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Developing Creativity among First- and Second-Grade Students through the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program at SDN Muktesareh 1

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Abstract

Developing creativity in early elementary education requires learning environments that support exploration, independent expression, and active participation. This study aimed to examine the implementation of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program in supporting creative engagement among first- and second-grade students at SDN Muktesareh 1. A qualitative Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach was employed through needs identification, planning, action, observation, reflection, and follow-up. The program involved university community service (KPM) students, classroom teachers, and elementary school students in drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicraft activities. Data were collected through participatory observation, teacher interviews, activity documentation, and field notes, followed by qualitative descriptive analysis and triangulation. The findings revealed differences in students' initial independence, confidence, and ability to express creative ideas. Participatory activities provided opportunities for students to explore materials, make individual decisions, complete artistic products, and interact with classmates. Classroom observations indicated greater willingness to attempt creative tasks, communicate ideas, and work independently. Collaboration between KPM students and teachers supported responsive instructional assistance and reflective adjustments. The program demonstrated practical value as an accessible approach to creative learning, although its long-term effectiveness requires further evaluation using systematic assessments and longitudinal observations.

Keywords: *Creative engagement, Elementary education, Participatory action research, Pojok Anak Kreatif, Student creativity.*

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INTRODUCTION

The development of creativity in primary education has become an increasingly significant concern as contemporary educational systems seek to strengthen learners' capacity for independent thinking, problem-solving, self-expression, and meaningful participation in learning activities. Educational approaches emphasizing the transmission of predetermined knowledge are increasingly being complemented by learning experiences that encourage children to explore alternatives, construct ideas, and produce original work through direct interaction with materials and their surrounding environments. Research on creativity development throughout primary education indicates that creative performance is closely associated with the characteristics of learning tasks, the opportunities provided for exploration, and the conditions under which students engage in creative activities (Potters et al., 2023). Classroom environments that accommodate curiosity, experimentation, and student initiative provide a relevant foundation for examining how creative learning opportunities can be organized within elementary education (Scott-Barrett et al., 2023). Contemporary educational research has also explored interdisciplinary learning experiences that connect scientific inquiry, artistic expression, and practical activities, indicating growing interest in educational arrangements that extend beyond conventional subject boundaries (Almarcha et al., 2023). The integration of artistic activities into educational practice offers opportunities to connect cognitive engagement with visual expression and practical exploration, while also introducing questions concerning the appropriateness

of learning materials and instructional support for different developmental stages (Danielson et al., 2022). Studies examining creativity in art education further demonstrate the relevance of artistic learning environments for understanding how students develop and express creative ideas through educational activities (Khasanah et al., 2024). Within Indonesian elementary education, these considerations are particularly relevant to first- and second-grade students, whose learning experiences require concrete activities, accessible materials, and developmentally appropriate opportunities for participation. The preliminary educational needs identified at SDN Muktesareh 1 provide the institutional basis for examining the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program, an initiative involving university community service students and classroom teachers in facilitating drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicraft activities. The central educational issue concerns how structured opportunities for creative exploration can be established without reducing children's participation to the reproduction of predetermined examples or uniform artistic products.

Recent scholarship on creativity-oriented education can be organized into three interconnected research directions: project-based learning, arts-integrated educational experiences, and instructional environments supporting creative thinking. The first direction addresses learning approaches in which students engage with problems, develop ideas, and construct tangible outcomes through purposeful activities. Research on project-based learning in elementary science and mathematics education has examined the relationship between project implementation, creative thinking, problem-solving, learning motivation, and educational achievement, suggesting that creativity can be investigated through different disciplinary and instructional arrangements (Musa & Kamal, 2024; Ndiung & Menggo, 2024; Pangestu et al., 2024). More recent literature has extended this discussion toward the mechanisms through which project-based learning supports creativity and higher-order thinking, while emphasizing the relevance of learning design, task organization, and student engagement (Fatmahwati et al., 2025; Andari & Nurizka, 2026; Putri et al., 2026). The second direction examines artistic expression as an educational process involving imagination, visual representation, material experimentation, and the interpretation of ideas through creative products. Research addressing creative thinking in art and design education provides a broader basis for understanding creativity as a process that extends beyond technical performance or the aesthetic evaluation of completed work (Samaniego et al., 2024). Studies of elementary art education and learner-generated drawing similarly direct attention to the instructional conditions under which students produce visual representations and develop their ideas through guided activities (Fitriyani et al., 2025; Tolsberg et al., 2022). The third direction focuses on pedagogical strategies that structure opportunities for idea generation, discussion, and collaborative inquiry. Research integrating project-based learning with think–pair–share activities, problem-based learning with computational thinking, and classroom questioning with creativity development illustrates the diversity of instructional strategies used to encourage creative engagement (Li & Tu, 2024; Ji & Wong, 2025; Yu et al., 2023). Collectively, these research directions establish creativity as a multidimensional educational concern involving learning tasks, expressive opportunities, instructional guidance, and student participation, rather than an outcome attributable to a single teaching technique.

