



Paper pulp mask art as a media for students' creativity in grade IV of elementary school

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ABSTRACT

Art education is part of the concept of education related to individual creative expression in conveying aesthetic appreciation experiences, a means of releasing emotions, and developing self-potential. The purpose of this study was to analyze the process and results of students' creativity in making paper pulp masks and to determine the average value of students' creativity in creating mask art for students at SD 3 Japan with 20 fourth-grade students as research subjects. This type of research uses Mixed Methods Sequential Exploratory design. The data collection techniques for this study are observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. Qualitative data analysis used consists of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, while quantitative data is in the form of descriptive statistics using SPSS and Microsoft Excel. The results of the study showed that fourth-grade students at SD 3 Japan have a good level of creativity in carrying out artistic activities of making paper pulp masks, both in choosing mask designs and students' creative ways of completing each stage. This is supported by the results of the student creativity questionnaire which is in the high category with an average value of 78.95. This study should be used as a guideline for teachers to implement creativity-based art learning using recycled materials such as paper waste so that students are more sensitive to the surrounding environment.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Art is part of the concept of education related to human creative expression. The role of art in education provides an aesthetic appreciation experience, a means to express emotions, and the development of students' potential (Kusnanto & Frima, 2022) . The aspects of copyright, karsa, and work in art learning form the ability of children's basic instincts in the process of self-actualization as a whole. The purpose of art education is to foster student sensitivity with a sense of empathy and sympathy for a work. This is in accordance with the statement Fajrie (2023) which states that the presence of art education can shape children's character values by prioritizing intuitive sensitivity and increasing individual creativity. With art learning, students get the opportunity to act as creators or subjects who create objects of art.

Art education in schools is one of the media that can be used in developing students' creativity and artistic talents. Agree with Munir & Hijriati (2019) which states that one of the principles of learning activities is to develop student creativity. Creativity is one of the most important skills that everyone needs to have, especially in making art. Creativity is the ability to find and create new things in the form of ideas, behaviors, and products that can benefit oneself and others (Fajrie, Hasta, et al., 2023) . Media can be a tool used as an intermediary to convey

information. Media is a means to educate students to increase understanding, knowledge, insight, and skills (Setiawaty, 2024) . This agrees with Parhusip & Indraswati (2023) explaining that with the media, subject matter can be easily conveyed to students so that learning becomes effective and efficient. The existence of the right media can also help students in processing knowledge transfer, so that learning activities become fun and easy to understand (Setiawaty et al., 2024) . One of the appropriate media in developing students' fine arts creativity is by using pulp from unused materials.

Research related to the use of used goods to make art has been conducted by Anggun et al (2024) about the creativity of making three-dimensional crafts from used goods. The results of this study prove that fourth grade students of SD Negeri Kedawung 1 Cirebon are able to explore the ability of creativity quite well assessed from the aspects of the principles of fine arts by utilizing used goods as a medium. Similarly, in research Cahlia & Yuliani (2019) shows the results of class action research by students of Group B1 Wulele Sanggula II UHO regarding increasing student creativity using papier-mâché with the demonstration method before action (pre-cycle) obtained a percentage of 31.25%. After being given action by making paper pulp printing artwork in cycle I obtained a percentage of 68.75% and increased again in cycle II to 87.50%. The research is supported by research conducted by Muntoharoh & Sugiarto (2020) which discusses the creative expression of art in children of the Taman Belajar Sobat Kecil Semarang Community. The results showed that children's creative expression arises when the process of obtaining ideas and the media used, the expression in the drawings created by each child has its own uniqueness with varied meanings.

Based on the background that has been explained, the novelty of this research lies in the focus of its observation, namely on the process of displaying student creativity in the artistic experience of making masks from paper pulp. It aims to find out in more detail the creative process created at each stage by students in doing art activities. The creative process will be formed when having the experience of doing artistic activities to make works of art (Pratama et al., 2023) . In addition, students are also able to create unique and valuable works even though they use used items that are no longer used.

