

Supporting Children with Autism Using Visual Arts

Mowafaq Ali Alsaggar, Art Education department, Education Faculty, Qatar University

تاريخ القبول: 2022/8/4

تاريخ الاستلام: 2021/8/15

دعم الأطفال المصابين بالتوحد من خلال الفنون البصرية

موفق علي السقار، قسم التربية الفنية، كلية التربية، جامعة قطر

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تطوير برنامج خاص يمكن للمدرسين والمربين من خلاله تدريب الأطفال المصابين بالتوحد من خلال الفن بهدف الاسهام في تعزيز السلوكيات الإيجابية واحتياجاتهم في المعاشة الاجتماعية لديهم. ولتطبيق ذلك قام الباحث بدراسة بحثية تجريبية في مركز الخدمات المجتمعية للتوحد وذلك من خلال الرجوع الى العديد من الدراسات والمراجع في مجال العلاج من خلال الفن. حيث ركزت الدراسة على توظيف الصورة وتشكيلها بصريا فيما يخص طفل التوحد من النواحي اللغوية والادراكية والانفعالية والحركية والاجتماعية. وكانت نتيجة الدراسة ان للصورة ومحركاتها وتطبيقها عمليا له دور في تعزيز وتطوير النواحي النمائية لدى أطفال التوحد.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفنون البصرية، الصورة، العلاج بالفن، أطفال التوحد.

Abstract

The current study aims to develop a special program for both instructors and educators to train children with autism via art while also promoting their positive behaviors and social requirements. To achieve these goals, an experimental study was carried out at the Centre of Community Services for Autism, drawing on previous research in the field of art therapy. The study concentrated on the usage of images and their visual composition from the linguistic, cognitive, emotional, motor, and social perspectives. The study's findings demonstrated that the image, its simulation, and its practical application all play important roles in promoting specific developmental features of children with autism.

keywords: Visual Arts, Image, Arts Therapy, Children with Autism.

Introduction

“The soul cannot think without pictures” (Aristoteles).

Art has an undeniable positive impact on the growth, enrichment, and development of communication skills among all children, including those with developmental difficulties. Individuals (children, teenagers, or individuals with special needs) can express their inner emotions and communicate with others through art, which is really a language in itself. As a result, art has become a means of purification that aids in the treatment of communicative issues among individuals. Individuals can use art to establish communicative ties with others around them. Therefore, whether or not the surroundings involve human interactions, communication with the surrounding environment broadens.

The aim of the current study is to develop a special program that enables teachers and educators to train children with autism using art. Although many people believe that autistic children are disabled individuals, many researchers in this field believe that autism is a developmental disease that can be rehabilitated and treated. Autism diseases are characterized by profound abnormalities in early childhood mental, linguistic, and social development, which hinder interactions with others. In their daily encounters with their children, parents are continuously looking for a cure for their children. It is believed that the use of visual thinking and embodiment contained in the formation and production processes can improve the treatment of individuals with autistic spectrums. Children with autism are rehabilitated in a positive way through these activities, which allow them to use various materials to create a conscious representation of what they are thinking.

There are many interactive activities within art therapy that serve to develop new channels of communication for visualization and self-understanding. These activities promote a creative personality and even enable children with autism to better cope with their societies. Educational programs should be devised to enhance children's self-esteem and ability to interact with others.

Study Problem

Despite all the obstacles faced by educators in rehabilitating children with autism, children can acquire developmental skills (language, cognitive, emotional, social, and physical) through art therapy using color and face sketching, as it improves communication skills and coexistence by stimulating children's inner instincts through interacting with colors as a means of play.

The study problem is about how educators may contribute to the effective use and production of visual arts with autistic children, confirming the existence of concrete visual teaching approaches to assist them in developing their language and engaging with their surroundings. As a result, it is critical to develop particular methods for the assembly and production of images that match different spectrums of autism in a variety of ways, as well as approaches that help with the process of educational attainment. Accordingly, the present study attempts to answer the following question: How the visual image in its creation and composition can help autistic children to deal in the educational and social process?