Despite these developments, several limitations remain relevant to understanding how creativity-oriented educational activities can be implemented among students in the earliest grades of elementary school. A substantial portion of the reviewed literature investigates creativity through discipline-specific learning arrangements, including science projects, mathematical problem-solving, computational thinking, and technology-supported activities, whereas the organization of accessible, low-cost creative experiences within ordinary classroom environments receives comparatively less direct attention in this selected literature. Studies examining computational approaches to creative problem-solving and the development of creativity through coding illustrate the growing sophistication of instructional interventions, but their technological and disciplinary characteristics limit their direct applicability to activities primarily involving drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicrafts (Aytekin & Topçu, 2024; Su et al., 2024). Research on technology-supported mathematical art and three-dimensional modeling similarly contributes to understanding relationships between creative representation and specialized learning environments without directly establishing how comparable opportunities can be organized through readily available classroom materials (Karavakou et al., 2023; Sosna & Vochozka, 2025). Literature addressing outdoor project-based learning and interactive instructional media broadens the range of educational resources considered

relevant to creative development, although the relationship between resource accessibility, instructional assistance, and students' independent expression requires examination within particular school conditions (Khoiriyah et al., 2022; Kurniawati et al., 2026). Another limitation concerns the interpretation of creativity through observable educational processes rather than exclusively through completed tasks or predefined performance indicators. Research on teachers' assessment of creative problem-solving raises questions about how educators recognize creative capacities, while studies of prospective teachers' perceptions of creativity indicate the relevance of instructional understanding and pedagogical judgment (van Hooijdonk et al., 2024; Michaelidou & Pitri, 2022). The resulting research gap is therefore primarily contextual and methodological: the selected literature provides substantial discussion of creativity-supporting instructional approaches, but offers a less direct explanation of how teachers, university community service facilitators, and early-grade students collaboratively organize, observe, and refine simple artistic activities through a participatory intervention in a specific elementary school. This gap does not establish the absence of comparable programs elsewhere; rather, it identifies the need for context-sensitive evidence concerning their implementation processes and observable dimensions of student participation.

Addressing this contextual and methodological gap has implications for both the interpretation of creativity development and the organization of educational support within elementary schools. The educational value of creative activities cannot be adequately understood solely through the presence of artistic materials or the completion of student products, because implementation also involves decisions regarding instructional assistance, opportunities for independent choice, classroom interaction, and responsiveness to differences in students' abilities. Research applying empathy-oriented design thinking to primary education provides a relevant basis for considering how learning activities can respond to learners' perspectives and experiences, rather than relying exclusively on standardized instructional expectations (Liu et al., 2024). The organization of educational activities through collaborative inquiry is particularly relevant when external facilitators participate in school-based programs and must coordinate their interventions with teachers' knowledge of classroom conditions. Scholarship on youth participatory action research emphasizes the relationship between participation, collaborative decision-making, and changes in educational practice, although its applications to older learners require careful adaptation when informing activities involving children in the first two grades of elementary school (Cummings, 2024). Research on teacher empowerment through participatory action research further provides a methodological basis for understanding educators as contributors to the identification, implementation, and evaluation of practice-oriented educational initiatives (Faizah et al., 2023). Participatory action research applied to STEAM-integrated problem-based learning similarly demonstrates the relevance of connecting educational innovation with cycles of collaborative investigation and instructional adjustment (Djaman et al., 2026). Literature examining participatory lesson study among science teachers also illustrates the use of collaborative reflection to connect instructional practice with locally identified educational concerns, although its subject matter differs from early-grade artistic creativity (Yasin et al., 2026). These methodological perspectives suggest that school-based creativity initiatives should be examined not only as instructional interventions but also as collaborative processes through which participants identify needs, organize learning experiences, observe student responses, and consider subsequent adjustments. Without such an examination, the practical relationship between creative activities and the institutional conditions supporting their implementation remains insufficiently specified, potentially limiting the usefulness of community service programs as sources of knowledge for teachers and future educational initiatives.

The present study positions the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program as a school-based participatory initiative that integrates accessible artistic activities, student-centered facilitation, and collaborative reflection within the educational environment of SDN Muktesareh 1. Its proposed contribution differs from studies centered on discipline-specific academic projects, digital creativity tools, or structured technological interventions by examining creativity-oriented participation through drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicrafts among first- and second-grade students. The originality of this study is not attributed to the invention of artistic activities or the Participatory Action Research methodology, both of which have established applications in educational research. Its contextual contribution lies in documenting how these established practices are combined within a specific university community service initiative, with university students acting as facilitators, classroom

