Prima Magistra: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan
Volume 7 – Number 1, January 2026, pp 99-115
https://doi.org/10.37478/jpm.v7i1.6045
Open Access: https://e-journal.uniflor.ac.id/index.php/JPM/article/view/6045

ISSN 2721-8112 (print)
ISSN 2722-4899 (online)

CHILDREN'S ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE IN DRAWING EXPRESSIONS ON THE MENARA KUDUS

Mohammad Ridlo[1], Nur Fajrie[2]*, Mohammad Kanzunnudin[3], Hisbulloh Als Mustofa[4]
[1,2,3]Universitas Muria Kudus, Indonesia
[4]Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia
**Corresponding Author:* nur.fajrie@umk.ac.id

Article History
Received : 19/06/2025
Revised : 21/10/2025
Accepted : 08/12/2025
Keywords:
Artistic Experience, Artwork, Menara Kudus.

Abstract. The values embedded in the Menara Kudus culture in Indonesia emphasize the preservation and development of local traditions. One way children express their understanding of local culture is through artistic activities, particularly drawing. This study aims to narrate and measure children's artistic experiences in creating drawings themed on the Menara Kudus, using cultural evidence from its historical legacy as a learning resource. This study employed a mixed-methods sequential exploratory design. The initial qualitative phase involved interviews, observations, and documentation to explore children aged 9 to 12's artistic experiences. The subsequent quantitative phase applied descriptive statistics to support and measure the findings from the qualitative data. All qualitative data were analyzed using an interactive model. The results show that children produced drawings of the Menara Kudus based on their personal experiences and interests, with artworks displaying varying levels of precision, imagination, and creativity. The creative process was found to consist of three phases: pre-creation (encompassing both direct and indirect experiences), creation (encompassing tool preparation, technical mastery, time management, and effective communication), and post-creation (encompassing self-confidence and interpretation). The overall mean score for the artistic experience was 119.43, with mean scores of 22.57, 80.95, and 15.91 for the pre-creation, creation, and post-creation stages, respectively. The findings indicate that children's involvement in the visual arts themed on Menara Kudus is categorized as moderate. It is therefore recommended that children's skills in capturing the original form of objects be enhanced.

How to Cite: Ridlo, M., Fajrie, N., Kanzunnudin, M., & Mustofa, H. A. (2026). CHILDREN'S ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE IN DRAWING EXPRESSIONS ON THE MENARA KUDUS. *Prima Magistra: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 7(1), 99-115. https://doi.org/10.37478/jpm.v7i1.6045

Correspondence address:
Jalan Lingkar Utara, Gondangmanis, Bae, Kabupaten Kudus, Jawa Tengah 59327, Indonesia. nur.fajrie@umk.ac.id

Publisher:
Program Studi PGSD Universitas Flores. Jln. Samratulangi, Kelurahan Paupire, Ende, Flores.
primagistrauniflor@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The geographical conditions of Pladen Village are far from the center of Kudus City. However, the cultural values in Pladen Village remain firm. The culture that is still often carried out is the Earth's alms and pilgrimage to the origin of Pladen Village. This is undoubtedly closely related to the culture of the community that makes pilgrimages to the Tomb of Sunan Kudus. The people of Pladen Village are well-acquainted with the religious culture of Menara Kudus. This is because most of the people, including children, have made religious visits and pilgrimages to the Tomb of Sunan Kudus. In addition, the community in Pladen Village takes great pride in the Menara Kudus through various cultural activities, such as the Takbir parade. Adults and children participate in enlivening it by creating miniatures of the Menara Kudus as a symbol of the region's rich religious culture. This is because culture is a real phenomenon that facilitates children's understanding of the culture in their surrounding environment (Ardianti et al., 2019).

Understanding of local culture can be seen through the way children express ideas in a work of art. Children's experience in creating art through expressive drawings is essential as a step in cultural enculturation (Karyono et al., 2025). Educators must provide feedback on the work produced by children (Hallam et al., 2022). Educators also need to guide children in transforming the visual elements of their understanding into graphic elements of images (Pantaleo, 2021; Yu, 2024). Cultural knowledge is closely related to the implementation of a work.

