



Drawing method with crayons as a medium of expression and imagination for children

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Abstract: Drawing is a medium of expression and a part of children's creative and imaginative process. Children can create, share ideas, visualize and realize their imagination through drawing. Drawing with crayons is familiar to children, but this does not apply to the children of age between 5 - 12 years old who live in Karawaci district, Indonesia. These children did not have the opportunity to learn additional skills through informal education due to their families' financial constraint. The purpose of this activity is to provide training in the right drawing methods and to train children to be creative in dealing with the limitations of the financial conditions. A qualitative method with a case study approach is used to achieve the objectives and determine the answers to the problems encountered in this research. Out of the five methods introduced, the blocking and mixing methods were the most preferred techniques by the children because it was easy to use and produced drawing with bright colours which represent their expression and imagination.

Keywords: drawing method, crayons, expression and imagination, children

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INTRODUCTION

Drawing is not just a fun activity in the leisure time, but it has benefited that able to influence the character building of a child in the future. Drawing or painting activity has the unique trait that support children's character development that related to intelligence (thinking skill, creativity, emotional and spiritual intelligence) and social-emotional such as positive attitudes and behaviour, brave and self-confidence (Habibi, 2018). Drawing activity can enhance children's fine motor skills, exercise hand-eye coordination, and give stimulus for the left and right brain. Drawing can also be used as a tool for expressing feelings, emotions and thoughts for children with verbal communication difficulties. The Ministry of National Education Regulation (Permendiknas) No.58/2009, stated that children's growth level related to drawing in the age of 5 to 6, should include the ability to: draw based on their ideas, explore various media and activities, as well express themselves through the details of drawing (Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2009). Children's drawings can depict selected events from their lifeworld, aspects of what they have experienced that they consider important, what they have noticed, remembered, and consider important at the time of the drawing. In other words, drawing allows children to express something emotional and something meaningfully experienced that they have not yet categorized or verbalized (Frederiksen et al., 2014). This suggests that the children's hidden or unvented stress can be released through drawing activity.

Drawing is a creative activity that carried out by human to express everything they feel and experience, mentally or visually, in form, line and colour (Sumanto, 2006). Drawing is an activity in the form of imagination resulted from a person's intention to convey ideas and concepts on the drawing paper as self expression without being forced to do so. Drawing is one



of the appropriate activities for the children to express their feelings and emotions. They will feel happy, convenient, free, and experience no difficulty to express their ideas in the drawing activity. In addition, drawing is an expressive activity that enable children to express their intention, idea, imagination, needs or concepts freely and decently.

The benefits of drawing as stated above should be experienced by all children despite their background. However, the threatening environment can hinder children's motivation, no matter how strong it is, and therefore inhibits their creativity. Drawing activity is still considered expensive and unaffordable for children from lower-income family. This situation can still be found in several areas in Indonesia, and ironically, this is not only found in remote areas but also in the areas of proximity to the capital city such as Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia. The families' economic limitation has resulted in the children to grow up and settle with any available facilities they have.

According to the results of survey and data collection conducted by the community service team from the Faculty of Art and Design (FSRD), Universitas Trisakti, it was found that approximately 20 children, ranging from the age of 5 to 12 years old, in the area of Perum III, Karawaci showed a strong interest to learn drawing. With regards to their ability to draw, the children were found to be incredibly talented but still needing some guidance to be better. Children who grow up in families facing social challenges or who have chronic health issues will often do their best to conceal them and present an idealized picture of their family situation (Werner & Malterud, 2016). These were concluded based on the team's visit to one of the residents' house in Perum III, Karawaci, which is also a gathering place for the children to carry out their drawing activity in that area. Overall, the findings of the survey can be identified as follows: (1) Low economic background has unable the children to have drawing activity openly due to limited equipment and inappropriate infrastructure; (2) The parents were busy working which caused the children to be lacking guidance in doing after-school activities. This has resulted the children to spend their time playing around without any positive objective; (3) The children were also lacking specific guidance on the best method of drawing which has resulted in varied drawing ability among the children. Some of the children are already talented and have produced good drawing. But there are still many of them who have strong interest in drawing but did not receive appropriate guidance which hindered their drawing potential.

Based on the above-mentioned situational analysis, the formulation of the problem that can be concluded for this community service is to identify the most appropriate drawing method for the children, so that, not only they are able to continue doing the activity that help them grow but also to hone their talent amidst of their families' financial limitation.

