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The Faculty of Psychology and Education Science

Ph.D. Summary

SCHOOL ART PROJECTS FACILITATING MOTIVATION AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to investigate whether and how Art Projects could promote motivation to create change in elementary school children. The desire to examine the generation of change through an educational intervention programme of this kind stemmed from increasing recent demands to create appropriate social and academic conditions in schools to assist pupils' emotional development, and reduce violence (Sarason, 1982; Elias, 1994; Maehr and Midgley, 1996; and Elias et al. 1997, mentioned in Feinberg, 2007, Wilf, E. and Wilf, M., 2008).

Since attempts to alter conditions in school obviously necessitate motivation to conduct and maintain the change, the present research investigated whether and how school Art Projects could facilitate motivation for change among elementary school children. The research emerged from a vision that a supportive school system could inspire pupils by stimulating and activating their motivation to learn and be creative thus enabling them to find meaning in their school experience. This does not usually happen in present-day school reality. Rather, educators are faced with the phenomena of pupils' violence, inconsideration and lack of willingness to assist and contribute to change (Assor, 1996; Deci, Ryan and Williams, 1996).

Before the educational intervention programme in the studied school, the pupils' everyday activities indicated a clear lack of motivation to engender change in their living environment in the classroom and especially outside the classroom in the school's public areas which were primary targets for damage and abuse by the pupils.

The research was founded on the premise that employing Art Projects as an educational intervention programme in an elementary school could facilitate the development of children's motivation to create change in their living space, in a manner that would help them to reveal their strengths, experience personal wellbeing, and enhance their individual development and thus activate their motivation to become positive forces in the community

Keywords: Art projects, Educational Intervention program, Motivation for change, Agents of change, Elementary school children.

<u>Aims of the Research</u>

The study analyses and examines the facilitation of motivation among elementary school children through Art Projects. The study aimed to discover whether it was possible to use an educational intervention programme in school employing Art Projects as a tool to create motivation for change. An additional objective was to examine whether a group of children who led the Art Projects could serve as a group of agents of change for the general community of pupils in the school.

<u>Research boundaries</u>

The research began to evolve in 2008. The environment that was defined for change included the public areas of the school that were open to all pupils and essentially constituted the physical encasement of the entity known as 'the school'. This issue was considered important since it enables the school to attempt to change children's perception of what is private and what is public and what is public yet considered private with all the implications of these perceptions for the development of the pupil as an individual and for the pupils as the school community. Israeli schools are characterised by a lack of maintenance even sometimes amounting to a physical risk identified with its public areas including the corridors, windows, toilets and school equipment. It was therefore considered important to investigate how the pupils' perceptions relating to these public areas could be altered and what means could ensure such a change.

The subject of the research was: Whether and how Art Projects performed as an educational intervention programme could promote the motivation of elementary school children.

The studied population was composed of elementary school pupils, including a group of pupils who were defined as agents of change, teachers and support staff and the school head-teacher. Mixed methods were employed, beginning with a qualitative study in Stage A and later including quantitative measurements at Stage B, derived from responses to a questionnaire that was completed by pupils in the studied school and by pupils in a control school with similar characteristics.

The research lasted for two school years, from September 2008 until February 2010 and was conducted in the extreme South of Israel.

This study enabled a new angle of consideration on the study of motivation, its definition and activation and facilitated understanding concerning the role of motivation in the creation of change.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Preview

The concept of motivation is the object of wide attention in the theoretical and research literature as one of the most important theoretical factors involved in the understanding of human behaviour (Weiner, 1989; Beck, 2000). Despite more than 100 years of research, there is still no agreement on its definition. According to Zisberg (2005) the controversy relates to two issues: A. the question: where does motivation come from? and B. what is the mechanism linking motivation with operative behaviour?

When planning the research to study the role of motivation in the context of Art Projects in an elementary school in a small Israeli town, it became clear that the term 'motivation' should first be clarified. This paper therefore provides a critical discussion of current academic trends and approaches regarding motivation among elementary school children including a comprehensive, though not exhaustive, account of current definitions and theories relating to this topic.

First, the different existing definitions of motivation are discussed in order to establish the background of the studied topic. Then the paper relates to different scholastic approaches to motivation, including an overview of different typologies of motivation. The terms 'motivation' and 'emotion' are distinguished, including their possible psychological and educational implications. An additional section relates to supporting theories concerning motivation, mediated learning and motivation as a factor in creating change. The Triadic model is presented, detailing the three modes of existence that can facilitate and inspire motivation. Finally, Positive Psychology and Flow Theory are discussed.

Lavoie (2008) says that

> In order to arouse motivation and maintain it in people, you must understand the complexities inherent in the process of motivation. It is important that adults learn what motivation is, but no less important that they also learn what it is not. (p. 23).

CENTRAL THEORIES

Theories that support Motivation

<u>Theory of Self-determination</u>

This theory was developed by Deci and Ryan (2000a, 2000b) and adapted for the field of education by Assor et al. (Assor, 2001, 2004; Assor et al., 2000, 2001; Assor and Kaplan 2001; Assor, Kaplan and Roth, 2002; Kaplan and Assor, 2004; Assor et al., 2004; Assor, Kanat-Maymon and Roth, 2005; Feinberg, 2007).

