

Kids Communicate through Art : An Observation

Tanusree Choudhary *and Dr. Bilasendu Shil ‡

Amity School of Fine Arts Kolkata, Amity University, Kolkata-700084, Bharat (India).

*choudharytanusree98@gmail.com

†ORCID:<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9300-5614>

‡bilasendu@gmail.com



ARTICLE INFORMATION

Vol. 02, No. 03(2025); pp 112-118

Received : 04/05/2025

Accepted : 27/06/2025

Published Online : 16/01/2026

DOI:

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How to Cite?

Tanusree Choudhary & Bilasendu Shil (2025).

Kids Communicate through Art : An Observation.

Green Lifestyle and International Market- (GLIM), 2(03), 112-118.

Abstract

Children frequently encounter a variety of obstacles in the busy metropolitan settings that may hinder their capacity for effective communication. Children living in urban environments may experience feelings of overwhelm, misunderstanding, and loneliness due to various factors such as the demands of academic success and the intricacies of social interactions. Understanding and interpreting nonverbal signs is crucial in this situation since it gives us a window into children's inner lives and important information about their wants, feelings, and experiences. This observational experiment provides a special means to understand kids and how they express themselves and share their deepest feelings and thoughts. It is based on the idea that the creative process has the capacity to cure. A secure and encouraging environment for kids to explore and express their feelings, experiences, and views. This is especially useful for kids whose spoken language is still developing or is being hampered by outside influences. Children can communicate in ways that go beyond the confines of spoken language through the use of art media including drawing, painting, sculpture, and other creative forms, fostering deeper understanding and connections.

Keywords: Art, Non Verbal Communication, Kids, Experiment, Observation

1. Introduction

This study's methodology blends empirical research, practical experience, and theoretical research to give a thorough understanding of children communicating through different non verbal communicative methods . This research is based on a comprehensive review of the literature on art therapy, child development, and nonverbal communication methods. Utilising an extensive array of scholarly publications, books, and academic papers, to get a deeper understanding of the theoretical foundations of art therapy and its applicability to children's communication.

- The one on one art class setting style facilitates engagement and collaboration, offering valuable insights into children's communicative dynamics. The research is to observe the colours, materials, and intensity of children's artwork through organised activities and art-making exercises, noting any links with the children's emotional states and communication patterns.
- Individual experiences and emotions can be explored in a more personal context during one-on-one art therapy sessions. Through the discourse and creative expression, there was deeper understanding of each child's distinct communication patterns, preferences, and obstacles
- This study's technique comprises daily observations of children's behaviour and artistic expressions in naturalistic situations, in addition to planned studies. A comprehensive grasp of the elements impacting communication and expression can be obtained by the research environment.

Ethical issues are of utmost importance during the research process, and participant anonymity and well-being are given great consideration. Parents or guardians of participating children are asked for their informed consent, and precautions are made to guarantee their comfort, safety, and privacy throughout the research process.

2. Study Area

With its special opportunity for art-based self-expression and communication, art therapy has become a noteworthy and potentially beneficial intervention for kids. Although earlier studies have emphasized the advantages of art therapy in encouraging social connection and emotional expression, little is known about how it may be used in urban environments and whether it can reveal underlying



Figure 1: Kid A ; Date: 08.07.23

psychological problems. In order to close this gap and add to the body of knowledge already available on art therapy and Non- Verbal Communication as a tool in Art Therapy .

The earliest research on children's paintings dates back to 1921, when Burt included a human painted sketch as a component of several cognitive tests. Then, research on children's paintings was done by Goodenough in 1926, Harris in 1963, Buck in 1948, Machover in 1949, Koppitz in 1968, and Hammer in 1958. Since the 1930s, family artwork have been used to help comprehend children. Appel and Wolff (1931) had highlighted the value of family paintings in comprehending children's personalities in 1942.(Malchiodi,2005).

A child's paintings of its family reveal feelings and behaviours that are hidden from view. Its self-perception in its family is reflected in the picture. For instance, it will draw itself to a location far from its family if it feels rejected by them. It creates barriers between family members if it views itself as distinct from them. Regardless of physical traits, the parent who is prized by the child—the dominant parent—is drawn larger. (Di Leo , 1983).