According to the Indonesian language dictionary, education is a process to change a person's attitude and behavior, or a group of people in their effort to develop maturity through education and training. In general, education is all types of learning experience that take place within the family, school and society that develop a person's optimal ability since birth to death (Wiyani et al., 2016). In the Indonesian Law on the National Education System (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional, 2003), Article 5, Paragraph 1, 2, and 5, it was stated that every citizen has an equal right for good quality education. The citizens with disadvantages, such as disabled, or disadvantaged social status, have the right to get special education. Every citizen has the right to get the opportunity to improve education throughout their life. As stated in the law, every citizen has the right to decent education, informally, formally or non-formally, without considering the social and economic background.

Besides formal education, non-formal and informal education have been introduced as well. The emergence of various educational terms shows the development of education that has been broaden, which indicates that education is not only attained at school. Non-formal education is different from formal education. UNESCO, as cited in Sudjana (2004), explained that non-formal education has less restricted structure and norms as compared to formal education. Non-formal education has varied forms and contents, whereas formal education, in general, is

more uniform in every unit, kind, and level of education. The objectives of non-formal education are not uniform or standardized, while the objectives of formal education are uniform and standardized for every unit and level of education. Non-formal educational learning is not as rigid as the implementation of formal education conducted in formal schools. Learning of non-formal education is not merely or prioritizing knowledge, but the learning is more toward empowerment to find and develop the potential of learners (Shofwan et al., 2019).

The main objectives of this community service were to give training on the drawing methods to the children from the age of 5 to 12 years old, in the area of Perum III, Karawaci, and to explore as well as develop these children's potential through a drawing activity. The other goal is to train children to be creative in dealing with the limitations of the financial conditions they face. One of them is in choosing a type of paper that is cheap but still produces good colour quality.

The benefits of this training are as follows: (1) For a short term, it is expected that the children who were also the participants of this training able to use the drawing method that have been taught and increased their creativity not only in drawing but also in other activities. (2) For the long term, it is expected that this training will be sustenance for these children's mental development that will help them to grow up to be creative, confident and independent.

METHOD

Problem solving framework

The results of the field survey and information collected by the team showed that children from the age of 5 to 12 years old, in the area of Perum III, Karawaci were familiar with crayons and drawing paper, but were unable to find more varied ways to use the crayons. The FRSD community service team then has decided to give training on the drawing method and varied colouring techniques that will produce more expressive drawings. The children's drawings were generally based on their observation in their daily life. Thus, the team encouraged the children to tell stories that were fictional to stimulate their imagination. This was to encourage the children to step out of their comfort zone, to inspire them to not only stick to their real-life condition but also to dare to dream.

Implementation

The activity necessary for the children was training on drawing method with crayons using various techniques. The training was carried out through a persuasive approach; by having dialogues of familiar topics with the children, followed by storytelling. The next activity was to explain the ways or methods to draw and colour with crayons on drawing paper alternatives, which was then followed by drawing practice by the children. At the end of the training, the children were given the opportunity to tell what they have drawn, and other children were asked to respond or comment.

The aim of training/target group

The target group of this community service activity was a group of children from the age of 5 to 12 years old, with a total of 20 children, consisting of 5 boys and 15 girls who were studying in playgroup (TK) and elementary school (SD). The target selection is made based on simple random sampling, where children who have the same economic background are selected randomly so that each child has the same opportunity. Margono (2004) states that simple random sampling is a technique to get a sample that is directly performed on a sampling unit. Thus, each unit of sampling as a remote element of the population gained the same opportunity to become a sample or to represent the population. Such a way is done when population members are considered homogeneous. There is no difficulty to invite these children to participate in the training because drawing is a fun activity for them.

These children were from families with middle and lower socioeconomic backgrounds, with the majority of them coming from the latter; the parents were vendors selling goods around the village or area. These children showed strong interest and talent in drawing, indicating that it was necessary to provide them with non-formal education to hone their talent, simultaneously served as a medium for expression and imagination appropriate for their age.

Methodology

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. A case study is a research in which researchers explore a particular phenomenon (case) in a given time and activity and gather detailed and in-depth information using various data collection procedures over a certain period (Moleong, 2013). Through this qualitative research, descriptive data were produced in the form of textual references, interview results, and dig up as much information as possible on problems related to drawing and colouring techniques with crayons. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) define case studies as follows: a case study in-depth description of an analysis of something of a bounded system. Part of the confusion surrounding the case study is that the process of conducting a case study is conflated with both the unit of study (the case) and the product of this type of investigation. Based on the case study and implementation, the case study approach in this research will be carried out on a social unit of non-formal education or single-case study of children in kindergarten-elementary age in Karawaci residential area that requires guidance in varied drawing techniques with crayon.

