



How children express their happiness through drawing

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This article reveals how children express their happiness through drawing. The drawings were collected by the children and then interviewed to give them a chance to talk about their drawings. The total number of participants was 25 children. The survey was conducted on children of (Al-Salam Kindergarten) aged five years in the industrial city of Jubail in Saudi Arabia.

The purpose of this article is to identify what makes children happy? Happiness for children is not always something physical like toys and sweets, but it can be something moral like family love. Children eventually have their own world through which they view life differently. Children look like adults in their outlook on happiness as they are different from each other, each child has a different view of the other. In this article we will see how children differ from each other in expressing happiness.



Introduction

Happiness is an inner feeling that everyone is looking for, whether children or adults, and it is a complex subject that is difficult to define its own definition because everyone looks at happiness from his own perspective there is no right or wrong answer about what is the thing that makes us happy. Happiness is not a new phenomenon that researchers and scientists are talking about either. Many philosophers were interested in this topic, especially psychologists, including Sizer (Sizer, 2010), where he defined happiness as "any activity that leads to virtue."

In 1938, a British newspaper set up a contest to find out what make people happy, is it material or moral things, the sample was limited to adults where many people answered the question by writing letters. The paper found that people were divided into four categories for "what makes them happy" The first category sees happiness in self-esteem, while the second category said it is commitment to religion and how close a slave is to his Lord, and the third category said it is the money, but for the fourth category was saying that happiness is a feeling that is not bought by money, and it is a moral sense can be felt while you are in a family, for example, shares your joys and sorrows or the presence of true friends around you or meditate nature (Gazeley &Langhamer, 2013).

The researcher conducted a questionnaire and asked the adults about what makes them happy and found that the first and most powerful reason was social relations (parents - friends) Category II Food Category III Sports hobbies (playing basketball, football ...) and the fourth and less category talked about Nature. Although the categories are similar as in the newspaper questionnaire despite all these years, people are similar, especially adults in their views in what makes them happy. The category that did not appear in the questionnaire is the religious category.

(Image is worth a thousand words) A phrase written by a philosopher to express children's drawings, the child may try to talk and express his opinion or feelings or what is inside, but because of his age and limited language wealth, he may find it difficult,



but if you ask him to express any feelings, it will be easy for him to answer your question through icons and images. Psychologists also emphasize that children's drawings are a non-verbal language that gives children room to express their feelings and attitudes that they have difficulty expressing verbally (Mai. Kap. And Cassi, 1985).

Based on this definition, drawing activity was chosen to express happiness because it will be easy for the child to express his positive feelings through drawing. In addition, the topic of happiness was identified to get the answer to the question. What makes children happy? Children were not left free to draw freely because if this were done, sporadic and forked drawings would be obtained and unrelated to the topic.

In this article, we will shed special light on what makes children happy, are they material or moral things? Not by asking them a question and asking to answer it, but by asking them a question of " What makes you happy" and asked to answer that question through drawing.

We will begin this article by talking about theories of happiness as defined by Sizer:

Theories of happiness:

Psychologists divided happiness into two types of theories are objective and subjective happiness theory

Objective theory: It is that connects happiness by luxury, prosperity, good thoughts and feelings, and also this theory advocates that people should think about what makes them happy, provided that this does not negatively affect them. Sizer gave an example to an adult about an addict where he feels happy about the drug abuse despite knowing that this affects negatively on his health. He also gave an example to the children about this theory which is (candy) when the child eats candy he feels happy even though this thing affects their health.

Subjective theory: It connects happiness to a special feeling that a person feels in a particular situation, which gives them a sense of pleasure, such as feeling comfortable or relaxed.



Some objected to this kind, as it saw that happiness is a moment where a human feels happiness, but this happiness does not last a lifetime. Sizer gave the same example of addiction where the addict feels happy while consuming these things and when the effect has dissipated ends their happiness ends, and also gave an example of children when they want to get a toy and insist on getting it and once he gets it will feel fun playing it for now, but after a while he will leave it because it no longer feels him happy.

The difference between adults and children in the concept of happiness is that adults can control themselves and distinguish between what is good and what is bad for them and have the ability to choose by get things that make them happy or away from them, but children need for follow, monitor and guide and need for support from adults to get What delights them and keep them away from what might hurt them (Sizer, 2010).

Why drawing was chosen as a way to identify through it what children feel happy about

Drawing technique considering as one of the easy ways to collect information from children, and is a powerful tool to get an answer on a particular topic, in a short time, also children enjoy drawing without any sign of tension because many children, especially 5-year-olds, do not like answering questions, but if they are asked to answer any question by drawing, we will get what we want them without any pressure. Also, drawing does not require language skill either because of age or even if the child speaks a different language, only we need the passion of children for manual activity (drawing). Children also draw for many reasons such as: pleasure, artistic tendencies, expression of ideas and concepts, representation of emotions and emotions, communication with the environment around them.

