



## Increasing children's creativity in outdoor kindergarten

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**ABSTRACT:** Childhood, as the first and most significant period of a person's life, is the founder of children's abilities and creativity (between 2 and 10 years of age). During these years, the child is highly affected by the environment and shows a high level of curiosity about the surrounding environment. Due to the presence of a majority of children aged 2 to 6 years in kindergartens and the need to pay serious attention to their open spaces for the education and development of children's creativity, this article explains the factors affecting the growth of children's creativity in the open spaces of kindergartens. In this regard, some of the effective factors in the development of children's creativity that should be considered in the design of the open spaces of these buildings are provided using the descriptive survey research method. The statistical population of the study included educators and kindergarten staff. Structural equations were used in SPSS and AMOS software to analyze the data. According to the results of the study, it can be stated that the development of children's creativity will not be possible only through educational programs but also through flexible spaces, using natural elements, and children's participation, which will also promote children's creativity. In this regard, the component of children's participation is the most effective in the growth and development of children's creativity. After that, space flexibility, natural elements, space playability, color and light, kind, sense of security, and space legibility, respectively, have the highest effect on the development of children's creativity.

**KEYWORDS:** Creativity, Open space, Child, Kindergarten.

**INTRODUCTION:** Childhood is the first and most significant period of a person's life. In this period, the structure of human personality and behavior is formed. It determines the fate of the person (Makarau et al., 2022). The significance of this period in the formation of personality, education, and acquisition of knowledge is so much that, based on the Prophet, the acquisition of knowledge in childhood is like a sign carved on a stone (Mirzabeigi, 2011). Several architectural studies have shown that the environment can affect human behavior and performance and provide the conditions to guide them in a specific direction (Hesami et al., 2022; Sedaghati, 2022; Alexander & Joshua, 2021; Bynum et al., 2021; Sebastien, 2020; Albertini, 2021). Education experts have considered the child as a product of the interaction of nature-education, heredity-environment, and nature-experience (Shoari Nejad, 2019: 3).

Knowing that taking care of children is a social issue, a significant difference was formed from terms such as keeping the child quiet or taking care of the child (Nora et al., 2022), and the need to pay attention to the special environments of children was determined. The

significance of the effect of society on the formation of children's growth has not been hidden for other thinkers such as Maxwell (Gabriel, 2017). Amabile argues that the environment plays a more significant role than personality factors in creativity and considers it much easier to change environmental factors than individual characteristics and talents.

We have seen worrying changes in children's daily habits in recent years. Children participate less in games and free activities in open spaces or public spaces and spend most of their time at home, schools, and extracurricular classes under the direct supervision of parents. This change in the life habits of Iran's children, which is taking place simultaneously with the global changes, has caused the emergence of a new approach at the international level, namely "modern childhood (Taghizadeh et al., 2023). Movements with the slogan of "paying attention to the comfort of children" have repeatedly stated in recent years. More than half of the children of industrialized societies live in cities that are not compatible with their physical and psychological conditions. The outcome of this limitation is that the majority of children grow up in environments that

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