

An Analysis of the Life Experiences of Educators in Disadvantaged Areas in the Online Creativity Workshop

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Extended Abstract

Aim

The purpose of this study was to assess and analyze the experiences of teachers in disadvantaged areas who participated in the virtually delivered Creative Instructor Training Workshop. Their experiences with the Creativity Workshop were reviewed and evaluated using three domains of the learning model: knowledge, attitude and skill.

Methodology

The study population was all participants in the part-time creative instructor training courses of the Institute of Free Creative Higher Education in Tehran in 2021. The present sample consisted of 14 participants of the Creative Instructor Training Workshop who were selected through purposive sampling. There were 10 women and 4 men. All of them were taught in different areas with different students from disadvantaged areas. The educators from disadvantaged areas were those who volunteered from all over Iran in the “Yari Rasan Yar Network” which works for working children and underprivileged and damaged areas and deals with training and education issues. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews in an interactive Zoom context and analyzed using the content analysis method. Validity was assessed using peer reviews by colleagues and participants, and reliability was assessed by coding the text of three interviews by unknown individuals outside the study.

Findings

Results in the form of 383 codes, 33 primary subthemes and finally 16 recurring subthemes reflect the dimensions and quality of training for educators in disadvantaged areas in the online creativity workshop. Recurring subthemes were: Reinventing the definition of creativity, how to retrieve the definitions of the components of divergent thinking, knowing the characteristics of the creative class and identifying barriers to creativity (from Question 1), motivation to participate in the workshop, relationship between imagination and creativity, comparing attitudes toward the use of creativity before and after the workshop, attitudes toward mental frameworks and stereotypes and the role of creativity in disempowerment (from question 2), application of creativity techniques in personal and professional life and developing ideas for applying creative skills in disadvantaged areas (from question 3), evaluation of content, evaluation of films, evaluation of effective sentences, evaluation of class interactions, and weaknesses and strengths of the workshop. The results showed that the instructors were very satisfied with the workshop and that their knowledge, attitude, and skills in the field of creativity changed significantly after attending the workshop.

Conclusion

The results of this research show that despite the restrictive environment and culture in teaching children and youth from disadvantaged areas, especially in the era of ovid proliferation and virtualization of education, the educators from disadvantaged areas who participated in the creativity workshop finally tried to expand and improve their knowledge, attitude, and skills in the field of creativity, achieve valuable success for themselves and their students. Among the greatest achievements of this workshop were the increase of teachers' self-confidence and the improvement of their individual lifestyles, which had a significant impact on their teaching style and creative performance.

Keywords: Creativity, Creativity Instructor Training Workshop, Instructors' Life Experiences.