Methodology of the study:

The aim of the study was to determine whether improving communication and social interaction skills among children with ASD, aged between 6 and 9, could be accomplished through the use of face sketching and drawing, utilizing both liquid and dry colors to form and produce the image. Children and teachers develop personal connections as a result of the increased interaction they have with color and visual development. Workshops were used to collect the data using a qualitative methodology,

and the researcher made notes about how the children interacted with the artistic experiences.

Study Procedures:

The current investigation was carried out at Jordan's Community Services Centre for the Disabled in Irbid. The sessions were attended by three artists, one of whom specialized in face sketching. In addition to the participation of the center's teachers in the workshops, the participants in the study were divided into two groups of autistic children; each had five children. Three measurement instruments were employed to assess the impact of the color drawing curriculum on each child's communication and social skills: (1) the assessment of children's reflections on their faces and hands during and after sketching; (2) the artistic treatment by autistic children employing colors and toys; and (3) researcher's notes.

The study was conducted over a two-week period. During the first week, data about autistic children was collected via personal interviews with the center's director and educators. Following that, the researcher began to play with children by sketching on their faces and hands, which is the stage of direct color contact with the body for the subjects. The qualitative data was then collected using the researcher's notes.

In the second week, the researcher started working with autistic children using liquid colors and allowing the children to play with colors on the surface of the paper. In this stage of direct connection between autistic children and colors was as a test. The observations were carried out until the end of the second stage.

Target group of the study:

The sample of the study consisted of (10) children with autism (M = 5, F = 5), aged between (5-6) years old, selected using a random sampling method. They were arranged in two groups in the center. Autism spectrum disorder in children ranges from mild to severe. The study focused on the mild spectrum because children with this type of autism are more likely to have trouble with development and social growth. Because the results were so comparable, the researcher provided only two cases of autistic children.

Image and its composition with autistic children

The study used the image as a procedural term, using Picasso's images in the classroom of autistic children who already has a difficulty in understanding or using language. The image may be photographs, drawings, etc. The image and its formation are important to help autistic children (ASD). The two main goals are to help parents communicate better with their children by displaying and shaping the image and helping children to communicate better with others.

The study aims to help educators and alert them to the importance of the picture and how to use it effectively with autistic children. Autism spectrum disorders are mainly a problem in the social interaction of children in using language.

The image and its visual shape help children in three aspects:

Firstly, ASD may not understand social gestures while interacting with others in the activities. They may not understand social expectations, such as how to initiate a dialogue, how to respond when others work, or how to change behavior based on unspoken social rules. The picture helps to teach social skills and help ASD children to use them alone in certain social situation (Janert, 2003).

Secondly, ASD often finds it difficult to understand and follow instructions and may not be able to express what they want or need. The image can help parents in delivering to their children what they want. This reduces frustration and may help reduce negative behaviors that result from difficulties with communication, the image can be made and formed in convenient and positive ways of communication (Limberg,1998).

Thirdly, some children of ASD feel anxious or upset when changing their routines or when they are in unfamiliar situations. The image can help them to understand what they expect and what will happen next. They also reduce their level of anxiety. The image can help them to pay attention to the details. And help them adapt to environmental and social changes (Hüppauf, Wulf, 2006).

The artistic artworks employed and analyzed by the current study:

Picasso's painting "The African Dance".

Picasso's artworks were used in this study because of the simplicity of the lines and the distribution of shapes within vast color spaces. This is the focus of the current study, since the workshop is all about using different colors.

Picasso's painting is an African dance, with a tranquil and peaceful atmosphere of reassurance. Women who dance on a smooth rhythm, this work is characterized through colors such as blue, red, yellow and green, which are the basic colors that are usually taught in the classes of art education of the classes in the basic stage. The dance of multi-movement makes it an easily distinguishable painting, in addition to the movement of the body with different lines and directions. The aim of using this painting was to examine the children's attitudes towards the picture and to identify their colors and to simulate the movements of the dance, which is somehow close to the movements of Arabic dance (Falasca-Zamponi, 2011).