Paper was chosen as the main material in this study because it is easy to find in the surrounding environment. Pulp games can have an influence on children's motor development and creativity (Mufida & Abu, 2018) . Students are given full freedom in creating mask works according to their imagination. The selection of recycled materials in art education makes a very important contribution because in addition to being a medium in improving student creativity and skills, it can also teach environmental values. The use of recycled materials teaches the important concept of sustainability, as well as helping to address waste issues. In addition, the use of recycled materials can also create a more interesting and meaningful learning experience for students. Thus, this research not only provides a practical solution to the problem of students' fine art creativity, but also contributes to strengthening students' art making experience, increasing appreciation for each stage carried out, and students' sensitivity to the surrounding environment.

2. METHOD

This research uses the type of research *Mixed Methods* or mixed *Sequential Exploratory* design. Nasution et al., (2024) explains that mixed methods are a combination of qualitative and

quantitative methods. *Sequential Exploratory* is used to explain qualitative research data and supported by quantitative data sequentially (Dewi, 2020) . The data source of this research is 20 fourth grade students at SD 3 Japan, Mejobo, Kudus.

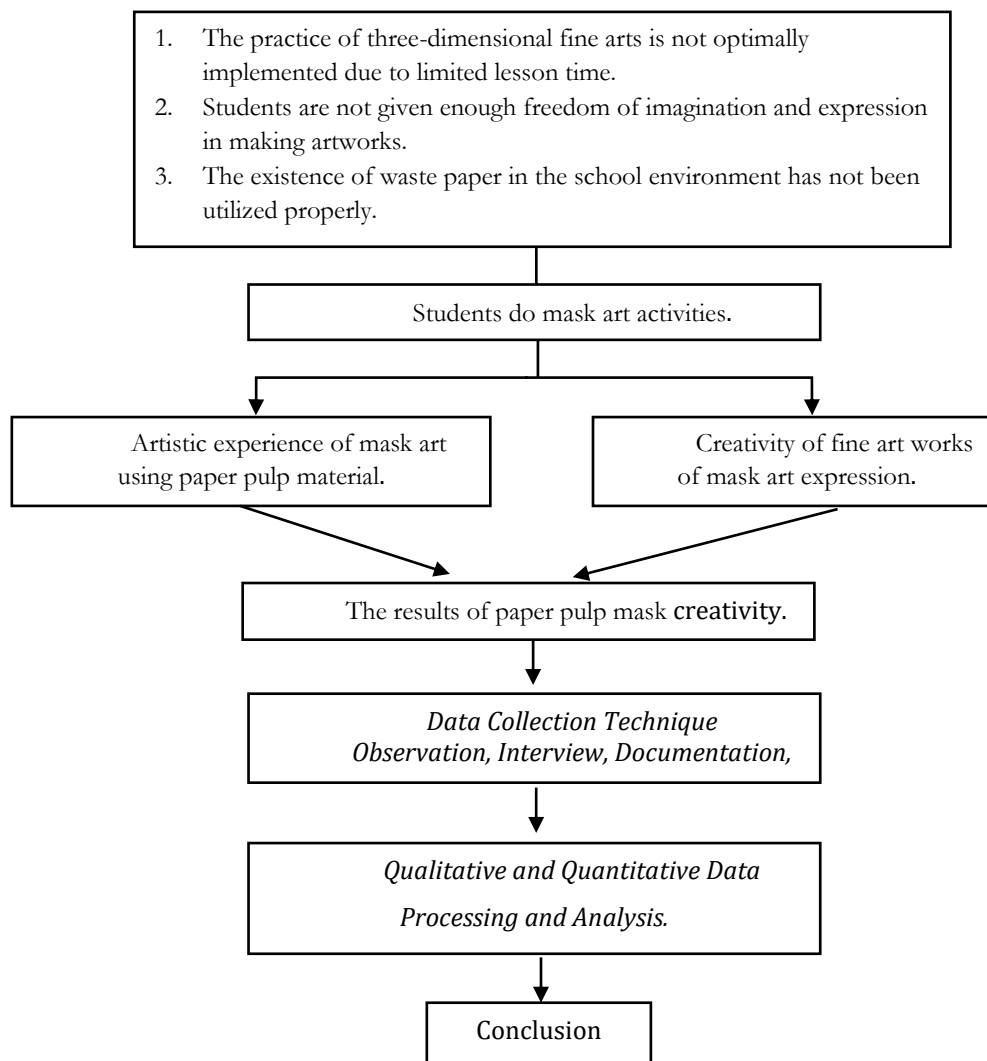


Figure1 Visual Model of Sequential Exploratory Design Method Research

Source: Researcher (2024)

Data validity is a research question testing tool with the aim of measuring the results of data that has been collected by researchers themselves or obtained from research subjects. This study uses two validity tests including credibility test and reliability test. Qualitative data uses a credibility test in the form of extended observation, triangulation of sources and techniques with the aim of increasing the theoretical, methodological, and interpretative strength of qualitative research. Meanwhile, quantitative data uses a reliability test. Reliability according to Sahir (2022) is testing the consistency of respondents' answers. Reliability testing is important because if the questionnaire or questionnaire is reliable, it means that the research conducted by the researcher can be trusted and accounted for. In this study, the reliability test was carried out by checking the validity of the questionnaire before it was given to fourth grade students of SD 3 Japan. Researchers conducted a reliability test conducted by expert validators. Experts who validated the questionnaire in this study were expert lecturers in the field of art, namely **Much Arsyad**