Painting therapy is a kind of psychotherapy that use artistic techniques such sand painting, sketching, collage, painting, and sculpture. Painting facilitates communication

between the therapist and the kid, assisting in overcoming communication barriers. When a child finds it difficult to communicate verbally, it uses drawings and colouring pages to share details about itself, its family, and its circle. (Yavuzer , 1992) .

Literature claims that producing an artistic work involves more than just basic cognitive and physical processing abilities. In professional media, the belief that "Emotional and communicative components are included in the drawing" is the fundamental reason for painting. Numerous research have been carried out to demonstrate that a child's drawings can provide insight into their personality and mental condition at that particular time, and that drawings by youngsters can convey several meanings to them. (Burkitt , Barret and Davis , 2005).

Apart from conventional nonverbal communication methods, art is a special and effective medium that people can use to express themselves and interact with others. A wide range of creative expressions are included in the term "art," such as painting, drawing, sculpture, music, dance, and literature, each of which provides a unique nonverbal communication style. Through the use of art as a medium for communication, also if introduced , art therapy promotes healing, inquiry, and expression. They can use colours, forms, and symbols to convey ideas, feelings, and experiences that might be challenging to express vocally.

3. Discussion

Observing the kids body language and facial expressions at the start of a session might reveal important information about their emotional state and level of preparation for the therapeutic process. A relaxed posture, open movements, and a pleasant grin can imply a sense of ease and openness to explore, while a furrowed brow, rigid shoulders, or averted gaze may reflect feelings of fear, reluctance, or discomfort.

Although nonverbal communication is the main emphasizes in the observation vocal expressions and tones of voice can also provide important clues about their inner experiences and emotional states. Confident tone, steady rhythm, or enthusiastic expression may reflect a sense of empowerment and self-assurance, while shaky voice, choking back tears, or hesitant speaking may indicate underlying sentiments of vulnerability.

3.1 Experiment

The experiment is based on systematically planned art sessions with a few kids to observe them and understand their behavior , how they communicate through at , how a planned art session can bring a change in their behavior



Figure 2: Kid B ; Date : 21.07.23

and temperament . The experiment continues for five weeks with four kids from same town but different environments considering financial and educational backgrounds . The art classes were pre planned on the parameters of what words to use , how much freedom of choosing the materials and colours to be provided . And giving similar instructions and options to all the kids to observe how they interpret and react to the same in their own ways . Main instruction parameters to be considered for the observation were:

- Absolute freedom of choosing material and colours for the sessions but within the first ten minutes in the beginning of the session .
- Using only affirmative words but not too strong to create any sense of pressure .
- If need to decline any request , omitting the use of word “ no “ and instead using “ what if “ providing certain different options .
- Allowing to practice on a rough sheet first and then the final work , relieving them from the pressure of doing the work correct in the first go .

Table 1: List of Kids and their details

Sl.No	Participant	Age & Class	General Observation	Art Specific Observation
1	Kid A	Age: 10 Class : 5	Intelligent and smart for his age he is punctual and straight forward , fears getting scolded hence avoids troubles (sort of people pleasing or keeping up good image)	Colours he likes are orange and green. Likes to use pencil oilpastel colourpencils etc .
2	Kid B	Age: 12 Class : 7	Shy but attentive kid	Usually likes to draw landscapes by imagination and express herself . Likes images and paintings of sky and greenery. Usually colours sky according to her mood . Colours she likes are blue and green . Usually focuses on watercolours if not pencil drawing .
3	Kid C	Age: 10 Class : 5	Dedicated and chearfull girl brins in a very fresh vibe . almost always happy and chearfull except when something goes wrong with friends at school . very emotional about friends makes many artworks and gifts them tp her friends.	Colours she likes are yellow light blue and red . Likes to do crafts making cards origami collages.
4	Kid D	Age: 13 Class : 8	Very Hyperactive yet focused kid . All he thinks about is to finish his work and go to play . Very stubborn will even cry to get things done and get scolded or get beaten but will do what he wants	Colours he likes are blue and yellow . Likes doing collage making and colouring geometrical animals etc .