Based on these reasons, it was easy to get an answer to my question easily as the children's passion during drawing was very important and was reflected in the drawings collected from them (Matthews, 1997,2003) In addition, children use their feelings during drawing where the size of the painting and color The chosen has a pronounced effect in children's drawings (Burkitt et al, 2003).



Why the topic of happiness was chosen?

The research focuses on the positive emotional aspects of children's lives, because they involve a daily and easy task they are already familiar with. Children's drawings can contribute to a better understanding of cultural and sexual differences about happiness. It may be helpful for teachers and parents to know what makes their children happy and to better help support them (Sizer, 2010).

British study showed that children feel more fun drawing positive topics and have more knowledge about them than sad subjects. The study also found that children take more time when drawing positive subjects than sad, and drawing considering as one of the activities that make the child get rid of negative mood.

The Method:

The research was experimental as the researcher collected drawings of children aged five years from one of the kindergartens of the Royal Commission in the industrial city of Jubail in Saudi Arabia after the approval of the kindergarten and parents. The researcher got 25 drawings from 25 children.

The researcher asked the children to draw what make them happy and then she interviewed each child to talk about his drawing and what it expresses. Some drawings were clear and easy to identify its content, but some of them were not clear accordingly were interviewed all children.

Results and discussion:

The researcher found that children are no different from adults in expressing things that make them happy, some of them drew material things and the other drew moral things.

Julie, 2010, discovered that children's drawings are almost the same as most children paint the human face, animals and plants, nature, chocolate, using bright colors.



This is what happened in the sample collected by children, where the nature like trees, flowers and sea topped the first place and then followed by the relationship with parents (love of the family) and then sporadic things such as animals, electronic games, football. This great similarity in the drawings of children may be because of different reasons either because they are in one chapter and the drawings were transferred from each other or is a coincidence, or because they belong to the same culture is their presence in one country. Jolie 2010 found that children's drawings in the same culture are almost the same when compared to another culture. But the fact that reached is that children are very attracted to the moral things is a sign that children are emotional in nature and always need to satisfy this need, and we as adult people, we must pay attention to this aspect.

The children's drawings also matched the views of many educators about the colors used by children, where males used dark colors while females used bright colors. Although using dark colors in many studies indicate means that the child has a problem, but in many of my sample's drawings they used dark colors to simulate reality, for example, the use of brown to express sand on the seashore or black to express the road (Burkitt & Newell, 2005).

She also noticed that females preferred to paint their drawings using colors, while males did not mind using only a pencil or coloring using one color.

For the deference of drawings for gender, studies show that there is a clear difference in artistic production between boys and girls, where children of the same sex tend to draw similar topics and agree with them (Boyatzis & Eades, 1999; Wright, 2010) as he found that boys tend to draw fictional characters and moving things like (drawing football) boys are absent from drawing human figures while girls tend to draw human figures, flowers and everyday experiences (Gardner, 1982).

Some children were symbolically expressing relationships such as: drawing the house with hearts to express the family rather than drawing human figures and most were girls.



One male drew a car to express his love for his family instead of human figures also females have a clear interest in drawing more details than males as the males draw one clear expression of something that goes on their minds, but girls are interested in drawing, for example, the sky, sun, clouds, earth, green areas, flowers and home and hearts around it. Some children did not draw a particular character to represent happiness, they only use bright colors to express happiness, so they did not specify exactly what makes them happy such as drawing a rainbow, or drawing the numbers he learned today. There is no correlation between these symbols and the answer I was looking for in their drawings when I asked what makes you happy? These drawings may be the result of the child not understanding what is required of him or the child may have a bad mood so he did not enjoy the activity of drawing, there are studies that have found that the drawing has short-term effects on improving the mood, and this is done through free drawing and not copy the drawings The study proved that the use of drawing helps to improve mood. Drawings can be a way to vent bad mood and get rid of negative emotions, but drawing happy drawings can help improve your mood. But with some children their mood may be caused by a strong cause as even the drawing did not change or improve their mood (Drake & Winner, 2013). In fact, I did not like to put more pressure on the children and I could not ask the children to provide more answers about drawing because time was limited and I was to try to meet all the children quickly.

Through my interview with the children, their characters were clear while talking to them. Some spoke fluently, proudly and happily while describing the drawing, and some were very shy as I was referring to each symbol and asking him what that meant even if the drawing was clear.

Conclusion:

Studies have shown that young children are more positive and self-satisfied than older children in drawing things that make them feel happy. This may be due to the younger age, the more human age the more choices in front of him (Thoilliez, 2011).



So I propose to do more researches on different ages and compare them. I also suggest that for future researches the drawings are collected twice to make sure that the children do not copy the drawings from each other and that each child draw exactly what he feels happy. Increase the number of research on topics such as happiness, unhappiness, safety, fear, all of which may be of interest to people who care about children and those who care for children, such as parents, doctors (psychologists) and teachers, because as I mentioned earlier drawing is an activity that helps to know the inner world of children, which in some cases is difficult to express their feelings in words, drawings are an easy and available way to work with them. We must take care of children and their childhood in having a happy childhood so that there is no disturbance in the future of children.



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