The existing body of research has firmly established that artistic activity is a critical medium for children's expression, cognitive development, and cultural learning (Bautista et al., 2018; Huang et al., 2025; Versitano et al., 2025). Many studies focus on the psychological and developmental stages revealed in children's drawings, using frameworks like Lowenfeld's (1957)

visual and haptic types to understand a child's perceptual orientation (Handayani et al., 2023; Sitepu et al., 2020). Other research demonstrates how specific drawing methods can enhance creativity (Septaria et al., 2023) or function as a form of culture-based education (Mayar, 2020). The influence of a child's cultural environment on their artistic development is also well-documented (Goodman et al., 2022). However, this existing literature predominantly focuses on the *product* of drawing or *general* creative development. A significant gap remains in studies that investigate the *entire artistic experience* as a process encompassing pre-creation, creation, and post-creation to understand how children interpret and visually translate a *specific, local cultural-religious landmark*. While the link between art and cultural understanding is known (Ardianti et al., 2019), few studies have used a mixed-methods approach to explore the holistic process by which children translate their lived cultural experiences (such as pilgrimages, local stories, and community traditions) into an expressive drawing of a specific icon like the Menara Kudus.

This research gap becomes particularly relevant when, based on pre-research interviews, children in the Pladen area become less expressive and creative in expressing ideas about local culture. This suggests a potential disconnect between their cultural immersion and their artistic articulation. In essence, the learning process is about optimizing the gifts that God has given to children. Septaria et al. (2023) Demonstrate how the application of drawing methods can enhance students' creativity. In line with the statement Mayar (2020) that drawing is a form of culture-based arts education.

Their cultural environment influences a person's artistic development (Goodman et al., 2022). Artistic experience is the artist's experience when creating a work of art. Artistic experience includes the stages of the artistic creation process, namely pre-creation, creation, and post-creation. Drawing is one of the activities that helps develop thinking skills and facilitates the child's creative process. Drawing expressions with local cultural themes can encourage children to think more critically about the culture they are familiar with based on their thoughts and experiences. Drawing expressions is a drawing activity that is intended to express emotions, feelings, and conditions of a person and their environment into forms and colors based on imagination, perception, and interpretation that sometimes do not follow the rules of drawing (Mayar, 2020). There are two types of drawing expressions, namely visual and haptic (Lowenfeld, 1957). The visual type is a type of child's drawing that exhibits a more visual-realistic tendency, namely showing the similarity of the shape of the image made according to the original object the child sees. The images emphasize the similarity between the form of the work and the form experienced, and the proportions are appropriate according to his observations of the surrounding environment (Handayani et al., 2023).

This study is poised to make significant theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, it will expand the model of 'artistic experience' beyond general creativity studies by applying it to the specific translation of local cultural heritage, offering a more nuanced understanding of how children's pre-creation (lived cultural experiences) and creation (artistic process) are interlinked. Practically, the findings will provide valuable insights for educators and curriculum developers, particularly in Kudus, on how to leverage local cultural-religious icons like the Menara Kudus as an effective pedagogical tool to foster both artistic skills and a deeper sense of cultural identity.

Therefore, this study investigates the artistic experiences of children in Pladen Village, Jekulo District, Kudus Regency, as a form of disclosure of their knowledge of the Menara Kudus culture. This specific locus was chosen to display the subjects studied, which include various children who are still original and have a natural inclination to participate in the study. This study ultimately aims to determine how and to what extent the level of children's artistic experience in drawing the Menara Kudus is influenced.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this study is a mixed-methods approach. The type of combined research design used is a sequential exploratory model combination study. Sequential exploratory research combines qualitative and quantitative methods, with the initial stage employing qualitative

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

approaches and the subsequent stage quantitative methods (Sugiyono, 2015).

Sampling in a qualitative approach according to specific considerations and objectives (purpose sample) with the term informant, resource person, or participant. The informants used in this study to explore potential problems were 15 children aged 9-12 years who were familiar with the local culture of Menara Kudus, which was in the early realism phase, according to Lowenfeld. The researcher employed a quantitative approach in this study, determining the population to be children aged 9-12 years in Pladen Village, Jekulo District, comprising a total of 156 children. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, specifically categorization, which was used to determine the subjects to be studied. According to the results of this formula, the respondents in the quantitative approach of this study numbered 61 children. The development of this research design is as seen in Figure 1.