teachers serving as educational partners, and children participating directly in creative decision-making. Research concerning creativity-oriented educational projects provides a relevant foundation for considering the relationship between learning design and student initiative, while the present study directs attention toward implementation through simple materials and developmentally appropriate tasks rather than more specialized instructional arrangements (Andari & Nurizka, 2026; Musa & Kamal, 2024). The study also extends the practical consideration of artistic learning beyond the completion of visual products by examining observable participation, willingness to explore alternatives, independence in completing activities, and interaction with classmates. This process-oriented emphasis is consistent with research that treats creativity as connected to learning experiences and classroom opportunities rather than merely to the technical characteristics of final products (Potters et al., 2023; Samaniego et al., 2024). Methodologically, the study employs successive stages of needs identification, planning, action, observation, reflection, and follow-up to organize the relationship between educational activities and participants' responses. Its analytical contribution is limited to the qualitative interpretation of the implementation process and observable student behaviors, without claiming experimentally established causal effects or statistical generalizability. The research consequently offers a context-specific account of how creative learning opportunities can be organized through collaboration among university community service students, teachers, and early-grade learners, while generating practice-oriented considerations that may inform comparable initiatives in elementary schools.

This study aims to examine the implementation of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program in developing creative learning opportunities for first- and second-grade students at SDN Muktesareh 1 through a Participatory Action Research approach. Specifically, it seeks to describe the identification of students' creative learning needs, analyze the collaborative roles of university community service students and classroom teachers in planning and facilitating artistic activities, and examine students' observable participation during drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicraft activities. The investigation also aims to identify manifestations of creative engagement reflected in students' willingness to explore ideas, make independent choices, experiment with available materials, complete creative tasks, communicate their ideas, and interact with classmates. Attention is directed toward the processes through which instructional assistance and opportunities for independent expression are balanced according to students' characteristics and responses during program implementation. The study further examines how observation and collaborative reflection contribute to identifying practical adjustments and considerations for the continuation of creativity-oriented activities within the school. Its scientific contribution lies in providing a contextually grounded qualitative account of the relationship between participatory educational implementation, accessible creative activities, and observable dimensions of student engagement during the early years of elementary education. Its methodological contribution consists of documenting the application of iterative participatory inquiry to a community service program involving university facilitators, classroom teachers, and young learners. Its practical contribution is to provide school-level insights into the organization of creative activities that accommodate differences in students' abilities while maintaining opportunities for self-expression, autonomy, and social interaction. The study does not seek to establish universal causal relationships or quantify the effectiveness of the intervention; rather, it seeks to generate an analytically structured account of its implementation and its relevance as a potentially adaptable form of creativity-oriented educational support.

METHODS

The study employed a qualitative Participatory Action Research (PAR) design to examine the implementation of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program among first- and second-grade students at SDN Muktesareh 1, Sampang, Madura, Indonesia. The research was conducted as a school-based community engagement initiative involving university students participating in the Kuliah Pengabdian Masyarakat (KPM) program, classroom teachers, and elementary school students. First- and second-grade students constituted the primary participants and units of observation, while classroom teachers served as educational partners and sources of contextual information regarding students' characteristics, learning needs, and participation in creative activities. KPM students functioned as facilitators responsible for planning, implementing, documenting, observing, and evaluating program activities in collaboration with teachers. The research followed an iterative PAR process comprising

needs identification, planning, action, observation, reflection, and follow-up. Initial identification involved observing classroom activities and communicating with teachers to understand students' interests, creative abilities, and difficulties in expressing ideas. Planning activities included determining appropriate artistic tasks, preparing materials, organizing instructional assistance, and adapting activities to the developmental characteristics of early-grade students. The action phase consisted of drawing, coloring, collage-making, simple handicrafts, and activities utilizing available or recycled materials, with students encouraged to select colors, shapes, materials, and creative arrangements according to their individual ideas. Facilitators provided introductory explanations, examples, and assistance when necessary while maintaining opportunities for students to explore alternatives and complete their work independently. Observations were conducted throughout implementation to document students' engagement, creative decision-making, interactions, and responses to instructional assistance. Collaborative reflection between KPM students and teachers informed adjustments to subsequent activities and the formulation of recommendations for program continuation within the school.

Data were collected through participatory observation, teacher interviews, activity documentation, and field notes, providing complementary qualitative information about the implementation process and students' observable creative engagement. Participatory observation focused on students' willingness to initiate activities, express ideas, experiment with materials, explore alternative approaches, develop individual artistic products, work independently, and interact with classmates. Teacher interviews were used to obtain contextual information about students' initial learning characteristics, their participation during program implementation, and behavioral changes observed throughout the activities. Documentation comprised photographs of program activities and students' creative products, while field notes recorded relevant classroom interactions, student responses, implementation difficulties, and observations arising during facilitation. The collected materials were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting and organizing information according to the research objectives, particularly initial learning needs, program implementation, student participation, manifestations of creativity, facilitator–teacher collaboration, and reflective adjustments. The organized information was presented through descriptive accounts of activities, participant interactions, and observable behaviors, allowing the interpretation of changes in students' engagement without introducing quantitative effectiveness estimates or unsupported causal claims. The credibility of the findings was addressed through source and technique triangulation by comparing information obtained from teachers, students' observed activities, and KPM facilitators, as well as examining consistency across observations, interviews, photographs, creative products, and field notes. Collaborative reflection provided an additional opportunity to examine interpretations of classroom responses and identify aspects of implementation requiring adjustment. The analytical conclusions were derived from the documented educational processes and observable manifestations of creative engagement, with attention to the correspondence between the stated research objectives, qualitative evidence, and interpretations of the program's implementation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identification of Students' Creative Learning Needs and Participatory Planning of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program

