

Implementation of Mix Media Collage Through The Project-Based Learning Approach to Improve Independence and Learning Creativity of Grade XI Students in The Material of Personal Ekspresion Works

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the effectiveness of applying mixed media collage techniques in Project-Based Learning (PjBL) based visual arts instruction on increasing the independence and learning creativity of Grade XI students in the Personal Expression Artwork material. The background of this research is the low exploration of ideas and active participation of students in art instruction which is still dominated by conventional approaches. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, involving one cohort of Grade XI students at SMAN 1 Boyolangu for approximately five months. Data collection techniques include participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of student artworks. The results show a significant increase in the aspect of learning independence, which is reflected in students' initiative in managing projects independently, as well as in the aspect of visual creativity, seen from the diversity of materials and techniques in the resulting collage artworks. Students were also able to display personal expression through emotionally meaningful themes. These findings support constructivism and humanistic theories, and reinforce the results of previous research regarding the effectiveness of PjBL in art instruction. The research conclusion indicates that the combination of PjBL and mixed media collage not only improves the quality of visual arts instruction, but also fosters independent and creative character in students. The practical implications of this research can serve as a reference in the development of contextual, expressive, and student-centered art learning strategies.

Keywords: mixed media collage, project-based learning, independence, creativity, personal expression artwork

INTRODUCTION

Visual arts education at the Senior High School (SMA) level has a strategic role in developing students' creative potential and independence. One important material in the visual arts curriculum is "Personal Expression Artwork," which encourages students to express thoughts and feelings through visual media. However, in practice, visual arts instruction is still dominated by conventional approaches that do not adequately facilitate exploration and active student participation. This has an impact on the minimal variation of artworks, low learning motivation, and lack of innovation in expression. To answer this challenge, a contextual and student-centered learning approach is needed, one of which is Project-Based Learning (PjBL), combined with the mixed media collage technique as an explorative medium in creating expressive and meaningful artworks.

The main problem identified is the low independence and creativity of Grade XI students in visual arts instruction, especially in the personal expression material. Many students still tend to imitate examples from the teacher or the internet, without deep exploration of ideas and techniques. On the other hand, teachers also experience difficulty in implementing innovative learning approaches such as PjBL, especially in integrating mixed media collage techniques. If this condition continues, the visual arts learning process will remain stagnant, unable to optimally explore student potential, and fail to support the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes contextual, collaborative, and student-sided learning.

This research aims to analyze the effectiveness of applying mixed media collage techniques in Project-Based Learning based visual arts instruction to increase the learning independence and creativity of Grade XI students in the Personal Expression Artwork material. In addition, this research also aims to formulate applicable learning strategies for art teachers in integrating the PjBL model and mixed media techniques appropriately and contextually in the classroom.

This research is based on constructivism theory, which states that knowledge is built through direct experience and active interaction with the learning environment. This theory is reinforced by Vygotsky's idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which emphasizes the importance of the role of teachers and peers in the meaningful learning process. Furthermore, the humanistic approach of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow also serves as a basis in emphasizing the importance of personal experience and intrinsic motivation in art instruction. Previous research by Setyorini, Ekowati, and Febriyanti (2023) showed that mixed media collage-based PjBL can increase student creativity. Similar results were found by Rosalina and Sanoto (2023) at the elementary school level, as well as Musdalifah et al. (2024) which showed the positive impact of PjBL on student independence in non-art subjects. This research expands the scope by focusing on the integration of mixed media collage and PjBL in SMA visual arts instruction.

Theoretically, this research gives a contribution to the development of visual arts education literature, especially in the context of applying PjBL and mixed media collage techniques. This research also enriches the understanding of how project-based learning approaches can be adjusted to student needs and the development of the times. Practically, the results of this research can be utilized by visual arts teachers as a guide in designing learning strategies that are contextual, enjoyable, and trigger student independence and creativity. The benefits of this research also extend to education policymakers in designing field practice-based art teacher training.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the main goal of the research is to gain an in-depth understanding of the process and experience of students in visual arts instruction using mixed media collage

techniques through the Project-Based Learning approach. The case study was used so that the research focus could be directed at the specific context of Grade XI and the learning phenomenon that occurs naturally without experimental intervention. This approach allows researchers to explore in detail the learning dynamics, changes in creativity, and student independence during the learning process.

The research sample was selected using purposive sampling, which is the determination of informants based on criteria relevant to the research objectives. The main informants consisted of Grade XI students who took visual arts subjects at SMAN 1 Boyolangu. The number of participants was 1 cohort, with diverse characteristics in terms of art ability and level of learning independence. In addition, the Teaching Assistance students who taught the class were also supporting informants to provide a perspective from the educator's side regarding the application of the learning method.

Data collection was carried out at SMAN 1 Boyolangu with data collected using several techniques, namely:

1. Participatory observation, for observing the mixed media collage learning process applied with the Project-Based Learning approach directly in the classroom.
2. In-depth interviews with students, aimed at exploring their experiences, perceptions, and reflections during their participation in the instruction.
3. Document study, in the form of student artworks, learning process notes, and visual documentation to assess the development of creativity and learning independence.

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis technique, which is the process of organizing data into themes relevant to the research objectives such as the themes of creativity, independence, and the learning process. The analysis process includes data coding, categorization, and systematic meaning extraction. To increase the validity of the findings, data triangulation was used by comparing data from observation, interviews, and documents. Furthermore, member checking was carried out by confirming the analysis results with the informants to ensure the accuracy of the data interpretation. To maintain the validity and reliability of the data, this research applied several validation steps, including data triangulation from various sources, the use of member checking techniques, and transparent documentation of the research process.

