



Creativity and Innovation on the Adoptions of Creative Arts Activities: Attitudes and Perceptions of Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to explore the influences of attitudes and perceptions of creativity and innovation of kindergarten art teachers on creative art activities in the kindergarten art classes of the first-class public demonstration kindergarten schools in Qujing City, Yunnan Province. Questionnaires were employed to collect data from 261 kindergarten art teachers. Descriptive analysis and multiple regression were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed the statistical differences among six variables of the adoption of creative art activities, which included: 1) Creativity in Creative Art Activities; 2) Evaluation of Perception of Teaching Activities; 3) Specified Art activities in Art Education; 4) Planned Classroom Goals; 5) Planned Classroom Activities; and 6) Adopting Creative Art Activities into Creative Art Teaching. For future research, longitudinal and cross-regional comparisons to track long-term changes with combined research methods can be applied to ensure the efficiencies of kindergarten creative art teaching activities to promote Chinese kindergartens' artistic senses and skills.

Keywords: Attitudes, Perceptions, Creativity and Innovation, Adoptions of Creative Arts Activities, Kindergarten Teachers in Yunnan

INTRODUCTION

Continuously in 2013, the development of Chinese early childhood education mandated that all kindergarten teachers at all levels, including the head teacher, teacher, and assistant teacher, must pass the assessment of the Kindergarten Work Regulations in the same year of their employment (Feng, 2013). Putting together regulations and teaching accreditation, the national curriculum guidance opted to urge all teachers in all fields, including art teachers, to prepare and apply knowledge and skills in creativity and innovation (Li & Wang, 2018), especially in artistic education, for young children's holistic development (Zhand, 2021). Moreover, the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China has put forward modern educational reform of aesthetic education to enact the Kindergarten Education Guidelines for children ages

3-6 Children, which incorporate physical and mental health, enriching life, aesthetic experience, and developing creative thinking to lead to innovation (Song, 2022).

The Kindergarten Education Guidelines for children ages 3-6 have emphasized the development of young learners' artistic appreciation and creative abilities through skills and techniques of artistic expressions through various types of art teaching activities and genres so that each student can discover and uncover his or her artistic ability and skills (AppliTrack, 2022; Benton, 2018). Accordingly, kindergarten art teachers must understand their attitudes and perceptions towards creativity and innovation, especially regarding their activities in teaching arts to young students (Erim & Cetin, 2020).

This is because it is argued that to be a good art teacher, one must have a positive attitude and perception towards creativity and innovation, as it not only helps to promote children's individuality through active learning but also provides a student-centered approach and philosophy with integrated teaching techniques and activities (Pandy, 2023). While a teacher's attitude and perception are closely linked with one another, it is viewed as the beliefs, thoughts, and feelings in working with students in the matters of choices of teaching methods and activities applied to students' learning experiences with positive, supportive, and inclusive, often, teacher attitudes and perceptions can help encourage active participation in learning and improve their academic achievement and self-esteem (Weiss, 2019). The more links there are between imagination and engagement in art activities, the more young learners can freely show their artistic selves in real-life situations (Zheng, 2021). Accordingly, kindergarten art teachers, especially, must pay attention to their attitudes and perceptions towards different forms of creativity and innovation that could affect student's fluency, flexibility, articulation, and originality of artistic senses (Murphy and Narayanan (2019); the National Association for Art Education, (2018).

Further, diverse art teaching activities are believed to help create creativity, collaboration, and imaginative problem-solving abilities that will strengthen adaptation to change and nurture an appreciation of cultural diversity and freedom of expression while fostering innovative and critical thinking skills (UNESCO, 2022). Even at the kindergarten level, at ages 3-6, when young learners engage in diverse art activities, they can explore their cognitive and behavioral skills guided by the teachers as the facilitator.

With the right choices of art activities, the kindergartens will think and talk about what they do and share their aesthetic sense with the right artistic, verbal, and nonverbal behaviors through different art teaching activities (Basak & Erdem, 2022), which include music-based activities-- listening to music, singing, playing instruments, dancing, bouncing, or moving to rhythmic sounds; 2) drama -- theater, story-telling, story-acting, fictional spaces and roles, and puppetry; 3) visual arts and crafts -drawing, painting or finger-painting; and sculpting clay or playing with sand; 4) invention -- arts construct tactile and tangible invented objects -- cloth, paper, clay, and dough; and 5) technological innovation -- Children use ICT to play games, listen to stories, draw pictures, take photos or role-play activities (UNESCO, 2015; 2022). With those activities, young students can explore and play to create finished works of art (Walshe, 2022). While the overall emphasis in this study was kindergarten art teachers' attitudes and perceptions of creativity and innovation in teaching and learning art in kindergartens, it appeared that very little research concerning kindergarten art teachers, especially in China. This study, hence, filled this gap by exploring the attitudes and perceptions towards creativity and innovation of Chinese kindergarten art teachers, particularly in Qujing, Yunnan Province, with a response to the Guidelines for Kindergarten Education Policy (2012) that encourages the kindergarten art teachers to ultimately adopt, plan, and integrate the right kinds of creative art activities into their kindergarten art teaching.