The initial implementation of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program at SDN Muktesareh 1 focused on identifying the creative learning needs of first- and second-grade students through classroom observation and communication with teachers. The preliminary observations indicated differences in students' ability to express ideas, initiate creative activities, and complete artistic tasks without direct instructional assistance. Some students demonstrated sufficient confidence to determine their preferred artistic arrangements, whereas others required additional encouragement and guidance before engaging independently in creative activities. These observations are consistent with the conceptual distinction between individual creative potential and the classroom conditions that enable its expression, particularly the influence of task characteristics and opportunities for exploration during primary education (Potters et al., 2023).



Figure 1. Initial Observations and Interactions Between KPM Students and First- and Second-Grade Students at SDN Muktesareh 1.

Differences in students' initial participation suggested that the development of creativity could not be approached through uniform instructional expectations or identical requirements for completed artistic products. Students who required assistance in selecting materials or developing ideas were not necessarily characterized by an absence of creative potential, since their observable performance could also reflect differences in familiarity, confidence, and instructional experience. Research examining curiosity and creativity in primary school classrooms emphasizes the educational relevance of environments that provide opportunities for exploration and student initiative rather than relying exclusively on predetermined responses (Scott-Barrett et al., 2023). The preliminary findings consequently supported the adoption of flexible activities in which students could receive guidance appropriate to their needs while retaining opportunities to make independent creative decisions.

The participatory identification process involved KPM students and classroom teachers as complementary contributors to the development of the program. Teachers provided information about students' learning characteristics and classroom conditions, while KPM students examined opportunities to translate these considerations into accessible creative activities. This arrangement established a collaborative planning process in which instructional decisions were informed by local educational needs rather than determined exclusively by external facilitators. Research on teacher empowerment through participatory action research similarly identifies collaborative involvement and reflection as relevant components of school-based educational improvement (Faizah et al., 2023).

The planning stage translated the identified needs into creative learning activities involving drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicrafts using accessible materials. These activities were selected because they allowed students to manipulate visual elements, combine materials, and produce individual artistic arrangements without requiring specialized technological equipment. The resulting instructional design emphasized opportunities for direct engagement and creative production while allowing facilitators to adjust explanations and assistance according to students' responses. Studies of elementary art education and artistic learning practices provide a relevant basis for treating visual production as an educational process involving creative expression, material engagement, and instructional support (Khasanah et al., 2024; Fitriyani et al., 2025).

The relationship between the identified learning needs and the program's instructional responses is presented in Table 1. The table synthesizes qualitative observations and planning considerations documented during the initial stages of implementation rather than reporting numerical measurements of students' creativity. Its categories distinguish the observed educational conditions, the responses incorporated into program planning, and the corresponding dimensions of creative engagement targeted during implementation. This analytical organization is consistent with research emphasizing the relationship between instructional task characteristics and the opportunities available for creativity development (Potters et al., 2023).

Table 1. Initial Creative Learning Needs and Participatory Planning Responses in the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program

Identified learning conditions	Participatory planning responses	Intended dimensions of engagement
Differences in students' ability to express ideas	Provide drawing and coloring activities with opportunities for individual choices	Creative expression and idea generation
Some students require additional instructional assistance	Provide introductory examples and responsive facilitation	Confidence and active participation
Differences in independence during artistic tasks	Allow students to select colors, shapes, and materials	Autonomy and creative decision-making
Need for accessible, practical learning experiences	Use collage-making, simple handicrafts, and available materials	Exploration and practical creativity
Need for interaction during creative activities	Facilitate shared activities and peer interaction	Communication and cooperation
Need for activities responsive to student characteristics	Involve classroom teachers in planning and reflection	Instructional responsiveness and continuity

Source: Qualitative synthesis of initial observations and participatory planning procedures documented in the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program.

The planning responses summarized in Table 1 indicate that the program addressed creativity through several interrelated educational dimensions rather than through artistic product completion alone. Opportunities for individual choices were associated with creative expression and autonomy, while responsive facilitation was intended to accommodate differences in students' confidence and familiarity with creative activities. The distinction between instructional support and student independence is analytically important because excessive direction may restrict opportunities for independent exploration, whereas insufficient assistance may limit participation among students requiring additional guidance. Research on empathy-oriented design thinking in primary education supports consideration of learner characteristics and experiences when organizing activities intended to encourage creative engagement (Liu et al., 2024).

The selection of drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicrafts also reflected an instructional orientation toward experiential learning through the direct manipulation of materials. These activities provided opportunities for students to transform initial ideas into visible products while making decisions about composition, color combinations, and material arrangements. Research on arts-based STEM integration demonstrates the educational relevance of connecting artistic activities with exploratory and constructive learning experiences, although the present program did not implement a formal interdisciplinary STEM curriculum (Danielson et al., 2022). The significance of the selected activities consequently lies in their accessibility and adaptability to early-grade learners rather than in the introduction of specialized instructional technologies or complex disciplinary tasks.