As previously mentioned, the purpose of this activity is to provide training in drawing methods that are appropriate for kindergarten-elementary school-age children with limited economic background and explore and develop the potential of children in the region through drawing activities. For this reason, before conducting the training, the community service team conducted experiments related to the method of drawing with crayons and tried to find alternative media as a substitute for the drawing paper. Experiments carried out by trying some drawing techniques with crayons such as blocking, gradation, mixing, finishing, and stabbing techniques. The community service team also decided to use brown rice wrapping paper instead of drawing paper because it produced a pretty good colour quality and the price of paper was quite low. Thus, an appropriate method was obtained for the children who were targeted for the training. The results of the implementation of community service are then arranged in the form of descriptive scientific articles.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are four things that will be discussed in this section, which are; equipment, human resources, implementation of community service activity, and the results of the activity.

Equipment

It is important to have knowledge concerning the equipment and material in the drawing. The drawing equipment and material have different functions and characters. It will make it easier for the children to pour their ideas and concepts in the form of images by knowing and understanding each of the drawing equipment and material. Crayons are one of the drawing and colouring tools that is immensely popular among children. According to the fifth edition of the Indonesian language dictionary, crayons are coloured pencils made of wax, usually used for painting or drawing. Briefly, crayons have a waxy shape, but with a softer texture. Crayons are quite easy to use for all ages. The bright and attractive, wide variety of colours making crayons easy to be used, especially when children want to explore the colours of every object that they draw.

Drawing with crayons has many advantages, but it also has some challenges that can be overcome. Crayons are one of the drawing or painting tools that belongs in the category of dry media. In this sense, drying media refers to drawing techniques without any liquid mixture, such as water or oil. The distinctive features of crayons are that the colours produced are bright and

clear, and its use by scratching or crossing out on drawing paper or other materials. Crayons are the drawing medium that contains wax, resulting on shiny and slippery scratches look, and it has limitation if the original colour is overlap/coat with other colours (Widodo & Harini, 2016).

The price of crayons is also inexpensive, however, due to its use, which requires a lot of colours and relatively fast decreases in size (depending on the technique used), suggesting that one set of crayons will not be enough for those who want to learn to draw with crayons. In addition to crayons, drawing paper, which is another drawing medium, is needed to allow the children to pour their ideas in the drawing. Usually, drawing paper or drawing book in the size of A4 or A3 are used while drawing using crayons. In this training, the team had the opportunity to use other media to replace drawing paper. This is because the team wanted to instil the principle of less paper, in the sense of reducing the use of drawing paper and replacing it with other media that are more environmentally friendly. A pilot was first conducted, and after that, brown-coloured wrapping paper that is used to wrap rice or food was chosen as an alternative to replace the drawing paper. This brown-coloured wrapping paper is often used by food vendors to wrap their wares. Besides being cheaper and environmentally friendly, this brown-coloured wrapping paper has a texture that makes crayons more attached when used on its surface.

Human resources

The community service team from the product design department, in the Faculty of Arts and Design, is consisted of four lecturers who acted as the training instructors. As explained earlier, the group targeted for the implementation of this community service activity was a group of children aged 5 to 12 years old who lived around Perum III, Karawaci, Tangerang, Banten. Most of the children who participated in this training were from poor families in which their parents' financial condition was not sufficient to provide them with additional lessons (non-formal education) outside of the formal education in schools that is subsidized by the government. However, looking at the children's consistency to learn to draw at one of the residents' house, who gave free drawing lessons, these children showed a strong interest and willingness to draw well. These children's drawings are not inferior to children who take private tutoring or courses at paid tutoring centres. Nonetheless, these children still need guidance for them to improve in their drawing. Therefore, the children were introduced to various drawing methods using crayons so that they can enrich their techniques and produce drawings with more leverage.



Figure 1. Training participants' profile

Training Implementation

The drawing training activity for the children was conducted at the home of one of the residents in Jl. Mataram Raya No.62, Perum III, Karawaci, Bencong Indah, Kelapa Dua, Tangerang, Banten, and lasts approximately 5 hours. The training is divided into 3 main sessions, including explanation, implementation, and evaluation and appreciation. The location of Perum III, Karawaci, is not too far from the downtown of Tangerang. The city of Tangerang is one of the busiest cities in the capital. This condition contradicts the fact that there are still many children who need additional education despite the city's growth.

