

Developing Children's Creativity Through the Art of Crafts

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ABSTRACT

Art is a process of providing an individual the opportunity to develop creativity. Art in early childhood education is a medium for knowing and understanding of the world around. Through art children have full opportunities to be actively involved by exploring and expressing their understanding in the fun ways. Children's freedom in expression is the main key that supports the growth of creativity. Therefore, teachers and parents should provide the freedom of expression and let children produce their works freely according to their ideas and creating innovation. Craft art is part of art activities that stimulate child creativity. Craft art is an activity that produces works of art using hands through various art media. In this craft media, children can identify, build connect their knowledge, interests and experiences. Craft art can provide a very broad opportunity for children to experiment and produce a new thing using all of their senses. Craft art can have positive influences on child's aspects of development including self-concept development, collaborative skills, cultural identity and appreciation. The creation of children make in the craft art is a reflection of ideas, imagination, critical thinking skills, problem solving, knowledge and experience

Keywords: *Developing Early Childhood, Creativity, Craft, Arts*

I. INTRODUCTION

A child is born with intelligent and creativity. A child is a unique creature who has intelligence that should be stimulated in early ages. One of the potential intelligences that can be developed is art and creativity. During childhood period children should be facilitated and stimulated to be creative [1]. Early childhood is a human initial period, where in this period child creativity is started to be developed. Children are in the process of growing up, and they grow rapidly and fundamentally enhance their potency for the future. Children in early ages have distinctive characteristics compared to children over eight years old.

Children in early childhood like to play. Playing gives children the opportunity to express various kinds of creative impulses. Besides that, playing provides opportunities for children to behave creatively, such as giving opportunities for individuals to think, act imaginatively. Children have imagination and the imagination is closely related to early childhood creativity, where they can become a person who creative. Craft art is a medium for knowing and understanding the world around children in early years.

Creativity is not only an act of the brain, but also emotional and mental health variables which are very influential on the birth of a creative work. Intelligence without a healthy mentality is very difficult to produce the creative work. Through making art children have full opportunities to be actively involved by exploring and expressing their understanding in a fun way[2].

Creativity should be encouraged through freedom of expression. By providing the freedom of expression in the future is not only improve child's personal quality, but also improve the nation quality. However, in fact that there are still few educational institutions carry out efforts in developing artistic creativity and children's talents. This is because of those parents are still focus on assessing children's creativity in terms of results, not from the process of engaging the activities. Early childhood educator should discuss with parents, the ways to explore and develop children's creativity.

Learning in early childhood education is expected to stimulate every stages of child development. In Craft art for example, activities given to children must be child-centred. Child is the centre of development and the potential of them should be developed by providing child centre activities that is supported in Early

childhood curriculum. The Early Childhood curriculum of learning in Indonesia, contains a guideline for the development of learning programs stated in the Ministry of Education Law of Republic of Indonesia no. 20 of 2003 Article 1 paragraph 14 that states that Early Childhood Education is one of the coaching efforts aimed at children from birth to the age of 6 years which is carried out through the provision of educational stimuli to help physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness in entering further education. Learning is a system that aims to assist the student's learning process, which contains a series of events that are designed, arranged in such a way as to influence and support the occurrence of children's internal learning processes[3].

Creativity is an individual mental process that gives birth to effective new ideas, processes, methods or products that are imaginative, flexible, successive, and discontinuous, which are useful in various fields for solving a problem. Creativity is part of an individual effort. Creativity will become art when children carry out activities. From that simple thought, children do all their artistic activities because children have a high curiosity as a child want to know. Children in early childhood do art activities based on their imagination, sometimes parents and educators are less aware that the work of children is seen from the process and not from product. Therefore adults should facilitate children's activities according to their development [4].

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses the type of literature study research, literature study is one way of collecting data according to the technique of searching, collecting, concluding articles, as well as journals and books related to the research study being raised. Literature study is a tool used as a collection of data, which is useful for revealing various theories that are relevant to the problems being faced or researched from various sources, both from books and other sources related to research studies

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Creativity as a Mental Ability

It can be seen that the theories of creativity of Gestalt and psychometric theory defined creativity as a mental ability or creative thoughts. Gestalt theory stated that a theories still contains many doubts and cannot be tested for truth. But this theory has contributed to understanding towards the production thinking process. Through this theory of concepts related to the stages of thinking which are centered on problem solving, for

example seeking information and structuring information. According to [5] Clark creativity is the highest expression of individual abilities grouped into gifted and talented. Based on the description of the theory above, it can be concluded that creativity comes from ideas and ideas that can be channelled based on children's talents.

Craft art is one of the means of art development in children with creativity. Craft art is a child's activity in producing works of art. Children use their hands with a variety of art media in creating craft art. Through this craft children can develop knowledge, interests and experiences as well as express through a work, this activity provides broad opportunities for children to explore, experiment and find out using all their senses, this has a positive influence on all aspects of children's development including self-concept. In addition, craft art has a predominant influence in developing children's creativity. Therefore, parents need to pay attention to the development of the child and providing learning activities according to the child's need. Each child has different needs and learning styles. Therefore, in compiling a learning program, it is necessary for educator to pay attention to individual need.

Developing children craft art is one of the aspects of development stated in Early Childhood Curriculum in Indonesia. The arts development program includes the creation of an atmosphere for the development of exploration, expression, and appreciation of art in the context of play. The core competencies of the 2013 Early Childhood Education Curriculum are a description of the achievement of Child Development at the age of 6 (six) year old [6]. In early childhood, children's art activities can be developed through various activities for children, which are facilitated by methods, as well as presentation methods that are packaged in a non-monotonous manner,

3.2. Benefits of Crafts

There are several benefits of craft art. First, the craft art is a reflection of cognitive development, showing ideas, problem solving, critical thinking, predicting and trying something new. Secondly, through art activities can develop motor skills as a provision for writing skills, coordination of limbs, flexibility, and movement that can support growth and development. Third, art is a way of communicating and expressing feelings and emotions. In addition, by engaging art activities such as making handy craft, a child can communicate, and this can develop language skills. Moreover, children play with craft art, and they can build their abilities to collaborate and building cooperation, feelings and appreciation.