Fig.1 "African Artwork Painting "Freedom dance"

Image Simulation by Autistic Children:

Foulf, notes that image simulation is important in understanding and explaining the process of socialization and education in terms of social activity and aesthetic experience (Hodgdon,2000). Therefore, simulation is well suited to developmental processes in autistic children. Simulation can start with movement and create possibilities for a relationship with the environment. The simulation of children is closely related to the physical processes that builds bridges with the outside world and with other individuals; they try to break down the subjective self-division, that is, to make itself similar to the general environment or to another individual. Simulated processes include rational elements, but they are not exhausted by those (Rao; Gagie, 2006). In these processes the individual steps outside himself, puts himself on the side of the world as it is, has the ability to move the outside world into his inner world, and to express this inner world in a self-integrated way, and calls simulation to converge with other objects. As a result, stimulation is a necessary requirement for understanding and self-development. Simulation is not merely a process of imitation, reproduction or formation; on the contrary, they require individual formation by children, and the degree of individual differences varies according to different circumstances. The examination of the meaning of simulated processes in learning and education, socialization and social behavior forms a complex area for the research (Theunissen; Schubert, 2010).

The Importance of Arts in the Treatment of Autistic Children

The importance of art therapy has been shown in the development of communication in children with developmental delays and communication skill disorders, such as autism.

Art is a language of communication that allows individuals, whether ordinary children or people with special needs, to express themselves and communicate with others ([Edwards, 2013](#)).

Art strives to find a communicative relationship between the individual and the artistic activity that the child is interested in. Thus, the scope of communication to the surrounding environment grows in both people and in the environment. Art activities are therefore one of the most important activities that may be offered to the autistic children because it helps them to develop their sense of perception by sensing the color, line, distance, distance, size and perception of the touch by touching the surfaces. Therefore, art therapy is one of the most successful ways to treat the various disorders that many people with special needs suffer from, including autistic children, as it is a fundamental part of the programs of developing communication and social skills for children with special needs (Limberg, 1998).

There are several basic principles of art therapy that must be met in order to achieve the treatment objectives ([Moon, 2015](#)). The basics consist of: materials, a work space and the organization of a treatment process. Time should be determined based on the situation of each child and according to the method of treatment whether it is individual or collective. Technical activities are the actual activities in the arts session that the child is asked to perform. The sessions mechanism varies from simple to complex, depending on the following: materials available for the activity, time available for the session, individual or collective method also according to the goal of the treatment and according to the child's skills and the program to which it is applied (Lippmann, 1998).

Benefits of Art Therapy for children with autism ([Bursztyn, 2012](#)):

1. It helps in expressing the emotional and expressive feelings of the child through the development of human interaction between them and the artwork and the therapist.
2. It works to develop the awareness of the child himself and his capability in producing a beautiful and distinguished work.
3. It develops the child's own sense so that their sense of the environment around them is able to grow.
4. It enriches the stereotypical pattern followed by autism in drawing and makes their style more flexible in relation to manufactured work. Through these methods, the child learns other ways of communicating with the surrounding environment in ways that deprive many autistic children.

Why is it important to draw and shape pictures with autistic children?

Autistic children who use their imagination and feelings may not understand them as well as the developments that accompany with their biological and physiological development. The family and the school must know that these drawings act as another language that can express feelings, thoughts and issues that the child may not necessarily be able to verbally articulate ([Jolley, 2010](#)).

Drawings and artistic works created by children with autism act as an important source of psychological research in the framework of therapy. This is the tool by which we can define the understanding of life matters such as the meaning of the role and how the working time behaves while taking his chance or how he moves and behaves during the game at his role in the game, understanding and realizing that you have time and the opportunity to draw (Jäger, 2004).

- Drawing requires technical abilities to help the autistic child get used to thinking about playing color and expressive drawing, no doubt that the impact is clear in the future ([Crenshaw, Stewart, 2016](#)). It is known that as far as capacity development in childhood, the results are better than post-childhood, adolescence and post-adolescence. The

educational pictures and the love of playing with colors and technical tools may take on a different character (Crenshaw, Stewart, 2016).

