preschools confirmed that they did not have a curriculum that supported children's creativity as well as other learning skills, such as literacy. Therefore, children's creativity in general and in art specifically depends on the support of schools and individual teachers. In terms of schools' support, in Makkah and Ad-Diriyah preschools, four teachers reported that there was no preschool support for children's creativity, although Makkah preschool is a private one where children are supposed to receive an outstanding educational experience. In Alkuş and Olgan's (2014) study, teachers reported that their schools were not supportive of children's creativity; rather, all efforts to support children's creativity came from teachers. One reason teachers reported that support was lacking for children's creativity in preschools may be related to parents' and primary schools' high expectations that preschool teachers need to focus on making children able to read, write and demonstrate number skills in preschools instead of adding being able to create as a fourth basic skill. According to Ariffin (2014), primary school teachers and parents put pressure on preschools' teachers to prepare children for these three basic skills. This reason for and result of pressure shows how school and home can influence children's development. This example supports Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, which argued that microsystem and mesosystem where home including parents and

schools including teachers, influence children's development through direct and indirect interactions with children (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Darling, 2007; Penn, 2005). This is especially the case since studies have suggested that different views regarding creativity exist between teachers, parents and school administrations (Alkuş and Olgan, 2014). In Scotland, HMIE's (2006) report stated that some preschools noticeably lacked a balance between supporting creativity and other learning curricula. In other words, teachers focused on teaching and supporting other skills, such as reading, and dismissed creativity. Therefore, if parents and primary schools dismiss creativity, preschools may not value it the way they value the three basic skills. It is important to mention that the above argument does not mean that reading, writing and number skills are not important, but rather that they and creativity are equally important. Also, it is argued that preschools should find a good balance for supporting all learning approaches to support creativity, as well as other learning curricula.

Regarding teachers' support in classrooms, I found less common data among teachers in the three preschools compared to the other data. I also found a clear similarity between Vahter's argument (2018) and the teachers' data. The most common form of support among almost half of the teachers in the three preschools was providing art materials as a way of supporting children's creativity. Aligned with this, Vahter's (2018) study suggested that it is important to offer children a varied selection of art materials so that they can create. Compared to what I noticed in classrooms during the observations, almost all the teachers in the three preschools provided accessible and varied selections of art material in the corners. Moreover, according to Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015), materials should be accessible so that children are supported in freely creating their own expressions. However, four teachers in Ad-Diriyah and Bad' Bin Arfaag preschools had very limited materials available for the day or did not make materials accessible – like Alshari, for example. She provided clay, and while the children were using it to create artwork, she provided them with plastic eyes from the shelf and told them they could use them (see Figure 7.19). Although art materials were physically accessible and reachable for the children, they had to ask the teachers for more art materials each time they wanted them or wait until the teachers provided them. According to Vahter (2018), children need to have the chance to discover and try new experiences during artwork activities.

Therefore, it could be valuable and helpful for supporting children's creativity to have wide selections and accessible art materials during activities.

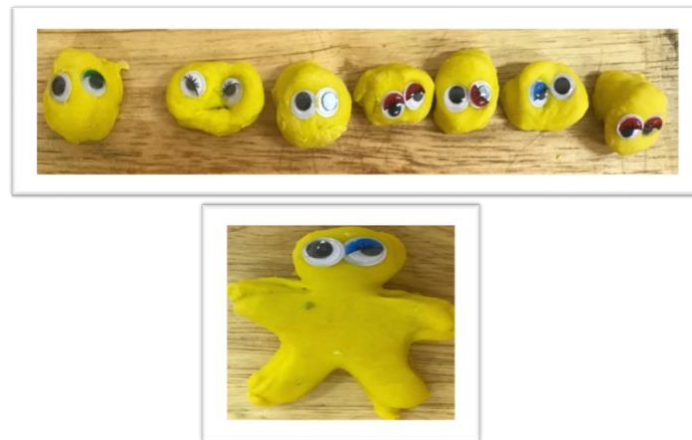


Figure 7.19 Children's artwork from Alshari's classroom

In Ad-Diriyah and Bad' Bin Arfaag preschools, four teachers agreed that they allowed children to show, tell about and display their artwork on one of the two boards inside or outside classrooms as a way of supporting their creativity. In Makkah preschool, Alrimth described completed artwork to the children after they had finished and showed it to her, as she believed it to be a way of supporting children rather than giving feedback or judgment. In Vahter's (2018) study, half of the teachers gave general feedback instead of discussing the children's artwork with them, although more than half believed in the importance of discussion. In this regard, Vahter (2018) argued that teachers should regularly discuss children's artworks with them. Cornelius and Casler (1991) further explained that children should not receive evaluation and judgement of their artwork, yet they need support for what they produce, whether these take the form of ideas or products. It could therefore be argued that children need to receive positive comments through discussions about their artwork with teachers to support them and help build their confidence in their skills.

Three teachers in Ad-Diriyah and Bad' Bin Arfaag preschools advocated approaching children's families as a way of supporting children's creativity. For example, Alqaysom in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool explained that she '*told her mum about her creativity; her mum did not know about her daughter before then. I told her I don't want the child to lose her giftedness.*' Alqaysom approached the child's mother to find a way to support the child's creativity at home. This way acknowledges the influence of families on their

children's creativity. Jankowska and Gralewski's (2022) study suggested that there is generally a link between the child–parent relationship and creating a climate that is conducive to creativity. Likewise, Lilly (2014) claimed that parents play an important role in supporting children's creativity by providing a rich home environment. In the same vein, Alkuş and Olgan (2014) stated that parents and schools, including teachers, should have close relationships to support children's creativity. I believe that approaching families seems a feasible and practical approach to encouraging creativity because of the important role that families play in children's development, which can help children to benefit from supporting their creativity at home.

Other ways of supporting children's creativity were mentioned once by some teachers, either as practices or as suggestions. For example, make use of the art corner a priority, inspire children with artists, take the children on trips to make artwork, keep a record of the children's artwork, provide different ideas and improve the level of questions to ask children. In line with these suggestions, Vahter (2018) believed that one way of supporting children's creativity is to visit exhibitions and galleries and allow children to decide if they want to continue making artwork. Similarly, Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015, p. 365) claimed that *'children should be allowed to decide when their projects are complete and whether to display, take home or save their project when it is finished'*. Allowing children some freedom to make decisions about their own artwork may have a positive influence on their creative process, which can lead to achieving creative outcomes. Regarding these suggestions, during the observations, some children had to stop working on their artwork because of the time limit. Moreover, all the crafts that the children made in Makkah preschool were displayed on outside boards at the teachers' request, and other kinds of artwork were displayed on inside boards, despite the children's wishes, as only crafts display outside according to the preschool's rules. One could argue that although these teachers' methods of supporting children's creativity mentioned earlier may not have been mentioned by more than one teacher, they could be useful to put into practice and may show worthwhile outcomes.

The above data and discussion make clear that there is no programme that teachers can follow in all three investigated preschools; almost half of the teachers reported that there is no school support. According to these teachers, providing art materials,

applying show, tell and display methods and approaching the families are the most common methods that teachers used for supporting children's creativity in art.

7.4.2 Focus: Types of Materials Support Children's Creativity in Art

Among the materials that the teachers recommended to support children's creativity are using recyclable materials, collaging, clay modelling, painting, drawing and colouring. Sudarsana (2010) partly agreed with teachers that using unfamiliar art materials, such as paper plates and recyclable materials, can help inspire children to create. These recommendations were related to the Ministry of Education (N.D.) and requested to be included at the art corners as five permanent artistic activities – drawing, painting, printing, clay and collaging (cutting and gluing) – to be provided during the week along with any required craft-making activities. The teachers' recommendations were common among the teachers and were seen during the observations, except for three teachers in Bad' Bin Arfaag preschool, where a variety of materials was not provided. In line with this, most teachers in the follow-up interviews suggested providing more art materials, such as collage, papers and glue, to support artwork activities to reflect a better example of creativity. However, AlharmI disagreed with the other teachers regarding collaging, as she believed that it limited children's creativity. This may be understandable because most of the collage materials that were common among preschools come in different forms, such as animals, trees and cars, which children can glue on a paper, for example. Thus, I would argue that what may limit children's creativity is the limitation of materials, such as in colours. Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015) claimed that children should be provided with colours of various shades to show their creativity. However, during observations of painting activities in all three preschools, I noticed that only one colour of paint was always available, and the teacher might add one more if the children asked and it was available, whether the preschool was private or public. For example, in Alsheeh's artwork classroom, children had only one colour (pink) – see Figure 7.20. It is arguable that children are likely to be inspired by more ideas to create if they are given more colours. Children may struggle to make the sun with a pink colour, for example.



Figure 7.20 Children's artwork in Alsheeh's classroom

Limitations were also seen in the options of activities for the day in almost all observations. These limited activity options, such as allowing only craft-making activities, reflected a lack of freedom in the preschools. According to Jaquith (2011), structured lessons can have a negative effect on children's creativity. Therefore, teachers need to allow children a good level of freedom alongside structured lessons. Similarly, Roeper and Ruff (2016) and Cheung (2017) argued that providing freedom with structured lessons can generate the kind of climate that children need to support their creativity and avoid tasking them with activities that do not support their creativity. For example, Alartaa taught children about fire and safety and then provided them with an activity to create their own firefighter's hat. She directed the children during the whole process of making the hats without giving them the freedom to create their own firefighter's hats the way they imagined and wanted. This way of directing activities led to have firefighter's hats that all look the same with no noticeable differences (see Figure 7.14, page 228).

This example is like what Bautista et al. (2018) suggested after conducting their study in Singapore with four- to five-year-old children: teachers should focus on giving children instructions for making products rather than supporting their creativity. I would argue that structured lessons may not always be negative; for example, when they are followed by activities where children have the freedom and are inspired by the creative artwork of artists, to create products or ideas, change them or even reject them. According to Ariffin (2014), allowing children to have different options of their own in

activities helps to support their creativity. For example, Alartaa redirected a child from a painting activity that he wanted to do to another activity that was provided that day by asking him to wait until he could do a craft-making activity, so he agreed. The child had to rush to finish the craft-making artwork so he could paint, but the teacher at the end redirected him to colouring and allowed him to colour only one picture of a firefighter. According to Sternberg (2003), children struggle to make creative artwork when they have to rush. Therefore, it could be argued that the child could not make his artwork creatively. Moreover, it seems that the child enjoyed certain art activities more than others, such as painting and colouring, rather than craft-making. Additionally, redirecting his interests made him lose his enjoyment and prevented him from showing creativity in what he had made. If I compare this example to Hook and Tegano's (2002) argument that creative people are those who can express themselves freely, I might argue that this child could not express himself freely because he was redirected twice from painting to limited art activities; therefore, he may not have been able to show his creativity. According to Sternberg (2003), people show their greatest creativity when they are making something they love.

