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Introduction to Creative Economy for Early Childhood in Beurandeh Village: Building a Creative and Independent Generation

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ABSTRACT

Themed community service activities aim to introduce the basic concepts of creative economy to young children. This activity was implemented with interactive learning methods involving stories, games, and creative activities, such as making crafts and painting. The active participation of 20 children aged 5 to 8 years old showed high enthusiasm, which contributed to the improvement of children's understanding of creative economy concepts and practical skills. The results of the activity showed a significant increase in understanding and skills, with the percentage of basic understanding increasing from 70% to 85% and practical skills from 60% to 80%. In addition, this activity also succeeded in fostering children's independence and creativity, which is expected to be a provision for a more creative and innovative generation in the future. The main challenges in implementing this activity are the limited props and the lack of understanding of parents about the importance of the creative economy at an early age. The long-term impact of this activity is expected to improve community welfare through the development of an independent and innovative creative generation.

1. Introduction

The creative economy has become a global phenomenon that plays an important role in driving sustainable economic growth, improving welfare, and creating extensive employment opportunities (Halim et al., 2024). The creative economy in some countries is not only a driving force for the economy, but also a tool for creating an innovative and highly competitive society (Halim et al., 2023). The creative economy encompasses a wide range of sectors that rely on

individual creativity, expertise and talent, including art, design, media, technology and culture. These sectors, through innovation and creativity, contribute significantly to gross domestic product (GDP) and employment. The great potential of the creative economy is in line with the achievement of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 9 (Infrastructure, Innovation and Industry) (Mukhlis et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, the creative economy is still a concept that is not widely understood by the community, especially among early childhood (Damai et al., 2020). Beurandeh Village, Mesjid Raya District, Aceh Besar Regency is an example of an area that has great potential in developing the creative economy sector but has not been fully explored. The majority of people in this village still depend on traditional sectors such as agriculture and fisheries, which although important, have limitations in terms of long-term economic growth. The development of a creative economy in this village is important so that the community, including children, can have insights and skills that are relevant to current economic developments. Socialization of the concept of creative economy for early childhood is an effort to open new insights, build a foundation of economic understanding from an early age, and prepare a young generation that is creative, innovative, and independent.

Various studies mention the importance of introducing the concept of creative economy to children from an early age (Boğa & Topcu, 2020; Gouvea et al., 2021; Runtu, 2022; Wiratama et al., 2023; Yani, 2023). Through the right educational approach, children can begin to understand the concept of economic value derived from creativity and innovation. Economic literacy instilled from an early age can help children develop critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration skills, skills that are essential in the creative economy. Various studies have shown that introducing the creative economy to young children can contribute to shaping their attitudes and skills in the future (ASLAM, 2021; Damayanti, 2014; Prahara & Jamil, 2018; Wahyuni & Hidayati, 2017). Education that introduces creativity and innovation early on can improve children's ability to innovate, think critically, and understand the economic value of their creativity. Several community service activities involving the socialization of the creative economy to elementary school-aged children have shown positive results in increasing their understanding and interest in creativity-based economic activities (ASLAM, 2021; Sasongko, 2018).

In addition to theoretical studies, several other community service activities have also shown the positive impact of introducing the creative economy to young children. For example, socialization programs conducted in several regions in Indonesia have been successful in increasing children's involvement in local economic activities as well as developing basic skills relevant to the creative economy (Moeljono et al., 2024; Nugroho et al., 2024). Experiences from these activities show that children have great potential to participate in creative economic activities, provided they are given the right opportunities and guidance. Unfortunately, in Beurandeh Village such activities are still very limited. This has led to children's low understanding of the economic value of creativity and innovation, reducing their participation in developing the local economy.

The main obstacle in introducing the creative economy to young children in Beurandeh Village lies in the lack of understanding and limited resources and access to information. Many parents and educators do not understand the importance of the creative economy and its impact on children's futures. In addition, children in this village also lack educational facilities that support the development of creativity, such as interesting teaching materials and interactive educational

methods. Therefore, there is an urgent need to introduce the concept of creative economy to young children in Beurandeh Village through an innovative and effective socialization program.