Fardani, S.Pd., M.Pd. and **Wasis Wijayanto, S.Sn., M.Sn.** as PGSD lecturers at Muria Kudus University. The results of the questionnaire validation that has been tested to expert validators are as follows.

Table 1 Questionnaire Validation Results 1 (Creativity)

Validator	Max Score	Questionnaire Score 1	Final Score	Comments	Improvement
Expert 1	50	44	88	Already suitable for research use	-
Expert 2	50	43	86	Please proceed to the next stage	-

Based on the results of the questionnaire validity test scores that have been given by the two expert validator lecturers, it can be concluded that the questionnaire instrument for Fine Arts Creativity in Making Paper Pulp Masks is very valid and suitable for use in research without revision.

Qualitative research data collection techniques are obtained from observation, documentation, and interviews conducted simultaneously when artistic activities are taking place to analyze student creativity in the process and results of the pulp mask works that have been made, then in quantitative research using questionnaire data on the creativity of pulp mask art distributed to students after art activities with a total of 25 statements. Data analysis is the process of processing research data that has been obtained with the aim of obtaining useful information and can be used to draw conclusions in a study (Hidayah et al., 2024) . In this study, qualitative data will be analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Meanwhile, the quantitative questionnaire is measured using the Likert Scale. Alternative answers using a Likert scale score range of 1-4 adapted from Sugiyono (2019) with details: 1 (very unsuitable); 2 (unsuitable); 3 (suitable); 4 (very suitable). The formula for calculating the total student questionnaire score is as follows.

$$X = \frac{\text{total score}}{\text{number of questions} \times \text{highest point scale}} \times 100$$

Keterangan:

X = final score

Table 2 Categories of Questionnaire Assessment Indicators

Score	Description
81 – 100	very high
61 – 80	high
41 – 60	enough
21 – 40	low
0 - 20	Very low

Source: Arikunto (2014)

After knowing the student questionnaire scores, then the results are processed in the form of descriptive statistical analysis using the help of SPSS and *Microsoft Excel* applications. The following is a list of names of students who will be studied: ARS¹, AOA², AK⁽¹⁾, BAF⁽¹⁾, DA¹,

DSW⁽²⁾, FA², IKN⁽²⁾, MIPU⁽¹⁾, MRAP⁽¹⁾, MRAB⁽¹⁾, MRAG⁽¹⁾, MYI⁽¹⁾, MZAF⁽¹⁾, MN⁽²⁾, NAA⁽²⁾, RAH⁽¹⁾, SANS⁽²⁾, SCS⁽²⁾, ANK⁽²⁾.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study, in accordance with the objectives and research approach, the results of the study will be presented into two approaches, namely qualitative and quantitative.