Drawing as an Expressing Language for Autistic Children:

In a study (1977-1983) conducted by Self (Faraj, 1992), the importance of picture was analyzed through drawings created by the six-year-old child, Nadyah. Her parents were Ukrainian immigrants to Britain, she was the second of three children. Sadly, Nadyah suffers from a severe psychotic disorder, living in her own private world, a typical aspect of Autism Syndrome. She is also an indifferent child, negative, unable to control herself, and has a weakness in the synergy of movement to a large extent, very slow in her movements and refuses to cooperate, her drawings were different from the drawings of an ordinary children. Behavioral difficulties began to appear at the age of three and a half of her age. It is observed on the above story (that the drawings are considered an interpretive language that can be used to explain what the autistic child thinks or what is going on in his life. This shows that the painting has a therapeutic aspect. By playing with different drawing techniques we can understand some other things besides that it may serve to modify behavior in the future light of the analysis that has been conducted (Faraj, 1992).

A view and analysis of an experimental sample

The following is a detailed review of the children cases studied by the researcher with the number of 10. This part of the study illustrates the cases in detail in terms of the pre-measurement of each case and aspects of development through the presentation of Picasso images and simulated by children to the formation in color.

The results were somehow similar, so the researcher saw the presentation of two experiments because of the similarity of the method of the program. The pictures were published with the consent of the children's parents, with changing the names of the children.



Fig 2 First case: The girl 1 6 years

Rahaf, a 6-years-old girl (Fig 2), has been integrated this year into the Rehabilitation Department of the Centre for Community Services for the Disabled in Irbid, living with her family on the ground floor. She is the youngest sister of two brothers, a girl and a boy. The symptoms of autism began to surface around the age of three, and she was diagnosed with autism by the medical centre in Irbid. Through experimental research and the questioning of educators, the preliminary data acquired presents as follows:

Mental skills: Through the sub-fields, we notice that the girl 1 has a partial (medium) to average level and needs help to acquire these skills.

Micro-motor skills: Through the sub-fields, we note that the girl 1 has a partial level (medium), and needs help to acquire these skills.

Great motor skills: Through the subfields, we notice that the girl 1 has a preliminary level and needs help to acquire these skills

Social Skills: Through the sub-fields, we notice that The girl 1 has a very basic level and needs help to acquire these skills

Self-help skill: Through sub-fields, we note that The girl 1 has a partial level (medium) i.e. average and needs help to acquire these skills

Communication skills: Through the sub-fields, we notice that The girl 1 has a preliminary level, which is simple, and needs help to acquire these skills

The general conclusion: We infer from the pre-application of developmental skills assessment that the developmental skills of the child The girl 1 are at a partial level. A medium level.

The course of the qualifying training program for the first case "The girl 1"

First week:

First session:

This session was devoted to collecting information on the situation and to conduct a prior assessment of the situation in which:

1. Explain the program to the educators and the management crew of the community services centre for the disabled in Irbid
2. Collect data about her the situation from her family through the centre's management supervision
3. Pre- measurement:
 - A. Art skills through the use of paint and dry pens
 - B. Autism degree through a test which studying the case file of the Community Services Centre for the Disabled.

Second Session:

The second session was devoted to the beginning of the rehabilitation process through the use of pictures of Picasso art paintings, attended by the child-care nanny and the director of the centre, in which the process of education and definition of The girl 1 on the contents of the painting of dancers of the artist Picasso began through:

The girl 1 was asked to help the nanny look at Picasso's painting and look at its colors. Then, the nanny pronounced the colors in the painting in a verbal and rhyme, repeating the names of the colors as the nanny said. Then, the nanny mimicked the dance movement seen in the picture.

Third Session:

This session was dedicated to drawing on faces using special colors in order to create communication between the children and the colors. The girl 1 participated in this session with other children who are also suffering from autism (Fig.3). Sketching on the face is an activity that offers a lot of fun and happiness to the children in general and allows the children more time to develop their self-confidence. This is what happened with The girl 1, who showed expressions of joy and happiness throughout. Girls prefer to draw hearts, stars, flowers, butterflies, smiling faces and rose girls.