The involvement of classroom teachers contributed to the alignment between the planned activities and students' developmental characteristics, particularly when determining the appropriate level of difficulty and assistance. KPM students were responsible for organizing creative experiences and providing facilitation, while teachers contributed contextual knowledge concerning students' needs and classroom learning practices. This distribution of responsibilities reflects the participatory orientation of educational action research, in which practical decisions are informed by collaboration among participants with different forms of experience and responsibility. Research concerning participatory approaches to educational innovation similarly highlights the relevance of collaborative planning and reflective adjustment when implementing instructional initiatives in school environments (Djaman et al., 2026).

The initial planning process further established the basis for observing creativity through behaviors that could be documented during program implementation rather than relying solely on judgments concerning the aesthetic quality of artistic products. Relevant observational dimensions

included students' willingness to initiate activities, express ideas, explore alternative arrangements, make individual decisions, and complete creative tasks with varying levels of assistance. Research examining teachers' assessment of elementary students' creative problem-solving abilities illustrates the methodological importance of distinguishing observable educational performance from broader claims about students' underlying creative capacity (van Hooijdonk et al., 2024). The qualitative approach adopted in the program permits interpretation of participation and creative engagement, but does not provide standardized evidence of changes in creativity scores or comparisons with students outside the intervention.

The findings from the identification and planning stages indicate that the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program was organized around the relationship between students' initial learning conditions, accessible artistic activities, and collaborative instructional support. Its principal contribution at this stage was the establishment of a context-sensitive framework for facilitating creative participation among early-grade students with differing levels of independence and confidence. This approach corresponds with research on project-based learning that emphasizes students' active engagement in developing ideas and producing meaningful learning outcomes, although the present initiative employed simpler artistic tasks and qualitative observation rather than formal comparative evaluation (Musa & Kamal, 2024; Pangestu et al., 2024). The participatory planning process provided the operational foundation for subsequent creative activities, observation of student responses, and collaborative reflection concerning the suitability of instructional assistance and opportunities for independent expression.

Implementation of Creative Learning Activities and Development of Students' Creative Engagement

The implementation of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program at SDN Muktesareh 1 involved creative learning activities designed to accommodate the developmental characteristics and varying levels of independence among first- and second-grade students. Drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicrafts constituted the principal activities through which students explored ideas, selected materials, and produced individual artistic work. Classroom observations documented student participation in these activities, including differences in their willingness to initiate tasks, make creative decisions, and complete artistic products with limited assistance. Research on creativity-oriented project-based learning emphasizes the educational relevance of involving elementary students directly in constructive activities that require idea development and active participation (Ndiung & Menggo, 2024; Fatmahwati et al., 2025).

The instructional process began with introductory explanations and basic demonstrations provided by KPM facilitators before students engaged in their respective creative tasks. These demonstrations introduced the activities without establishing uniform requirements concerning colors, shapes, material combinations, or the final appearance of artistic products. Students were subsequently encouraged to develop their own arrangements, allowing the facilitators to observe how individual choices emerged during the creative process. Research on project-based instructional approaches suggests that opportunities for independent decision-making and meaningful task participation constitute relevant considerations in the organization of creativity-oriented learning experiences (Li & Tu, 2024).

Drawing activities provided an accessible means through which students could represent personal ideas using lines, shapes, and visual compositions. Coloring activities introduced opportunities for selecting and combining colors, while collage-making required students to arrange materials into individually constructed visual products. The educational significance of these activities extended beyond the completion of artwork because students were required to make decisions about how their initial ideas could be represented through available resources. Research on learner-generated drawing identifies visual representation as an educational activity through which students can organize and communicate ideas, although its specific instructional applications differ from the artistic objectives of the present program (Tolsberg et al., 2022).

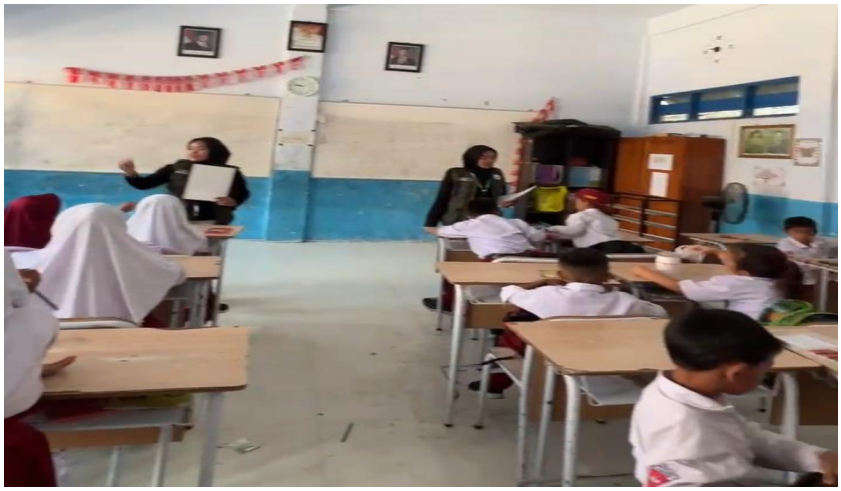

Figure 2. Implementation of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program with first- and second-grade students.