One of the innovative approaches that can be applied in the socialization of the creative economy through the use of game-based learning methods and interactive activities (Dewi et al., 2023). These methods are designed to provide learning experiences that are fun and relevant to children's age development. Through this approach, children not only gain an understanding of creative economy concepts, but are also actively involved in the learning process, which in turn can increase their interest and involvement in creative economy activities in the future (Malaikosa et al., 2022).

This article aims to document the process and results of this socialization program, as well as provide guidance for other community services that have similar objectives. In addition, this article also aims to demonstrate the importance of creative economy education for early childhood as part of efforts to support sustainable development and the achievement of SDGs at the local level. Through this article, it will contribute to the development of knowledge in the field of creative education and community-based economy, as well as support SDG 4, SDG 8, and SDG 9 by promoting quality education, supporting inclusive economic development, and increasing local innovation. It is hoped that a broader awareness of the importance of children's role in the development of the creative economy will be formed, as well as the great potential they can contribute to the progress of the village economy. Socializing the creative economy for young children is not only an investment in long-term human resource development, but also a concrete step in empowering rural communities to become more creative, innovative and self-reliant.

2. Methods

The target community in this service activity is early childhood in Beurandeh Village, Mesjid Raya District, Aceh Besar Regency. These children have varied educational backgrounds and environments, so it is a challenge to introduce the concept of creative economy from an early age. The number of participants in this activity was around 30 children consisting of various age groups from pre-school to elementary school. This service activity involves several parties with different roles and contributions. The service team consists of four people with academic backgrounds in education, child psychology, creative economy, and communication. Each team member has relevant expertise to develop training materials and provide technical guidance to participants. In addition, this activity also involved several community leaders and parents who played a role in providing data and information related to the characteristics of children in the village. Facilitators were also involved in assisting the smooth implementation of the activities.

The method used in this service activity is the Service Learning (SL) method, which consists of several main stages to achieve the goal of increasing understanding of the creative economy in early childhood in Beurandeh Village (Afandi et al., 2022). The stages in this method include:

1. Needs Analysis Stage

In the first stage, a needs analysis was conducted by conducting initial surveys and interviews to identify the level of understanding of children and the community regarding the concept of creative economy, as well as the needs of children in recognizing the potential of the creative economy from an early age. Interviews also involved parents to find out their expectations regarding the introduction of the creative economy to children. The data

obtained at this stage was used to design a suitable approach in conveying the concept of creative economy to young children.

2. Material Development Stage

In the second stage, the service team developed socialization materials that include a basic introduction to the creative economy, the importance of creativity, and examples of creative economic activities that are simple and can be understood by children. These materials were designed to be interactive, using games, stories, and interesting visuals, so that children could be actively involved. The socialization materials are also tailored to the characteristics and needs of children in Beurandeh Village and involve local elements to make them easier to understand.

3. Training and Mentoring Implementation Stage*

In the third stage, training is conducted through interactive sessions involving role-playing, simulations and small group discussions. Children are given the opportunity to try out various activities that exercise their creativity, such as drawing, creating stories, or building something from simple materials. Through these simulations, children are introduced to various creative economy concepts in a fun and relevant way to their daily lives. In addition, parents were also involved in certain sessions to understand how to support the development of children's creativity at home.

4. Evaluation and Follow-up Stage

In the fourth stage, an evaluation was conducted to assess the children's understanding and involvement in the socialization activities. This evaluation includes assessing the children's increased understanding of the concept of creative economy, their ability to demonstrate creativity, and their enthusiasm in participating in the activities. The evaluation also included interviews with parents to find out their views on the changes that occurred in the children after participating in the activities. The follow-up is to develop a simple guide for parents and educators in the village, so that they can continue to support the development of children's creativity independently after this activity ends.