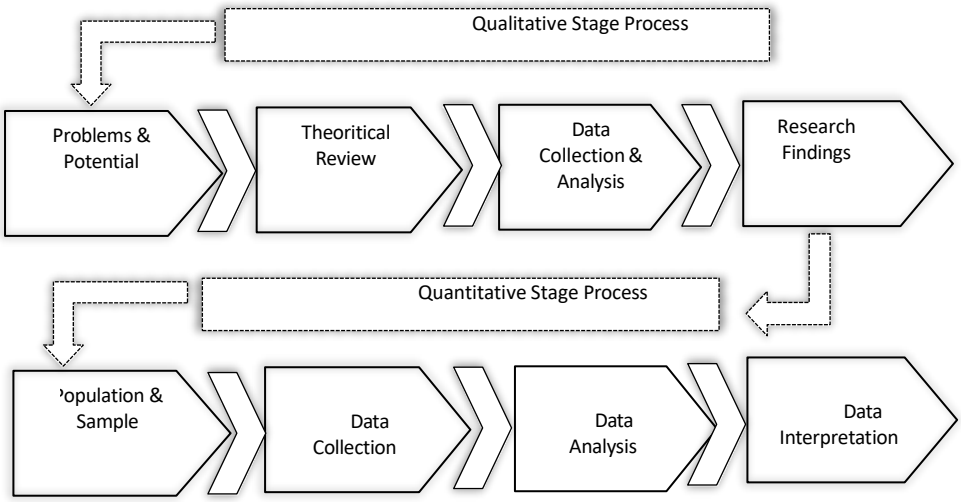


Figure 1. Sequential Exploratory Combination Method

Qualitative data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation. At the same time, quantitative data collection techniques use questionnaires. This study employs an unstructured interview type, utilizing only interview guidelines in the form of an outline of the problem (Sugiyono, 2015). Documentation is a data collection technique that involves searching for relevant information on related matters in various forms, such as notes, books, papers, articles, journals, or news (Kahfi, 2022). Finally, the type of observation carried out is passive participatory observation, where the researcher visits the research location but is not directly involved in the research (Sugiyono, 2015). The qualitative data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman Model. The Miles and Huberman data analysis model, as described in Sugiyono's book (2015), comprises four stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion (Sugiyono, 2015). Furthermore, the data is analyzed using a quantitative descriptive statistical approach.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Artistic experience is gained through the process of creating art, beginning with the pre-creation stage. At this stage, children have experience and motivation in drawing. Children's experience in responding to culture serves as a stimulus in producing a work of art (Fajrie & Purbasari, 2024). Cultural understanding is closely related to effective job implementation. Children's artistic experience in the process of creating visual art in the form of an expression drawing of the Menara Kudus can be seen based on indicators of previous experience, motivation to create, mastery of tools and materials, understanding of creative techniques, communication skills, ability to express objects/experiences, ability to imagine, understanding the process of making, and the meaning of artwork. This study employs qualitative analysis of data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Qualitative data collection was conducted with 15 informants, as outlined in Table 1.

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Table 1. Coding of Observation and Interview Informants

No.	Child Initial Code	Gender
1	AF[1]	Boy
2	FW[2]	Girl
3	NS[1]	Boy
4	TJ[1]	Girl
5	AD[2]	Girl
6	MT[1]	Boy
7	AI[1]	Boy
8	FZ[1]	Boy
9	FN[1]	Boy
10	AM[2]	Girl
11	DB[1]	Boy
12	AA[1]	Boy
13	AK[1]	Boy
14	SM[2]	Girl
15	FI[1]	Boy

Code[1] indicates the gender of the boy, and Code[2] suggests the gender of the girl. The number of boy informants is greater than the number of girl informants. The following is a description of the results of observations, interviews, and documentation for each informant. At the pre-creation stage, most children had visited and seen the shape of the Menara Kudus building directly, except for AF[1], AD[2], and AM[2]. They are not only observed directly but also through cell phones and books. Most children described the Menara Kudus as having the basic shape of a square, box, or rectangle. According to interviews with several children, the basic materials used to make the Menara Kudus are bricks and cement. The creation stage involves children drawing the Menara Kudus in their artwork. Some of the children's works are as follows.

The work of the child with the initials AF[1] is visualized in the form of the Al-Aqsa Mosque or the Menara Kudus Mosque

The child's work illustrates the Menara with a picture of a Mosque. The form of creativity that the child shows is using a book as a substitute for a ruler to make a border. The work of the child's drawing with the initials AF[1] (refer to Figure 2) does not yet have a regular shape, and the coloring is still black and white (only thickened using a marker), so there is no contrast in the results of his work. Additionally, the shape of Menara Kudus has not been accurately represented.

