

The Extent of Using Tactile Art Therapy In Teaching Pupils with Visual Impairment

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ABSTRACT

This study describes the 30 pupils with Visual Impairment from Grade 1-6 in the 3 divisions namely: Marikina, Manila, and Quezon City. Its objective to determine the achievement of pupils' before and after the use of Tactile Art Therapy (TAT).

As an outcome of this study, a proposed Teachers Training Program for the development of fine motor skills, social skills, self-awareness, and independence in teaching art subject is offered.

Descriptive survey design was used in the study to determine the level of achievement before and after the use of Tactile Art therapy in Grade 1-6 pupils.

To determine the statistical reliability of the survey tool, a pilot test was purposively administered to five (5) respondents. The tool underwent several revisions in compliance to the

comments and suggestions of the validations before its administration to the pilot test respondents.

For statistical treatment weighted mean and paired t-test was used to determine the achievement of pupils before and after the use of Tactile Art therapy.

The findings of the study showed that Tactile Art therapy (TAT) as to drawing and painting has been found to a very great extent in Grade 5, great extent in Grades 2, 3, and 4 while moderated extent in Grades 1 and 6.

The study concluded a very significant difference in the pupils' achievement before and after the use of Tactile Art Therapy (TAT) for pupils' with Visual Impairment.

Keywords: *Visual impairment, tactile art therapy (TAT)*

I. INTRODUCTION

Sensorial activities such as tactile input for pupils with visual impairment are their pathway to progress nowadays. It can provide students with information about objects they come in contact with and it is very meaningful activity to the central nervous system because it can promote learning.

Parents and teachers for pupils with Visual Impairment affect the whole process of information gathering. Far too often we expect visually impaired children to base their knowledge if the world in verbal descriptions and very limited "hands"- on experience.

Like all children, youngsters who are visually impaired need to learn about the world around them but are not able to rely on their sight to the extent that sighted children do. Young children with visual impairment need families and paraprofessionals to provide intense stimulation, motivation and movement. If these children do not become actively engaged in experiences and exploration at an early age, their approach to gathering information is

passive and they cannot fully develop their sense of touch.

Background of the study

Art therapy is an established discipline that uses the process of art-making to assist individuals in promoting well-being.

In cases of children with disabilities, it is not uncommon that the individual never had the chance to develop a clear sense of self, he or she may have difficulty differentiating him or herself from the environment.

The term art therapy was first coined by United Kingdom Art Educator, Adrian Hill (1940) and United States Art Therapist and mother of art therapy Margaret Naumburg in the middle 20th century. Margaret Naumburg is seen as a primary founder of American art therapy and is frequently referred to as "mother of Art therapy". She viewed art therapy as a distinctive form of psychotherapy. The clients'

unconscious material in a direct, uncensored, and concrete form that Naumburg (1940) argued would aid in the resolution of the transference.

Artworks done by children under this type of therapy create drawings, murals, collages, paintings, and even sculptures to express their feelings. Remarkably, a child's drawing, for example, becomes more detailed and livelier near the end of a therapy program.

According to Rubin (1999) through art therapy, children were given a chance to express what was troubling to them through art materials and a safe confine environment. Provided with appropriate techniques and materials, blind and visual impaired children could find a world of exploration, creative expression and learning thought art making activities. Art therapy for children can provide kids with an easier way to express themselves since children are more naturally artistic and creative.

Marlow (2007) cites that Tactile Aesthetics is an intimate and more experience in which we move our body in space and often implies a "desire or curiosity to touch". This itself be taken constitute an important part if our aesthetics experience of haptically stimuli. Note the impressive success of touch-screen devices (such as Ipod Touch from Apple) in recent years is probably linked with the inner desire of humans to actively touch, hold and manipulate those objects that we regularly use.

Here in the Philippines, a renowned group was given an Artistic for peace recognition by United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organizational (UNESCO) last 2003, for having an extra ordinary skills in terms of promoting culture and the arts among groups of differently able (blind, paraplegic, deaf, mute), disadvantage (economically deprived artists from Payatas, Baeseco, Smokey Mountain) and indigenous artists (Manobo, Igorot) the Earth savers Dream Ensemble headed by Cecile Guidote-Alvarez based in Manila, which help promote the said advocacy to most depressed areas around the archipelago (de Jesus, 2006).

The results of this study will serve as a basis for training program for special education teachers, homeroom teachers, art teachers, alternative teachers for specialization. This will help them come up with different activities in their class to enhance their competencies in teaching pupils of Visual Impairment. It will also serve as clues formulation to improve art instruction in the school.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in the theory of Arts and Learning by Erik Erikson (1980) on arts integration in classes that focuses endearing the desire to do hard work by using the intrinsic motivational

properties of arts. Artistic work is imbued with the promise of personal transformation (Cornett, 2007). Arts integration levels include learning with the arts, learning in the arts, and learning through arts (Burnafordet.al., 2007, Cornett, 2011) . An investigation of these levels reveals ways that teacher leaders can positively affect students, schools, and community.