It seems clear that teachers used different art materials to support children's creativity, but they had limited materials and options for art activities for the day, as well as a lack of freedom, as some of them redirected the children's interests.

7.4.3 Focus: Barriers to Support Children's Creativity in Art in Classroom

More than half of the teachers were dissatisfied with the level of support available for supporting children's creativity in art, such as the lack of art materials. This dissatisfaction may reflect on their practice, since, according to Hui et al. (2015) and Jukic (2011), teachers' beliefs about creativity are a vital factor in their practice. This dissatisfaction was also reflected in the barriers that the teachers faced. The most common barrier among preschool teachers was a lack of materials. Ariffin (2014) argued that a lack of resources is one of the barriers that teachers may face during their support for children's creativity, which reflects the importance of schools providing materials. Moreover, in a study conducted by Ariffin (2014), teachers argued

that a school's budget was not enough; thus, teachers had to purchase the materials they needed. For example, in a private preschool where parents pay high fees, AlharmI clarified that:

Sometimes schools can let you down when they don't provide materials . . . Our school is not really good; they can't bring everything as materials, they can bring some but not everything. There was stuff that I asked for. It was unavailable and cost a lot, so they refused. They said we can't afford it, so you would try by asking children's moms to help you . . . Sometimes they do.

It can be argued that parents enrol their children in private preschools and pay high fees to provide a high standard of education. However, in the above example of private preschools, parents pay high fees and sometimes compensate for unavailable materials. Unfortunately, some private preschools are run on limited budgets, despite the high fees that parents pay for a private preschool, thinking it would produce a high-standard education. In fact, however, such schools may offer an education that is lacking in quality, with inadequate art materials and no special programmes.

Other barriers were common among some teachers and seemed connected, such as limited time, lack of freedom and flexibility and work pressures. For example, Alnafl argued that because she has a curriculum to follow, her freedom is restricted. In Ariffin's (2014) study, the teachers stated that they needed to be flexible during teaching to support children's creativity. Similarly, according to Runco (2004), providing a flexible approach in schools is fundamental for supporting creativity. Therefore, Smith (1996) suggested letting children's interests drive the curriculum instead of obligating them to follow it. Being obligated to follow the curriculum and finish each phase of the daily schedule on time before the end of the day may negatively affect the process of supporting children's creativity. According to Cheung (2017), structured lessons and limited time have a negative influence on teachers' methods of supporting children's creativity. This influence may appear to be the pressure that teachers are under. This pressure was not only on teachers but was also transferred to the children. During some observations, children had to finish their artwork or were helped by teachers to finish their artwork because the time had run out, either because a child had spent 15 minutes in the corner and other children were waiting for their turn or because the indoor playing time had ended. According to Ariffin

(2014), children need sufficient time to create. Being in an environment that has limited time, work pressures, a lack of freedom and flexibility is not likely to be conducive to supporting children's creativity. This perspective was reflected in the follow-up interviews by some teachers who suggested allowing more freedom and time to support artwork activities to reflect a better example of creativity.

Another barrier that some teachers face is teaching in an overcrowded classroom. Although during observations there was sometimes at least one teacher in an occupied art corner and a maximum of three teachers in the organised classroom all the time, some teachers faced the issue of an overcrowded classroom. For example, in Ad-Diriyah preschool, Alnafl struggled with managing her classroom because children with special educational needs were mixed with children without such needs in the same class without providing a teacher specialised in special needs education, in which Alnafl was not specialised. Therefore, when a child with special educational needs did not follow a certain rule because of their disabilities, other children without special educational needs imitated them or interrupted Alnafl during the lesson, telling her about what the child had done, so she had to re-manage the children again to continue the lesson. Another issue occurred in Alrimth's classroom, where, in her view, she had too many children from age three to four. Ariffin (2014) argued that struggling to manage children in large-sized classrooms leads to difficulty in supporting children's creativity; therefore, classrooms need to be organised and less crowded to provide better support for creativity. Specifically, classrooms that are for children from three to four years old like Alrimth's classroom should be less crowded than classrooms that are for older children. In Finland, for example, according to Paananen (2020), the ratio of children to teachers for children from three to six should be seven children for one teacher. Perlman et al. (2017) argued that the quality of early childhood education is measured by child-staff ratios and that the fewer the children, the higher the quality of the setting. Teachers may not focus on creativity, as they would be busy trying to manage their classrooms to put things into order and follow the curriculum. Therefore, Alrimth argued that she had to *'focus on handling things that are more important than creativity'*. This statement by Alrimth may reflect Hui et al.'s (2015) claim that teachers' beliefs about creativity are a vital factor in their practice, since she believed it is less important.

The data and discussion above show that teachers experienced a lack of art materials and freedom, limited time, work pressures and overcrowded classrooms as barriers to their support, which may explain why more than half of them were dissatisfied with the level of support they provided for children's creativity.

7.4.4 Focus: Advice to Policymakers for Setting up a Curriculum for Supporting Children's Creativity in Art

This focus comes from the belief that policymakers in societies could make differences in supporting children's creativity and enhancing cultures' beliefs about the importance of creativity, which supports the three theories of the study of Bourdieu, Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky, which were discussed above in section 7.3.7 in this chapter (Bourdieu, 2010; Vygotsky, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Routledge, 2016; Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018; Reunamo et al., 2014).

The data in this focus reflected most of what was discussed earlier, such as the lack of art materials, the absence of a programme and the absence of school support. For example, teachers need to receive cooperative support from their school in their efforts to support children's creativity and provide more art materials when they ask for it, since it is an issue that teachers face, as well as allowing children and their teachers to visit exhibitions and galleries.

Since all the teachers in the three preschools agreed that there was no creative curriculum, most suggested that policymakers provide a programme and more art materials. Therefore, based on the outcomes of children's artwork, most teachers would provide more art materials, more space and time and more art activities if they planned to set up their art corners again to provide better support for children's creativity in visual art. However, since creativity in art in preschools has not been sufficiently studied (Hui et al., 2015), it may be difficult to suggest how the curriculum should be structured or to reflect teachers' beliefs regarding the curriculum beyond what has been discussed above in reference to the literature, since they did not suggest anything different. However, Sternberg (2003, p.333) advised educators generally to encourage children *'to create, invent, discover, explore, imagine and*

suppose'. This encouragement may be the result of inspiration that comes after visiting exhibitions and galleries. Accordingly, Vahter (2018) believed that one way of supporting children's creativity is by visiting exhibitions and galleries. Shulsky and Kirkwood (2015) also suggested schools can cooperate with local artists to inspire children to create and help them admiring their abilities and development in art. However, these cooperations and visits would benefit from being held at children's creative museums, which, according to Gong et al. (2020), are more suitable for children compared to traditional exhibitions and galleries in which educators, artists and parents join children in workshops and activities.

According to Cheung (2017), teachers need to be trained to balance freedom and structure while supporting children since children need to know the necessary skills to be creative. For example, encouraging them to ask questions, having experiences and exploring (Eason et al., 2009). In line with this, Alrimth suggested providing a programme that explains in detail what teachers should do. The most important things that teachers said they needed while collecting the data to support children's creativity were providing a programme and different art materials, visiting exhibitions and galleries, working with artists, and allowing more time and freedom, which may be interpreted as the foundation for supporting children's creativity.

In their recommendations to policymakers, most teachers expressed their need to have a programme to follow. This approach would provide more and different art materials and activities and would allow more time and freedom to visit exhibitions and galleries. During the discussion, all of these recommendations were confirmed as valuable by being supported by other researchers. The teachers did not advise policy makers about establishing children's creative museums, which may be related to the lack of awareness of the idea of these kinds of establishments, because there is only one children's creative museum in Saudi Arabia and none in Riyadh, where the data were collected. Therefore, I would advise policy makers to establish children's creative museums as an important source of support for children's creativity in society, based on the discussion in Section 7.3.8.

7.4.5 Conclusion of the Answer to the Second Research Question

All the teachers claimed that there was no curriculum to support children's creativity, nor did their schools help teachers support it. Therefore, teachers commonly relied on providing art materials, show and tell and display methods and approaching the families to support children's creativity in art.

In terms of art materials and activities, the teachers used different art materials to support the children's creativity. However, they allowed limited materials and options for art activities for the day and were restricted by a lack of freedom because some of them had to redirect children's interests.

Regarding barriers to support, teachers argued that they struggled with a lack of art materials and freedom, limited time, work pressures and teaching in overcrowded classrooms. These barriers interfered with their support, which explains why more than half of the teachers were dissatisfied with the level of support they provided for children's creativity.

For policymakers, teachers recommended providing a programme, providing more and different art materials and art activities, allowing visiting exhibitions and galleries and allowing more time and freedom.

It is clear that the discussion above supports the background of the study suggested by the arguments raised by the theories of Bourdieu, Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky regarding the degree of the influence that culture, society and the surrounding environment like parents and teachers have on children (Bourdieu, 2010; Vygotsky, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Routledge, 2016; Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018; Reunamo et al., 2014). It also supports Vygotsky's theory that every child is creative (Vygotsky 1967; Lindqvist, 2003).

The discussion in this chapter leads to the next chapter where the conclusion of the study will be addressed including strengths and the contribution of the study, the key findings and future recommendations that was gathered mostly from this chapter along with providing dissemination plans and giving the limitations of the study.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter will conclude the study by presenting the significance of this study, in relation to the identified research gap, through the aim and the two research questions of the study. After that, I will discuss strengths and contribution of the study to the field of research in creativity, teachers' beliefs, and early years education. Following that, it will present the key points to answer the two research questions and the study's five key findings, which will inform and suggest recommendations for future practice and research, provide dissemination plans, give the limitations of the study, and finally, I will make concluding remarks.

8.2 Research Gap, Aim and Research Questions of the Study

Since this field of research is developing and as discussed in the Literature Review chapter, research on children's creativity is lacking (Leggett, 2017), the aim of this study was to explore how teachers define children's creativity and support it in art, even without curricula to guide them. This aim was addressed by answering two research questions:

1. What do preschool teachers in Riyadh believe creativity means in visual art in children between three and six years of age?
2. How do preschool teachers in Riyadh support creativity in visual art in children between three and six years of age?

