

# EMPOWERING SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH CREATIVITY USING DIGITAL MEDIA

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**ABSTRACT:** *In order to foster wise humanizing creativity; understanding and application of research to creativity should be addressed to determine how the young generation in educational institutions can be empowered through the use of digital media in actual classroom environment. So, the present paper aims to present arguments around creativity and related concerns within ethical domain of society to demonstrate that children and young people can be empowered through their involvement and use of digital media to stimulate and boost up a wise humanizing creativity (WHC) to confront the prevailing conditions and to promote moral understanding that has the tendency for peaceful revolution. It can be asserted that WHC and creative emotional reasoning (CER) might be integrated in constructing teaching learning plans for high possibility classrooms where young student community under the given sources and facilities can learn efficiently and become innovative, visionary and agents of change who can imagine creatively, think logically, act rationally, not only for the solution of emerging problems for themselves and for the society at large, but also to tackle the problems world is facing forever in order to shape the world quite differently. Though this implantation and resultantly revolution of digital media seems more ideal than functional in actual situation yet it can be brought into practice if teachers, students and other agents of change work jointly, effectively with a great deal of patience and persistence.*

**Key Words:** WHC, empowerment, engagement, digital media, ethical awareness, CER, teaching and learning, problem solving, high possibility classroom

## INTRODUCTION

The present era is the age of digital media. People spend more time on different digital media than accompanying their family members and friends. Similarly, the children of new generation and young people are also in the same race. During most of their leisure time and sometimes while being awkwardly busy in everyday activities they are found to be engaged in their mobile phones or tablets either playing games or using social media to keep themselves in contact with the world over. They have become so addicted that they do not want to get away for a single moment except the moment they enter into classrooms, they get disconnected which makes them bored or sometime irritating. As a result, they cannot concentrate on their studies. As we know that comparatively in less developed societies we have traditional classrooms where teachers have to cover a lot of syllabus and students have to do a great deal of readings and writing stuff and have to undergo different types of assessments tasks which make them burdened, monotonous and resultantly they feel frustrated. Here comes the time when they want to escape from this thwarting situation and go back to their own "media world" where they have full freedom of doing whatever they want, in a way they want.

A lot of efforts have been made to seek the connotation between creativity and learning after [1] gave the notion that education has not only the potential to nurture the creativity but also has the ability to grow more and more. Researches such as [2, 3] suggest that these efforts ended up by giving very useful ways of activating and developing creativity. Its importance in lifelong learning can be judged as [4] put creativity in their new taxonomy of educational objectives on the top of the list to be achieved. Creativity can be nurtured by the help of adults, not by enforcing but just cooperating with children [5]. This support is so crucial that children would not be able to grow these hidden possibilities without timely support from their families.

[6], who is leading researcher in the field, describes that digital media proves to be very helpful in generating so many possibilities for children without undergoing much trouble. [7] explains that when children work in digital setting like playing games, making their own content and interacting with other people through social media, it makes them think in a quite different ways and allow them to solve their problems by using their own creative means. In other words, this digital media "empowers" them to do the things in their own way. Moreover, [8, 9] argues that it not only makes them creator but also users of all the different forms of their work which they produce individually, collectively and gives them opportunity to disseminate to the wider community. Also, [10, 6, 11] state that possibility thinking is the core element of creativity among children irrespective of how they are working, individually or in a group. It is produced by people in all activities related to learning by just posing the question in different ways. [11] includes 4P's, these are: plurality, possibility, participation and playfulness. When combined, these 4P's, provide prospects which have the power of changing "what is to what might be" in almost all the settings specifically in school environment. They also give voice to develop the educational prospects by facilitating creativity not within themselves but also with the other people.

The prevailing situation compels us to reframe our education system, the system in which students think themselves and take initiative to own that new system which should allow constructive use of digital media world. The possibility thinking cultivated and mixed two concepts of creativity. One is "humanizing creativity" which is based on compassion and shared values. Keeping in mind this ethical element along with the sense of responsibility that the decisions which are being made should have positive results and they have wise impact on the community in general is called "wise humanizing creativity" [12, 13]. It would be the system having "digital media" which can be best run by using "wise humanizing creativity (WHC)" which is based on "creative

emotional reasoning (CER)” and “co-creativity”. WHC with CER and Co-creativity works on five elements: the first one is to generate the ideas having “ethical impact”, then to “involve in dialogue” to resolve the conflicts, next to take charge of doing the things in their own creative way and “having control”, the next step is to get them “engaged in action” by immersing them in the environment by taking risks and lastly by introducing “intervention” which will open new ways and force them to reframe their decisions [14].