In the first level of arts integration, learning with arts, art experiences are not directly connected to the curriculum. The arts-infused classroom may include a learning center where arts materials are available for use during free time. These art experiences are engaging, but are not assessed nor aligned with curriculum.

The next level of integration, learning in the arts, implies that the teacher leader, consciously design arts experiences that are tied to the general curriculum. Art elements, principles, and techniques are incorporated and assessed along with content and skills in curriculum areas.

The final level of integration is learning through the arts are the focus, and the entire classroom environment becomes an aesthetic experience (Cornett, 2011). By providing rich, multisensory learning, the teacher leader exerts a positive and lasting effect on students, schools, and the community.

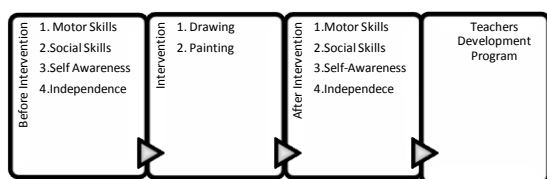
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows inputs on the level of achievement before the intervention. These variables are Fine Motor Skills, Social Skills, Self-Awareness and Independence. Independent Variables are fixed and should be evaluated on how they affect the dependent variables. The process is through the two tactile art therapies drawing and painting.

The output or the dependent variables are the level of achievement after the intervention. These variables are Fine Motor Skills, Social Skills, Self-Awareness and Independence. These represent the effect of the independent variables.

The expected outcome is to come up a Teacher Development Program that will be used by the Special Education Teacher for pupils with Visual Impairment. This training program will equip the teachers with knowledge and skills in art therapy to enhance the motor, social self-awareness and independence skills of pupils with visual problems.

Figure 1. A Conceptual Paradigm on Tactile Art Therapy in Teaching Pupils with Visual Impairment: Basis for a Teachers Development Program



II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aimed to describe Tactile Art Therapy in teaching pupils with Visual Impairments.

Specifically this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the extent of the use tactile art therapy in teaching pupils with Visual Impairment through drawing and painting in term of:

- 1.1 objectives
 - 1.1.1. *objectives for drawing*
 - 1.1.2. *objectives for painting*
- 1.2 content
- 1.3. strategies and
- 1.4. evaluation
 - 1.4.1 *evaluation for drawing*
 - 1.4.2. *evaluation for painting*

2. What is the achievement of the pupils with Visual Impairment before and after the use of Tactile Art Therapy in terms of the following:

- 2.1 Fine motor skills
 - 2.1.1. *fine motor skills for drawing*
 - 2.1.2 *fine motor skills for painting*
- 2.2 Social Skills
- 2.3. Self-awareness and
- 2.4. independence

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The study covered the level of achievement in Arts before and after the use of Tactile Art Therapy of pupils with visual impairment from Grades 1-6. These pupils had visual impairment due to low vision uncorrected refracted errors (near-sightedness, far-sightedness or astigmatism), others had glaucoma, and total blindness. Aside from visual impairment, other pupils had multiple disabilities like Cerebral Palsy, Attention Deficit Disorder, Global delay

Development Syndrome, Down Syndrome, Learning Disability and Intellectual Disability.

This study was conducted in the Division City Schools of Marikina City, Manila, and Quezon City for the school year 2014-2015. The two tactile art activities drawing and painting are included in this study.

The study was delimited only for teachers who utilize tactile art for pupils with visual impairment because they are the ones who are most concerned. As such they have the competencies to give reliable data.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research method used in this study was descriptive survey technique which is under descriptive research design. Descriptive studies are aimed to finding out “what is,” so observational and survey methods are frequently used to collect descriptive data (Borg&Gall,1989). Specifically, the survey sought to determine the achievement before and after the use of tactile art therapy in grades 1-6 pupils with visual impairment.

Research Locale

This study was conducted in 3 schools division in Metro Manila. Division City Schools of Marikina, Manila and Quezon City. The researcher chose these schools because these are among those public schools with established educational programs for pupils with visual impairment. Pupils with visual impairment are enrolled in Mainstreaming and Special Education class. Division City Schools of Marikina consists of Barangka Elementary School and Concepcion Elementary School. Schools in Division of Manila consists of Padre Gomez Elementary School, Legarda Elementary School, Luckban Elementary School and P. Burgos Elementary School. Schools in the Division of Quezon City consists of Batino Elementary School, PoncianoBernanrdo Elementary School, Commonwealth Elementary School and Payatas B. Elementary School.