8.3 Strengths and Contribution of the Study

This study enriches the international research on young children's creativity in visual art, given that the area of study – and young children's creativity in general – has been under-researched (Leggett, 2017), as well as poorly defined (Kaufman and Beghetto, 2009; Glaveanu, 2011). This study contributes significant findings to the field by establishing a working definition for creativity, drawing from three key theorists –

Vygotsky, Bourdieu and Bronfenbrenner – and exploring a group of teachers' beliefs regarding creativity in preschools, with a specific focus on art. Furthermore, the study examined the extent to which teachers can support creativity and how their beliefs can lead their practice, both negatively and positively – especially when there is no curriculum to guide them. The above two research questions were addressed to contribute to the research gap identified earlier in this thesis's literature review. The results, data analysis and discussion in the previous chapters indicated a strong resonance with the theorists identified above, providing valid theoretical considerations upon which to build and develop the study.

Regarding design and approach, I might argue that this study has more strengths than limitations. In particular, with regard to the approach of methods and methodology, I created the approach of using the following mixed methods: interviews, observations and artwork to stimulate post-lesson interviews that are unique, as I am unaware of any study in this field that used these methods in this combination. Based on my knowledge, no previous study has drawn upon the links between teachers, the environment and what children produce that demonstrates their creativity in artwork, which made my contribution novel and valuable. The sources of case study data were rich and meaningful, as was the analysis, with steps presented in codebooks (see Appendix H, page 304). These codebooks supported the reliability of the main study, so the results could be used and replicated in future studies. Moreover, the methods were tested several times during the pilot study before they were applied to the main study.

I have also conducted a broad discussion on defining creativity in the literature and have developed my own understanding of the definition of creativity. This was an essential process for studying the ideas from a teacher's perspective and in the context of Saudi Arabia, which has been added to my contributions to the field. Furthermore, the methods were applied in two different cultures – the main study and the pilot – which showed that the methods were applicable outside of the context. They also have the ability to explore any cultural influence on children's creativity wherever the tool is applied.

This study contributes by helping adults in societies, including teachers and parents, understand the meaning of children's creativity generally and in visual art and how to foster and support it. Additionally, the degree to which children's culture and environment can have a positive or negative influence on their creativity depends greatly on how well their creativity is supported or neglected. It contributes by helping teachers to have realistic expectations regarding children's creativity in visual art and in general. For example, every child is creative, and supporting creativity requires not expecting it to be limited to gifted children. Therefore, all children need to receive the same level of support from their teachers in order to express and develop their creativity.

Perhaps the most significant strengths and contributions of the study are the richness of data that have been obtained regarding the teachers' beliefs. Not only does my study show that teachers are uncertain about the definition of creativity for young children and how it can be reflected in their practice, but it also highlights how culture influences children's creativity and their approach to art and how culture influences teachers' views of art and curriculum pressures. To the best of my knowledge, this level of qualitative study is rare in this field and this topic.

8.4 Summary of the Research Questions' Answers

8.4.1 Summary of the Answer to the First Research Question

The teachers had different definitions of creativity in general and art specifically; however, they mostly agreed that all children are creative, but it can present differently in each child. In terms of their definitions of creativity in art and its signs, both were reflected in teacher's choices for children's creative artwork, which could reflect their awareness of how they defined creativity in art and the signs that indicate that a piece of artwork is creative. The majority of the teachers believed that the role they play in supporting children can simultaneously have both negative and positive influences. Similarly, for culture and society, all the teachers agreed with the theories of Bourdieu, Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky that culture, society and the surrounding environment all have an influence on children (Bourdieu, 2010; Vygotsky, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Routledge, 2016; Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018; Reunamo et al., 2014), which supports the theoretical considerations of the study.

8.4.2 Summary of the Answer to the Second Research Question

According to all of the teachers, there was no curriculum to support children's creativity. The only source of support that teachers believe they rely on is providing different art materials; for example, show, tell and display methods and approaching children's families. However, not only are teachers given limited art materials to choose from in art activities, but they also offer little freedom of choice; for example, offering only one water colour – red – for children to paint.

Teachers appeared to generally and consistently struggle with the lack of art materials and freedom, limited time, work pressures and teaching in overcrowded classrooms. The findings suggest that these barriers interfered with their support, which perhaps explains why more than half of the teachers recorded in this study were dissatisfied with the level of support they provided for children's creativity. Therefore, the teachers recommended that policymakers provide a specific programme, provide more and different art materials and art activities, allow for visits to exhibitions and galleries and allow more time and freedom.

8.5 Key Findings of the Study

After collecting, presenting, analysing and discussing the data, I identified five key findings from the study that can be addressed in future recommendations for practice and research in general. First, the teachers agreed on the theoretical considerations of the study in terms of how a child's development is influenced by their societies and their surrounding environment. They also agreed that culture influences children's creativity and how individuals view art. This influence can be seen in the fact that some of the teachers viewed art as important, and it is important for everyone to create art, for example, as an expression. In contrast, others believed that creating art is too easy and unimportant, or only for individuals who are artistically talented. Alrimth (in Case 1) articulated this well when she argued, '*I think not any child can have creativity, . . . I think creativity is something a child did, but other children could not.*' In terms of viewing art and creating artwork, she also argued that '*families found it expensive and*

unnecessary. Although I have seen children create amazing artworks.' Similarly, but significantly, regarding the families' views, Alartaa minimised art by saying, *'I think all children have creativity in art; art is too easy. What is art? It's when a child holds a pen and starts to paint or draw. It's easy.'* It was also clear during data collection that the support teachers give to children's creativity depends on how they (the individual teacher) view creativity, which is in line with Jukic (2011) and Hui et al. (2015). All of these agreements among the teachers reflect the theory of Bourdieu (2010), who argued that cultural practices and kinds of activities, such as art, are productions of society linked to social class and social development. The teachers' agreements also reflect the theories of Bronfenbrenner and Vygotsky, both of whom argued that societies and their surrounding environments influence adults'/children's development (Vygotsky, 1979; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2005; Routledge, 2016; Harkonen, 2007; Thuketana and Westhof, 2018; Reunamo et al., 2014). These theories tend to show support for research that studies cultural influence, which should be addressed in future research in this area.

Second, half of the teachers had uncertain definitions of creativity as they changed their minds during the interviews or after the interviews or gave conflicting definitions. For example, in the second preschool, Alshari defined creativity as *'something unusual, something new, not something common. Something special and inventive that has not been presented before'*. Later, during the interview, she added, *'It is an idea that has been improved and created, and each time the child does it differently.'* She also thought that talent is creativity, but after a few days and during the follow-up interview, she clarified that creativity, based on talent, means *'saying talents develop to be creativity. Each talented person after development and support becomes a creative person. Even if there is no way he will find his way to become creative. However, children should have support. So, creativity is based on talent.'* It is clear and predictable that it is not only researchers who struggle with the complexities of defining creativity (Vygotsky, 1967), but also teachers who are unaware of the meaning of creativity. There appears to have been an absence of support from the Saudi Ministry of Education (according to teachers), as well as the absence of any attention to creativity when they studied early years education in university. This indicates the need for teaching creativity in universities to guide teachers in their future careers.

Third, children's creative abilities differ based on their interests. Vygotsky (1967) argued that all children are creative (Lindqvist, 2003), but they are creative in different areas of interest, such as mathematics or art. Also, children's creativity reflects their cultural influences (Reunamo et al., 2014). According to Alnafl, in Ad-Diriyah preschool, '*there are individual differences . . . Some are creative in mathematics, others in imagination, painting*'. This comment reflects, to some extent, the Scottish report (HMIE, 2006), which reported that all children have creative abilities, but the difference is that they are not the same in every child.

It was also noticed from the teachers' answers that they were implying that policymakers and preschool management are putting pressure on teachers through curricula requirements teachers must meet. Asking teachers to meet these requirements and stick to the curriculum when they have limited time prevents teachers from encouraging children's creativity. Alnafl argued that limited time was a barrier that she dealt with to support children's creativity in artwork. According to her, 'Limited time is an issue because I have a programme to follow'. This may be a descending pressure that does not stop at the teacher's level and may be transferred to children through teachers by asking them to create artwork that reflects the theme of the educational unit of the week. For example, all three teachers in the first preschool asked the children to create a certain idea of artwork that reflected the theme of health and safety. Furthermore, they asked them to follow a model that was put in front of them or to follow the instructions that the teachers gave. Although the first preschool was a private one, where children were supposed to have more freedom and advanced educational experiences than in public preschools, the artwork of the children in the private preschool was as limited as that of the children in the second public preschool. Consequently, all three teachers in the first private preschool were dissatisfied with the level of support available for children's creativity in artwork. Another key finding that was identified is what appears to be common among Saudi private and public preschool teachers regarding facing several barriers in supporting children's creativity. The teachers for example, faced a lack of art materials and freedom, limited time, work pressures and teaching in overcrowded classrooms. The teachers struggled to overcome these barriers when confronted with related decisions that came from policymakers or management. This is also in line with Ariffin (2014),

who argued that these barriers affect teachers' support for children. I would argue that these barriers seem to come from a lack of budget for public preschools from the Saudi Ministry of Education and because private preschools' owners provide limited budgets, although they charge high fees for enrolment. For example, private preschools employ fewer teachers and enrol more children, so classrooms tend to be overcovered and teachers struggle to manage their classrooms.

Finally, I have noticed that there is a lack of studies in the literature focusing on supporting children's creativity in general and in art specifically. However, there have been more studies of teachers' definitions of children's creativity, but creativity as an area of study is still considered a developing area of study (Kaufman and Beghetto, 2009; Glaveanu, 2011).

8.6 Future Recommendations

My future recommendations for the field of creativity cover future practice and research. These are my recommendations below.

8.6.1 Recommendations for Practice

The study aimed to have an impact nationally and internationally in practical and theoretical terms. Nationally, in the Saudi context, since I am a lecturer in the Early Childhood Studies Department at Shaqra University in the town of Shaqra, the study will contain the following recommendations, which are mainly practical. Firstly, enrich BA programme in early childhood studies department in Saudi universities with creativity. This step will help the students to understand the meaning of creativity and determine the means for supporting it in preschool children since creativity has not been taught. This step is the first step before establishing a module of teaching and enriching creativity for young children in Saudi universities in last terms of studying early childhood studies where the students would have a wide understanding of their subject by that time. In order to apply the creativity module in BA programme each early childhood studies department in each Saudi university need to plan their own

module and submit it to be approved by the head of their universities because each university plan their owns but mainly the module should involve definition of creativity, importance of creativity, and how to support creativity. Secondly, working in partnership with the non-profit Mohammed bin Salman Foundation (Misk, 2018) that is well positioned for impact in Saudi Arabia, and it is interested in science, technology, education and entrepreneurship, regarding creativity in Saudi Arabia in particular, as it supports creativity in young adults Saudis.