Craft art media can also be done in a positive way as a means of channeling emotions in children in a positive way. Craft arts activities are carried out at home or at school or at home, parents and educators should pay most attention to the process of crafting art not based on results. Through craft art children can channel their aspirations and feeling. This activity has a benefit to train children to control their emotion. Teachers and parents can be facilitators and provide companionships to prepare facilities and infrastructure for organizing craft activities.

The place for craft art can be facilitated not only in the room but also can be organized in the yard. Adults need to pay more attention to the safety and comfort of the art facilities for children[6]. Children safety should be guaranteed; therefore the harmful risk of play in doing art activities can be minimized. Adults should facilitated art activities of children with minimal instructions. Children are encouraged to create their own craft art. There should be no guidance or steps mentioned that the children should be followed. Adults do not blame children to the right or wrong steps. But adults need to motivate child's independent work, therefore they can produce a unique and original work based on their ideas. The final result of children work is not a benchmark. But the most valuable is how the creative process of the child idea in craft art has produced a creative art.

3.3. Several Supporting Factors in Craft Playing Activities in the home and school environment

There are several things that need to be considered by adults to support the activities of playing craft arts at home:

- a. Create a home environment that attracts children to be creative.
- b. Arrange tools and materials attractively, so they can be seen by children and easy to reach
- c. Provide a variety of tools around the house, both colour, function, texture, size, shape, factory-made, natural materials, and household appliances
- d. Teachers and parents give children the freedom to be creative
- e. Teachers and parents should ensure a comfortable, relaxed and fun atmosphere when children are creative. As for the things that are prepared, namely, natural stones, pine seeds, tissue rolls, used cardboard/boxes. As for some things that are recommended to do by teachers and parents

As for examples of some process-based craft activities that can also be done at home, including:

- a. Make sculptures from removable materials or household materials. When doing this activity, children can be asked to make 3D sculptures using loose objects or materials at home
- b. Playing with blocks, children can create a work of art by using toy blocks
- c. Drawing or painting, tools and materials that can be provided by parents, such as brushes, chicken feathers, cotton buds, leaves, tree branches, threads, banana stems, rocks, shells, crayons, watercolours, food colouring, markers , charcoal and paper

3.4. The Role of Teachers in Developing Children's Creativity

The characteristics of creative teachers include: Flexible, optimistic, respectful, agile and humorous, inspirational, and discipline [5]. Teachers must be flexible to face all these differences in order to be able to grow all the potential of children. Optimistic teachers must be optimistic that every child has potential and that every child is a unique person.

The teacher's belief that fun interactions in learning will be able to facilitate students change for the better and will have an impact on the positive development of children's character. Respectful teachers teach children to be a respectful person. Teachers should cultivate respective behaviour to children so they can respect to their own craft.

Children are always active and dynamic. They need agile or active and dynamic teachers in order the strong mutual understanding can be emerged. Moreover, personality such humorous determine to the sense of creativity. Teachers who are humorous bring up on the side lines of learning. These teachers will certainly refresh the boring learning atmosphere. The amusement from the joke will contribute to fun learning atmosphere. Inspirational teacher Facilitate every student to be able to find new things that are useful. Make each student a meaningful person by finding something positive for his personality development. Disciplined teachers make a disciplinary policy, remember the expected initial goal of changing children's attitudes towards a more positive one. Discipline does not always have to be synonymous with punishment[5].

By doing craft art, children can develop creativity, imagination, initiative, and a sense of beauty. The art of craft create a cheerful atmosphere as children in this activity will be able to be creative and express themselves freely. For this to be happened, children

must be given the freedom to do art activities. The role of educators in this case is only to direct children activities. Through art activity, children will have opportunities to develop various skills, such as hand skills by using various materials and tools, for instance: folding, cutting, colouring, making crafts, painting and making crafts using dough.

In the craft center, children play and learning to hone their sense of beauty, building independence, cooperation, responsibility, socialization, training eyes, hands, feet and mind coordination [7]. It is understood that craft art is essential activities for motoric coordination as well as building children character.

There are several factors that support children's creativity [8].

- a. The opportunity for children to be creative if they have a little free time to be creative with their ideas and concepts. Teachers give children time to think or imagine because basically creativity also requires time to explore, express ideas and concepts and try in new or original forms.
- b. Motivation or encouragement Motivation is given in the form of words such as congratulations and words of encouragement which in this case are used to motivate children to grow self-confidence so that children are not ashamed and afraid anymore in expressing their ideas or opinions in the learning process.
- c. Facilities should be provided to encourage children to do experiment and exploration. In this case the teacher provides media that will further support children's to be creative. The process of teaching and learning activities in kindergartens cannot be separated from the roles of the teacher.
- d. The competency of professional teachers. Learning process needs the teachers as the learning facilitator and educator. The stimulation that teachers given benefits to child creativity development. The competent teachers can present the motivated learning environment. This can enhance child creativity.

One of factors that inhibit children's creativity is a lack of self-confidence. Less self-confident child does not brave to convey his creative ideas, and does not believe in his abilities.

4. CONCLUSION

Children creativity in early childhood can be developed through craft art activities. Teachers and parents should wisely address children artistic creativity from what they do. In general, children in early childhood have creative ideas in expressing the activities carried out. Craft art is a form of means for children to explore their abilities, especially in developing aspects that are unique to themselves.

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