The observations indicated that students did not demonstrate identical levels of independence throughout the implementation process. Some students began selecting colors, arranging materials, and developing their work without extensive assistance, whereas others initially relied on facilitator explanations or encouragement before proceeding. This variation required facilitators to provide differentiated guidance without replacing students' own decision-making processes or directing them toward identical artistic outcomes. Studies examining creativity-supporting instructional environments suggest that opportunities for individual exploration and appropriately structured learning support are relevant to students' creative participation (Scott-Barrett et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2024).



Figure 3. KPM students providing instructional assistance during students' creative activities.

The observed relationships between creative activities, student participation, and facilitation practices are synthesized in Table 2. The table presents qualitative categories derived from the documented implementation activities and classroom observations rather than numerical measures of creativity development. Its analytical emphasis concerns how particular artistic experiences provided opportunities for independent decision-making, practical exploration, and social interaction. This process-oriented interpretation is consistent with research examining the relationship between learning-task characteristics and creative engagement in elementary education (Potters et al., 2023).

Table 2. Creative Learning Activities, Observed Student Participation, and Instructional Facilitation in the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program

Creative activities	Observed student participation	Facilitation practices	Dimensions of creative engagement
Drawing	Students represented ideas through individual drawings and visual arrangements	Introductory explanations and assistance when needed	Idea expression and visual creativity
Coloring	Students selected and combined colors according to individual preferences	Basic demonstrations without imposing uniform outcomes	Creative choice and independence
Collage-making	Students arranged and combined materials to construct artistic products	Guidance in using and organizing available materials	Exploration and creative decision-making
Simple handicrafts	Students participated in constructing and completing practical artistic products	Assistance adjusted to students' difficulties	Practical creativity and task completion
Activities using available materials	Students explored different possibilities for using accessible resources	Provision of materials and opportunities for experimentation	Resourcefulness and material exploration
Collaborative creative activities	Students observed classmates' work, communicated, and assisted peers	Facilitation of interaction during artistic activities	Communication and social participation

Source: Qualitative synthesis of activity observations and implementation documentation from the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program at SDN Muktesareh 1.

The evidence summarized in Table 2 demonstrates that creative engagement was expressed through several observable behaviors associated with the process of artistic production. Students' decisions concerning colors, shapes, and material arrangements provided opportunities for individual expression, while the completion of handicrafts involved practical decision-making and persistence during task implementation. The activities also required students to respond to the characteristics and limitations of available materials, creating opportunities for experimentation within accessible classroom conditions. Research on creative thinking in art and design education supports examining creativity through processes of idea development, exploration, and artistic production rather than limiting interpretation to the appearance of completed products (Samaniego et al., 2024).



Figure 4. Students' artistic products created through the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program.

Interactions among students represented another observable dimension of participation during the creative activities. Classroom observations documented students examining their classmates' artwork, discussing materials, and offering assistance when peers encountered difficulties in completing their tasks. These interactions indicate that artistic activities provided opportunities for communication and shared learning experiences alongside individual creative expression, although the available evidence does not establish measurable improvements in social competence. Research addressing creativity development through questioning and classroom interaction provides a relevant conceptual basis for considering communication as part of learning environments that support creative engagement (Yu et al., 2023).

The participation of KPM facilitators and classroom teachers contributed to the implementation of creative activities through complementary forms of instructional assistance. KPM students organized the activities, introduced artistic materials, assisted students experiencing difficulties, and observed their responses, while teachers contributed knowledge of learners' characteristics and helped adjust task difficulty. The resulting collaboration allowed the instructional process to accommodate differences in students' abilities without eliminating opportunities for independent exploration and creative decision-making. Research on participatory educational practice and school-based collaborative inquiry identifies the involvement of educational practitioners as relevant to the adaptation of learning activities to classroom conditions (Faizah et al., 2023; Djaman et al., 2026).

The implementation also revealed an important distinction between providing instructional support and controlling the creative production process. Facilitators supplied explanations and assistance when students experienced difficulties, but students retained opportunities to select materials, develop arrangements, and determine the appearance of their work. This distinction matters because observable independence in artistic production depends partly on whether instructional arrangements permit students to make decisions rather than merely reproduce demonstrated examples. Research on creative problem-solving and instructional scaffolding supports examining how educational guidance can structure learning opportunities while maintaining space for learner participation and independent responses (Su et al., 2024; van Hooijdonk et al., 2024).