Research Objectives

This study aims to examine the influences of attitudes and perceptions towards creativity and innovation of kindergarten art teachers on their choices in planning and integrating art activities into creative art teaching in Qujing City, Yunnan.

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling

The population was 742 kindergarten art teachers of the highest ten specifications among the first-class public demonstration kindergarten schools that meet provincial standards in Qujing, Yunnan Province (Beijing Statistical Yearbook, 2022). To ensure the representation of teachers, a systematic random sampling technique with a counting technique (Krejcie & Morgan, 2017) was used to gather the samples. The sampling procedure was done by picking up every second name on the list from the ten kindergarten teachers' school lists until 261 respondents were yielded.

Instruments

The validity of the questionnaire was ensured by conducting an item-objective congruence (IOC) index with five experts in the field of education. A survey research design was employed with the 57 items of the questionnaire taken and adapted from three different scales. First, the Kaufman Domains of Creativity Scale (Kaufman, 2012), consists of five domains: 1) Daily (creative activities in everyday life); 2) Academic (intellectual and verbal creativity); 3) Performance (creativity in literature and music); 4) Science (creativity in mechanics; and mathematics); and 5) Artistic (creativity in the visual arts). Second, the Innovation Attitude Scale (IAS) of (Christensen & Knezek, 2022) measured attitudes toward innovation and leadership in the advancement of new ideas: 1) Inventive, 2) Motivation or pride, and 3) leadership.

Third, the Adoption of Choices for Creative Art Activities (Basak & Erdem, 2022) 1) Evaluation Perception of Teaching Activities; 2) Specified art activities in art education; 3) Expected outcomes based on Planned Classroom Goals; and 4) Expected Outcomes Based on Teachers' Planned Classroom Activities.

Data Analysis

A statistical computer program performed descriptive statistics: Frequency, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. The reliability of the survey was performed through a pre-test with different subjects outside the sampling. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was as follows: K-DOCS, IAS, and ACAS were 0.967, 0.960, 0.911, with a total of 0.980, respectively. Multiple regression was run to test the influences of attitudes and perceptions towards creativity and innovation of the kindergarten art teachers on adopting choices in planning and integrating art activities into creative art teaching in Qujing City, Yunnan.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1 shows the result of the regression analysis of KDOCEVD, KDOCSCL, KDOCPFM, KDOCSCL, and KDOCART as the independent variables and ACAS as the dependent variable in that one variable of artistic creativity (KDOCART) has statistically significant effects on the adoption of creative art activities, $R^2 = 0.312$ ($p = 0.000$). Thus, the equation was read:

$$ACAS = 1.525 + 0.156 * KDOCEVD + 0.224 * KDOCSCL + 0.036 * KDOCPFM + 0.089 * KDOCSCL + 0.256 * KDOCART$$

Table 1 Adoption of Choices for the Creative Art Activities (ACAS) Regression Coefficient

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standard Coefficient | t | Sig |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|--------|-------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| (constant) | 1.525 | 0.188 | | 8.094 | 0.000 |
| KDOCEVD | 0.149 | 0.126 | 0.156 | 1.187 | 0.236 |
| KDOCSCSCL | 0.207 | 0.106 | 0.224 | 1.957 | 0.051 |
| KDOCPFM | 0.034 | 0.128 | 0.036 | 0.268 | 0.789 |
| KDOCSCI | -0.086 | 0.110 | -0.089 | -0.777 | 0.438 |
| KDOCART | 0.244 | 0.114 | 0.256 | 2.143* | 0.033 |
| R ² = 0.312 | | | | | |
| Note. Dependent Variable: ACAS | | | | | |

As can be seen in Table 2, with KDOCS and IAS as independent variables and EPTA as the dependent variable, the R²= 0.350, which indicated that the independent variables K-DOCS and IAS could affect 35% of the change in the dependent variable EPTA, and KDOCS ($\beta=0.395$, $P=0.000$) positively affects EPTA; IAS ($\beta=0.277$, $P=0.000$) positively affects EPTA. From this analysis, the equation was read:

$$EPTA=1.051+0.395*K\text{-DOCS}+0.277*IAS$$

This means that attitudes towards creativity and innovation significantly impacted the evaluation perception of teaching activities.