Population of the Study

The population of the study came from 3 school divisions in Manila. Division City Schools of Marikina, Manila and Quezon City. All of which are funded by the government and under the supervision of the Department of education. These were pupils with Visual impairment enrolled for the school year 2014-2015. It includes thirty (30) pupils with visual impairment. These pupils were assessed and diagnosed by professionals like low vision specialist, ophthalmologist, developmental pediatricians and clinical psychologist.

Respondents of the Study

The study included thirty (30) teachers (regular and special education) who handle grades 1-6 pupils with visual impairment in selected Special Education Schools in Division of Metro Manila. They were considered as respondents of the study. In each school, only teachers who incorporated tactile art therapy for pupils with Visual impairment who were given a chance to answer the questionnaire.

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of teacher-respondents who participated in this study. Majority of the respondents were female (97%) and only 2% were male. In terms of specialization majority of the respondent specialized. Children with Visual Impairment. As to length of service, majority of the respondents were in their 21 years, which make them more viable respondents for this study.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency(f) N=30	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	2	3
Female	28	97
Total	30	100
Specialization		
Special Education (SPED-CWVI)	20	67
Early Childhood	1	3
Bachelor of Elementary Education	5	17
Bachelor of Secondary Education	3	10
Library Science	1	3
Total	30	100
Length of Service (in years)		
21 and above	14	46
11-20	2	7
6-10	6	20
3-5	8	27
Total	30	100

SPED-Special education; CWVI- Children with Visual Impairment

Sampling Techniques

The researcher used the purposive sampling in this study. This sampling is a form of non-probability in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research. (Oliver 2006)

Purposive sampling starts with the purpose in mind that include people having the same interest with the researchers and exclude people that do not suit in any of the interest. Thirty (30) regular and special education teachers handling pupils with Visual Impairment were included in the study since it satisfies to the criteria.

Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in the study was a Checklist questionnaire. The data gathering instrument is composed of two (2) parts. Part I solicits the question regarding the extent of use of Tactile Art Therapy in terms of the Objectives, Content, Strategies and Evaluation. The 4-point Likert Scale was used to ask the respondents by evaluating the pupils in terms of Objectives, Content, Strategies and Evaluation. If the respondents answer “Not at all” is scored as 1, “moderate Extent” is scored as 2, “Great Extent” is scored as 3, and “Very Great Extent” as 4. Part II solicits the questions on the use of tactile art therapy in terms of the following: motor skills,. Social skills, self-awareness and independence. Likert scale was used to evaluate the pupils in terms of motor skills, social skills, self-awareness and independence. If the respondents’ answer 1 is second as never, 2 is scored sometimes, often is scored as 3 and 4 is scored as always.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

The Salient findings of this study are briefly stated as:

1. The extent of use of tactile art Therapy in teaching pupils with Visual Impairment in terms of objectives as to drawing and painting has been found to be a very great extent in Grade 5, great extent in Grades 2,3, and 4, while moderate extent was found in Grades 1 and 5. In terms of content, Grade 5 was found to use TAT to a very great extent, great extent among pupils in Grades 2, 4, and 6 while moderate extent in Grades 1 & 3. The most recognized strengths of strategies using Tactile Art Therapy (TAT) were encouraging pupils with Visual Impairment to touch and manipulate. In the evaluation it was found that the use of Tactile Art Therapy (TAT) was great extent among pupils in Grades 1-6.
2. The level of achievement of the pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) in terms of fine motor skills, social skills, self-awareness, and independence before the use of Tactile Art Therapy (TAT) was observed to be low and eventually goes higher after the use of Tactile Art Therapy (TAT).

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Teachers in Grades 1 and 3 need more assistance to equip themselves with better skills in the use of Tactile Art Therapy (TAT).

2. Regular teachers in Grades 1 lack other expertise and skills in providing solutions to their problems in the use of Tactile Art Therapy (TAT). Likewise, Grade 6 teachers have difficulty of acquiring software that should be used by pupils with visual impairment in creating digital painting.
3. Teachers of pupils with Visual Impairment also need additional training on computer software to enhance their skills in using Tactile Art therapy (TAT).
4. Grade 1 pupils with Visual Impairment lack the needed experiences in art therapy to develop creativity and be happy in the world around them.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. That school administrators provide strategies for an intensification and enforcement of an advance technology hardware or software in digital painting for teaching pupils with Visual Impairment.
2. That regular teacher should focus on pupils in Grade 1 and Grade 6 in art subjects and how they could cope up in the newly K-12 curriculum.
3. That pupils with Visual Impairment should be given adequate sensory input through tactile art therapy that would let them develop creativity and experience joy in the world they want to touch and feel.
4. That parents should support the teachers in art activities in schools.
5. That future researchers must extend their scope on the performance of students in such area of learning such as K-12 curriculum in arts.

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