The qualitative findings suggest that the creative activities provided a structured yet flexible environment in which students could participate through artistic exploration, individual expression, and interaction with classmates. The documented changes concerned observable behaviors,

particularly students' willingness to attempt activities, communicate ideas, make creative choices, and complete artistic tasks with varying degrees of assistance. These observations are compatible with research emphasizing the educational potential of project-based and arts-integrated learning, although the absence of standardized creativity measurements and a comparison group prevents conclusions about the magnitude or causal effectiveness of the intervention (Musa & Kamal, 2024; Danielson et al., 2022). The implementation evidence supports interpreting the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program as a participatory educational activity that created opportunities for creative engagement while establishing a practical basis for subsequent observation, collaborative reflection, and instructional adjustment.

Participatory Reflection, Collaborative Evaluation, and Sustainability of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program

The reflective stage of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program at SDN Muktesareh 1 was implemented through collaborative discussions between KPM students and classroom teachers following the completion of creative learning activities. These discussions examined students' responses, participation patterns, difficulties encountered during artistic production, and the appropriateness of instructional assistance provided throughout the program. The reflective process also considered observable changes in students' willingness to express ideas, initiate creative tasks, interact with classmates, and complete their work with greater independence. Participatory action research emphasizes the relationship between collaborative inquiry, practical intervention, and reflective examination of educational practices, providing a methodological basis for understanding how program implementation can generate opportunities for instructional improvement (Cummings, 2024; Djaman et al., 2026).

The evaluation process relied on qualitative evidence obtained through classroom observations, teacher interviews, activity documentation, and field notes rather than standardized assessments of creative performance. Observations of students' participation were examined alongside teachers' accounts of classroom characteristics and facilitators' documentation of activities to identify patterns requiring instructional attention. This approach enabled the evaluation to consider creativity as an observable educational process involving experimentation, idea expression, decision-making, and task completion without assuming that every completed artistic product represented an equivalent level of creative development. Research examining teachers' assessment of creative problem-solving abilities demonstrates the methodological significance of distinguishing observable student performance from broader interpretations of creativity, particularly when instructional evaluation involves subjective judgments (van Hooijdonk et al., 2024; Potters et al., 2023).

Reflective observations indicated differences in how students responded to creative opportunities and instructional assistance throughout the program. Some students demonstrated greater willingness to select materials, communicate ideas, and continue working without extensive facilitator intervention, whereas others continued to require explanations or encouragement when encountering unfamiliar tasks. These observations suggest that student independence should be interpreted as a developing dimension of classroom participation rather than a uniform outcome achieved by all participants. Research on creativity-supporting educational environments identifies task characteristics, instructional opportunities, and learner engagement as relevant considerations when interpreting differences in students' creative participation (Scott-Barrett et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2024).

Collaboration between KPM students and classroom teachers provided an institutional mechanism for translating observations into adjustments to subsequent activities. Teachers contributed information concerning students' learning characteristics and difficulties, while KPM students used classroom observations to reconsider task complexity, available materials, and the amount of guidance required during creative production. The resulting adjustments were directed toward maintaining accessible learning opportunities without restricting students' ability to explore alternatives and make individual decisions. Research on teacher participation in action research and collaborative instructional development supports the relevance of practitioner involvement when adapting educational activities to locally identified learning needs (Faizah et al., 2023; Yasin et al., 2026).

The principal components of the reflective evaluation and their implications for program improvement are summarized in Table 3. The synthesis distinguishes documented observations from instructional responses and potential considerations for future implementation, avoiding the interpretation of prospective improvements as empirically established outcomes. This distinction is necessary because the available evidence concerns qualitative observations and collaborative reflection rather than longitudinal measurements or experimental comparisons. Research on participatory educational improvement similarly emphasizes the relationship between evidence-informed reflection, collaborative interpretation, and subsequent instructional decision-making (Cummings, 2024; Faizah et al., 2023).

Table 3. Participatory Reflection, Qualitative Evaluation, and Sustainability Considerations for the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program

Evaluation dimensions	Qualitative observations	Reflective instructional responses	Sustainability considerations
Creative expression	Students demonstrated differences in expressing ideas and developing artistic work	Maintain opportunities for individualized artistic choices	Integrate open-ended creative activities into classroom learning
Student independence	Some students completed tasks independently, while others required assistance	Adjust instructional support according to individual needs	Encourage gradual development of autonomous task completion
Confidence and participation	Students showed willingness to attempt activities and present their work	Provide encouragement and avoid imposing uniform artistic outcomes	Maintain an inclusive and supportive learning environment
Social interaction	Students communicated, observed classmates' work, and assisted peers	Facilitate constructive interaction during creative activities	Incorporate opportunities for collaborative artistic experiences
Instructional collaboration	Teachers and KPM students exchanged observations and reflected on activities	Use teacher feedback to adjust task complexity and facilitation	Strengthen teacher involvement in continued creative learning activities
Learning resources	Activities employed accessible materials and simple artistic techniques	Prioritize materials suited to students' abilities and school conditions	Utilize existing classroom resources and reusable materials
Program continuation	Reflective discussions considered future implementation beyond KPM activities	Formulate recommendations for school-led continuation	Develop feasible opportunities for integrating creative activities into regular school practices

Source: Qualitative synthesis of participatory observations, collaborative reflection, and follow-up considerations documented during the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program.