This is the technique by which we can increase the interest of our students in their educational system because it empowers them to make the decisions and brings out solutions of many existing problems of community by using their very own digital media in their own creative ways. It makes them responsible for their own decisions and creative tasks. They can work in groups, can involve many other people in different places, can think of many possibilities by sharing each other’s ideas and then get involved in the situation by deeply immersing themselves in the virtual or digital environment to be engaged in the action process. In this way, they will be in the process of “co-creativity”. The biggest trait of this system is not only to empower them to take out only the solutions, but the solutions which have the greater ethical impact on their community and this is the time when they enter into the “journey of becoming” by first involving themselves in a change they wanted to bring in the society and would be able to bring “quiet revolution” afterwards [15].

This empowerment can further be enhanced by using another very useful technique called creative emotional reasoning (CER) where their creative process even works better when they will be interrupted by “digital or tactile” random word or an image which will create more “possibility thinking” among them and their thinking become non-linear because that intervention will force them to think in lateral ways and disrupt their pattern of thoughts. These game computations will reframe the problems and their solutions [14]. Thus, in a way, the use of digital media can break the status quo of our educational system. The students will have their best buddies in their classrooms too to get benefitted not only themselves, but also for the classmate and community to large extent. By adopting this digital media, teachers will be able to empower the children and young people to confront the problems and find out the way to solve them in a very creative way but at the same time having an ethical impact on community.

This ethical awareness is a key to whole process of “journey of becoming” and “quiet revolution” because when they create or make any decision, they take themselves as a creator or maker and become responsible for the consequences [15]. That is why the change process first starts from them and ultimately spread in class and then in community at large. Wise humanizing creativity (WHC) and Creative emotional reasoning (CER) were almost new concepts to me before this seminar but now they are no more. As far as we perceive, they are the extensions of creativity and a step forward not to be just a creative person, but a person whose creativity can have positive impact on community as well. It is a process by which students can work in groups or teams, share each other ideas, and make combined efforts to bring about creative solutions to the existing problems which are not only

beneficial for them, but equally valuable for the system of education which turn them into creators of the their own world and the whole community.

As we got to know that WHC works on four basic elements: ethics and impact, dialogue, control and engaged action [14]. These elements if use in classrooms can make students learn well, be creative, productive and also able to make them thinking citizens in a pretty good manner and ultimately turns classrooms, the place for “high possibility”. These elements can be incorporated in teaching learning process by the teachers by throwing a problem to them and force them to find out the solutions in a creative manner. Students will be able to go through the journey of becoming an enthusiastic creator of new world when they will be confronting a problem which is already existing and harming the community. They are the people now who have to create new ideas and solutions by immersing themselves in situation, thinking deeply, sharing their thoughts by discussing the best possible solutions, having control to change the situations according to their own creative ways and then finally bringing out a solid and practical world where they would be able to create ideas out of the box which can be practical to implement and have the positive impact on society by providing the new solutions [16, 17].

In this way they will try to change the community by changing themselves first, going through the whole process of change and this small change “Quiet revolution” will ultimately bring the “Big change” in community at the end. In addition to WHC, the other technique of CER will be very useful when combined with WHC to get “high possibility” classrooms because the core idea of this technique is to “disrupt” or “intervene” what the students are already thinking and in this way enabling them to think out of routine or in a very different way than they were thinking earlier [14]. In this way, they would be able to create more possible solutions of the problem and reframe it in a new context with a new mind set. A teacher can use three different modes to stimulate these interventions which might be semantic, diagrammatic or emotive way of thinking. It means that by introducing a single word, image or any emotive thought in the middle of their thinking process, teacher can be able to shake them and force them to think in a different way than they were thinking previously and thus enable them to become the potential thinkers by having different emerging possibilities and developing capacities (C. Walsh, personal communication, May 4, 2014).

## CONCLUSION

As a conclusion on empowering children and young people through their engagements and use of digital media, we can confidently assert that the techniques reported in the article can be used in classrooms because we have practically executed these techniques in our seminar where students worked in groups with a problem, discussed reasons, found so many ways to cope up with that problem in a very creative and enthusiastic way. However, one thing about its implementation is that the teacher must be aware that it is time taking process for getting students involved in the endeavor which can then bring desired result. There is agreeat possibility that in the beginning, teachers will not be able to

get the desired results, ut they would be able to get themselves in practice and hopefully after twice or thrice attempts, students will be able to work on the similar lines what the teachers want from them to do. Hence, it requires a great deal of patience and persistence, both from teachers and for students.

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