At the end of the first week:

We have noticed that the children need to be more focused on the communication process. Educators at the Community Rehabilitation Centre for the Disabled have been asked to re-focus on Picasso's paintings and repeat as much as possible to begin the second phase, with the aim of developing the visual skills of autistic children.

2. Notes of the nanny during the first week:

- A. Children did not complete any work and moved from one job to another very quickly
- B. Children recognized all colors but happened to mix some up as well
- C. Children repeated what was said literally without realizing the meaning, for example (what color) tells you (what color).



Fig.3

second week:**Fourth Session:**

The fourth session was devoted to the identification of drawing materials, where we first identified the colors used in Picasso's paintings, where the artist Shadi participated in the study to prepare the colors for that. The girl was permitted to touch the material and the brushes of the colors. The girl 1 spread paint on the paper and touched it with her hands and positively reacted to spreading the paint. After her encouragement by applause ('Bravo The girl 1!') she stopped working and rejoiced.

Fifth Session:

The fifth session was devoted as a follow-up on the process of rehabilitation, using the method of casting colors in a plastic dish. This was done by holding the finger of the girl The girl 1 and moving in circular motions with the repetition of the vocabulary of colors (red, green, yellow and blue) (Fig. 4) she showed a response to mentioning the vocabulary of colors and the rotation of the sphincter was very active and attentive, as they began to rotate them on their own.

At the end of the second week:

We noted that the children have acquired more emotionally expressive skills as well as better social interaction with the nanny and the artist Shadi. The nanny was asked to repeat the activities presented in the centre with the girl in the same method, in addition to noting the child's linguistic balance in terms of pronunciation of colors.

Notes of the nanny during the second week:

- A. The girl was able to distinguish between color and names a number of them (yellow, red)
- B. Simulation of drawing on faces through drawing with her colleague
- C. Painted shapes but not in the required form and painted them in violet color.

Synopsis of the first case (The girl 1)

On the first case, the girl 1, showed progress in their developmental skills where they were able to acquire linguistic, cognitive, emotional, physical and social communication skills. This demonstrates that the use of the image and the interaction with it, in both physical and practical ways, is highly effective in improving the developmental skills of autistic children. This has been supported by differences between pre-measurement and post-measurement in the acquisition of developmental skills in the study. The girl 1 produced a painting.



Fig. 4 The color composition produced by The girl 1

Case number 2: Child 2 7 years

Child 2 is a 7 years old child Fig (5). He is the middle brother of two brothers, a girl and a boy. According to his parents, he started to show autistic tendencies and present certain behaviors at the age of three. He was diagnosed with autism by a practitioner at their local health centre. Through empirical research and the questioning of educators about the Child 2 case, a group of observations were summarized as follows:

Mental Skills: Through the subfields, we observe that Child 2 has a simple initial level and needs help to acquire these skills

Micro-motor skills: Through the sub-fields we note that Child 2 has a high level and needs to increase these skills

Large motor skills: Through the sub-fields we note that Child 2 has high standard and needs to increase these skills

Social skills: Through the sub-fields we note that Child 2 has a simple level and he needs help to acquire these skills

Self-help skill: Through sub-fields, we note that Child 2 has a partial level (medium) , which is average, and he needs a help to acquire these skills

Communication skills: Through the subfields, we noted that Child 2 has a preliminary level, proving that he needs help in acquiring certain skills

General conclusion: We conclude from the pre-application of the developmental skills assessment that the developmental skills of, Child 2 present, at a partial, medium or high level.



Fig. 5 Case number 2: Child 2 7 years

The course of the training program for the first case "Child 2"

First week:

First session:

This session was devoted to collecting information on the situation and to conduct a prior assessment of the situation in which:

1. Explain the program to the educators and the management crew of the community services centre for the disabled in Irbid
2. Collect data about her the situation from her family through the centre's management supervision
3. Pre- measurement:

A. Art skills through the use of paints and dry pens

B. Degree of autism, determined through a test which studied the case file of the Community Services Centre for the Disabled.

