

# Creativity in The Pre-school Setting: A Comparison Study Between Arabic and English Lessons in Qatari Preschools

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Received: September 30, 2023 Accepted: August 23, 2024 Online Published: August 30, 2024

doi:10.5539/jedp.v14n2p59

URL: <http://doi.org/10.5539/jedp.v14n2p59>

## Abstract

This paper explores creativity, allowing children's imagination to flow, and predicting what is suitable for them. It emphasizes the dynamic role of creativity in science, innovation, and the arts, helping children face challenges in their lives, find solutions to obstacles, and comprehend differences. This study compares two lessons in Qatari preschools: one in an Arabic school and one in an English school, focusing on the first unit, "Who Am I." The findings reveal similarities in the approach, which help children broaden their horizons and accept each other. English schools tend to enhance self-acknowledgement more than Arabic schools, which emphasize the overall picture of the family.

**Keywords:** Creative development, enhance thinking skills, pre-schools, "Who Am I"

## 1. Cognitive Development in Preschool

Creativity involves generating and innovating new ideas that help us progress in our lives and make our daily life easier (Ritter et al., 2020). In the 21st century, creativity and thinking outside the box are crucial elements. Creative and imaginative minds help us face the world with new and innovative ideas that solve obstacles and problems in our daily lives, making us more adaptable and able to comprehend new and challenging ideas (Ritter & Mostert, 2016). Research confirms that creative development in children and preschoolers is enhanced through the use of the class environment and schedule; the accessibility of suitable equipment; functioning in outdoor environments; sports and games with learner autonomy; polite relationships between teachers and learners; opportunities for peer teamwork; collaboration with external interventions; and responsiveness to learners' needs (Davies et al., 2013).

The frontopolar cortex, located in the brain's frontal lobes, is associated with creative thinking. Targeting specific areas in the brain, either through neuromodulation or cognitive interventions, could enhance creativity (Weir, 2022). The Six-Step Cycle is the core of Brainnovation, consisting of understanding the problem, approaching the problem, different thinking, separating thinking, pausing, and then sleeping. This cycle emulates the way the human brain solves complex problems, starting with analysis and ending with sleep; each time the cycle repeats, the brain produces new neural networks (Oonincx, 2020).

Art classes are integral to educational practice, with creativity being one of the next generation's significant responsibilities in the current education system. Art and drawing are among children's favorite practices, often starting before they can speak. Through participation in illustration, they portray everything they envision; the more they participate, the more their creative thoughts improve their imagination and theoretical thinking. They refine their fanciful thoughts, and theoretical thinking becomes part of their imaginative thinking style and perception (Olga et al., 2020). Research acknowledges a clear improvement in children's participation in their own work and creativity. They work using different tools to improve their creativity and develop various ideas and thoughts, which helps improve their imagination and creativity. Creativity in their work enhances their theoretical thinking. Children comprehend and understand creativity, dreams, and new thoughts through practice and developing their skills by giving them the tools and opportunities to develop their own interests and creations. A school environment rich in tools and equipment increases children's work skills, whether working individually or in teams, and also enhances listening skills. In addition, the hands-on and technical aspects of exercises—such as 'how to work with children'—provide them with experience in expressing themselves using other tools, such as listening and following directions, which helps children complete their projects (Yates & Twigg, 2017).

Art lies at the center of creativity in the curriculum for young children at a Reggio school, where art is seen as a product. It focuses on acts of enhancing, creating meaning, and expressing oneself. Observing and listening to the children, Massey refines the big ideas central to their explorations, providing provoking questions and a rich atmosphere to deepen and develop children's cognitive development (Hansel, 2017).

## 2. Teachers' Opinions on Creativity

Teachers emphasize the importance of the classroom environment, which they enrich with tools and materials that help children explore their diversity. The classroom setup, including circle carpets and multiple centers, provides children with different skills such as teamwork, individual work, following directions, and showing their creativity and problem-solving abilities through their work (Karlıdağ, 2021). Being creative helps children process new ideas and thoughts and showcase their individual work. Children acting creatively helps develop many aspects of their social lives, including thinking skills and emotional development. Creativity is not merely a learning aspect; it is more of a gift, and it is our responsibility to develop that aspect by giving children the opportunity and environment to nurture it (Kokotree, 2023).