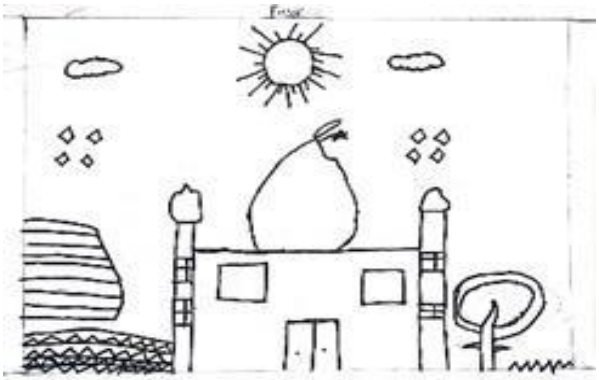


Figure 2. Results of the Child's Initial Drawing AF[1]

The shape of the image shown by the child with the initials FW[2] is a geometric image

The child with the initials FW[2] always uses a ruler to show the basic shape of the Menara Kudus, which is a rectangular brick. The tools and materials used in the drawing process are pencils, markers, rulers, and colored pencils. Based on the FW2 drawing in Figure 3, FW[2] has been unable to communicate the shape of the Menara Kudus, as evidenced by his habit of always asking his deskmate about the shape of the Menara Kudus. The work of the child with the initials FW[2] shows that the unity of the elements in the image is not yet visible. There is no balance

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

between the shapes in his work, so it appears slanted. The coloring technique is quite effective in displaying color contrast within each shape of the image.



Figure 3. Results of Children's Drawings with the Initials FW[2]

The process of creating the image of the Menara Kudus by a child with the initials NS[1] with the results of the similarity of the object

The child NS[1] based on Figure 4 can accurately communicate the shape based on what he has observed. The results of the child's understanding are very focused on his work, as he depicts detailed shapes and textures of the Menara Kudus building. The child expresses the shape of the bricks by drawing lines in the middle of the tower image. The unity of shape and color balance looks very neat. The child with the initials NS[1] chose to use the gradation technique and then scraped it. This resulted in neat coloring with the appropriate contrast. The child also added a garden shape in front of the Menara Kudus building. In addition, the morning atmosphere is evident in the image of the sun, accompanied by a picture of a tree on one side of Menara Kudus.



Figure 4. Results of Children's Drawings with the Initials NS[1]

The process of creating a picture of Menara Kudus by a child with the initials TJ[1] took a longer time

The results of the child's creative process, with the initials TJ[1] in Figure 5, always prompt opinions on each part he draws. The child draws casually while joking and laughing. The tools used during the drawing process are pencils, borrowing markers, rulers, colored pencils, and crayons from other friends. The delivery of the Menara Kudus shape is satisfactory, resembling the original building. The child's imagination, with initials on the building TJ[1], produces the shape of a Menara Kudus featuring pictures of a mosque, trees, clouds, birds, and the sun. The unity of shape and color selection is appropriate and similar to the original color of the building, producing the right contrast. The proportion of the shape is right, with the correct large and small sizes. The balanced arrangement of the shape displays a whole room. However, the shape of the Menara Kudus building remains the center of attention in the work of the child with the initials TJ[1].

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



Figure 5. Results of Child's Drawing with Initials TJ[1]

The process of creating the work of the child with the initials AD[2] is quite different

The child AD[2] in Figure 6 imagines the Menara Kudus by drawing a castle alongside the picture of the Menara Kudus. The result of this drawing is a creative process from the child with the initials AD[2]. Her difficulty in drawing the Menara Kudus encouraged him to create something more so that the shape of the castle was created. The tools used during drawing were pencils and colored pencils. The results of the drawing by the child with the initials AD[2] look very colorful. According to the interview results, the child prefers bright colors, so the colors drawn in the shape of the Menara Kudus are pink and purple. The child with the initials AD[2] uses colored pencils with a straight-line technique in her drawing. The choice of colors that are not quite right (tending to be bright) makes the contrast in his drawing not yet visible. The shape of the castle building is also one of his imagination. However, this makes the center of attention of the drawing focus on the shape of the castle rather than the Menara Kudus. The inappropriate proportions are also evident in the shape of the tiny, curved tree under the picture of Menara Kudus.