3. Result and Discussion

Community service activities with the theme "Introduction to Creative Economy for Early Childhood in Beurandeh Village: Building a Creative and Independent Generation" aims to introduce the basic concepts of the creative economy to early childhood. This activity was initiated as a form of support for the development of creativity-based human resources from an early age. The service carried out is expected to form the character of a young generation that is independent, creative, and has innovative skills in the future.

The activity was held at the village hall and attended by 20 children aged between 5 and 8 years old and accompanied by their parents. The selection of early childhood as the target of the service is based on the understanding that childhood is an important phase in character building, creativity, and mindset. At this stage, children are very sensitive to environmental stimulation and can absorb various new concepts quickly, including the concept of creative economy.

All participants showed high enthusiasm in participating in each activity session. This was reflected in their enthusiasm when participating in various activities involving practical skills such as making handicrafts, painting, and designing simple products. This active participation indicates that the

children in Beurandeh Village, although at a very young age, have curiosity and interest in learning new things, especially related to creativity and innovation.

1. Increased Understanding of the Creative Economy

The activity began with an introduction session about the creative economy given in the form of simple stories and illustrations to facilitate children's understanding. Given the very young age of the participants, the learning approach used must be interesting and relevant to the world of children. Therefore, the concept of creative economy is delivered through story and game-based methods that allow children to understand this concept in a fun way.

Prior to the training, most participants did not understand what the creative economy is and how it relates to their daily lives. However, through an interactive approach involving many visuals and examples, the children began to understand that the creative economy is the process of creating valuable goods or services by utilizing creativity, new ideas, and innovation. For example, they were introduced to simple examples such as making handicrafts from recycled materials and drawing with unique ideas that can lead to valuable works.

During the training the participants were given the opportunity to explore their creative potential through various activities involving arts, crafts and innovative games. One example of an activity that was carried out by making works from recycled materials that are easily found around the house, such as plastic bottles and used paper, so that children begin to see that everyday objects can be transformed into interesting and valuable items. The evaluation results after the training showed a significant increase in understanding, where around 85% of the children had begun to understand that the creative economy is an activity that involves the process of creation and innovation.

Table 1. Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Results

Indicator	Before Activity (%)	After Activity (%)
Basic Understanding	70	85
Practical Skills	60	80
Satisfaction with the material	70	80

Source: Primary Data (processed), 2024

Thus, to summarize the table, the diagram as seen below:

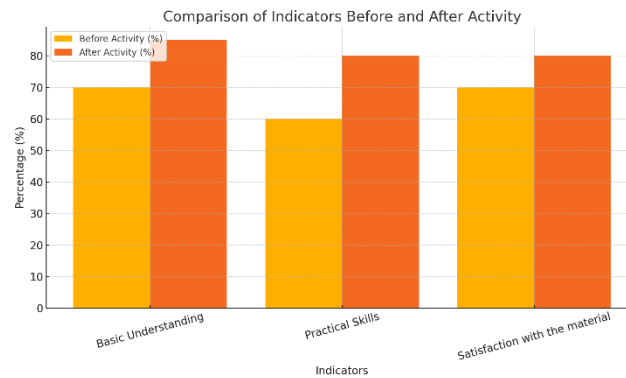


Figure 1. Comparison Indicators Before and After Activity

2. Developing Children's Creativity and Independence

In addition to providing an understanding of the creative economy, this activity also focuses on developing children's creativity and independence. Creativity is considered as one of the essential skills that is very important for children's development. Creativity not only enables children to think outside the box, but also helps them find innovative solutions in various situations. Therefore, in each session children are directly involved in the creation process such as making crafts, drawing, painting, and creating with simple media that are easily found around them.

Each activity is designed to stimulate the children's imagination and creative thinking. For example, in the drawing and painting sessions, they are given a specific theme and given the freedom to express their ideas without being limited by standard rules. This aims to give them freedom of expression and foster confidence in expressing new ideas. Meanwhile, in the handicraft session, the children were introduced to simple materials such as paper, used cloth, and plastic bottles. From these materials, they are taught to make items that have added value, such as bags from used fabrics or toys from plastic bottles.