The evaluation presented in Table 3 indicates that the program's educational relevance was associated with the interaction between creative participation, responsive instructional assistance, and collaborative reflection. Differences in students' independence and confidence required attention to individual learning needs, while opportunities for peer interaction provided an additional dimension of participation beyond artistic production. The reflective responses consequently focused on preserving flexible learning arrangements in which students could explore ideas while receiving assistance when necessary. Research on elementary creativity development and project-based educational activities supports considering student engagement, instructional design, and opportunities for independent production as interconnected aspects of creativity-oriented learning (Andari & Nurizka, 2026; Pangestu et al., 2024).

The sustainability of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program represents a practical consideration arising from its implementation as a university community service initiative with direct involvement from external facilitators. Continued implementation would require classroom teachers and the school to incorporate suitable creative activities into existing educational practices rather than depend exclusively on the presence of KPM students. The use of accessible materials, relatively simple artistic procedures, and adaptable forms of facilitation provides a practical basis for considering such continuity, although the available documentation does not establish whether the program was maintained after the community service period. Literature concerning creativity-oriented project-based learning and teacher-supported instructional innovation suggests that the feasibility of continued implementation depends on the alignment between educational activities, classroom resources, and teachers' capacity to organize appropriate learning experiences (Kurniawati et al., 2026; Fitriyani et al., 2025).

The participatory approach also provides an analytical basis for distinguishing immediate changes in classroom participation from broader claims concerning educational transformation. Observed willingness to explore materials, communicate ideas, and undertake creative tasks with reduced assistance may indicate meaningful developments in students' learning experiences, but such observations do not independently establish sustained changes in creative ability or school-wide instructional practices. The absence of standardized pre-intervention and post-intervention creativity measurements, a comparison group, and documented longitudinal follow-up limits the strength of conclusions concerning intervention effectiveness and long-term sustainability. Research on participatory educational inquiry and creativity development highlights the importance of aligning interpretations with the scope of available evidence and distinguishing documented changes in practice from outcomes requiring additional investigation (Cummings, 2024; van Hooijdonk et al., 2024).

The contribution of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program lies in demonstrating how participatory planning, accessible artistic activities, classroom observation, and collaborative reflection can be organized within a school-based community engagement initiative. Its educational relevance is supported by qualitative observations of students' creative expression, independent decision-making, willingness to participate, and interaction with classmates, while its methodological contribution concerns the use of iterative reflection to inform instructional adjustments. These findings are compatible with scholarship emphasizing the integration of creative learning opportunities, student participation, and collaborative educational practices, although their applicability beyond SDN Muktesareh 1 requires consideration of differences in institutional resources, learner characteristics, and implementation conditions (Samaniego et al., 2024; Scott-Barrett et al., 2023; Djaman et al., 2026). The evidence supports the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program as a context-sensitive model of participatory creative learning that offers practical considerations for school-based educational support, while identifying sustained student development and post-program continuity as matters requiring further empirical investigation.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Pojok Anak Kreatif Program at SDN Muktesareh 1 provided structured opportunities for first- and second-grade students to develop creative engagement through drawing, coloring, collage-making, and simple handicraft activities. The Participatory Action Research approach facilitated the identification of students' learning needs, collaborative activity planning, implementation, observation, reflection, and consideration of program continuation. Qualitative findings indicated that students demonstrated varying levels of independence, confidence, and ability to express ideas, requiring instructional assistance responsive to their individual characteristics. The program provided opportunities for students to explore materials, make creative decisions, complete artistic products, communicate their ideas, and interact with classmates. Classroom observations documented greater willingness among participating students to attempt creative tasks, express ideas, and demonstrate independence during artistic activities, although these changes were not measured through standardized creativity assessments. Collaboration between KPM students and classroom teachers contributed to the adaptation of activities, the provision of appropriate guidance, and the identification of instructional adjustments through reflective evaluation.

The findings establish the program's relevance as an accessible, participatory approach to supporting creative learning experiences among early-grade elementary school students.

The study contributes a context-specific qualitative account of how creative activities, student participation, and collaborative instructional facilitation can be integrated into a school-based community engagement program. Its methodological contribution lies in documenting the application of participatory cycles to identify educational needs, examine observable student engagement, and inform adjustments to creative learning activities. The practical implications concern the potential integration of accessible artistic tasks into elementary classroom practices, particularly through the use of available materials, flexible instructional assistance, and opportunities for independent expression. Continued implementation would require sustained teacher involvement and adaptation to the school's instructional resources and students' developmental characteristics. The absence of standardized creativity measurements, comparative groups, and longitudinal follow-up limits conclusions regarding causal effectiveness, measurable improvements in creative ability, and long-term program sustainability. Future investigations should incorporate systematic assessments of creativity development and extended observations to examine whether the changes in participation and independence documented during implementation are maintained over time.

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