## 3. Creativity and Lesson Plans: Arabic vs. English

### The Education Strategies: Qatari vs. English Curriculum

The policy of early childhood education in Qatar aligns with the best theories and methods for preschool, first, and second grade. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar strives to implement the best practices in education by being open to American and British curricula and adapting them to the local culture.

This curriculum helps children acquire the knowledge they need in various areas of cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, based on the latest programs. The school's objectives, besides imparting knowledge, aim to enhance children's personalities to become individual, creative, and responsible citizens. The early years' program objectives help develop children in all aspects of their lives and are designed to assist administrators, teachers, and professionals in the field of education.

These objectives include:

- **Physical Development:** Gross and fine motor skills.
- **Investigation and Examination:** Science and mathematics.
- **Individuality and Identity:** Self-awareness and the implementation of Islamic and social studies.
- **Language Skills:** Proficiency in both Arabic and English.
- **Artistic Development:** Art, play, poetry, and movement.

Preschools in Qatar are equipped with excellent school buildings, rich environments, highly qualified teachers, and psychological guidance for each school to support children and parents. The environment meets high standards, including indoor and outdoor areas, computer labs, libraries, and compliance with NAYC regulations regarding teacher-child ratios. The evaluation system is based on observing the child and is implemented quarterly during the preschool stages (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2020).

## 4. British Education Policy

Education holds a central place in British society. Children can acquire skills such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening, enabling them to express their emotional and social development comprehensively. Reading, a key element of the curriculum, introduces children to culture, information, communication, and self-expression. Reading opens up literature, information, and communication, perfecting their reading skills and widening their knowledge. Listening skills, developed through reading literature, stories, and poems, further enhance their cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual development. All of these components help build confident and strong children in British society (Government UK, 2014).

## 5. The Qatari Model vs. The English Model

One of the first lessons in both the Qatari and English curricula is "Who Am I?" This lesson invites creativity, imagination, and inspiration. The Qatari model gives children the freedom to draw their family members on a blank piece of paper and color it. This activity helps them identify their families and themselves.

The British model adopts a similar approach, where children are provided with blank paper to draw their family members, including extended family, as part of an exercise to help them identify and express themselves. This activity helps children recognize that every individual is unique and special, reinforcing the significance of each child's beliefs and concepts. As part of Unit 1, titled "Who Am I?", teachers collaborate with movement specialists

to further explore these themes through dance. Children use props such as juggling scarves to express moods and feelings, working in pairs to create and perform dances that delve into emotional expression (BBC, 2023).

## 6. Conclusion

Both models encourage children to introduce their families in a free, creative, and constructive way. The Arabic model is open and creative, allowing children to represent their family members by drawing them on blank paper. The English model follows the same procedure, advancing in representing the child's personality, including their likes, hopes, and individuality. Both models encourage creativity through play and social development at an individual level. Creativity in action and movement, as evaluated using the TCAM test, shows that participative direction is strongly connected with creative thinking skills, though it is less frequent in social situations involving adults. In participative orientation, children engage with the situation and intend to change it (Nikkola et al., 2022).

## 7. Recommendation for Further Research

Creativity should be implemented in all subjects, with content prepared around main concepts and inquiries that can be observed from numerous perspectives. Wherever possible, this should include data about the creative methods of the discipline being taught (Creative Thinking Strategies, 2023). Children should be encouraged to be creative in their work, with resources such as technology, art, music, and outdoor environments significantly improving the implementation of a creative curriculum (Regoniel, 2023). It is important to give children time to creatively acknowledge themselves, extending and observing their control over their knowledge, creating choices, and taking ownership of their learning (Cremin & Barnes, 2015). Emphasizing emotions such as care and love within creativity will promote social-emotional development, supported by a foundation focused on social-emotional, physical, and cognitive development. This approach includes teaching strategies like "Building Your Preschool Classroom Community," daily resources designed to build social-emotional skills, and embedded coaching and support for social-emotional development (Teaching Strategies, 2023).

### Funding

None.

### Informed Consent

Obtained.

### Provenance and Peer Review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

### Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request.

### Competing Interests Statement

The authors declare that there are no competing or potential conflicts of interest.

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