Result of Work Analysis and Creativity Questionnaire

Before making the artworks, the researcher conducted initial interviews with the students, which showed that each student had different experiences and motivations related to the mask art form. The first step is for students to sketch a picture of the mask that will be formed at the creation stage. The creation stage is a series of processes carried out to realize students' imagination and creativity in making previously created works of art. This activity invites students to create mask art using paper pulp media. The activity begins with preparing tools and materials, making paper pulp dough, printing masks followed by drying, and the last is the stage of giving color to the mask. After finishing making the artwork, the researcher observed and documented the students' mask works. Researchers conducted an observation assessment of the work by analyzing the mask work of each student using a narrative approach by conducting in-depth exploration of students' experiences (Fathurohman et al., 2024).

The assessment of this work is guided by six indicators according to Saragih & Tarigan (2022) including unity, balance, proportion, rhythm, emphasis, and harmony. The following are the results of students' work in making paper pulp masks.



Figure 2 Cartoon Character Mask Work

Source: Researcher data (2024)

The group that made cartoon character masks consisted of four students, namely ARS¹, MIPU⁽¹⁾, MRAP¹, and BAF⁽¹⁾. Based on the results of interviews before creating art, ARS¹ and MIPU¹ wanted to make a ninja turtle mask, MRAP¹ with a spider image, and BAF¹ with a joker image. Harmanto et al., (2024) explained that imagination can form when someone watches something. The reason is because they like the character in each character that is often watched on television, such as a brave hero defending the truth or having a mysterious identity behind a masked face. The assessment of the work from the unity and harmony of ARS¹ and MIPU¹'s masks is quite interesting while MRAP¹ and BAF¹'s masks have visible shapes although the results are not perfect. The color of ARS¹'s mask looks more harmonious and neat. The indicators of balance and proportion are very well seen in ARS¹ and MIPU¹'s masks, while MRAP⁽¹⁾ and BAF¹'s masks are not yet balanced and proportional because the mask molds are too thick and thin, the

papier-mâché dough looks still rough and less unified. The rhythm and emphasis indicators of the mask are quite good, although the texture of the mask still needs to be refined on all sides, especially BAF¹'s mask.



Figure 3 Carnival Mask or Party Mask Work

Source: Researcher data (2024)

The group that made the carnival mask or party mask consisted of five students, namely AOA², DSW², FA², IKN⁽²⁾, and SCS⁽²⁾. Based on the results of the interview before creating art, the five students sketched the same mask even though the idea was obtained in different ways. Some were inspired by watching carnival performances, seeing *Barbie* cartoons, or seeing someone selling masks. Children's imagination can be obtained from experiences they have found (Harahap, 2022). The reason for making the mask is because according to him the mask has a unique shape, only covering the eyes but can attract attention because the color is beautiful and the original form has additional elements such as trinkets or feathers on it.

The assessment of the work from unity and harmony shows that the masks made by the five students are well visible, in terms of shape and color are very harmonious and attractive. Of the five works above, SCS⁽²⁾'s mask appears different with a brighter color choice than the others. The indicators of balance and proportion of the masks are quite balanced and proportional, but some student works still need to be improved on the size of the mask with additional details on it to make it look balanced and perfect. Meanwhile, the rhythm and emphasis indicators of the mask are well visible, it is just necessary to pay attention again to the thickness of the pulp and the consistency of the texture or color applied to the mask.