Kaplan and Assor (2001) note that Self-determination Theory is one of the most important theories in the field of motivation studies in general and especially in the field of motivation in education. Instead of relating to the two types of motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) as a dichotomy, this theory sees them as two extremes of a continuum relating to learning in which actions are perceived as autonomous and meaningful.

> *There are motives for behaviour which are located at the extreme of extrinsic motivation, there are those that are located at the extreme of intrinsic motivation, and there are those that are positioned at different points along the continuum between these extremes. The theory focuses on the pupil's perception of the reasons for his behaviour* (p. 20).

This perspective was applied in this research to understand the perceptions of the general school pupil population and the group of the agents of change. Interpreting the pupils' expressions, the researcher identified three aspects and seven dimensions as the domains within which motivation develops and used them to investigate the way in which the pupils' motivation was activated during and following the Art Projects.

One of the theories that underpinned the development of Self-determination Theory was that of DeCharms (1976), which relies on the conception that people have a need to be the 'origin' and the 'agent' of their actions. DeCharms discerned that the source of causation of human behaviour was either internal or external. An internal control point reflects the individual and behaviour is innovated and regulated by an internal personal power. This is a high level of self-determination where the individual is the source of the behaviour (DeCharms, 1968, p.272). Existence of an external causation point means that the source of an individual's behaviour can be found in the individual's external environment and that the individual is subject to the forces of the environment (ibid). This conceptualization underpinned the development of Self-determination Theory.

The Theory of Self-determination explains human motivation through the Humanist worldview (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2000a, 2000b). The founder of the Humanist approach, Maslow (1970) claimed that motivation for human behaviour stems from the need to satisfy innate universal internal needs, and that the extent to which these needs are satisfied determines the individual's ability to realise their personal potential and their sense of self-worth (Assor and Kaplan, 2001). Satisfaction of these needs enables the individual to form deep, high quality involvement in the actions in which they are involved. Suppression or avoidance of need satisfaction harms the quality of the individual's motivation and also sometimes reduces its strength.

This theory provides partial underpinning for the present research which, among other goals, examined how art projects allowed the participating children to improve their sense of belonging to the school and to the community of children in the school.

Achievement Goal Theory

One of the theoretical frameworks that has developed in the last three decades and has become an extremely important foundation for educational research and practice is known as Achievement Goal Theory (Ames, 1992). This theory focuses on different goals that school pupils have when they perform learning tasks in school. Achievement Goal Theory does not focus on 'what' the pupils are trying to do in class, but rather 'why' the pupils are doing what they do in class.

Goal-setting is considered an important cognitive process that influences motivation (Bandura, 1986; Locke and Latham, 1990; Schunk, 1989). This can be illustrated by considering what happens when pupils determine their own goals or receive goals from their teachers. It is reasonable to assume that these pupils will experience an initial sense of self-efficacy on achieving the goal. When the goals positively influence their performance they may also acquire commitment to attain the goals. During their work on the task, they participate in activity that they believe helps them to achieve their goals. They listen to the instructions, memorize information that they need to remember, invest efforts and persevere. Their self-efficacy is proved when the learners observe their progress towards the goal, testifying that they are becoming more skilled (Freeman, Elliott and Dweck, 1988).

The motivational benefit of goals depends on the characteristics of those goals: their proximity, uniqueness and difficulty. Proximate goals can be achieved within a short

distance or time. They foster efficacy and motivation more than distant goals. This is because pupils can more easily judge their progress towards accessible goals than they can for long-term goals. This is the reason that goals that include specific performance criteria improve efficacy and motivation more than general goals (as for example when children are told "*do your best*").

Schunk (1983) found that goals that were difficult to attain increased the motivation of children studying mathematics more than easy goals. Convincing information provided by teachers such as: "*You can solve 25 problems*" (ibid, p, 61), increased the sense of self-efficacy. Difficult goals accompanied by convincing remarks led to higher level skills. Schunk (ibid) opined that giving an opportunity to the pupils to determine their own goals would increase their commitment to goals.

A limitation of researches concerning goal-setting/goal-achievement is that they encounter one specific problem; they can only examine short-term influences. A research that focuses only on goal achievement, can examine basic processes, but cannot completely capture the character of motivation for learning (Schunk, 1983c).

Each of the Art Projects applied as an educational intervention programme in the present research was goal-directed. Due to its very nature, each project defined goals, subject-matter, strategies, contents, timetables, target population, participants and function-holders (Raz, 2004). The projects in this research emphasised goals and performance strategies learnt through a group of mediator pupils (agents of change). No emphasis was given to ability. This is the reason that all the children's works (products of the projects) without exception were displayed in the school's public areas as part of the project's design.