Thirdly, working in partnership with the King Abdulaziz and His Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity (Kacgc, 2018) in order to find out potential opportunity that promote children's creativity in preschools. I also recommend working in partnership with the King Abdulaziz Centre for World Culture Organisation (Ithra, 2018) in in order to find out potential opportunity that helps develop young children's creativity in Saudi society through public events like children's activities, galleries or consorts that help to enrich people's cultural knowledge. Similarly, I recommend working in partnership with policy makers in the Saudi Ministry of Education, given that the Saudi Vision 2030 (2016), has identified creativity in children and youth as an aim that must be achieved by 2030.

Practically, the results could be used by international practitioners to determine the means for supporting children's creativity in visual art, such as putting the resulting methods into practice. For example, by converting the observation schedule into a checklist, educators can use it to evaluate their process of supporting creativity. Such a checklist would be especially helpful in visual art for young children when provided alongside written guidance that gives a definition of creativity and advice on how to use the guidance. Ministries of education worldwide could also use the checklist and accompanying guidance to train in-service teachers. Universities could use the same protocol to train pre-service teachers or student teachers during their final-year training courses by adding it to the evaluation criteria for training. This would be a suitable opportunity to incorporate it as a support for creativity in visual art for young children.

8.6.2 Recommendations for Research

For future research, since the interview questions and the observation framework that I developed for the study were innovations in the methodology for studying creativity in young children in terms of teachers' beliefs and practices, I recommend that researchers be encouraged to apply these methods to creativity, especially in visual art. The methods of the study could also be used in further research to gather data about teachers' beliefs and practices in children's creativity in different fields, such as creativity in mathematics or in general. These could also be applied to gathering data about teachers' beliefs and practices in other areas of research about young children. Furthermore, since the methods are suitable for use in different cultures and contexts, they would therefore be ideal for researchers to use in cross-cultural studies. There is a paucity of cross-cultural research in this field, so there is potential for an original contribution here.

For this study, since there is no definition of creativity accepted worldwide (Prentice, 2000), I defined creativity as a mental skill that is available to everyone, which differs according to interests and can be supported by environments from an early age to achieve original and useful outcomes. This definition encompasses all the categories of definitions that were discussed in the Literature Review chapter; therefore, future research can rely on this definition or benefit from it to build other research in the field for its development, as, according to Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) and Glaveanu (2011), it is a developing area of study. Future research regarding creativity could also further involve children by choosing them to be active participants – for example, conducting the same study but on a larger scale, focusing on the included children, as well as teachers, through observation and interviews immediately after, so the children do not forget any ideas they may have. This may help in understanding their perspectives in terms of the meaning of their artwork.

Another recommendation is that a preschool education programme should be evaluated on how it supports children's creativity in general by tracking children's creativity in artwork and the available art materials over a year. In the same environment, a researcher could conduct an experimental study on how providing limited art materials and then a range of art materials for children five–six years old can influence children's creative artwork. The reason for choosing this age range is that those children are the most experienced in terms of using art materials, compared

to three–five-year-olds in preschools. A further recommendation is to conduct an experimental study on the effect of allowing teachers to give instructions to children while they are creating artwork, then limiting the teachers during another art activity, with the purpose of exploring to what extent teachers' influence may have on the creative artwork of children five–six years old.

Additionally, it would be informative to conduct the same research, but in other educational corner areas in the classroom instead of an art educational corner in classrooms, such as a block educational corner which is where children use wooden items with different shapes and sizes for construction area, for example. Finally, formal invitation by the Saudi Ministry of Education to early childhood studies researchers who are interested in creativity alongside with teachers from different background of experiences and policymakers to co-design a creativity programme enacted in a preschool classroom during a term to explore the extent to which it can influence children's creativity.

8.7 Dissemination Plans

I am planning to share the findings of the study through different channels, which include publishing academic articles, presenting papers at conferences worldwide regarding creativity and childhood, cooperating with the Department of Early Childhood Education in Riyadh to present workshops for preschools' teachers regarding supporting children's creativity. I will also create an online blog where I can approach parents and teachers who are interested in childhood and creativity in general, which can help enrich their knowledge and ways of supporting children's creativity at home and schools.

8.8 Limitations of the Study

I faced three main limitations while conducting the study. First, a lack of studies regarding young children's creativity in general and in art specifically, and to a lesser degree regarding supporting children's creativity. Therefore, it was difficult to indicate

the status of these in the literature and research. This lack of studies showed the need for conducting research in the field. Second, for testing the research materials in a pilot study, I approached nurseries in advance in July 2019 to book an appointment to visit them in September 2019, but they asked me to recontact them in the middle of September 2019. However, when I did, they refused, and I had to look for an alternative. Unfortunately, I was unable to find a nursery that would allow me to meet their staff until mid-October 2019, when I found one. Consequently, I started piloting later than planned, which led to an unexpected delay in the process of conducting the research. Third, receiving a decision from my sponsor regarding a data collection trip to go to Saudi Arabia took longer than it should have, as the decision arrived five weeks late from the date of the data collection. This delay forced me to shorten my trip from 90 days maximum – based on my sponsor’s restrictions – to 45 days so I could return to England in time. Therefore, I had to collect the data under stress until I could ensure that all the data had been obtained.

8.9 Conclusion

To summarise, reaching the aim of the study helped to develop the area of creativity for the future of children and educators, and since the data of the study agreed with the theoretical considerations on how culture and the surrounding environment have an influence on children’s development. It is important to bear that in mind when designing and creating curricula that suit our cultures and develop our creativity without losing the features of society, which can make each instance of creativity unique because it reflects its culture. It is also important for our children’s future to be provided the opportunities to be creative, not just in art, but in thinking. Encourage them to be independent creators and thinkers in an uncertain world currently in crisis. Establish educational system to support that aim instead of providing an education that creates an ‘expected outcome’ with little independent thought and creativity.

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Appendices

Appendix A

1.The Methods

1.1 First interview, Phase One

1.1.1 First version

1. What is your qualification?
2. How long have you been teaching children?
3. Which age group of children do you teach this year?
4. What do you think creativity means?
5. What does creativity in visual art mean to you?
6. How would you describe the visual art in creativity of children?
7. Which types of materials promote visual art in creativity of children?
8. To what extent do you agree that all children have creativity in visual art?
Please give more details to explain your thought.
9. What are the indicators of creativity in children's artwork?
10. What are the characteristics of children who demonstrate creativity in visual art?
11. Do you have a curriculum to support children who demonstrate creativity in their artwork? What does it involve? If it is not, to what extent do you think it is important? Please give more details to explain your thought.
12. How do you support children's creativity in visual art in your classroom?
13. How does your preschool support children's creativity in visual art?
14. To what extent do you interact with a child who shows creativity in visual art in the art corner? What does that interaction involve?
15. What are the barriers to supporting the children's creativity in visual art in your classroom?
16. To what extent do you believe a teacher's role positively influences children's creativity in visual art? Please give more details to explain your thought.

17. To what extent are you satisfied with the level of support that is available to support children's creativity in visual art? Please give more details to explain your thought.
18. If you could offer advice to policymakers, to set up a curriculum for supporting the preschool children's creativity in visual art, what would you recommend? What do you consider to be indispensable?
19. To what extent do you agree that children's artwork are affected by the culture of their society? Please give more details to explain your thought.
20. Could you describe what you see in children 's artwork that reflect their culture?
21. What are the available resources in the Saudi society for supporting preschool children's creativity in visual art?
22. Are there any ideas or suggestions that you would like to share in this topic?

Thank you very much for you time and participating

1.1.2 Second Version

1. What is your qualification?
 - You don't have here reception?
 - When can you start doing level 3, because it different than in Saudi Arabia?
 - So, it's not as a degree is it?
2. How long have you been teaching children?
3. Which age group of children do you teach this year?
 - And reception in primary ... ?
 - Year one start at the age of six?
4. What does creativity in general mean?
5. How do you see creativity in visual art in particular?
 - What do we mean by 'what they see'?
6. you described creativity in visual art in general, but do you think it can be different in children so it can have a different meaning you think?
 - So, it can be similar in all ages?
7. Which types of materials promote visual art in creativity of children?
8. To what extent do you agree that all children have creativity in visual art? Please give more details to explain your thought.

9. What are the signs of creativity in children's artwork?
10. What are the characteristics of children who demonstrate creativity in visual art?
11. Do you have a curriculum to support children who demonstrate creativity in their artwork? What does it involve? If it is not, to what extent do you think it is important? Please give more details to explain your thought.
 - When you say your key children what do you mean? ...
12. How do you support children's creativity in visual art in your classroom?
13. How does your preschool support children's creativity in visual art?
 - But what about creativity in visual art?
14. How do you interact with a child who shows creativity in visual art in the art corner? What does that interaction involve?
15. What are the barriers to supporting the children's creativity in visual art in your classroom?
16. To what extent do you believe a teacher's role positively influences children's creativity in visual art? Please give more details to explain your thought.
17. To what extent are you satisfied with the level of support that is available to support children's creativity in visual art? Please give more details to explain your thought.
18. If you could offer advice to policymakers, to set up a curriculum for supporting the preschool children's creativity in visual art, what would you recommend? What do you consider to be indispensable?
 - So, would you suggest something different?
 - Ok if it's for the young staff quite let say difficult, do you think can be an issue?
19. To what extent do you agree that children's artwork are affected by the culture of their society? Please give more details to explain your thought.
 - So, you say the colour choice can be but not the artwork?
20. What are the available resources in the British/ English society for supporting preschool children's creativity in visual art?
21. Are there any ideas or suggestions that you would like to share in this topic?

Thank you very much for you time and participation

1.1.3 Third Version

1. What is your qualification?
2. How long have you been teaching children?
3. Which age group of children do you teach this year?
4. What do you think creativity in general mean?
5. How would you describe children's creativity in art?
 - Could you please tell me more?
6. Some educators may believe that all children have creativity in art, what do you think?
7. Think of children's artwork, what are the signs of creativity in these pieces of artwork?
 - Could you give me some examples?
8. Think of a child that you believe they are creative, how they are?
 - What is their personality?
9. Someone could argue a teacher's role positively influences children's creativity in art, what do you think?
 - Is there any situation you may think teachers' roles positively/negatively influence children's creativity in art?
 - Could you give me some examples?
10. Do you have a curriculum to support children who show creativity in their artwork?
 - What does it involve?
 - How important do you think it is?
 - Could you tell me more details?
11. How do you support children's creativity in art in your classroom and school?
12. Which types of materials support children's creativity in art?
13. How do you interact with a child who shows creativity in art in the art corner?
 - Could you give me an example?
14. What are the barriers to supporting the children's creativity in art in your classroom?
 - How do you overcome these issues?
15. How satisfied are you with the level of support that is available to support children's creativity in art?