Figure 6. Results of the Drawing of a Child with the Initials AD[2]

While creating the work, the child with the initials MT[1] was very focused and ignored his friends

The tools and materials he used were pencils, markers, and crayons. The coloring technique used was by drawing straight lines and coloring without gradation. His imagination was excellent, as evidenced by the picture of clouds, which indicated a rainy atmosphere. Based on the interview, the child stated that he wanted to depict a rainy atmosphere, but he had already created the sun. In the work of the child with the initials MT[1] (refer to Figure 7), the paper is filled with the shape of the picture. The right proportion is evident in the shape of the Menara Kudus, which towers upwards, featuring a picture of a tree next to the building. The child also added a human shape with an inappropriate placement. The unity of the image is achieved through the detailed representation of shapes, including trees, humans, bushes, clouds, and rain. Although his work displays a considerable amount of shape components in his picture, the center of attention remains on the shape of the Menara Kudus. However, the use of an inappropriate coloring technique results in uneven color.

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



Figure 7. Results of the Child's Drawing with the Initials MT[1]

The child with the initials AI[1] demonstrates a very detailed drawing process

According to the interview results with the child, he had practiced drawing the Menara Kudus. The child practiced drawing the Menara Kudus several times to achieve the best results when creating the building. The child compared his work several times with others to ensure that his drawing was the best. The tools and materials used were pencils, markers, and crayons. The child also demonstrated his creative side by using his crayon holder as a makeshift ruler. As seen in Figure 8, the work of the child with the initials AI[1] is the most detailed and similar drawing. The unity and regularity of the very detailed shape, along with the correct coloring technique, display a texture that is remarkably similar to the original shape of the Menara Kudus. The coloring technique used by the child is color gradation, which creates contrast in his drawing. The size of each component of the shape ensures the right proportion, and the center of attention in the picture is focused on the building object. In addition, the space in the picture appears to be full of a balanced arrangement of shape components.



Figure 8. Results of the Drawing of a Child with the Initials AI[1]

A child with the initials FZ[1] displays a picture of the Menara Kudus with a morning atmosphere

The child found the drawing process difficult, so he decided to copy his friend's picture. The child also often walks around to see his friend's pictures. The work of the child with the initials FZ[1], as seen in Figure 9, features an orange background, representing a morning atmosphere, with the addition of cloud and sun shapes. The coloring of the Menara Kudus building is without gradation. The proportionality of the shape in his work has not been considered, such as the presence of a minimal tree shape next to the Menara Kudus building.



Figure 9. Results of the Drawing of a Child with the Initials FZ[1]

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

The process of creating the work of the child with the initials FN[1] is quite complete

The composition of the Menara Kudus building, the gate, and also the mosque. The child copied the picture from the book he brought. The child with the initials FN[1] as seen on Figure 10 quite often asked questions related to what was drawn, such as "Is it okay to make a lamp?", "what color is suitable for the Menara Kudus building?" The tools used were quite comprehensive, including pencils, markers, rulers, and crayons. Based on the analysis of the work, the child with the initials FN1 exhibited critical components in the vicinity of Menara Kudus. The coloring is quite good, trying to be as similar as possible to the Menara Kudus building. In addition, high imagination is evident in his picture, as he incorporates a lamp as a symbol of the night atmosphere, although the child with the initials FN[1] did not include the shape of the moon or stars. The proportionality of the shape compared to the mosque and gate is very fitting the balance of the shape in the picture so that there is no space on the paper. However, the center of attention for the child with the initials FN1's picture is divided between the mosque and Menara Kudus.



Figure 10. Results of the Child's Drawing with the Initials FN[1]

The process of creating the work of the child with the initials AM[2] is very close

Occasionally, the child asks, "Can I draw like this?" The rest of the time, the child tries to draw his picture without looking at his friend's picture. The child does not permit his friend to see his work. The child with the initials AM[2] always covers his drawing so that his friend does not copy his work. The child draws as seen on Figure 11 using geometric techniques and always uses a ruler. The child also expresses the Menara Kudus as a tall building with a triangular roof. The shape of the Menara Kudus building, according to the child with the initials AM[2], is not well understood. People who see it for the first time will ask about what picture was made. The work of the child with the initials AM[2] shows a unity of form that is not harmonious. The gradation coloring is not smooth and lacks clear contrast, further compounded by the shape of the Menara Kudus, which does not match the original design. The layout of the building is centered, allowing for a clear view of the proportionality of the image so that the center of attention is focused on the shape of the Menara Kudus that the child made.