Maehr and Midgley (1991) say that from a utilitarian viewpoint it is logical to focus on the learning environment as the core for change. Different studies have been conducted in order to assess whether schools contain dimensions of a learning environment, which correspond with something that could be seen as motivation, or the pupils' learning achievements. Achievements were examined in the areas: English, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences (ibid). To the best of the present researcher's knowledge, no such studies have been conducted in the field of the Art or with regard to Art Projects.

This research intended to examine to what extent the shaping of the hidden curriculum within the learning environment by the pupils, would activate and improve their motivation

according to three functional aspects of seven different dimensions in which motivation is expressed. The dimensions studied were: Social Involvement, Capability, Freedom, Wellbeing, Belonging, and Autonomy. The functional aspects are: Emotion. Thinking and Performance

The School Climate as a Facilitator for Improvement of Pupils' Motivation

The concept of an environmental 'climate' was first employed in the field of social sciences by Lewin, Lippitt and Whit (1939). In their research on organisations, they used the term to describe a subjective 'feeling' or 'atmosphere' in the organisation. In the present study, the researcher chose to relate to research on organisational climate since the school is primarily an organisation, and by nature, organisations aspire to create a climate that engenders creativity[1] and motivation. The results of these organisational studies showed that different organisations established different types of climate. They demonstrated links between organisational climate and other factors such as: motivation, productivity, wellbeing and success. Ekvall (1983, 1987), a Swedish researcher, drew a distinction between organisational climate and an organisational culture. He saw organisational culture as something created to maintain welfare and tradition and to establish the organisation's values. In an educational environment, the organisational climate stems from characteristic behavioural patterns of all those who act within the organisation or who have a daily experiential contact with the area in which the school exists. The number or types of people involved in the school climate depends on the character of the school.

Treffinger, Isaksen and Dorva (1996) related to climate in the context of creativity and innovation and found that a creative climate is a complex combination of multiple factors. Some of these are found on a daily basis in relations with the family or friends and stimulate people to become 'fired-up'. People react differently to these factors on different occasions. The character of a school's climate is, to a large extent, determined and expressed by the school's willingness to consistently allow its pupils to be creative at any time and the provision of rewards for this creativity through assessment. Researchers note that schools,

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[1] 'Creativity' refers to a process, products and reactions, new and utile relations. 'Innovation' relates to creative implementation in different situations in a practical and applicable manner.

which consistently provide these factors, create a climate that generates the growth of creativity and innovation (ibid).

Personal and Community Empowerment

The teachers differ from the pupils not only due to their training in teaching, but also because they direct change that would not occur on its own (Shor and Freire, 1990). Motivation does not occur spontaneously, it is constructed and promoted. One of the tools used to construct motivation is the process itself.

During an empowerment process, both internal and external changes take place. The internal process is the person's sense or belief that they have the ability to make decisions and solve problems. An external change is expressed in the person's ability to act and apply practical knowledge, skills and training and other new resources acquired during the process (Parsons, 1988).

The process of empowerment means the transfer from a state of helplessness to a state where there is greater control of life, fate and environment. This process involves changes in three dimensions: people's feelings and abilities; the life of the collective to which they belong; and professional actions that intervene in the situation. Thus empowerment theory deals with three processes: individual empowerment, which is the personal, intimate change; community empowerment, which is the social change; and the empowering professional action which forms the functional and organisational change that encourages the fulfilment of both the aforesaid processes (ibid, p. 11). Sadan (1997) likens the term 'empowerment' to a power of attorney – authorisation to act in the name of the society, a kind of relegation of authority on the personal and social level (ibid. p. 12). Empowerment symbolises boundless energy. It is not assumed by force, it expresses an on-going and non-incidental social process. The creation of a community enables both social and personal empowerment. This theory corresponds with the aims of the Art Projects under research and provided justification for the introduction of the projects, as an option that could be used to strengthen the community of elementary school children.

Empowerment is an interactive process that takes place between a person and the surrounding environment. Shor and Freire (1990) explain that this process occurs through dialogue and that any attempt to attain this state, must take into consideration that pupils have a 'culture of silence'; however this is a characteristic that relates to high school pupils.

The present educational intervention programme employed Art Projects in an elementary school under the assumption that empowerment begins at an early age, and that early intervention was likely to reduce the risk of development of a 'culture of silence'. This study decided not to deal with the question of whether and to what extent the culture of silence exists in elementary school.

Education for Creation or Creativity

Active participation in the Art Projects meant that the pupils needed to use many skills: social skills (social involvement, consideration for others, cooperation), creative thinking skills and performance skills. During the projects the children were exposed to work techniques and learnt new ways to perform their tasks. Physically, the projects ultimately resulted in the production of physical environmental change, reflected in the participants' products, created as part of the projects. The research examined three aspects of the participants' creation process: thinking, emotion and performance. These aspects formed the field of action within which each pupil was able to perform their own creative work and thus improve their motivation. The pupils' performances in all these three aspects were examined in relation to each of seven dimensions, identified and defined by the research as spaces within which the expression of motivation is facilitated through work in the Art Projects (Belonging, Social Involvement, Internal Attentiveness, Capability, Wellbeing, Freedom and Autonomy).