- Could you tell me more details?
16. If you could offer advice to policymakers, to set up a curriculum for supporting the preschool children's creativity in art, what would you recommend?
- What do you consider to be necessary?
 - What would you also suggest differently?
17. To what extent do you agree that children's artwork are affected by the culture of their society?
- Could you tell me more details?
 - Do you think there is any particular part of children's artwork can be affected by the culture of the society?
 - Could you give me an example?
18. Could you describe what you see in children's artwork that reflect their culture?
- Could you give me some examples?
19. What are the available resources in the Saudi society for supporting preschool children's creativity in art?
- How easy for these resources to be available most of the time for children?
20. Are there any ideas or suggestions that you would like to share in this topic?

Thank you very much for you time and participating

1.1.4 Fourth Version

1. What is your qualification?
2. How long have you been teaching children?
3. Which age group of children do you teach this year?
4. What do you think creativity in general means?
5. How would you describe children's creativity in art?
 - Could you please tell me more?
6. Some educators may believe that all children have creativity in art, what do you think?
7. Think of children's artwork, what are the signs of creativity in these pieces of

- artwork?
- Could you give me some examples?
8. Think of a child that you believe is creative, how would you describe them?
- What is their personality?
9. Someone could argue a teacher's role positively influences children's creativity in art, what do you think?
- Is there any situation you may think teachers' roles positively/negatively influence children's creativity in art?
 - Could you give me some examples?
10. Do you have a curriculum to support children who show creativity in their artwork?
- What does it involve?
 - How important do you think it is?
 - Could you tell me more details?
11. How do you support children's creativity in art in your classroom and school?
12. Which types of materials support children's creativity in art?
13. What are the barriers to supporting the children's creativity in art in your classroom?
- How do you overcome these issues?
14. How satisfied are you with the level of support that is available for children's creativity in art?
- Could you tell me more details?
15. If you could offer advice to policymakers, to set up a curriculum for supporting the preschool children's creativity in art, what would you recommend?
- What do you consider to be necessary?
 - What would you also suggest differently?
16. To what extent do you agree that children's creativity is affected by the culture of their society?
- Could you tell me more details?
 - Do you think there is any particular part of children's artwork can be affected by the culture of the society?
 - Could you give me an example?
17. Besides schools, what are the available resources in the Saudi society for

supporting preschool children's creativity in art?

- How easy for these resources to be available most of the time for children?

18. Are there any ideas or suggestions that you would like to share in this topic?

Thank you very much for your time and participation

1.2 Observation, Phase Two

Observation Information:

- 1. The date:**
- 2. The length of the observation:**
- 3. Age of children:**
- 4. Number of children in a class and the art corner:**
- 5. Number of teachers in a class and the art corner:**
- 6. Teacher qualification/ length of experience:**
- 7. Description of the class:**
- 8. Are all the resources accessible?**
- 9. The theme of classroom:**

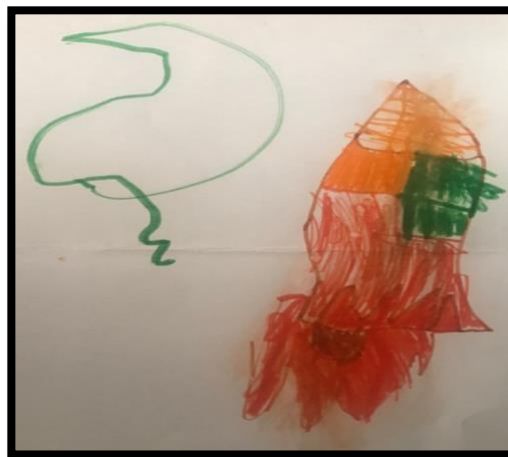
Field notes:

Kind of available activities in the corner	The materials at the art corner	Displaying a board for children works	Space for children
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
The kind of the chosen activities of the day	The way of teacher's interaction with a child/children	Child's choice?	Child/children speak about the artwork to anyone/themselves
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
How a child starts their artwork	How a child finishes their artwork	Sample of the child's artwork?	Further description

1.3 Follow-up Interview and Artwork, Phase Three and Four

1.3.1 First Version as a Questionnaire with up to Six Pieces of Artwork

(The following photo is only one example of a photo before piloting the method)



Specific questions for each photo: (will be under each photo)

1. From the photo of your child's piece of artwork that you have chosen, why did you choose this piece of artwork?

2. What in this photo do you believe presents children's creativity in visual art in terms of the ideas, colours, design, and visual art creation ability of the piece of artwork? Please provide more details. You could point at the photo.

3. Do you believe that your culture has an influence on this child's piece of artwork in terms of their creativity? If your answer is yes, please provide more details. You could point at the photo.

4. Do you believe that your society has an influence on this child's piece of artwork in terms of their creativity? If your answer is yes, please provide more details. You could point at the photo.

5. Do you believe that your interaction has an influence on this child's piece of artwork in terms of their creativity? If your answer is yes, please provide more details. You could point at the photo.

General questions for the entire up to 6 photos:

1. Please rank these pieces of artwork from the most creative in your opinion in visual art to the least creative.

2. Do you believe these pieces of artwork could be supported in order to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art? If it is yes, could you explain in which area of the artwork exactly?

3. Based on the outcomes of these piece of children's artwork, if you would plan to set up the art corner again in order to provide a better support for children's creativity in visual art, what would you do?

Thank you for your participating in the study 😊

1.3.2 Follow-Up Interview with up to Three Pieces of Artwork

This version is after piloting the method.

Specific questions for each artwork:

1. Why did you choose this piece of artwork?
2. What in this piece of artwork do you believe presents the child's creativity in art in terms of the ideas, colours, design, and the creation ability of the piece of artwork?

- Could you provide more details?
3. Do you believe the child's culture had an influence on this piece of artwork in terms of their creativity?
 - If yes, please indicate where?
 4. Do you believe the child's society had an influence on this piece of artwork in terms of their creativity?
 - If yes, please indicate where?
 5. Do you believe your interaction had an influence on this child's piece of artwork in terms of their creativity?
 - If yes, please indicate where?

General questions for the entire artwork:

1. Please rank these pieces of artwork from the most creative in your opinion in visual art to the least creative.
 - Could you clarify based on what you rank them?
2. Do you believe these pieces of artwork could be supported in order to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art?
 - Could you explain in terms of what exactly, colours, designs or ideas?
3. Based on the outcomes of these piece of children's artwork, if you would plan to set up the art corner again in order to provide a better support for children's creativity in visual art, what would you do?

Thank you for your participating in the study

Appendix B

Information sheet for participating

Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Law,
Leeds Social Sciences Institute



[Information sheet for participating in Exploring Visual Art Production in Riyadh Preschools: Practitioners' Beliefs on Supporting Children's Creativity](#)

My name is Dimah Hamad Aldosari, and I am a PhD student at the University of Leeds. I am carrying out a study on 'Exploring Visual Art Production in Riyadh Preschools: Practitioners' Beliefs on Supporting Children's Creativity. I am inviting you to participate in this research which is separated into two phases. This information sheet will tell you more about the project and what you will be asked to do if you take part. Please read this sheet in full and take some time to consider whether you would like to be involved.

The research study aims to explore preschool teachers' beliefs of the visual art in creativity in children three to six years old in Riyadh. Also, I will examine how preschool teachers support children in their pieces of artwork activities to develop their creativity. As you are a preschool teacher, your belief and practices are valuable for the present study.

Taking part in the research is based on your willingness and is not an obligation under any circumstances. If you feel that you do not want to take part up to two months after your participation, you may withdraw without giving any reason. Also, if you wish not to answer any particular question or questions, you are free to decline. Participating in the study depends on four phases: an interview, an observation, choosing up to three pieces of children's artwork and a second interview. After reading the information sheet, you may choose to participate in one of the four phases (interview, observation, choosing up to three pieces of children's artwork and interview), some or all of them by signing the consent form.

First Phase: An audio recorded initial interview, focusing on your views regarding visual art and creativity in early childhood which should take approximately 30 minutes.

Second and third Phases:

Following this you will be observed once to document how you support children's creativity in art during their work in the art corner of the classroom. Please be assured that the purpose of this is not to judge your teaching, it is purely for the purpose of gaining insights into how you support creativity. At the end of the observation – second phase-, I will ask you to choose up to three pieces of children's artwork that you believe are creative and buy this time you will be finished with the third phases.

Fourth phase: An audio recorded follow-up interview which will involve discussion of some pieces of children's artwork, this will take approximately 30 minutes.

After collecting the data (interviews, observations, interview data), the data will be analysed to answer the research questions. The data will be analysed to answer the research questions. The results may be published but the report will not mention any of the names of teachers or preschools. Your name and your preschool name will not be shared, and all names will be anonymised. The data will not be shared with anyone apart from the researcher and research supervisors. I confirm that all your data and your name will be treated in a confidential and secure manner.

If you would like to participate in the study, please sign the consent form and choose how you would like to participate by ticking the box on the consent form. I will then contact you by calling the preschool phone number to arrange the observation part with you. Alternately, on the same day of signing the consent form, you could choose when you would like to be observed. Also, you can contact the researcher as soon as you decide when you would like to be observed, by sending an email.

Contact information:

If you would like to contact me with any questions, please send an email.

Email address: eddhma@leeds.ac.uk

My supervisors' contact details:

Dr. Paula Clarke

Email: p.j.clarke@leeds.ac.uk

Dr. Mary Chambers

Email: m.e.chambers@education.leeds.ac.uk

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Dimah Hamad Aldosari

Appendix C

Participant consent form

Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Law,
Leeds Social Sciences Institute



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Participant consent form

Consent to take part in Exploring Visual Art Production in Riyadh Preschools:
Practitioners' Beliefs on Supporting Children's Creativity

Add your
initials next to
the statement if
you agree

<p>I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.</p>	
<p>I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw up to two months after my participation without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. I understand that I could contact the researcher through: Email address: eddhma@leeds.ac.uk I understand that my data that I share will be destroyed if I decide to withdraw.</p>	
<p>I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research.</p>	
<p>I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential, and the interviews will be audio recorded.</p>	
<p>I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study, may be looked at by auditors from the University of Leeds where it is</p>	

relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my records.	
I agree to take part in the above research project and will inform the lead researcher should my contact details change during the project and, if necessary, afterwards.	
I would like to participate in the study.	