The training began with the explanation of the training materials, the objectives and benefits of the training, the methods to be provided, and the expected results. Further, the team explained the stages of the training to the children as well as explained the importance of creativity and motivation for these children's independence in future. The stages of the training provided are as follows: First, built rapport with the participants by explaining the purpose, goals, and benefits of the training as well as the results obtained from the training. The language used in training was adjusted to suit the level of the children which were more relaxed, easy to understand and communicative. Second, introduced the drawing tools' characters and drawing media to be used, which in this case were crayons and brown-coloured food wrapping paper. Third, explained several drawing methods with crayons accompanied by examples (demonstration). Fourth, given the participants the opportunity to practice drawing techniques that have been taught with themes decided by the instructors. Fifth, asked the participants to respond and appreciate the work of other participants in turn.

Before the participants were given a chance to use the drawing media that have been explained, the instructors first explained the drawing techniques using crayons. The explanation can be seen as follows; (1) Drawing with crayons is actually similar to other drawing activities. The first thing to think about is the theme or concept of the drawing that will be created. The children at least must already have an idea of what they want to draw. (2) Before colouring the drawing with crayons, the children must first understand the objects and concepts of the drawing. If they already know the idea, it will be easier for them to choose which colours to be used when colouring. (3) While drawing, the children should consider the following things: make a sketch before colouring, focus on the object to be drawn, confident when colouring because there is no right or wrong in choosing colours.

Furthermore, the instructors took turns, explaining several drawing techniques with crayons, which are as follows:

Blocking technique

Blocking is one of the most popular techniques in colouring with crayons. The trick is to block the image area using certain colours by gently sweeping it. For example, if the children are going to colour a leaf, then the way to colour it is by sweeping a light green or yellow colour to block the image of the leaf.

Gradation technique

The next technique is the gradation technique. After the blocking process is completed, the next step is to coat the already blocked part with another colour that is still in the same group of colours and should be done in stages—for example, coating the leaves with dark green or other green colors. The essence of this technique is to create a neat, dark and bright effect on the leaf. This technique is usually done by putting the dark colour first and then transition it with a lighter or brighter colour. In order to have a livelier drawing, it is necessary to explore children's creativity in combining colours.

Mixing technique

Another colouring technique is mixing technique or blending technique. This technique is applied to create more variations in colour. There are two mixing techniques that can be used.

Each technique can be adapted to the needs of the drawing. The first mixing technique is the linear stroke technique and another technique is the circular stroke technique. Linear stroke technique is usually used when colouring sky images.

Finishing technique

The final step or closing step in colouring with crayons is the finishing technique. This technique is used to soften the colours on parts that are still not perfect. At this stage, complementary accents can be added to create more effects that will make the drawing becomes more attractive.

Additional technique

The additional technique can also be applied, such as the scrubbing technique or swab technique. Scrubbing is to scrape a particular part of the image or drawing by using a tool (scrubber) for refinement. The scrub tool is usually included in certain crayons sets



Figure 2. The instructor explained the method of drawing with crayons

Once the instructors were done with the theoretical explanation, it was the time for the participants to be given the opportunity to draw with crayons using the techniques that were taught earlier and the equipment that was provided. The participants were requested to draw according to the theme of "my ambition". But before they practice drawing using the drawing methods that were already explained, the instructors encouraged the participants to expand their imagination on the requested theme by telling stories. The storytelling method is one of the ways to give children the experience of learning by telling stories orally. Children can understand the contents of the story and can develop their imagination and creativity through stories (Moeslichatoen, 2004).

The theoretical explanation session lasts for 30 minutes, while the explanation of the technique of drawing using crayons with the demonstration is also about 30 minutes. The next activity was the practice of drawing according to the methods explained earlier, for approximately three and a half hours. The time comparison provided for this training is 20 (Explanation): 70 (Practice): 10 (Evaluation and appreciation). The participants were guided and assisted by the instructors during the drawing process. The participants were also encouraged to focus and concentrate on their drawings when they were drawing. They were also encouraged to ask questions to the instructors whenever they have any confusion. In colouring activities, each child

has different abilities in terms of colouring, there are children who can colour with a variety of colour combinations, some are colouring one object with only one colour (Meylinie et al., 2017).