Abinun (2002) says that the purpose of education for creation is to realise the best and the most of a person's potential, their finest skills and abilities. This education can be provided in the form of workshops for various types of art. He envisages that pupils should be given as many opportunities and stimuli as possible for creative activity, in order to enable them to achieve self-realisation, and depth and quality of intellectual and emotional experiences of different sorts.

Motivation to create change through Mediated Learning Theory and the Triad model

Feuerstein's (1988) Mediated Learning Theory is based on the assumption that people have the ability to change. This occurs when the intellect is engaged in thinking.

Mediated learning is the most outstanding expression of the meaning of human culture, that transfers not only quantities of knowledge and skills to the individual, but also (and primarily) provides ways of looking at phenomena and ways to search for the connections between them (ibid, p. 45).

According to Feuerstein (ibid.) learning is mediated through the human factor. Humans have knowledge, experience and direction that mediate the world for them, making it more comprehensible and giving it significance. In addition, direct stimuli are absorbed by people from every experience that they encounter; not only personal experiences but also general human experiences are absorbed. Thus the human being is exposed to a wide field of direct, informal experience. However, 'mediating agents' also significantly change the stimulus and transmit it to the recipient in a controlled manner. A 'mediating agent' is any intervening factor that acts so that *"a person can be equipped with essential thinking tools for proper adaptation to life, even when he lacks them to some extent"* (Feuerstein, 1999, p. 11). These agents engender structural changes responsible for the adaptation of the individual's thinking and behavioural processes.

Feuerstein sees man as a constantly changing being. One of the factors that engender change is motivation. This concept lies at the heart of human essence. The mediating agent serves as a motivational factor for the child's process of change.

Mediation is an action that can occur simultaneously in a particular field through the intervention of intermediary mediating agents trained for this objective even if they are sometimes of the same age and character as the individual who absorbs the knowledge. If this assessment is applied in the field of the present research, the elementary school, it becomes feasible to train pupils to act as mediating agents for other children. Motivation for change occurs when individuals understand that they have the ability to make it happen despite severe physical, sensory and mental limitations (Feuerstein, 1998).

Modes of Existence: The Triad Model

This research was inspired by the Triad Model, so called because of a third existence mode: 'To do' that was added by Professor Rand (2009) to the existence modes that Fromm designated as: 'To Have' and 'To Be'.

This third mode is also referred to as a person's 'inclination'. Pupils do not often find themselves in a situation that allows them to accomplish 'doing' and when they do, they act

according to dictates predetermined by the practices of the education system using traditional methods that do not allow or create conditions for doing out of motivation and meaning.

The Triad model is based on the assumption that Erich Fromm's dual model (Fromm, 1976) is deficient and does not give expression to the entire range of human behaviours. Each individual has basic predispositions with their own unique levels of strength and direction and these qualities reflect that person's substance. These predispositions are employed as sources of energy to mobilise the individual and guide behaviour. The directions of the predispositions are not content-dependent and remain relatively constant over time. They are primarily reflected in the quality of the individual's actions, and in the manner of action chosen by the individual to achieve objectives (Rand and Skolnick, 2009).

Positive Psychology and the School Climate

Positive psychology provides a clear conceptual frame, within which it is possible to understand the findings obtained from this research regarding the participants' (agents of change and entire school pupil population) sense of mental and social wellbeing This includes an examination of the identified dimensions: Belonging, Capability, Freedom, Autonomy, Social Involvement, Thinking, Internal Attentiveness within which the participants motivation was expressed and the facilitation of their motivation to learn and create through the Art Projects. According to Seligman (2004, 2005) metal wellbeing is linked with social involvement, he explains: "*the 'happiest' people were distinguished by a single matter from the average people and from unhappy people: they enjoyed a rich and satisfying social life. The happiest people spent more time than the others in social relations*" (p. 59). As a result of their 'mixing' with others (ibid), happy people reveal altruistic tendencies. Seligman (ibid) describes his surprise on discovering the link between mood and help for others. His research findings indicated without exception that happy people are more inclined to help others. In Seligman's opinion, when people are happy they are less focused on themselves and more focused on their environment and want to share their good luck with others, even strangers.

The Flow

The Flow Theory of Csikszentmihalyi (1998, 2008) was the result of many years of research. Flow Theory can explain how the Art Projects employed in the positive intervention programme provided the conditions that helped the children to enter into a 'flow' state.

According to Csikszentmihalyi (1975) 'flow' is an *"optimal experience … the holistic experience that people feel when they act with total involvement"* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975: 36). He also indicates that the phenomenological experience of flow is a powerful motivating force. Flow occurs when individuals are fully involved in an activity; they tend to find the activity enjoyable and intrinsically rewarding. However, whatever the original motivation for playing chess or playing the stock market, or going out with a friend, such activities will not continue unless they are enjoyable or unless people are motivated by extrinsic rewards (Csikszentmihalyi, ibid). He also indicates that the phenomenological experience of flow is a powerful motivating force. Flow occurs when individuals are fully involved in an activity; they tend to find the activity enjoyable and intrinsically rewarding.