Second Session:

The second session was devoted to the beginning of the rehabilitation process through the use of pictures of Picasso art paintings, attended by the child-care nanny and the director of the center, in which the process of education and definition of Child 2 on the contents of the painting of dancers of the artist Picasso began through:

- C. Child 2 was asked to help the nanny look at Picasso's paintings and look at the colors that were used. Then, the nanny pronounced the colors in the painting in a verbal rhyme, repeating the names of the colors just as the nanny did. Then the nanny simulated the dance movement in the picture.

Third Session:

This session was dedicated to drawing on faces using special colors in order to create a communication between children and colors on one hand and with the artist on the other. Whilst participating in this study, Child 2, also met other children with autism that were taking part in this research. Where children prefer cartoon characters, the most popular of all are spiders, scarves, moustaches and beards, as well as snakes, sharks, and tigers. It does not stop at this point, but a large number of children asked to draw on their parents faces. The artist painted on Child 2's hand and Child 2's face.

At the end of the first week:

Notes from the nanny during the first week:

- Child 2 identifies all colors and tries to compare the colors that are on Picasso's color palette.
- Child 2 repeats what is said to him literally without realizing the meaning, for example (what color) tells you (what color)
- Child 2 simulates the movements of the artist by trying to draw on his hand



Fig. 6

Here we have identified the drawing materials, where we first identified the colors of the paint on the Picasso paintings, the artist Shadi prepared the colors. The child was left to touch the colors and use the brush to apply the paint. Child 2, painted onto white paper in multiple colors and exhibited good cognitive ability in the way he held the brush (Fig. 6). Following this, there was an applause of encouragement from the research team which he acknowledged and laughed to.

Fifth Session:

The fifth session was devoted to following up on the rehabilitation process, using a method of casting colors in a plastic dish. This was done by holding of the child's finger and moving it in a circular manner with the repetition of the words of the colors (red, yellow, green, blue) (Fig 7), showing a simple response to mention the color items with the artist and the rotation was very active and attentive, as he began to rotate on his own.

At the end of the second week:

The nanny was asked to repeat the activities presented in the center with the girl in the same manner, in addition to noting the child's linguistic balance in terms of pronunciation of the colors or what they refer to?

Notes from the nanny during the second week:

- He was able to distinguish between colors and at time also name colors
- He was able to simulate drawing on faces by drawing with his hands
- He was able to paint shapes but not in the form required and coloring it in blue

Synopsis of the first case (Child 2)

The second case, Child 2, was distinguished by improving his developmental skills, where he was able to acquire skills in linguistics, cognitive abilities, emotional processing, and physical and social communication skills.

This demonstrates that the use of the image and the interaction with its both physically and practically sides, through the use of colors, is highly effective in improving developmental skills in autistic children. This has been supported by the differences between pre-measurement and post-measurement in the acquisition of developmental skills in the study.



Fig. 7 A painting created by, Child 2.

Results and discussion of the study:

By analyzing the results of the study and its aim to acquire developmental skills (linguistic, cognitive, emotional, social and physical) in autistic children in the study sample,

1. For language skills: it is important to focus on the development of the linguistic aspect through the acquisition of children some simple vocabulary, such as knowing the names of colors. As Hyman (2013, p. 445) states, "Many older children with autism incorporate the scripts appropriate conversational context. which can give much of their speech a "rehearsed" and often more fluent quality relative to the rest of their spoken language. Children also show difficulties with pronouns or other words that change in meaning with context, and often reverse pronouns or refer to themselves in the third person or by name. Others may use literal idiosyncratic phrases neologisms. Verbal children with autism may speak in very detailed and grammatically correct phrases. which are nonetheless repetitive, concrete, and pedantic?"
2. For cognitive skill: in order to develop the cognitive skills of recognizing the color of stimuli, children are asked to compare their drawings to the colors of Picasso's paintings. According to Lisa Kurtz, (2014, p, 71), "Once the eyes transmit images to the brain, the brain must interpret the meaning and importance of those images, a process referred to as visual perception, or perceptual reasoning. Problems with visual perception involve difficulty recognizing, remembering, and organizing the visual images transmitted by the eyes to the brain. Problems with visual efficiency and visual perception are common among children with developmental differences, including those with autism, ADHD and specific learning disabilities. Although they can vary widely among children, certain visual difficulties are predictably more associated with certain disabilities. For example, children with autism commonly avoid eye contact with others, seek intense visual stimulation such as spinning objects while ignoring stimuli peripheral to the object they are looking at, and avoid looking at their hands when manipulating objects. Some children with ADHD are believed to have difficulty maintaining close visual focus on near objects, a problem with visual efficiency, which may be why they are so easily distracted by things they see".
3. In order to tackle emotional skill and competency, one must look into emotional development through successful and small activities. Through the drawing on the face expressed by the children with the emotional expression of (pleasure and enjoyment). Mahmoud Al-Bassiouni, emphasizes that the role of art therapy with non-standard