Name of participant	
Participant's signature	
Date	
Name of lead researcher: Dimah Aldosari	
Signature	
Date*	

Appendix D

Information sheet for children's parents

Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Law,
Leeds Social Sciences Institute



Information sheet for children's parents

Exploring Visual Art Production in Riyadh Preschools: Practitioners' Beliefs on Supporting Children's Creativity

My name is Dimah Hamad Aldosari, and I am a PhD student at the University of Leeds. I am carrying out a study on 'Exploring Visual Art Production in Riyadh Preschools: Practitioners' Beliefs on Supporting Children's Creativity'. The study aims to explore how preschool teacher perceive and support creativity of visual art in preschool children from three to six years old.

I am inviting your child's teachers to participate in the study and be observed for 45 – 60 minutes. Teachers will be observed once. I consider it to be important for you to know that your child will not be observed, and the observation will only be for the teacher. I will observe how the teacher provides the artistic materials to children, what kind of materials, how the children start and finish their artwork and how the teacher interacts with the children during their work. Additionally, I will observe what facilities are available and the kind of artistic activities that are provided in the classroom's art corner.

Please tick the box below if you are happy that your child be present during the observations and send the letter signed with your child to the school.

I am happy that my child will be present during the observation.

Thank you for your time.

Dimah Hamad Aldosari

Appendix E

Letter from Dr Paula Clarke to travel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to collect the data



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Date 01.07.19

To Whom It May Concern:

I confirm that the following student Dimah Hamad M Aldosari (ID number: 201198328) is currently doing her Ph.D. study in Early Childhood Studies at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom.

Dimah needs to collect data for her study in Saudi preschools in Riyadh. Data collection is scheduled to take place from December 2019 to February 2020. She will need to travel to Riyadh and remain there throughout this period.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'P. Clarke'.

Dr. Paula Clarke

Appendix F

Ethics approval

The Secretariat
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9JT
Tel: 0113 343 4873
Email: ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Dimah Hamad M Aldosari
School of Education
University of Leeds
Leeds, LS2 9JT

**Social Science, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics
Committee
University of Leeds**

3 January 2020

Dear Dimah

Title of study: Exploring Visual Art Production in Riyadh Preschools:
Practitioners' Beliefs on Supporting Children's Creativity
Ethics reference: AREA 18-172 amendment November 2019

I am pleased to inform you that your amendment to the research application listed above has been reviewed by the Social Science, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee and following receipt of your response to the Committee's initial comments, I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion as of the date of this letter. The following documentation was considered:

Document	Version	Date
AREA 18-172 amendment November 2019 Ethical review NOTICE OF AMENDMENT - AREA18-172.docx	2	27/11/19
AREA 18-172 Ethics form Dimah Aldosari .doc	1	12/06/19
AREA 18-172 Dimah Fieldwork Assessment Form low risk.docx	1	12/06/19

Please notify the Committee if you intend to make any further amendments to the original research as submitted at date of this approval as all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available at <http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAmendment>.

Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation, as well as documents such as sample consent forms, and other documents relating to the study. This should be kept in your study file, which should be readily available for audit purposes. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited. There is a checklist listing examples of documents to be kept which is available at <http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAudits>.

We welcome feedback on your experience of the ethical review process and suggestions for improvement. Please email any comments to ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Blaikie
Senior Research Ethics Administrator, the Secretariat
On behalf of Dr Matthew Davis, Chair, [AREA Faculty Research Ethics Committee](#)
CC: Student's supervisor(s)

Appendix G

Approval for collecting data in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

الرقم :

التاريخ : ١١/١٧/١٤٤٤ هـ

المشروعات :

المملكة العربية السعودية
وزارة التربية والتعليم
(٥٠)
الإدارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض
Planning & Development
إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

وزارة التربية والتعليم
Ministry of Education

" إفادة "

الموضوع: الموافقة على تطبيق أدوات الدراسة في مدارس تابعة لإدارة التعليم بمنطقة الرياض

الاسم	ديمه بنت حمد بن مطلق الدوسري		
السجل المدني	العام الدراسي	١٠٥٧٧٨٥٢٩٥	١٤٤٠هـ - ١٤٤١هـ
الجامعة	التخصص	جامعة ليدز، بريطانيا	دراسات الطفولة المبكرة
الدرجة العلمية	العينة	دكتوراه	معلمات رياض الاطفال
عنوان الدراسة	دراسة استطلاعية لإنتاج الأعمال الفنية في الروضات، وجهة نظر معلمات الروضات في دعم الإبداع عند الأطفال..		
نوع الإفادة	الموافقة على تطبيق الدراسة في المدارس التابعة للإدارة العامة للتعليم بمنطقة الرياض بدء من تاريخ ١٤٤١/٤/٤ هـ خلال العام الدراسي (١٤٤٠هـ إلى ١٤٤١هـ) بحسب طلبها		

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته وبعد،

بناء على قرار سعادة مدير عام التعليم بمنطقة الرياض رقم ٣٨٩٢٠٧٩٣ وتاريخ ١٤٣٨/٦/٢٣ هـ بشأن تفويض الصلاحية لإدارة التخطيط والمعلومات لتسهيل مهمة الباحثين والباحثات، وحيث تقدمت إلينا الباحثة (الموضحة بياناتها أعلاه) بطلب إجراء دراستها بداية من تاريخ ١٤٤١/٤/٤ هـ خلال العام الدراسي ١٤٤٠هـ إلى ١٤٤١هـ وعليه نقيدهم أنه لا مانع من تطبيق الدراسة خلال مدة زمنية محددة ب (٩٠) يوم خلال العام الدراسي الحالي ، على نطاق مدارس منطقة الرياض مع ملاحظة أن الباحثة تتحمل كامل المسؤولية المتعلقة بمختلف جوانب البحث ، ولا يعني سماح الإدارة العامة للتعليم موافقتها بالضرورة على مشكلة البحث أو على الطرق والأساليب المستخدمة في دراستها ومعالجتها وبناء على طلبها تم منحها الإفادة، علماً أنه تم الاطلاع على أداة الدراسة (استبانة).

شاكرين لكم حسن تعاونكم

إدارة التخطيط والتطوير

وزارة التعليم
إدارة التخطيط والمعلومات ١
الوزارة العامة للتربية والتعليم بمنطقة الرياض

ص / للملحقة
ص / قسم الدراسات والبحوث

صفحة ١٤ من ١٨ تاريخ الإصدار : ١٤٣٦/٨/٥ هـ الإصدار : ١.٠ رمز العملية ت ط 6 ع.

Appendix H

An example of one of the codebooks for data analysis

Makkah preschool

(Interview, observation, follow-up interview)

Interview

Interview question	Initial codes gathered from teachers' answers	Initial cods' number	Final codes after grouping from all the answers to the question	Final cods' number	Initial themes	Initial themes' number	Final themes	Final themes' number
What is your qualification?	-BA in Early Years Education. -BA in Early Years Education. -BA in Early Years Education.	3	BA in Early Years Education.	1	BA in Early Childhood Education.	1	Specialised in Early Childhood Education	1
How long have you been teaching children?	-Less than a year -Less than a year -9 years	3	- Less than a year. - 9 years	2	- Less than a year. - Nine years	2	- Non-experienced teachers - Experienced teacher.	2
Which age group of children do you teach this year?	-3-4 year -3-4 year -4-5 year	3	Age of Children: 3-5year	1	All ages of pre-schoolers	1	Young children	1
What do you think creativity in general mean?	-Something unusual, creating new things from usual things. -Showing inner feelings and thoughts. Everyone has intelligence in a certain area. -Ability, way of focus, answering, thinking, movements, early signs of leadership skill, insists on their opinions, demanding what they want, building something and imaging what it is, talking about	16	- Intelligence in everyone, thinking and concentration -Abilities and movements -High level of self-confidence, determination and leadership -Showing feelings and thoughts	6	-Mental abilities -Physical abilities -Good personality -Expressing themselves -Imaginative	6	-Mental abilities -Physical abilities -Leadership -Expressing themselves	5

	their works and themselves, thinking about things that are above their age.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Using their imaginations -Creating new things out of ordinary materials. 		-Creating original outcomes		-Creating original outcomes using imagination	
How would you describe children's creativity in artwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -It is an activity that led by children themselves from the beginning to create something new using the provided art materials. -Perfection of making artwork. - Using imagination and accurateness. His paint also reflects him, what he lives. and matching colours. Requesting more colours and talk about their plans and create something unusual. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is an activity that led by children themselves from the beginning to create something new using the provided art materials. - Perfection of making artwork - Using imagination and accurateness. Reflection of the child themselves and their lives beautifully and matching colours. -Requesting more colours and talk about their plans. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-directed activities to create original artwork using available materials. - Perfection of making artwork - Reflecting themselves and their lives into artwork using imagination, accurateness, matching colours. - Requesting more colours and talk about their plans. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-directed activities to create original artwork using available materials. - Perfection and accurateness of making artwork. - Children reflecting themselves and their lives through artwork using matching colours and being imaginative. - Expressing their artistic needs and thoughts 	4