Wellbeing

The term 'Wellbeing' refers to a general perception that emphasises the search for what is good, and not prevention of what is bad, in various life domains. Different approaches regarding this issue have been developed in the fields of social sciences and health. One of the predominant views is the Salutogenic Approach of Antonovsky (described in Sagi, Or and Anson, 1998).

The flow theory of Csikzentmihalyi led to the formation of Antonovsky's theory of salutogenesis (Sagi, Or and Anson, 1998). This sequence is reflected in the conclusion that children who enter into a state of flow during creative work which affords a challenge, and the use and integration of existing and acquired skills and meaning, are in effect in a state of Wellbeing.

Antonovsky's model of salutogenesis developed from rejection of the pathological model that defined the term 'health' as the absence of disease. The salutogenic approach assumes that everyone lives in a world of continual unavoidable stimuli and pressures and attempts to identify psychological strengths that help people to cope with these pressures. With regard to infants in an elementary school, any teacher can testify how stress disrupts and undermines the children's composure and to what extent this is expressed physically. The present study reflects the fact that motivation was facilitated through the Art Projects, enabling the children to be in the Flow. The Flow was a place where children could 'recharge their batteries' (internal resources) in order to continue to function under conditions of daily life stress.

The Context of the School Art Projects: An educational intervention programme to facilitate motivation in elementary school children in Israel

The Art Projects were not intended to meet all the children's needs but rather created a tangible set of boundaries, enabling all the school's children's to recognise and reinforce their strengths and increase their awareness of their obligations as an individual and as a member of the school community. The Projects also helped them to reflect on and internalise their consideration and respect for the public area as if it was their own private concern with the objective of creating a more tolerant and patient society. The rationale underlying the educational intervention programme recognised the importance of facilitating motivation in children to affiliate with the school and the society of their schoolmates, towards social interaction by learning and the experiencing the significance of boundaries and authority. Those participant children, chosen as agents of change within the school community in curricular and extra-curricular contexts, acquired special status among their peers and the special training programme they underwent and their experiences in the Art Projects helped them to discover their personal strengths, through the promotion of a sense of capability and the development of creative thought.

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A Mixed-Methods Approach

An on-going debate has been waged for more than one hundred years between qualitative and quantitative researchers. Each side sticks to its own paradigms and both declare that the two cannot be mixed (Howe, 1988). The difference between the two has sometimes been so great that education researchers, who wanted to conduct research, were often required to choose sides. *'The two dominant research paradigms have resulted in two research cultures'* (Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2004, p. 14) one professing the superiority of *'deep, rich observational data'* and the other the virtues of *'hard, generalizable…data'* (Sieber, mentioned in Onwuegbuzie and Johnson, 2004). Alpert (2010) explains that the mixed methods approach (combining qualitative and quantitative approaches) enables researchers to expand their tools and observation points and to develop new viewpoints and interpretive

bases of qualitative research, enabling a multi-dimensional and multi-system investigation. In conclusion, the mixed methods approach was found to be the most appropriate methodology for this study aiming to present a robust body of data through triangulation of data from the different research tools that would assist in advancing the conclusions and raising the generalisation potential of the data.

The Mixed-Methods used here include: Action Research (as an Educational Research)**,** Case Study, Qualitative Research, Quantitative Research, Triangulation.

<u>Research Tools</u>

Research Stage	Tools Employed
Stage 1	• Two Structured Questionnaires for Agents of Change- Graph analysis • Open Interview, for Agents of Change (First group) • Semi-structured Questionnaire for Teacher -Graph analysis • Researcher's Dairy
Stage 2	• Open-ended questionnaire – 12 teachers • Interviews with 2 groups of agents of change - 23 pupils • In-depth Interviews - 4 teachers • In-depth interviews - 6 Agents of Change • Semi- structured interviews with focus group -18 pupils • Closed-ended questionnaire with 115 pupils (experiment group) • Closed-ended questionnaire with 72 pupils (control group) • In-Depth interview with principal • Researcher's Diary

Qualitative Research Methods

<u>Interviews</u>

According to Farr (1982, in Bauer and Gaskell, 2010) the qualitative interview is *'a technique or method intended to determine or discover that there are perceptions or points of view of events that are different from those of the initiator of the interview*' (p.49).

Types of interviews

Creswell (2009) notes three types of interview: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and open interviews, all of which are directed by guiding questions.

1. **The Structured interview** – This is built on a pre-determined series of questions. In the structured interview, the researcher must adhere to the wording and order of the questions. There can be no changes as a result of stimuli received during the course of the interview. This is a formal interview, occasionally essential to ensure uniformity of the subject matter discussed in all interviews. This type of interview has the highest predictable validity.

2. **The Open interview** – This is not built on pre-determined questions, but instead begins with a general question and flows with the interaction. In this interview the reaction of the interviewee determines how the interview will develop. The researcher determines the order of the questions in light of the proceedings. This type of interview resembles a conversation more than a structured and formal interview. The researcher focuses on a number of general issues in order to assist the interviewees in revealing their stories and presenting their meanings. This type of interview is called a non-structured (open) interview.