children is diagnostic and this kind of therapy can also be used on children with autism, amongst other conditions. This diagnostic method can help to reveal and better understand behaviors, therefore, allowing practitioners to develop an appropriate treatment. (Bassiouni, 1984). As [Martin](#) (2009, p 47) asserts, “There is a unique beauty and style to the art made by people with autism. Children on the spectrum experience the world and their bodies differently than their neurotypical peers, and their artwork reflects this difference. There are several observable characteristics that are remarkable enough to warrant description as an autism-related style of art-making. Just like the general symptoms of an ASD diagnosis, at least a few of these art characteristics are present to greater or lesser degrees in each young artist with autism, and the characteristics encompass a wide variety of children. In reality it is possible for any child's art-making to present one of these features at some point in time, but it is the pervasive nature of these characteristics and the way that they appear to stall out a typical artistic development that make them uniquely autistic features”.

4. As for social skill, the development of social communication through the practice of artistic activities, where the activities are aimed at children in particular, created an atmosphere of social communication between the children and the artist, Shadi. On one hand, this worked for the educators and, on the other hand, it also helped through the development of visual communication and the behavior of demand such as, ‘give me the paper’ and ‘take this color’. The children also enjoyed the programmed activities and performances in the classroom, further showing the emergence of an improvement in social skills, like asking for help, and the reapplication of materials from practitioners. Children also showed more physical expression such as hugging after each technical application, possibly as an expression of gratitude. "The art of the child is a mean of communication through which ideas and opinions are exchanged between two or more people”. This indicates that art therapy contributes to the development of perceptions and experiences towards the child's understanding of themselves and directing his impulses, it helps to absorb the anger load and modify his behavior in a positive way, psychological treatment by art improves the quality and gives the family an opportunity to communicate with each other in life in general.
5. Physical Skill: In order to improve physical skill, it is important for practitioners to further develop the muscular abilities of their students, by practicing more technical activities. For example, the way they may hold pens, brushes and drawing tools all act as exercises in focusing and strengthening the muscles of the hand. This is reflected in the success of artistic activities such as: coloring in paints using a paint brush. Art therapy is suitable for autistic children, especially in cases where there is a weak response to behavioral interventions. Art therapy allows these children to achieve various goals, such as improving their motor skills and their verbal communication as well as other social aspects and expression of feelings. Thus, becoming an important tool that autistic children can use in order to feel more settled and at ease in their environment. Moreover, art has been shown to change and amend the child's behavior as it offers them a chance to escape and thus gain harmony and balance within their environment. Through the results of the previous study, this hypothesis was answered and verified. However, there are notable differences between pre-measurement and the telemetry in the acquisition of developmental skills (linguistic, emotional, social and physical) in autistic children after the application of the program. The general hypothesis of the study has been achieved: by making sure that there are differences between the measurement in the acquisition of developmental skills (linguistic, cognitive, emotional, social and physical). The autistic children study sample, following the program, showed that the training program is highly effective in the improvement of developmental symptoms in autistic children. The study sample after

applying the program showed an improvement in their developmental skills and this fulfils the general hypothesis of the study.