Some educators may believe that all children have creativity in artwork, what do you think?	-No, each child is special in themselves, production but not creative. Creativity is in one child out many children. -Yes, art is so easy. -No, some children do not like art so they cannot be creative at art. Creative child shows better level of making artwork than their peers in terms of their lines, thoughts, imagination and they way of holding pens.	11	- They are all creative because art is easy. - Not all of them are creative in art because it has to like art and shows advance level in art to be creative.	2	- All children are creative in art. - It Is too easy to be creative in art. - Not all children are creative in art. - Creativity requires high level of skills and passionate	4	- All children are creative in art, as creativity includes no difficulties. - Not all children are creative in art, as creativity requires high level of skills and passion	2
Think of children's artwork, what are the signs of creativity in these artwork?	-Advance level comparing to peers, like drawing faces but others cannot. Have ideas; reflect their personalities on their artwork even if they are using a model. -Perfection. Advance level comparing to peers. -Only love art, passionate, well done artwork, imaginations, talk about their artwork, reflect their feelings on artwork. The way of holding pens and using clay, choice of colours.	13	- Advance level of making artwork comparing to peers. - Have ideas and choice of colours. - Reflect their personalities on their artwork. - Passionate - Imagination - Talk about their artwork. - Way of holding pens and using clay.	7	- Advance level of making artwork comparing to peers. - Reflect themselves into artwork. - Being passionate and imaginative - Ways of using art materials. - Expressing their ideas	5	- Advance level of making artwork compared to peers. - Expressing their ideas and reflecting themselves through artwork. - Being passionate, imaginative, and talk about their artwork - Ways of using art materials.	4
Think of a child that you believe they are creative, how they are?	-P: Sociable, leader, love their peers, likes to share, higher level in art comparing to their peers. -D: Naughty, stubborn, impatient, does not apologies immediately. P: leader, like to be the first. -D: A bit stubborn. P: make her own decisions of colours, clothes	17	P: - Leader - Sociable - Like to share. - Take care of babies. - Really good personality. - competitive - high skills in art	12	Positive personalities: - Act like a responsible adult. - Sociable - Generous. - Leader - Independent	2 main themes 10 sub-themes	Positive personality traits. Difficult personality traits.	2

	that reflect her personality, act like a mature person, like to take care of a baby, has a really good personality.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make their own decisions. - Act like a mature person. D: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Naughty - Stubborn - Impatient 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skilled in art - Competitive Difficult personalities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Naughty - Stubborn - Impatient 			
How do you support children's creativity in artwork in your classroom and school?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only describing their artwork, school ran an art gallery once. - Play a video about artists, run a gallery, support them to be like them. Ran a gallery by school once. - Provide different kind of art materials and ideas. School refuses to buy materials. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe their artwork. - Play a video about artists. - Provide different kinds of art material and ideas. - School ran an art gallery once. - School refuses to buy materials. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describing children's completed artwork. - Provide different art material and ideas. - Inspiring children with artists. - School lack of support 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describing children's completed artwork. - Provide different material and ideas. - Inspiring children with artists. - School's lack of support. 	4
Someone could argue a teacher's role positively influences children's creativity in artwork, what do you think?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It depends if teacher supports or neglects. - Yes. - It can be both. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes. - It can be both. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Always positive - Negative and positive. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positive - Negative and positive. 	2
Do you have a curriculum to support children who show creativity in their artwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No, but it should be. - No. - No. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No. - It should be. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no curriculum to support children's creativity in art. - The importance of curriculum. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Absence of curriculum - The importance of a curriculum. 	2
What are the barriers to supporting the children's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too many children in my class, limited time for me and children, no different materials, limited time for children in each corner. 	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too many children. - Limited time for children in each corner. - Lack of materials. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited time - Lack of materials - Overcrowded classroom. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited time - Lack of materials 	4

creativity in artwork in your classroom?	-No barrier. -Lack of materials, we repeat the same materials.		- Limited time for teachers and children. - No barrier.		- No barrier		- Overcrowded classroom. - No barrier	
How satisfied are you with the level of support that is available to support children's creativity in artwork?	-Three out of ten, I focus to handle things that are more important than creativity. -I work hard but I need to do more, I can do more, not satisfied. -I don't think I can be satisfied because of circumstances, lessons and limited time for playing.	7	- Not satisfied.	1	Dissatisfaction	1	Dissatisfaction regarding level of support	1
Which types of materials support children's creativity in artwork?	-All kinds of materials, recycled materials, painting, drawing. mostly collage. Not craft because we always have model. -Watercolours and brushes for free painting, clay and its tools. -Clay, drawing, painting. Collage limit children.	12	- Recycled materials. - Painting - Watercolours and brushes for free painting. - Drawing - Clay and its tools. - Collage - Making crafts limits children.	7	- Recycled materials - Collage - Drawing - Clay and its tools - Watercolours and brushes - Painting - Using collage and making crafts limit children.	7	- painting - Recyclable materials - Collage - Drawing - Clay and its tools - Collage and crafts limit children's creativity.	6
If you could offer advice to policymakers, to set up a curriculum for supporting the preschool children's creativity in artwork, what would you recommend?	-Clear and set up plans for art corners that have more than one method for teachers, explain for teacher in details what to do provide art materials, setting up galleries, allow children to talk about their artwork, have artists to evaluate, receiving helps from experts. -Adding 20-60 minutes a day for drawing lesson only, the rest of art activities remain at the art corners. -Selecting children who need support like gifted and creative by teachers at the beginning of the year in order to have extra lessons for	12	- Set up clear plans for art corners. - Setting up galleries. - Receiving helps from experts. - Adding 20-60 minutes a day for drawing lesson only. - Providing extra lesson for creative children - Provide different materials and method. - Running computation and awards between schools. - Exchanging experiences between schools	8	- Providing clear plans and materials for art corner. - Extra lessons. - Setting up galleries - Computation and awards. - Exchanging experiences between schools - Help from experts.	6	- Provide different materials and methods - Extra lessons. - Opening galleries, running competitions, and exchanging experiences - Experts' support.	4

	half an hour or an open day as part of the programme. Provide different materials and method. Running computation and awards between schools. Exchange experiences between teachers and children between schools to update teaching and learning methods.							
To what extent do you agree that children's artwork are affected by the culture of their society?	-Sure, high level of influence, families who are aware and read for their children and see a lot, not limited environments and have experiences, their children are creative. -Yes, who has rich influence culture will be creative. - 80%, children who come from educated families and travel a lot and have knowledge and help their children to learn and experiences are encouraged to be more creative.	9	- Yes.	1	Culture influence on children's creativity	1	Culture influence on children's creativity in art	1
What are the available resources in the Saudi society for supporting preschool children's creativity in artwork?	-Good support but not enough. Bookshops, King Abdul-Aziz library. Unapproachable and it costs, families do not appreciate art. -Media, social media, families. Approachable -Schools and families.	12	- Media - Social media - Families - Schools. - Bookshops. - Public libraries. - Unapproachable, and it costs. - Approachable - Not enough	9	- Media and internet - Family - School - Bookshops and public libraries - Approachable resources - Unapproachable, Inadequate and expensive.	6	- Media and internet - Family and school - Bookshops and public libraries - Approachable resources - Lack of family's interests and expensive	5



Observation

The criteria of gathering information		Initial codes gathered from teachers' answers	Initial cods' number	Final codes after grouping from all the answers of the question	Final cods' number	Initial themes	Initial themes' number	Final themes	Final themes' number
General Information about the Classrooms	The length of the observation	- 45 minutes - 30 minutes - 30 minutes	3	30 – 45 minutes	1	30 – 45 minutes	1	A 30–45-minute observation length	1
	Age of children	- 3 - 4 years old - 3 - 4 years old - 4 - 5 years old	3	3-5 years old	1	3-5 years old	1	A 3-5-year old group of children	1
	Number of children in the classroom and the art corner	- 4 out of 12 children. - 4 out of 13 children. - 4 out of 13 children.	3	4 children in the corner. 12 -13 in the classroom.	2	Four children were in the corner out of 13 children were in the classroom	1	The corner is always full of children	1
	Space for children	- 5 children - 4 children - 5 children	3	- 4-5 children	1	Making space for children	1	- Making certain space for children	1
	Number of teachers in the art corner and the classroom	-1 teacher in the corner out of 2 teachers in the classroom -1 teacher in the corner out of 2 teachers in the classroom -1 teacher only in the whole classroom.	3	1 teacher in the corner Up to 2 teachers in the classroom	2	There is always a teacher in the corner	1	At lease a teacher in the corner for observation and direction children.	1
	Description of the classroom	- An organised environment and rules are displayed around wall's class. - An organised environment and rules are displayed around wall's class. - An organised environment and rules are	3	- An organised environment and rules are displayed on the walls of the classroom.	1	- Organised environment - Rules are displayed on the walls	2	- Organised environment - Rules are displayed on the walls	2

		displayed around wall's class.							
	The theme of classroom	- Health and safety - Health and safety - Health and safety	3	- Health and safety	1	Health and safety	1	The theme' of the week's unit	1
Specific information about the corner	Kind of available activities in the corner and amount of materials	- colouring and making crafts. Full of materials - colouring and making crafts. Full of materials - collage, clay, drawing and painting. Full of materials	8	- colouring and painting - crafts. - collage - clay - drawing - Full of materials	6	- Different kind of art activities. - The corner is full of art materials.	2	- Different kinds of art activities in the corner - The corner is full of art materials	2
	Are all the resources accessible?	-Yes -Yes -Yes	4	-Yes	1	-Resources are accessible	1	- Resources are accessible	1
	Displaying a board for children works	- 2 boards, in and out the class - 2 boards, in and out the class - 2 boards, in and out the class	3	- 2 boards, in and out the class	1	Boards to display children's artwork	1	- Use of boards to display children's artwork	1
	- The kind of the chosen activities of the day - Providing a model of the child's artwork - Child' choice	- Colouring and making crafts. Teacher explained to the children how to make it. Children are not allowed to choose. - Making crafts. A model was provided. Children are not allowed to choose. - Clay and making crafts. A model was provided. Children are not allowed to choose.	9	- Colouring. - Making crafts. - Clay. - Teacher explained to the children how to make the idea of craft. - Children are not allowed to choose.	5	- Colouring. - Making crafts. - Clay. - Directed activities - Lack of freedom - Children are not allowed to choose what to do	6	- Limited activities for the day - Directed artwork activities. - Lack of freedom.	3
	How a child starts their artwork	- The teacher invited children to make crafts	4	- The teacher invited children to make crafts	4	- Teachers' invitation	4	- Teachers' invitation	4

	and redirect their interests to crafts. - Children's wish to make crafts. - Teacher asked them to make crafts, children's wish.		- Redirect their interests to crafts. - Children's will to make crafts. - Teacher asked them to make crafts.		- Teachers' directing children's interests - Children's will to create. - Teacher's requirement		- Teachers' redirecting of children's interests - Children's will to create. - Teacher's requirement	
Child/children speak about the artwork to anyone/themselves	- Only one child expressed how much he loves blue colour. - Yes - Yes	3	- Only one child expressed how much he loves blue colour. - Yes	2	Children talking about their artwork	1	- Talking about their artwork during activities	1
The way of teacher's interaction with a child/children	- Directing, compliments and description - Directing, suggestion and remanding children with the rules - Compliments, asking questions	6	- Directing - Description and compliments - Remanding children with the rules - Asking questions	4	- Directing children's artwork. - Encouraging children - Remanding children with the rules - Asking questions	4	- Directing children's artwork. - Complimenting the children - Remanding children of the rules - Asking questions	4
How a child finishes their artwork	- Most of them finished by themselves. - With the teacher's help. - Most of them finished by themselves, when the time was ended.	4	- Most of them finished by themselves. - With the teacher's help. - When the time was ended.	3	- Decided to finish - Teachers' help - finished because of the time end	3	- Decided to finish. - Helped to finish. - Forced to finish.	3