Figure 3. Participants of the training practiced the taught drawing methods with crayons

Results of the activity

Basically, the results achieved from the training were quite good, considering the skills and perseverance that are required and needed in drawing with crayons. Some of the participants found it difficult to present ideas in the form of drawing that could represent their ambitions. The instructors who assisted the participants then provided input and guided them to express their ambitions in the form of drawing. Difficulties faced by these children are common, considering that previously they were accustomed to drawing things or objects that could be seen in their daily life, such as flowers, landscapes, homes, and so on. However, due to the guidance given by the instructors, the participants became enthusiastic and confident in drawing. This is the most important aspect that affects the quality of the drawings. In reporting several studies where children have been encouraged to draw, the researchers have noted the importance of drawing as a process, rather than the drawing product (Einarsdottir et al., 2009).



Figure 4. Blocking method applied by one of the participants



Figure 5. The drawings of the training participants

The drawings produced by the participants with the theme of "my ambition" turned out to be largely influenced by the professions of those close to them. Seven out of twenty participants in the training drew the teacher as their ambitions. The main reason given was because they were amazed at a teacher figure who lives in their neighbourhood and voluntarily teaches them to draw and do other creative activities. This is in line with Mustakim (2005), who said that children who admire a character would express their admiration through simple sketches in the form of drawing. Similarly, Burkitt et al. (2019) were in the opinion of being aware that children may draw emotions differently for different professional groups may help practitioners to understand children's feelings towards the drawn topics more fully and afford a basis of discussion to ask children why they drew certain information for certain people. The findings indicate that it matters which profession children think they are drawing themselves for and whether they are familiar with a member of that profession. Children's drawings of themselves are more expressive if the audience for those drawings is familiar to the child.

Consequently, further evaluation and observation are needed to measure the ability of the participants in absorbing all the lessons on the drawing that have been taught. This is because this aspect will be apparent once the participants practice on their own, relying solely on their own initiatives and creativity. Despite the short time of drawing training, which was only 5 hours, the results achieved were quite good and satisfying. The obvious drawback was at the stage of finishing method because the process of adding accents sometimes resulted in colours that were not matching with the basic colours that were already created. At the end of the training, each participant was asked to appreciate each other's work. This is to inculcate the attitude of respecting the work of others. Although delivered in simple words, these children responded to each other's appreciation. The instructors also gave appreciation to all the children's work. Taking children's work seriously, whatever the subject or type of activity, is extremely important if they are to feel that their efforts are respected and highly regarded. Communication between adults and children includes listening to what they are saying, respecting their intellectual integrity and reinforcing that scribbling is regarded as an exciting, serious, and stimulating activity (Coates & Coates, 2016).

After following this activity, children increasingly confident and understand drawing techniques with crayons and can overcome the problems they face during practice. The participants seemed to be quite satisfied with the results of their work and expressed their intention to continue practising the lessons that they had gained from the drawing training. On the contrary, the instructors felt that the time spent in conducting the training was not enough to accommodate all the drawing methods. Therefore, it is necessary to design and conduct the same training in the future.

CONCLUSION

The training participants turned out to have extraordinary talent and enthusiasm that beyond the expectations of the instructors, as evident in their drawings. Although the participants have never experienced non-formal education such as painting courses or other similar activities, they were able to quickly absorb the lessons that have been delivered and practiced them, with the guidance and direction given by the instructors. The drawing methods that were taught by the instructors have proven to be able to enrich the children's mastery of drawing techniques with crayons despite never knowing it before. Of the five methods given, blocking and mixing were the most preferred techniques among the participants because they were considered easy and produced drawings with bright colours that represent the children's expression and imagination. From this study, it can also be concluded that economic background has no effect on children's drawing ability.

Through this community service activity, besides aiming to provide training on the right drawing methods, it also aims to explore and develop the potential of children in the targetted area through drawing activity. In addition, through this activity, children are also trained to be able to work around financial limitations such as by using brown rice wrapping paper as an alternative to replacing drawing paper. It is hoped that through this activity, the training participants can master their drawing skills and ability to increase their creativity not only in drawing but also in other activities. In addition, it is expected that this activity will support these children's mental development that will help them to grow into a creative, confident and independent person.

The community service team from the Faculty of Arts and Design, Universitas Trisakti is only able to contribute to society in the form of knowledge and skills. For the next step, it is anticipated that the related parties can continue the effort to help the children who are disadvantaged due to their families' economic limitation to gain additional skills through non-formal education.

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