Table 2 Evaluation Perception of Teaching Activities (EPTA) Regression Coefficient

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standard Coefficient | t | Sig |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------|-------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| (constant) | 1.051 | 0.208 | | 5.041 | 0.000 |
| KDOCS | 0.411 | 0.062 | 0.395 | 6.643*** | 0.000 |
| IAS | 0.281 | 0.060 | 0.277 | 4.667*** | 0.000 |
| R ² = 0.350 | | | | | |
| Note. Dependent Variable: EPTA | | | | | |

As can be seen from Table 3, with K-DOCS and IAS as independent variables and ACSAA as the dependent variable, the R²=0.341, indicating that the independent variables K-DOCS and IAS can affect the dependent variable ACSAA has a change of 34.1%, and KDOCS ($\beta=0.361$, $P=0.000$) positively affects ACSAA; IAS ($\beta=0.305$, $P=0.000$) positively affects ACSAA. From this analysis, the equation was read:

$$ACSAA=1.090+0.361*K\text{-DOCS}+0.305*IAS$$

It can be seen that attitudes towards creativity and innovation significantly impacted specified art activities in art education.

Table 3 Specified Art Activities in Art Education (ACSAA)

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standard Coefficient | t | Sig |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------|-------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| (constant) | 1.090 | 0.208 | | 5.231 | 0.000 |
| KDOCS | 0.373 | 0.062 | 0.361 | 6.034*** | 0.000 |
| IAS | 0.306 | 0.060 | 0.305 | 5.095*** | 0.000 |
| R ² =0.341 | | | | | |
| Note. Dependent Variable: ACSAA | | | | | |

It can be seen from Table 4 that with K-DOCS and IAS as independent variables and ACEOTPCO (Planned Classroom Goals) as the dependent variable, the $R^2=0.330$, indicating that the independent variables K-DOCS and IAS can affect the dependent variable AEOTPCO has a 33% chance, and KDOCS ($\beta=0.370$, $P=0.000$) positively affects AEOTPCO; IAS ($\beta=0.285$, $P=0.000$) positively affects AEOTPCO. From this, the equation was read:

$$\text{ACEOTPCO}=1.137+0.370*\text{K-DOCS}+0.285*\text{IAS}$$

It can be seen that attitudes towards creativity and innovation both significantly impact the expected results based on teachers' planned classroom goals.

Table 4 Planned Classroom Goals (AEOTPCO) Regression Coefficient

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standard Coefficient | t | Sig |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------|-------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| (constant) | 1.137 | 0.211 | | 5.400 | 0.000 |
| KDOCS | 0.384 | 0.063 | 0.370 | 6.132*** | 0.000 |
| IAS | 0.287 | 0.061 | 0.285 | 4.719*** | 0.000 |
| $R^2=0.330$ | | | | | |

Note. Dependent Variable: AEOTPCO

As can be seen from Table 5, with K-DOCS and IAS as independent variables and ACEOTPCA as the dependent variable, $R^2=0.330$, indicating that the independent variables K-DOCS and IAS can affect 33% of the variation of the dependent variable ACEOTPCA, and K-DOCS ($\beta=0.405$, $P=0.000$) positively affects ACEOTPCA; IAS ($\beta=0.244$, $P=0.000$) positively affects ACEOTPCA. From this, the equation was read:

$$\text{ACEOTPCA}=1.094+0.405*\text{K-DOCS}+0.244*\text{IAS}$$

It can be seen that the attitudes towards creativity and innovation have a strong, significant positive impact on the expected results based on teacher-planned classroom activities.

Table 5 Planned Classroom Activities (ACEOTPCA) Regression Coefficient

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standard Coefficient | t | Sig |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------|-------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| (constant) | 1.094 | 0.216 | | 5.074 | 0.000 |
| KDOCS | 0.430 | 0.064 | 0.405 | 6.718*** | 0.000 |
| IAS | 0.252 | 0.062 | 0.244 | 4.049*** | 0.000 |
| $R^2=0.330$ | | | | | |

Note. Dependent Variable: ACEOTPCA

As can be seen from Table 6, with K-DOCS and IAS as independent variables and ACAS as the dependent variable, $R^2=0.359$, indicating that the independent variables KDOCS and IAS can affect 35.9% of the change in the dependent variable ACAS, and K-DOCS ($\beta=0.392$, $P=0.000$) positively affects ACAS; IAS ($\beta=0.290$, $P=0.000$) positively affects ACAS. From this, we can know the equation:

$$\text{ACAS}=1.092+0.392*\text{K-DOCS}+0.290*\text{IAS}$$

Attitudes towards creativity and innovation significantly impact the adoption of creative art activities.