3. **The Semi-structured interview** – In this type of interview the researcher has several pre-determined questions but he is free to change their order and to add new questions and/or follow-up questions according to the development of the interview. This is the most common form of interview as it combines the flexibility of the open interview with the framework of the structured interview.

An additional form of interview is the Context Interview – often integrated in a data-collection process as a component of the on-going process (Shkedi, 2003).

The researcher used two diaries as tools for data-collection. A Researchers' Diary is essentially a record of field notes recorded during participant observation and including the researcher's reflections on the intervention.

Quantitative Research Method: The Closed-ended Questionnaire

The statements that comprised the first part of this questionnaire emerged from the analysis of the content of the pupils' comments during the personal and group interviews and related to three dimensions: Belonging, Wellbeing, and Social Involvement. In addition the researcher added consideration of four aspects: Freedom, Emotion, Thinking and Performance. The analysis and the consequent division into dimensions and aspects were conducted by entering the pupils' comments into an analytical table in the appropriate places. The researcher then applied three criteria to establish whether congruence could be found between the dimensions and the aspects. These criteria were: Autonomy, Internal Attentiveness and Capability. A comparison was made between the analyses of the different data (the interviews with the head-teacher, with the focus groups and groups of agents of change) to discover differences and similarities between them, and whether there were repetitions in order to find representative statements for the quantitative questionnaire. The researcher was assisted in this process by the comparative weights of the pupils' statements assessed by counting the number of statements appearing under each dimension and aspect. The chosen statements reflected the children's thoughts and were appropriate for their age and situation as pupils etc. The researcher identified seventeen statements that were essentially the comments made by the pupils, which served as the basis for the entire questionnaire composed of twenty-two statements. The closed-ended questionnaire was built according to the categories that resulted from the analysis of the data from the qualitative stage, and was validated in nine stages. The ninth stage was validated by an expert statistician and approved for its use with the studied children.

Triangulation as a Data Analysis Strategy

The researcher decided to use triangulation as a research strategy for data analysis since the technique of triangulation cross-examines several sources in order to identify and indicate a specific point as the research target. Additionally quantitative data were collected and triangulated with qualitative data and to reinforce the validity of the qualitative research

findings. Cohen and Manion (1986) note that in social sciences *'triangulation attempts to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint'* (p. 254).

FINDINGS EMERGING FROM THE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

In order to determine whether the motivation of children in an elementary school was promoted through the Art Projects that constituted an educational intervention programme it was necessary to locate the arena within which motivation is expressed. Content analysis of the first qualitative part of the research identified seven dimensions in which it was possible to examine whether and to what extent the motivation of the pupils had advanced. The identified dimensions were: Social Involvement, Capability, Freedom, Wellbeing, Belonging, Internal Attentiveness and Autonomy. The existence of these dimensions was expressed in three functional aspects of the pupils' existence: Thinking, Emotion and Performance. The extent of expression of these dimensions and aspects was measured through the quantitative tool created by the researcher (the questionnaire).

Major findings were:

1. A significant difference was found in the perception of the term 'belonging' by children (pupils) and adults (teachers).

2. The school can help to reduce and prevent the prevalence of social gaps between the pupils, if it adopts the Art Projects as a part of the school culture for the general school population.

The Agents of Change were able to facilitate Motivation only at the level of the Reverberation (see p.24).

Conclusions regarding the Activation of Motivation through the Art Projects

Two central conclusions emerged from the research in relation to the activation of motivation through education in the language of art and creativity and together they constitute a novel approach to the issue of motivation.

The First Conclusion indicates that although the Art Projects constituted an intervening factor for the creation of change, the active factor within the Art Projects was the agent of

change. The quantitative findings indicated that the agents of change successfully mediated the 'reverberation' part of the process and this part of the process is subject to strong influence by the external activating entity. In contrast, the meta-reverberation part of the process necessitates the individual's personal understanding of these processes as they reverberate within them over time. This reverberation eventually turns the experiences into memories that constitute a significant factor in the individual's and the community's learning and development processes. Meta-reverberation can be seen as the location in which memories are created as a result of the internalisation of experiences.

The Second Conclusion indicates that motivation is an energetic force, a potential reaction that every person possesses. Motivation is not only a personality factor or attitude or an internal content or a drive but rather it constitutes a range of possible phenomena waiting to be activated. The activation of motivation can only happen when an outside intervening factor (stimulus) appears that is considered relevant by the individual, group or community, and then a response is aroused.

The research examined four research questions and three hypotheses. The research questions emerged during the first year of the research and they reflect a qualitative orientation. The hypotheses were derived from the research questions and rely on insights from the qualitative research (Levine, 2010). The hypotheses grew with the progress of the research and the increased development of the researcher's research thinking and reflected the understanding that it was necessary to add quantitative research in order to fully comprehend the multi-layered nature of the research in its second year. It is noted that there are no clear boundaries for the findings. In other words, the findings are sometimes relevant for more than one question or hypotheses.