4. Analysis

Kid A: Staying in a family from academic background has made a greatportion of his character very controlled and which in result made a fear of boundaries and image etc., seeing him trying to come across his fear and trying work out of his comfort zone is a very good thing for his mental peace in long run.(Plate 1)

Kid B: She comes from a financially challend background which makes her think a lot before doing anything, starting something with new material , hence making it look like she is very confused at times but has great talent and is much skilled than kids of her age. so when pushed forward with affirmations and a good art pad as a gift it boosted her confidence and made her try thing of her will a bit easier than the previous times. (Plate 2)

Kid C: Coming from the family of a teacher and restaurant owner she is quite well mannerd and has a giving

nature which comes in her art also as often the main reason to creat something is to make someone happy, coming from such space making her talk and make art for herself was a great achievement for her as it introduced her to her likings and talking about it. (Plate 3)

Kid D: Being true to his stubbor n nature and coming from a family in business background making him more concioud about his choices and tsking spontaneous dissicions was a challenge , he tries to plan his works more often which is name for his artworks, which he tries to pre plan. but taking spontaneous descisions is not vey easy for him like he made a different version of previously done work , making work after having a glimpse of some sort of sone work so that he knows it will workout workout and didnt get upset about failed tries and comleted the classes with desired results. (Plate 4)

Between the ages of four and five, pre-schoolers start to identify the three primary colours. Prior to then, children

Table 2: 4 days kids activities

Sl. No.	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Kid A	Date : 08.07.23 He was happy after the complete work .	Date : 15.07.23 He was positive about this new technique .	Date : 20.07.23 in the end he was satisfied.	Abscent
Kid B	Date : 07.07.23 Initially she was a bit sceptical because the colours were fading.	Date : 14.07.23 It wasn't up to her satisfaction but she was willingly ready to put effort and complete it next time .	Date : 21. 07.23 she was a bit confident and satisfied and then she wanted to complete the painting she left incomplete the last class .	Date : 30.07. 23 She quite excited for the class and herself told me what she wanted to do for the class .
Kid C	Date : 08.07.23 she started making birds with me and had a thought to talk with them everyday.	Date : 10.07.23 She wrote a letter to herself which she initially wanted and put it inside .	Date : 22.07.23 class ended on a happy note but still there was a hint of distraction .	Date : 30.07.23 the end of the class she was quite happy and satisfied with what we did and also named it.
Kid D	Date : 08.07.23 He was quite excited yet was sceptical of result .	Date : 15.07.23 he couldn't get clean outlines with brush so we ended up using a marker to give fine border and satisfy him.	Date 22.07.23 he was ready for the challenge and tried until he could get a desired result .	Date : 31.07.23 He was intrigued by the way we used newspaper and made shapes on it with pen. He wanted to make more of those.

employ colours in their artworks without distinguishing between them or choosing a colour. They start using colours progressively around the age of four or five. They passionately utilise colours they enjoy. They would create a green person, a blue dog, and a red sun, for instance. When a child wishes to paint a portrait of someone they truly adore, they will usually choose their favourite colour. Children utilise colours with psychological connotations, and each child's interpretation of a colour may be different. As a result, attempting to infer meanings and make firm conclusions is quite challenging. When a kid utilises colour, they should be allowed to be free since they do so with inner passion. He or she is able to create trees with green leaves and brown trunks, as well as a blue dog. There is a certain unconsciousness to this choice. He or she applies colouring that is both realistic and ornamental (Yavuzer, 1992).

Girls place greater importance on colour choice than do boys. Some kids like bright colours like yellow, red, and orange, while others choose chilly hues like blue and green. According to experts, kids who like hot hues are cuddly, flexible, and cooperative, whereas kids who prefer cold colours are stubborn, grouchy, and unadaptive. Young schoolchildren who consistently choose chilly colours have a tendency to repress and conceal their emotions. Research has shown that kids who utilise the colour red frequently

exhibit stubborn and violent behaviour. It has been noted that children's colour preferences tend to gradually shift from cold to hot hues as part of their normal developmental process. For instance, children who experience suppression when learning to use the potty have a tendency to paint more in brown and blue and start using other colours once the suppression ends (Yavuzer, 1992).