Follow-up interview

		First Teacher								
Interview questions		First photo			Second photo					
										
		Initial codes for first photo	Initial codes for second photo	Initial cods' number	Final codes for the two photos	Final cods' number	Initial theme for the two photos	Initial themes' number	Final theme for the two photos	Final themes' number
Specific questions for each artwork	Why did you choose this artwork?	Related to the unit	Related to the unit	1	Related to the unit	1	Related to the unit	1	Related to the unit	1
	What in this artwork do you believe presents the child's creativity in artwork in terms of the ideas, colours, design, and the creation ability of the artwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of eyes. - The tooth is upside-down. - The colours are matched. - It looks like a fish or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Well organised and tidy. - The stick is in the middle. - The eyes have no colours or eyelashes. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating an artwork that shows multilabel ideas. - Fine details in the artwork . 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not following the model. - Paying attention to the details. - Comparing a child artwork's level to other children. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not following the model. - Paying attention to details. - Comparing the child's artwork level to others children's. 	3

		something different	- It is a sign of creativity comparing to other.		- A tidy and well organised. -Comparing the artwork to others.					
	Do you believe the child's culture had an influence on this artwork in terms of their creativity?	I do not know; colour choice reflect she is a girl.	- His choice of colours. - He did not choose eyelashes or colours.	3	- In terms of choice of colours and woman makeup.	1	- Cultural influence on children's choices of colours and details.	1	- There is cultural influence on children's artwork	1
	Do you believe the child's society had an influence on this artwork in terms of their creativity?	Nothing	Nothing	2	Nothing	1	- There is no social influence on children's creativity.	1	- There is no social influence on the children's artwork.	1
	Do you believe your interaction had an influence on this child's artwork in terms of their creativity?	- Yes, she did what she wanted. There was no space to suggest if she want to colour the tooth. - She added many eyes. - It is a directed artwork.	- Too much influence, it is a directed artwork.	4	- High influence as it was directed artwork	1	- Teachers' strong influence on children's creativity.	1	- There is teachers' strong influence on children's artwork	1
General questions for the	Please rank these pieces of artwork from the most creative in your opinion in visual art to	- The first one, because she made something new, it looks like a fish, tooth or		3	- The artwork which is not	1	- Creating an artwork that is different from the model.	1	- The most creative artwork is the first one - Deriving different outcomes from the	2

entire artwork	the least creative. Could you clarify based on what you rank them?	tulip. I do not think she knew it was a tooth.		similar to the model.				main idea of the artwork.	
	Do you believe these pieces of artwork could be supported in order to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art? Could you explain in terms of what exactly, colours, designs or ideas?	- Providing more materials.	1	- Providing more materials.	1	- Providing more materials.	1	- Providing more materials.	1
	Based on the outcomes of these children's artwork, if you would plan to set up the art corner again in order to provide a better support for children's creativity in visual art, what would you do?	- Allow more time. - Allow the child to make more than one artwork and use as many materials as she wants.	2	- More time. - The chance to make more than one artwork. - Use unlimited materials.	3	- Allowing to have more time and use materials. - The chance to make more than one artwork.	2	- More time and materials. - The chance to make more than one artwork.	2

Second Teacher

Interview questions

First photo



Second photo





		Initial codes for first photo	Initial codes for second photo	Initial codes' number	Final codes for the two photos	Final codes' number	Initial theme for the two photos	Initial themes' number	Final theme for the two photos	Final themes' number
Specific questions for each artwork	Why did you choose this artwork?	the unite is Health and Safety	- Related to the unit	4	Artwork's idea is related to the unit of the month.	1	Craft's idea is related to the unit of the month	. 1	related to the unit of the month	1.
	What in this artwork do you believe presents the child's creativity in terms of the ideas, colours, design, and the creation ability of the artwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was only one colour, I did not offer other colours. - They were all the same. - She painted one side; it is kind of perfect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The idea of this artwork is boring. - The way he painted is good. 	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The idea of the artwork is boring. - The way of painting. - All the artwork are the same. - Lack of art materials. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The idea of activities. - The outcome of production. - Similarities in artwork - Lack of art materials. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The idea of activities. - The outcome of art production. - Lack of art materials. 	3

	Do you believe the child's culture had an influence on this artwork in terms of their creativity?	- I do not know. children are all the same, whether they have different cultures or not.	- As I said I don't know.	2	- All children are the same, whether they have different cultures or not.	1	There is no cultural influence on children's creativity.	1	There is no cultural influence on children's artwork.	1
	Do you believe the child's society had an influence on this artwork in terms of their creativity?	- I do not know.	- Yes, through my complements	2	- No Idea. - Teachers' complements.	2	- No social influence on children's creativity. - Teachers' complements can consider as a society influence	2	- There may be social influence on the children's artwork	1
	Do you believe your interaction had an influence on this child's artwork in terms of their creativity?	- Yes, I did influence. I said some complements. She may like complements so became excited to paint.	- Yes, through my complements	2	- High influence	1	- Teachers' strong influence on children's creativity.	1	- There is teachers' influence on the children's artwork	1
General questions for the entire artwork	Please rank these pieces of artwork from the most creative in your opinion in visual art to the least creative. Could you clarify based on what you rank them?	- The first one, because she painted most of the artwork.		2	- Completing the artwork.	1	Managing to finish the artwork.	1	- The most creative artwork is the first one. - Managing to finish the artwork.	2
	Do you believe these artwork could be supported in order to reflect a better	- I did not allow them freedom to create.		1	- Lack of freedom.	1	- Allowing freedom helps to create creative artwork.	1	- Allowing freedom helps to create	1

	example of creativity in visual art? Could you explain in terms of what exactly, colours, designs or ideas?							creative artwork	
	Based on the outcomes of these children's artwork, if you would plan to set up the art corner again in order to provide a better support for children's creativity in visual art, what would you do?	- The art corner is rich and full of all the art materials.	1	- The corner is full of materials.	1	- The corner is full of materials.	1	Nothing to add	1

Third Teacher

Interview questions		First photo		Second photo					
									
		Initial codes for the two photos	Initial codes' number	Final codes	Final codes number	Initial theme	Initial themes' number	Final theme	Final themes' number
Specific questions for each artwork	Why did you choose this artwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are now at the unite of Health and Safety - Today was about practicing. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Related to the unit 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artwork's idea is related to the unit of the month. 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Craft's idea is related to the unit of the month. 	1
	What in this artwork do you believe presents the child's creativity in artwork in terms of the ideas, colours, design, and the creation ability of the artwork?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I showed them a model to make exactly like it. - There is no creativity at these two photos to be honest. - They are a sign of the unit. - I was limiting the child, and creativity based on freedom like creating things, matching things. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The children were limited with a model. - They are a sign of the unit. - Creativity is based on freedom. - Freedom in artwork are like creating and matching things. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No creativity when there is no freedom. - Freedom likes creating and matching things. - The artwork are a sign for the unit. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creativity is based on freedom and matching things. -The artwork are a sign for the unit. 	2

	Do you believe the child's culture had an influence on this artwork in terms of their creativity?	- No, not in this.	1	- There is no culture influence on children's creativity.	1	There is no cultural influence on children's creativity.	1	- There is no cultural influence on the children's artwork	1
	Do you believe the child's society had an influence on this artwork in terms of their creativity?	- No, not in this.	1	- There is no society influence on children's creativity.	1	There is no social influence on children's creativity.	1	- There is no social influence on the children's artwork	1
	Do you believe your interaction had an influence on this child's artwork in terms of their creativity?	- No, I gave him freedom, and materials. If I was accurate then yes, but no I was not. - I allowed them to make them, like this one is upside-down. - I was limiting them with the shapes and materials. - A model in front of children affects their imaginations.	4	- Children were free to make the kits upside-down. - I limited them with the shapes and materials. - model affects their imagination.	3	- There is no teacher influence on children's creativity on how to make the kits. - Teacher limited children with the shapes and materials. - Model affects their imagination.	3	- There is no teacher influence on the children's artwork	1
General questions for the entire artwork	Please rank these pieces of artwork from the most creative in your opinion in visual art to the	- No creativity in these two.	1	- No creativity in these two pieces of artwork.	1	No creative artwork in these two.	1	- No creative artwork in these two.	1

	least creative. Could you clarify based on what you rank them?								
	Do you believe these pieces of artwork could be supported in order to reflect a better example of creativity in visual art? Could you explain in terms of what exactly, colours, designs or ideas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If I have not given them a model and ask them to imagine how first aid kit looks like. - It can be wrong as I asked them to make a first aid kit. - I can give them the materials they need. - They can create new ideas for the first aid kit, add more things or remove others to create creativity. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not provide a model. - Allow them to imagine how the kit looks like. - The way I used can be wrong. - Provide materials, to create new ideas of kits. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing a model of an artwork does not support creativity. - Use of imagination shows creativity. - Providing materials only leads to support creativity. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of imagination without providing a model - Providing materials leads to support creativity. 	2
	Based on the outcomes of these children's artwork, if you would plan to set up the art corner again in order to provide a better support for children's creativity in visual art, what would you do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I should have said 'I want you to make a first aid kit' and provide the materials they need. - I can ask them to bring their own first aids to put it inside the kit. - Children can create by bringing things from home. - We can put the red crescent, but we can change the kit's shape. - Dividing the corner and the board to two sections, boys and girls. - Adding theme for the board like a road to inspire them or 	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By telling children the idea of the artwork to make it. - Allowing children to bringing materials from home. - Keep the most important details of the idea. - Changing the design of the corner. - Adding themes to the board to inspire children. - Doing a competition to make beautiful and new artwork. 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present only an idea of an artwork without a model. - Allowing children freedom to choose what to put in their first aid kits. - Encouraging children to bring materials from home. - Some details of an idea are 	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present only an idea of an artwork without a model. - Encouraging children to bring materials from home. - Allowing some changes. - Changing the design of the corner. - Running competitions. 	6

		<p>like a doctor to put all the kits around it, for changing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing the colours of the corner. - Adding another table to have a competition to make something beautiful and new. The competition will be without winning and losing, especially if we have a sign of unit, the outcomes will be different. - The limitation is when I ask a child to copy a model of artwork. - Some children look at what other children did before and make something like it. other children like to make something new to have a different artwork. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coping a model is a limitation. - Some children copy other children's artwork. 		<p>important to be kept.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changing the design of the corner. - Themes inspire children to create. - Competition influence positively on creativity. - Children influence by their peers. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children influence by their peers. 	
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