Table 6 Adoption of Creative Art Activities (ACAS) Regression Coefficient

| Variable | Unstandardized Coefficient | | Standard Coefficient | t | Sig |
|----------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|---|-----|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| (constant) | 1.092 | 0.201 | | 5.441 | 0.000 |
| KDOCS | 0.396 | 0.060 | 0.392 | 6.643 | 0.000 |
| IAS | 0.285 | 0.058 | 0.290 | 4.920 | 0.000 |
| R ² =0.359 | | | | | |

Note. Dependent Variable: ACAS

DISCUSSION

The research findings found that there were statistical significances of the Kindergarten Art Teachers' Attitudes and Perceptions of Innovation on 1) Evaluation Perception of Teaching Activity, 2) Planned Classroom Activities, 3) Planned Classroom Goals, 4) Specified Art Activities in the Art Education; 5) Adoption of Creative Art Activities; and 6) the Adoption of Creative Art, respectively. The following is the discussion of those findings.

1. While artistic creativity turned out to be one of the most significant in planning and incorporating art activities into creative arts teaching, it can be explained that, generally, in teaching art, a positive attitude towards creativity is the key in that the adoption of innovative teaching methods will help gain practical activities that increase not only the teaching behavior but also the students' learning outcomes through the actual behavior of both the teachers and the students in that the students can be aroused to speak and voice their opinions Kasirer and Shnitzer (2021). As argued by Bereczki and Kárpát (2018), teachers with high creativity can better design more attractive and educationally valuable art activities that lead to learner-led activities of creativity and innovation.

2. It has been revealed that the kindergarten art teachers' attitudes and perceptions of creativity and innovation positively impacted the evaluation perception of teaching activity. Teachers' positive attitude toward creativity is the key to adopting innovative teaching methods (Kasirer & Schnitzer, 2021). As Agnoli et al. (2018) noted, creativity cannot be promoted by issuing policy documents alone but must be initiated and implemented in creative practices through activities; teachers need good creative practices and adopt appropriate strategies to cultivate children's creativity with an open attitude towards creative of thinking and behavior towards innovative art activities.

3. The finding revealed that the influences of the kindergarten art teachers' attitudes and perceptions of creativity and innovation on specified art activities in art education that specified creative art of different generations, such as music and drama to the very modern forms of digital art activities play essential roles in choosing and adopting different types of specified activities (NEA, 2004). However, pairing or mixing the classics with new kinds of activities could help develop the artistic sense of young children (Nicolopoulou et al., 2009). Therefore, integrating artistic creativity in drama and music coupled with the innovative IT skills of visual arts, for example, would be an option for developing good skills in art (Li & Li, 2019; Yeung, 2021).

4. The finding found that the influences of the kindergarten art teachers' attitudes and perceptions of creativity and innovation also significantly impacted expected results based on teachers' planned classroom goals. Lucas and Spencer (2018) explained that teaching tenacity involves encouraging students to persist through challenges, closely linked to fostering a creative mindset. The kindergarten teachers may set their goals in teaching by choosing more challenging and inspiring art activities to meet the learning needs of the students through decorative art designs, namely forming one's personality with a positive side to find new things by creating phases in their learning (Basri et al., 2023).

5. The influences of the kindergarten art teachers' attitudes and perceptions of creativity and innovation had the most significant impact on teachers' planned classroom activities in that the teachers' perceptions of creativity influence their beliefs about using creative practices in the classroom based on their perceptions of creative child characteristics (Ishtayah and bushokhedem, 2023) in various domains of children's creative competency. This could be effectively reached by using peer play interaction, which would help develop and support the abilities of young children in creating art through various forms of planned activities such as singing, dancing, drawing, sculpturing, painting, paper cutting, and new forms of art in digital art activities (Paik, 2022).

6. The influences of the kindergarten art teachers' attitudes and perceptions of creativity and innovation also had the most significant impact on the adoption of creative art activities. According to Amabile (1983), teachers' innovativeness has an essential influence on their choice of creative activities in teaching. The results showed that teachers with higher scores on the K-DOCS scale show higher levels of innovativeness. Abdellah et al. (2022) explained that creativity and skills in the arts among kindergarten mediated by idea manipulation and generation and analogical and metaphorical thinking could result in young

Recommendations

From the above findings, it can be concluded that to be effective in creative art activities, evaluations of art activities, and specified planned activities and classroom goals, especially for kindergarten art teachers in Qujing City, Yunnan Province, it is recommended that the teachers' training should be provided to enhance the understandings and developments of creative and innovative abilities and skills in applying creative arts into their teaching activities. The training content should include creativity stimulation techniques, innovative teaching methods with resource enrichment in classic and modern art materials and teaching tools, etc., to help teachers better design creative art activities for their young students. Most importantly, research should be expanded to other regions of China with different types of research methods and designs of cross-sectional and longitudinal, to ensure the efficiencies of kindergarten creative art teaching activities to develop and promote the talents and abilities of young Chinese kindergartens' artistic senses and skills.

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