The thesis presents one novel finding, which emerged from the field work with the pupils, and which is significant in order to understand the complexity of the research since it reflects a different angle of interpretation concerning the different situations and contexts in the research. It also clarifies the way in which we, as adults engaged in education, understand and perceive the pupils' needs.

The discussion of the findings is composed of two parts: the first part discusses the qualitative findings and responds to the research questions. The second part discusses the quantitative research findings and responds to the research hypotheses.

1. In what manner can an art project (as an Educational Intervention Program) facilitate motivation in elementary school children in the following dimensions: Belonging, Social Involvement, sense of Capability, Thinking, Emotion and Performance?

2. In what manner can an art project (as an Educational Intervention Program) stimulate a sense of Wellbeing, Freedom, Autonomy and Internal Attentiveness in elementary school children?

3. How can an art project (as an Educational Intervention Program) contribute to a change and improvement in the school climate and implicitly in the hidden curriculum?

4. How can an art project (as an Educational Intervention Program) empower a group of children to act as agents of change among the general community of children in the school?

The Research Hypotheses

1. The arts project (employed as an educational intervention programme) can improve elementary school children's motivation in the following dimensions: Belonging, Social Involvement, and Capability through the aspects of Thinking, Emotion and Performance

2. The Art Projects (employed as an educational intervention programme) can create a sense of Wellbeing, Freedom, Autonomy and Internal Attentiveness among elementary school children

3. The arts project (employed as an educational intervention programme) can contribute to change and improvement of the school climate, by facilitating a sense of Wellbeing.

Summative Findings for the Research Questions and Hypotheses

Finding P: A comparison conducted between the experimental group and the control group from a school that had not experienced the intervention programme to examine whether the Art Projects (the independent variable) constituted a factor that improved the primary school

pupils' motivation (the dependent variable) as expressed in seven dimensions and three aspects, found that **a reduction in motivation was seen in the control group from Year 4 in the direction of Year 6 (i.e. less motivation in the older children)**, **although in the experimental group (in the school where the projects were applied) motivation improved in Year 5**. Nevertheless a clear drop in motivation was evident in both groups in Year 6.

Two aspects of this finding necessitate explanation:

1. Why was a reduction in motivation recorded for Year 6 in the quantitative findings, while an improvement was recorded in the qualitative findings? How can these contradictory findings be reconciled?

2. Why was it that an improvement in motivation occurred particularly in Year 5 but a reduction in motivation took place in Year 6?

The work of Katz, Kaplan and Gueta (2010) was consulted to relate to the first question, although their research deals with differences in motivation between elementary and middle school children (regarding curriculum subjects). The experimental group of the present study included children from Years 1 to 6. The Year 6 children were considered as the senior pupils in the school. They and their environment considered them not only as the most mature pupils but also as those who *'will go up to middle school next year'*. The qualitative and quantitative findings for the perception of the dimension of 'belonging' by the pupils of Year 6 are in line with those in the research by Katz et al. (ibid.) noting that although the psychological needs of pupils in Year 4 do not differ from those of Year 8, the teachers of Year 4 are perceived by the pupils as supporting these needs more than the teachers of pupils in Year 8. The conclusions of their research emphasise the need to pay greater attention in the older year groups to the pupils' emotional-psychological needs. Understanding for these needs should improve the pupils' sense of Wellbeing and create internal motivation for studies.

The conclusions of the research of Katz et al. (ibid) are in line with the present research findings that did not find any significant appearance of motivation in the Emotional aspect, and therefore indicate the need for greater attention to the pupils' emotional-psychological needs.

Finding Q: The qualitative findings show that **the agents of change in Year 6 do not exhibit a decrease in motivation, but exactly the opposite. Motivation grew and did not differ from that of the agents of change from years 4 and 5. However, the quantitative findings indicated a decrease in motivation for all the school's pupils in Year 6 including the agents of change.**

The explanation for this finding can be found in the pre-projects training programmes that the agents of change underwent with the constant attendance of the researcher as their group guide, with the support of the school management and the teaching staff and no less important with the obvious support and respect that they received from the other pupils in the school. All these factors provided a holistic response for the psychological needs of the agents of change from Year 6 and created motivation for the agents to give something back to the school and to leave their mark before leaving the school.

The answer to the second question (noted above in relation to *Finding P*): why was it that an improvement in motivation occurred particularly in Year 5 but a reduction in motivation took place in Year 6, relates to the fact that for the agents of change from Year 5, this was their second year of exposure to the Art Projects at the conceptual and the practical levels. Some of them had already been agents of change in Year 4 so that this was their second year in the role. Others had participated in the Art Projects in Year 4 as part of the general pupil population and this was their first year as agents of change, in which they had learnt to understand, experience and practise the change in the school whether they had participated as part of the general population or as agents of change. In addition, during the quantitative data collection, the agents of change from Year 5 constituted 38.6% of all the pupils in their year group (total number: 14 agents of change). Their experience and familiarity with the Art Projects together with their relatively large number in comparison with the other agents of change from years 4 and 6, (from Year 4 – total number: 6 agents of change constituting 9% of the year group: from Year 6 total number: 6 agents of change constituting 10.7% of the year group) may provide the explanation for this finding.