References:

1. Aristóteles: Aristoteles' drei Bücher über die Seele. Publisher L. Heimann, 1871, Sapienza University of Rome. Rome
2. Banda, D. R., Grimmett, E., & Hart, S. L (2009) Activity schedules: Helping students with autism spectrum disorders in general education classrooms manage transition issues. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 41(4), 16-21
3. Bassiouni M (1984). The psychology of children's drawings, *Dar Al Ma'arif*, i. 2, Cairo
4. [Bursztyn](#), C (2012). *Young Children and the Arts: Nurturing Imagination and Creativity*. IAP
5. Dalryaple, N. (1989) Learning to be independent and responsible: Functional programming for people with autism. ERIC Document Reproduction Service NO. EC302 520
6. [Edwards](#). D. (2013). *Art Therapy. Creative Therapies in Practice series*. SAGE
7. Falasca-Zamponi, S. (2011) *Rethinking the Political: The Sacred, Aesthetic Politics, and the College de Sociologi*. McGill-Queen's Press – MQUP
8. Faraj, S (1992). *Intelligence and children's drawings (Arabic Book)*. House of Culture Publishing, Beirut
9. Goodman, G., & Williams, C. M. (2007). Interventions for increasing the academic engagement of students with autism spectrum disorders in inclusive classrooms. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 39(6), 53-61
10. [Crenshaw](#), D [Stewart](#), A (2016). *Play Therapy: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice*. Guilford Publications
11. Hodgdon, L. (2000) *Visual strategies for improving communication: Practical supports for school and home*. Troy, MI: Quirk Roberts.
12. Hüppauf, B Wulf, (2006) *Bild und Einbildungskraft*. Verlag W. Fink, München

13. Hyman, S (2013). Autism: The Science of Mental Health. Routledge
14. Janert, S (2003) Janert, Sybille: Autistischen Kindern Brücken bauen. München
15. Jäger, J (2004) Ästhetische Praxis in der Sozialen Arbeit: Wahrnehmung, Gestaltung und Kommunikation - 1. Aufl.. - Weinheim [u.a.] : Juventa-Verl.
16. [Jolley](#), R (2010). Children and Pictures: Drawing and Understanding. John Wiley, Sons
17. [Kurtz](#), L (2014). Simple Low-Cost Games and Activities for Sensorimotor Learning: A Sourcebook of Ideas for Young Children Including Those with Autism, ADHD, Sensory Processing Disorder, and Other Learning Differences. Jessica Kingsley Publishers
18. Limberg, R (1998) Kunsttherapie bei frühen Störungen. Aachen
19. Lippmann, A (1998) Brücken zwischen Kunst und Alltag: Brücken zwischen Kunst und Alltag : integrative Methoden [in der künstlerischen Tätigkeit- Essen : Verl. Die Blaue Eule
20. [Martin](#), N (2009). Art as an Early Intervention Tool for Children with Autism. Jessica Kingsley Publishers
21. Mietzner, U (2005) Visual history: images of education. Berlin. Peter Lang, 2005
22. Mollenhauer, K (1999) Grundfragen ästhetischer Bildung: theoretische und empirische Befunde zur ästhetischen Erfahrungen von Kindern Weinheim ; München : Juventa-Verl
23. [Moon](#), B, (2015). ETHICAL ISSUES IN ART THERAPY: (3rd Ed.). Charles C Thomas Publisher
24. Rao, S. M., & Gagie, B. (2006) Learning through seeing and doing: Visual supports for children with autism. TEACHING Exceptional Children, 38(6), 26-33.
25. Theunissen, G, Schubert, M (2010) Starke Kunst von Autisten und Savants. Freiburg im Breisgau
26. Washington Department of Health. Introduction to autism. (2010) In Autism guidebook for Washington State (chapter 2). Retrieved April 16, 2011, from Autism Task Force website: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/autism/Documents/Guidebook/Chapter2.pdf>
27. Washington Department of Health (2010) Defining Autism. In Autism guidebook for Washington State (chapter 3). Retrieved April 16, 2011, from Autism Task Force website: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/autism/Documents/Guidebook/Chapter3.pdf>
28. <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/autism/Documents/Guidebook/Chapter3.pdf>
29. Wilkinson, L. A. 2008 Self-management for children with high-functioning autism spectrum disorders. Intervention in School and Clinic, 43(3), 150-157.
30. Winnicott, D (2006) Vom Spiel zur Kreativität. Stuttgart