5. Conclusion

The findings of this research underscore the transformative potential of art as a communication tool for children in urban environments. Through the exploration of colors, materials, and intensity in children's artwork, we gain valuable insights into their emotional world and communication patterns. It not only enhances the effectiveness of the intervention but also strengthens the parent-child relationship, bridging the gap that often exists in urban societies.

This research offers insights into children's emotional world, communication patterns, and psychological well-being while shedding light on the transformative potential of art as a communication tool. It highlights the value of art in fostering children's holistic development while also advancing our understanding of the area by addressing the



Figure 3: Kid C ; Date : 08.07.23

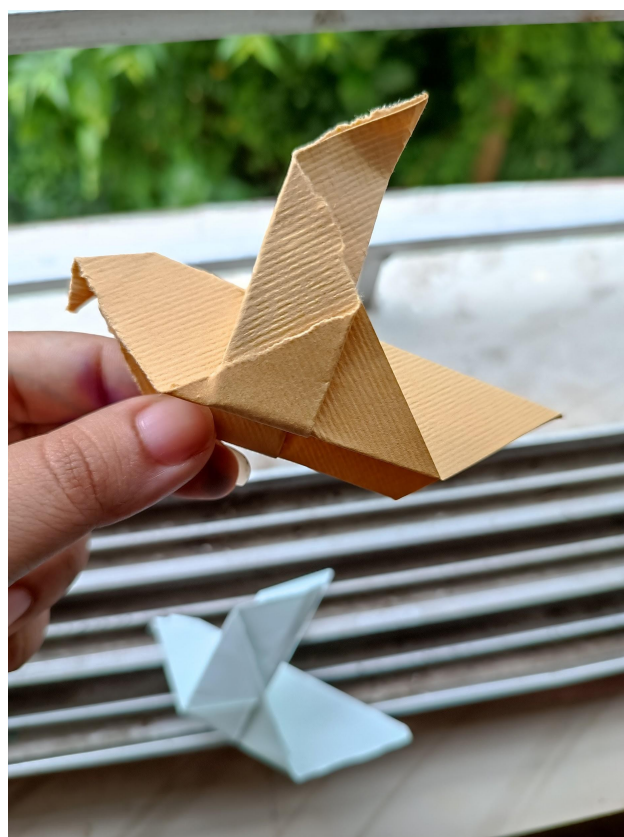


Figure 4: Kid D ; Date :22.07.23

shortcomings and gaps in the literature.

A kid can analyse and challenge their opinions about themselves and their surroundings by using paintings that represent how they perceive certain situations. Perhaps the kid is using art to attempt and bring its inner and outside worlds together. The kid may be allowing someone else to understand what it went through by using paintings to subtly reveal its inner reality. It is important to remember that the child who painted the picture is the one who created the pictorial depiction. Painting provides kids with a helpful or free-form, and adaptable, setting that encourages self-exploration. However, there may occasionally be drawbacks if direction is completely avoided when working with children.

By analysing the significance of colours, materials, and intensity in children's artwork, this study expands on earlier studies and offers a more profound comprehension of the emotional experiences and communication processes of the young artists.

Longitudinal Studies: To evaluate the long-term impacts of planned art sessions on kids' psychological health and communicative abilities, future research should include longitudinal studies.

Cultural Sensitivity: Research conducted in

comparisons between various cultural contexts might shed light on the subtle cultural differences in art therapy and its applicability in various circumstances.

Technology Integration: In cities where access to traditional art therapy may be restricted, investigating cutting-edge technology-based art therapy interventions can improve accessibility and efficacy.

Authorship contribution

Tanusree Choudhary conceptualized the structure of the paper; prepared the full draft; reviewed art sources; and **Bilasendu Shil** ensured adherence to academic and formatting guidelines.

Funding

No funding was received for this study.

Conflict of interest

The authors declares that there are no conflicts of interest writing this review paper.

Similarity Index

I hereby confirm that there is less than 10% Plagiarism was achieved in this case study.

Declaration

The author declares that this paper is an original work and has not been published or submitted elsewhere. All external sources have been properly cited.

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