To summarise this finding: **a statistical interaction was demonstrated between the experimental group and the control group, indicating that the experimental group underwent a more positive change and this was demonstrated most strongly in the results for Year 5**.

This finding was the result of analysis of the quantitative findings from the questionnaire. The questionnaire was strengthened by application to a research group and also to a control group (from a school that had not experienced the intervention programme). Analysis of the findings was conducted through a two-directional analysis (ANOVA) performed for the different analyses in order to answer three questions:

1. Was there a difference between the experimental group and the control group with regard to the particular dimension?

2. Was there a difference between Years 4, 5 and 6 with regard to the particular dimension?

3. Was there an interaction between the Year and the group in relation to the particular dimension (Interaction = alteration in structure of the pattern in the experimental group in comparison to the control group)?

Significant differences were found between the year groups but not between the experimental and control groups. Thus in relation to those dimensions for which significant results were obtained it is reasonable to assume that similar results would be achieved in the coming years in the school with similar data.

The main conclusion emerging from this discussion is that (in relation to the school where the intervention programme operated) the **model of agents of change who came from and acted with the elementary school pupils facilitated an improvement in motivation through the setting of overt goals for change with the participation and inclusion of all the pupils, and with the involvement of the school management and the school's teaching staff.**

The Model of 'Motivation Reverberation between Two Complementary Poles'

As a result of the research and the analysis of its findings and conclusions, the researcher was able to develop a model that describes and explains 'motivation reverberating between two complementary poles', a new conceptualisation of the processes involved in the development of motivation facilitated by education Intervention program through the Art Projects mediated by the work of groups of pupils acting as agents of change.

The model of 'Motivation Reverberation between Two Complementary Poles' explains the development of motivation as a potential energy that can develop into an influential force in cognitive and non-cognitive contexts within each individual. The model shows how this energy is activated by an external intervention and then reverberates between two extreme poles due to the individual's response to the intervention. As the motivation begins to reverberate, it forms a distinct character and characteristics reflecting the nature of the intervention and the context in which the motivation is activated. During an individual's lifetime, they develop a wide spectrum of motivation types, in response to different stimuli (interventions) and contexts that they encounter which activate the motivation.

<u>Reverberation</u> carries auto-reverberation through the different dimensions and aspects that influence the way in which motivation is activated and promoted, since reverberation shapes the meaning of creation of change for the individual.

<u>Auto-reverberation</u> is an experiential state of being[2] that only occurs if there is a response by the individual to the reverberation that stems from the intervention. A response can only happen when the individual identifies meaning that they feel is relevant for them.

Motivation reverberates through seven dimensions and three aspects, that allow the individual to develop meaning for the response to intervention and thus to create change. The model that this research offers reflects two stages of reverberation that occur during the process in which motivation begins to move from the intervention pole to the respondent pole and then resonates between the two poles. The reverberation exists at two levels:

- The basic level, at which reverberation is expressed as something concrete and sensory/physical, visible to the eye and the result of performance in the field.

- The second level is higher – meta-reverberation. The reverberation at this level is influenced by the extent of response to the basic level of reverberation and by the mediation of the intervention to the individual at this stage, between the basic physical acts and emotional experience. In the present study, <u>meta-reverberation</u> represented the pupil's reflection concerning the reverberation achieved through the

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[2] An 'experiential state of being' is defined here as a state in which meaning is attributed to the individual's actions, for example: "I play a part in the creation of change and I am myself a part in this change. I become the change ".

mediation of the agents of change. This reflection enables consciousness (personal or group consciousness) regarding the responsive process, to become the object of observation and analysis, generating personal development through the discovery of personal or group strengths, and this is turn leads to an assimilation of the process, transforming the motivation into an experience retained as memory.

Motivation is fully activated if a reverberation is created. The reverberation of motivation begins to resound the moment that the pole of the auto-reverberation, Respondent motivation identifies the Intervention motivation and begins to react. The strength of the reverberation gradually builds up as it traverses the space between the seven dimensions and three aspects. This reverberation takes place on two levels throughout the motivation development process: reverberation and meta-reverberation as described above.

SUMMATION

The research revealed that the process of activation of the motivation was identical in both arenas of activity: the first the activation of motivation in a small group (the agents of change) as distinct from the entire school pupil population. The second is the arena of the entire school community population as distinct from the individual pupil. It seems that the activation of motivation assumes a similar pattern in both these arenas: there is an educational intervention employing Art Projects that contains energy and power, which can potentially be realised (intervention motivation) by all members of the school. Similarly, there is energy and power that can potentially be realised as a response to the intervention (responsive motivation). **It is therefore possible to say: the Art Projects performed as an intervention programme, effected a change in the school since they activated the pupils' motivation for change through the mediation of children appointed as agents of change.**

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