Figure 4 Animal Shape Mask

Source: Researcher data (2024)

The group that made the animal theme mask consisted of four students, namely MZAF¹, NAA², SANS², and ANK⁽²⁾. The four students chose to make animal-shaped masks, namely owls (MZAF¹), pandas (NAA²), and bears (SANS⁽²⁾ and ANK⁽²⁾). The reason students make these

shapes is because they remember their favorite animals, either when they see the shape of the animal directly or through objects they have encountered. This statement is supported by the opinion of Fajrie, (2023a) that by seeing and observing art, children become excited in making art. From the assessment of the work, the indicators of harmony, harmony, and rhythm in the mask show good results. The shape of the mask is very similar to the original shape, one can recognize the shape so that the mask made is very interesting and quite harmonious. The balance indicator is quite good, although there are some parts of the mask that are slightly tilted and less parallel. Meanwhile, the indicators of emphasis and proportion are quite visible but still need to be improved, such as the size of the eyes and ears that are slightly different, the texture of the mask is not neat, and the color is slightly uneven.



Figure 5 Abstract Mask Work

Source: Researcher data (2024)

The group that made masks with different shapes consisted of three students, namely AK¹, RAH¹, and MN². Based on the results of the interview, AK¹ and RAH¹ made sketches that were quite easy to understand, a simple mask shape with few details on it, while MN² wanted to make a traditional regional mask like the decoration in his grandmother's house. The reason why AK¹ and RAH¹ made the sketch was because they had difficulty in *exploring* the original mask shape, so they lacked experience and motivation to draw. Meanwhile, MN² made the shape because he liked the unique mask carvings.

Assessment of mask works based on indicators of harmony, harmony, and emphasis is still not well seen. The mask is less harmonious and less attractive because when viewed it is a little confused with the shape, the color selection also does not support the beauty of the mask, especially the masks belonging to AK¹ and RAH¹. In the process of printing to dry, MN²'s mask looks better with a perfect shape. However, due to the uneven thickness of the mask, when removed from the mold, the eyes look cracked and hollowed out. The emphasis indicator is quite good in MN²'s work, while the masks of AK⁽¹⁾ and RAH¹ do not look perfect, the mask dough is not finished so that when applied to the mold it is not well formed. The indicators of balance, proportion, and rhythm still need to be improved again because overall the three masks do not show good balance, the proportions are not appropriate, and the rhythm of the mask is not visible enough.



Figure 6 Mask Work of Unreal Creatures

Source: Researcher data (2024)

The group that made the mask of unreal creatures consisted of three students, namely DA¹, MRAB¹, MRAG¹, and MYI⁽¹⁾. Based on the results of the interview before making the work, these four students wanted to make a mask according to their own ideas. Only DA¹ drew a monkey-shaped sketch. Once finished, the works were indeed quite different from the others, seen from the unusual facial posture coupled with the horns on it. When interviewed again after finishing making the masks, students defined the works with the titles of scary masks (MYI⁽¹⁾), alien masks (DA¹), funny buto ijo masks (MRAG¹), and angry expression masks (MRAB⁽¹⁾). The assessment of the mask works of the four students according to the indicators of harmony and harmony is quite good, the masks produced have unique shapes and colors so that they look attractive to look at. The balance indicator appears slightly on the mask, the facial details of the mask still need to be improved again such as the location of the nose, mouth, and the distance between the two eyes that are not quite right and slightly tilted. The proportion indicator is well visible, the right and left eyes are the same size, the size of the nose and mouth is also quite appropriate to the original. Indicators of mask rhythm such as texture show that the work made is a little rough, for the colors used by MRAB⁽¹⁾'s mask looks neater while DA¹, MRAB¹, and MYI⁽¹⁾'s masks lack contrast because the color mixture looks a little pale and some are too dark. Meanwhile, the indicator of mask emphasis is quite good, so that the pulp dough mold can be formed well.