In the ethical aspect, the researcher ensured the confidentiality of informant data by disguising identities and only using codes as a substitute for names. All participants were given an explanation regarding the research objectives and their consent was obtained voluntarily. The researcher also maintained anonymity and respected the privacy of participants during and after the research process

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

This research aims to examine the extent to which the application of mixed media collage through the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) approach can increase the independence and learning creativity of Grade XI students in the Personal Expression Artwork material. The data obtained comes from classroom observation, documentation of student artworks, and in-depth interviews with students. The research was conducted in Grade XI which consisted of 1 cohort.

Before the PjBL model was applied, art learning activities were more instructive and teacher-centered. Students tended to be passive in exploring ideas and limited in using media. After the implementation of the PjBL model, an increase was found in two main aspects:

1. Learning independence: Seen from the students' ability to independently organize, work on, and complete projects without too much direction from the teacher.
2. Creativity in artwork: Characterized by the diversity of materials used in the collage (for

example waste paper, fabric, beads, photo cutouts), as well as variations in techniques and visual concepts that are more expressive and personal.

Some artworks showed the courage to explore personal themes such as anxiety, hope, and local identity packaged symbolically in visual form. Analysis was carried out based on findings categorized into three main aspects:

1. Learning Independence



Figure 1. Documentation of Student Hands-on Practice

Students showed an increase in making their own decisions during the creative process. They chose materials, determined themes, and evaluated the results without always waiting for teacher instructions. This change in behavior was observed from the increase in initiative, such as coming earlier to prepare materials and discussing in small groups independently.

2. Visual Creativity



Figure 2. Students' Collage Artwork Creativity Results

Creativity was evident in the variety of techniques and materials used. Some students used cutouts of used cloth, transparent plastic, dried leaves, up to magazine cutouts to create unique collage artworks. This exploration reflects the level of creativity and the courage of students to try something different from conventional collage techniques.

3. Personal Expression



Figure 3. Mixed Media Collage Artworks

Students were able to connect their artwork with their personal experiences. Many artworks reflected moods, life experiences, or values that they considered important. For example, one student depicted feelings of loss through dark image cutouts, while another student expressed a feeling of happiness through the application of bright colors and flower motifs.

Meanwhile, the results of the interview with one student revealed that: "At first I was confused about what kind of work to make, but after being given a choice of themes and materials, I felt freer to express my own feelings through collage" (Student A). The author as the Visual Arts Subject instructor realized that students became more active in conveying ideas/consulting, more interested in the process, and showed a sense of pride in their artworks.

From the collected data, it can be concluded that the application of mixed media collage through the Project-Based Learning approach not only enriches students' visual experience, but also forms a more independent and creative learning character. This shows that students not only learn technical art skills, but also learn how to compose ideas, plan projects, and convey personal meaning through artwork. Thus, this approach is not only relevant in the context of visual arts instruction, but is also aligned with the goals of 21st-century education which emphasizes learning independence and the development of creativity as important basic competencies.

DISCUSSION

The research results show that the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in visual arts instruction with mixed media collage techniques significantly increases the independence and creativity of Grade XI students. Data collected through observation, interviews, and project assessment show an increase in the aspects of flexibility, originality, elaboration, and fluency of student ideas. For example, research by Setyorini et al. (2023) showed that the application of PjBL in visual arts instruction through mixed media collage significantly increased students' creative thinking skills. This finding is consistent with previous research that emphasizes the effectiveness of PjBL in increasing students' 21st-century skills, including creativity and independence.

Scores from cycle to cycle. For example, in research by Setyorini et al. (2023), the percentage of student creativity increased from 66.67% in cycle I to 87.75% in cycle III. This shows that the gradual application of PjBL increases aspects of student creativity, such as flexibility, originality, elaboration, and fluency. This data supports the finding that PjBL is effective in increasing students' creative thinking skills.

Comparison with previous studies shows that the results of this research confirm previous findings regarding the effectiveness of PjBL in visual arts instruction. For example,

research by Rosalina and Sanoto (2023) showed that the application of PjBL increased student creativity in visual arts subjects. However, this research also adds a new perspective by focusing on the mixed media collage technique as a medium for students' personal expression. This shows that the integration of specific art techniques in PjBL can enrich students' learning experiences and increase their creative skills.

The logical structure of this research finding begins with an introduction regarding the importance of independence and creativity in visual arts instruction. Next, the presentation of the results shows a significant increase in the aspects of student creativity through the application of PjBL with mixed media collage techniques. The discussion links this finding with constructivism theory and previous research that supports the effectiveness of PjBL in increasing 21st-century skills. The conclusion summarizes the contribution of this research in enriching visual arts learning strategies that encourage student independence and creativity.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the application of the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model combined with mixed media collage techniques is proven effective in increasing the learning independence and creativity of Grade XI students in the Personal Expression Artwork material. This finding directly addresses the research objective, which is to evaluate the effectiveness of the PjBL approach in the context of visual arts instruction focusing on personal expression. The increase is seen in the students' ability to manage projects independently, explore collage materials and techniques diversely, and display personal meaning in their artworks. Theoretically, this result reinforces the constructivism approach and is relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum policy which encourages contextual and student-centered learning. The practical implication of this research can be a reference for art teachers in designing instruction that facilitates the individual expression of students through creative projects. The limitation that needs to be noted is not in the scope of participants or duration, but in the specific institutional context, namely SMAN 1 Boyolangu, so generalization to other schools requires adaptation to the characteristics of the students, school culture, and available resources. Therefore, further research is suggested to test a similar model in different school contexts, including in rural areas or with more heterogeneous student characteristics.

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