Figure 2. Process of Creative Economy Training Activities in Early Childhood

After participating in this activity, there was a significant increase in children's creativity. Based on observations, around 80% of the children started to show new ideas during the practical sessions. They were not only able to create interesting works, but also understood the importance of hard work and independence in creating something. This shows that the children have positively benefited from this activity in terms of developing creative skills and the ability to think independently.

3. Challenges in Implementation

Although this activity managed to achieve many positive results, there were some challenges faced during the implementation process. One of the biggest challenges was the limited understanding of parents and teachers about the importance of creative economy development in early childhood. Most parents and teachers are more focused on formal and academic education, so they have not fully supported the application of creative economy concepts in children's daily lives. This resulted in some parents not actively supporting their children in exploring their creativity and innovative potential outside of the training activities.

In addition, limited facilities and teaching aids are also an obstacle in the implementation of activities. Some materials needed for practicum activities, such as craft tools and art materials, were not always available in sufficient quantities. As a solution, the team used alternative materials that were easier to find around the village environment, such as recycled materials from households. Nonetheless, these limitations remain a challenge in delivering the materials optimally.

To overcome these obstacles, in the future it is recommended that similar activities can involve more parties, such as the village government and related institutions, to provide support for the facilities and tools needed. In addition, further programs to educate parents about the importance of the creative economy should also be conducted so that they can better support their children in developing their creativity and independence.

4. Long-term Impacts and Implications

The long-term impact of this service activity is expected to have a positive influence on both the development of children in Beurandeh Village and the village community as a whole. By being introduced to the concept of creative economy from an early age, children are expected to grow into a generation that is creative, innovative, and independent in facing future challenges. Not only will they have the skills to create valuable goods, but they will also have a more open mindset to new opportunities that may arise in various aspects of their lives.

The skills acquired from this activity, such as creative thinking, cooperation, and entrepreneurship, will also serve as a strong foundation for their future development. This activity also has a positive impact on the village community in terms of raising awareness of the importance of developing an economy based on creativity and innovation. Through this program, parents and teachers are beginning to see that developing creativity in early childhood can be a valuable asset for children's future success.

In addition, the introduction of the creative economy from an early age is also expected to improve the welfare of the village community through efforts to empower children who will one day become the next generation who have insight into the creative

economy. Thus, this activity not only has an immediate impact on the children who take part in the training, but also has the potential to have a positive long-term impact on the Beurandeh Village community as a whole. The program participants are expected to become role models for the next generation, so that the spirit to create and innovate can continue and become part of the community culture.

Overall, this service activity shows that young children can be introduced to creative economy concepts that are relevant and beneficial to their development. This activity not only focuses on improving creative skills and independence, but also makes a real contribution to efforts to build quality human resources that have the potential to thrive in an increasingly creativity and innovation-based world. It is hoped that similar activities can become a model for community empowerment programs in other villages, especially those that focus on developing children through creative and innovative education.

4. Conclusion

Based on the implementation of community service activities themed "Introduction to Creative Economy for Early Childhood in Beurandeh Village: Building a Creative and Independent Generation," it can be concluded that this program succeeded in achieving its main goal, which is to introduce the basic concepts of creative economy to early childhood. Through a story-based approach, games and practical activities, the children were able to understand the concept of creative economy in a simple way and began to develop their creativity and independence. This can be seen from the significant increase in understanding and practical skills after the activity, as shown by the pre-test and post-test data.

This activity also succeeded in having a positive impact on children in Beurandeh Village in developing creative and independent thinking skills through handicraft making activities, drawing, and exploration of recycled materials. Children not only get a basic understanding of the creative economy, but are also trained in developing creative and innovative ideas, which will be a valuable provision in facing the future. Despite facing several challenges, such as limited parental understanding and minimal facilities, this activity still managed to achieve good results with alternative solutions provided by the service team. Further support is needed from various parties, such as the village government and related institutions, so as to help the sustainability of the program and increase the positive impact on early creativity-based human resource development.

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