After conducting an observation assessment of student work, the researcher continued to re-interview 20 fourth grade students of SD 3 Japan. The purpose of this activity is to find out the level of creativity and understanding of students in the artistic activity of making paper pulp masks. Based on the results of interviews that have been conducted with each student, it shows that students really enjoy and feel happy after getting new experiences in making three-dimensional artworks. From this activity students can find out the tools and materials needed in making works, know how to make masks using paper pulp, and students also understand the various types of techniques that can be used to make paper pulp masks. Students also gain new knowledge about three-dimensional artwork and the various forms of masks that exist in Indonesia as well as their functions and uses. Students feel that with this activity they can find out the level of creativity in themselves, students can explore new ideas and imaginations that they have to be able to pour into the artwork.

The results of observations of works and interviews with fourth grade students are supported by a questionnaire of fine arts creativity and artistic experience in art. These two

questionnaires were given to students after doing the artistic activity of making paper pulp masks. The purpose of this questionnaire is to strengthen the results of the analysis that researchers have done before. The results of the questionnaire can be shown as follows.

Table 3 Student Fine Arts Creativity Questionnaire

Final Score	Category	Art Creativity	Percentage
81-100	Very High	10	50%
61-80	High	8	40%
41-60	Fair	2	10%
21-40	Low	0	0%
Number of Students		20	100%
Total score		1579	-
Average		78,95	High

Source: Researcher data (2024)

Table 3 shows that the level of fine arts creativity in fourth grade students of SD 3 Japan is in the high category. This can be seen in the table which shows the average score of the creativity questionnaire of 78.95. Of the total number of fourth grade students with a level of creativity classified as a very high category of 50% or as many as 10 students, the high category is at a percentage of 40% with a total of 8 students, and two other students of 10% are in the moderate category.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistical Test Results of Student Fine Arts Creativity

	N	Minimu m	Maximu m	Mean	Std. Deviation
STUDENTS' FINE ARTS CREATIVITY	20	56	91	78.95	9.757
Smoothness	20	53	91	76.25	9.909
Flexibility	20	67	100	87.70	8.272
Breakdown	20	44	94	76.35	15.852
Authenticity	20	50	96	76.05	12.992
Valid N (listwise)	20				

Source: Researcher data (2024)

Table 4 shows the results of descriptive statistical data on SPSS in each indicator of fine arts creativity according to Munandar in Simarmata (2019) . Based on this table, it can be seen that the maximum value of student creativity is 91 and the minimum value is 56. Meanwhile, the standard deviation of student creativity after art practice activities gets a value of 9.757. The creativity indicator in the very high category is in the flexibility indicator which gets an average value of 87.70 with a maximum value of 100 and a minimum value of 67. The next indicators with an average value in the high category are indicators of detail (76.35), fluency (76.25), and originality (76.05). Based on these four indicators, it shows that students' creativity in creating fine arts is in the high category and has been seen very well.

Discussion of Students' Art Creativity

The activity of making mask art using paper pulp material is used as a process to determine the level of student creativity during artistic activities. The creativity of elementary school students can be formed with the existence of art education which includes three different but interrelated aspects of activities, namely observing, self-expression, and appreciation (Rondhi, 2017). Students can explore many things even on their own abilities without any definite limits. Experience and motivation can arouse students' curiosity and imagination in making art. In line with research Fajrie, Purbasari, et al., (2023), states that various daily activities can shape children's experiences. This opinion is also supported by Yaung et al., (2023) explaining that motivation can influence a person to carry out an activity. Previously, most students had never made masks or created works using paper pulp, so students did not have the knowledge and experience to make paper pulp masks. This activity is the first art learning practice for students in creating mask works using paper pulp.

Based on the sketches made in the pre-creation stage, students have a variety of imaginations in shaping the face of the mask including: some want to make masks of their favorite cartoon shapes such as Ninja Turtle, *Spider-Man*, and *Barbie* party masks; masks of bears, pandas, and owls; and various forms of masks with scary, sad, and happy expressions. Various character designs can describe a person's character and can have a behavioral impact on a person's attitude (Adzani & Murwonugroho, 2021). Students can tell the reasons and meanings of the mask sketches that have been drawn on a piece of paper.

From the results of the analysis of the work that has been done, it shows that each student has diverse creativity and imagination in the mask work. The form of creativity is very visible from the different forms of mask details produced. Each student has its own character and characteristics seen from the courage of students to be creative and pour their creative ideas in realizing various forms of pulp mask art expression. Harmanto et al., (2024) explains that the characteristics or uniqueness of each child can be seen from the various forms of work created, the emergence of imagination, and applied by children in the form of works can be a reflection of the experience and creativity of each child.

Forms of creativity can also be found from the researcher's observation process during the creative process. Hanifah et al., (2022) explained that using a variety of media in learning can spur student creativity and innovation. The examples of creativity that can be seen are the students' steps in completing the pulp dough in various ways, some tear the paper and then soak it in water and some soak the paper sheet first and then tear it to make it crumble faster and blend with water. Another example is seen when students use the function of spoons and bottle caps as tools to form eye and mouth circles. Students are also very brave in playing with the colors of paint on the mask, they are not only fixated on existing colors, but try to experiment to mix various colors and create new colors. This shows that paper pulp is proven to be a medium that can be used to explore student creativity. In line with research by Sulhaliza et al., (2024) which states that the existence of simple but creative media can help students overcome challenges easily.

The results of field research also observed that each grade IV student at SD 3 Japan has a talent in the field of art. This talent can be seen from the students' ability to develop their creative ideas and innovations in creating various forms of papier-mâché mask art expressions. This agrees with research conducted by Iraqi et al., (2023) that project-based art learning will form an active and creative spirit. The application of real learning can enrich sensory experience and

aesthetic sensitivity in students. By inviting students to make papier-mâché masks, it not only gives them new experiences. However, it can also stimulate the creativity and aesthetic development of students' art, and at the same time can contribute to protecting the environment because it uses materials that are no longer used. Students do not only create works because of the teacher's assignments and orders, but also can be used as a fun play media, can learn to understand and interpret the meaning of the works made, and can process students' motor skills according to their developmental age stages. This opinion is supported by research conducted by Nurwita, (2020) that by inviting students to make art at a young age can stimulate the development of the right brain and will help them to develop their creativity.

Based on the data from the art creativity questionnaire that has been done, it shows that students have been able to show their creativity abilities well, students' experiences while making masks show very good results. This means that this activity has succeeded in making art learning more meaningful and fun. One of the factors that make students' creativity emerge is the freedom of students to work. Freedom of expression can give birth to new views and thoughts in art, especially in fine arts (Zam et al., 2022) . Other factors that can develop children's creativity according to Anggraini et al., (2022) namely: Internal factors include openness to individual experiences and challenges, the ability to play and explore elements of concepts or make new combinations from previous things, and internal evaluation in assessing the products produced; while the biggest external factor is from the surrounding environment that gives a person influence in developing their creativity. One thing that is no less important is that a person's creativity can actually grow if he has a great desire to explore his potential and high curiosity, because how much opportunity or opportunity is in front of the eyes if he does not have the desire to try and grow then the creativity cannot be honed to the maximum.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that paper pulp can be a medium for students in developing artistic creativity. Each student can complete the work of paper pulp masks according to the expression, style, and understanding of the characters in each mask shape. Student creativity emerges at every stage of the activity. The results of the mask work based on the assessment of the art process look quite good, it's just that the indicators of rhythm and harmony between texture, shape, and color still need a little improvement. Broadly speaking, students are able to master art techniques, students' imagination is well developed, expression can be seen in the shape of the mask, and the way students present their work is quite good. This is supported by the data from the art creativity questionnaire which obtained an average (*mean*) of 78.95 which is in the high category with a maximum value of student creativity of 91, a minimum value of 56, and a standard deviation of student creativity after the art practice activities obtained a value of 9.757.

Based on the results of this study, it shows that the use of paper pulp can make a significant contribution to the process of forming student creativity. Students are able to create art crafts using simple materials in the surrounding environment. Suggestions for future researchers, in order to carry out more in-depth research and develop more creative and innovative activities regarding student creativity in the process of creating art, especially three-dimensional fine art.

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