Figure 11. Results of Child's Drawing with the Initials AM[2]

The child with the initials DB[1] drew with several complete components

Several times, the child drew and erased the sketch so that he did not have enough time to color. The tools and materials prepared were only pencils. The child also asked, "Can I draw this? (while pointing to the picture of a car and truck on his paper)." The child said that when visiting

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Menara Kudus, they saw many motorbikes passing by. When I asked, "Why did you draw a truck? Aren't there no trucks passing by there?" The child with the initials DB[1] stated that he only wanted to draw transportation, even though, in reality, the child did not see any trucks on the road around the Menara Kudus. The monochrome work created by the child with the initials DB[1] refer to Figure 12 features pictures of roads, transportation, trees, and clouds, which suggest a rainy atmosphere. The child uses lines as a form of the bricks that make up the Menara Kudus. The coloring stage was not carried out because there was not enough time, so the contrast in the picture was not yet visible. The work of the child with the initials DB[1] is considered unbalanced because the position of the Menara Kudus is too sideways so that on the other side, there is space. The shape of the road and transportation are in the foreground, which should appear large but are drawn smaller. However, the center of attention in the picture remains on the image of the Menara Kudus.

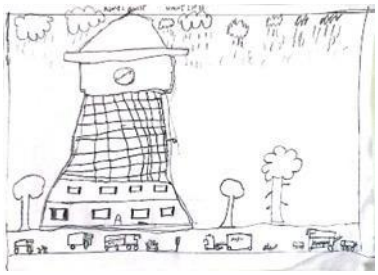


Figure 12. Results of the Child's Drawing with the Initials DB[1]

A child with the initials AA[1] has no idea about the shape of the Menara Kudus

The child only describes the Menara Kudus as a tall building. The tools used are pencils and colored pencils. During the drawing process, the child looks bored and wants to end it immediately. The work of the child with the initials AA[1] as seen in Figure 13 can be describe as a rectangular building that resembles Menara Kudus, but it is high without an end (roofless). The unity of the components of the shape is incomplete, and the proportionality of the shape is not correct, so there is no space to take a picture of the roof of the Menara Kudus. The child wrote the words "Menara Kudus" to explain to the observer what is drawn. The coloring is only applied to a few parts of the Menara Kudus, so that the contrast in the picture does not appear.

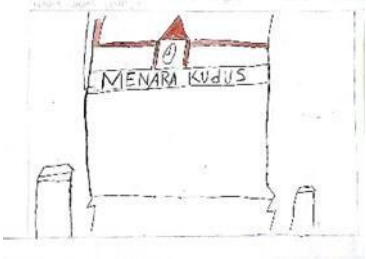


Figure 13. Results of the Drawing of a Child with the Initials AA[1]

The drawing process of the child with the initials AK[1] is quite long

The child often erases his sketches, leaving torn parts of the paper. The child also usually walks around looking at his friends' drawings but does not ask about how to draw the Menara Kudus. The tools used in the drawing process are pencils, markers, and colored pencils. The coloring technique involves drawing lines with colored pencils to express rough textures. The child with the initials AK[1] can accurately communicate the shape of the Menara Kudus, allowing observers to understand that the shape he draws represents the object. The work of the child with the initials AK[1] depicts a building object without any accompanying components, as seen in Figure 14. There is quite a bit of space left, making the image look unbalanced. In addition, the basic shape of the tower is small, and the shape that widens towards the top makes the image of Menara Kudus lean upwards and appear less proportional. The coloring is quite effective in showing the contrast between light brown and dark brown. Utilizing a special technique, it displays the rough texture of the building objects.

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



Figure 14. Results of the Drawing of a Child with the Initials AK[1]

The process of creating the work of the child with the initials SM[2] shows maximum results.

During the drawing process, the child remains very focused, paying no attention to his other friends. Likewise, the child has already had experience drawing the Menara Kudus, so he is freer than his other friends. The drawing experience he has gives him the confidence to draw without asking other people. The child uses a drawing technique with crayons, rotating and gradating the colors so that the coloring appears more thorough and even. The picture of Menara Kudus that he created can be conveyed to the observer. The details of the image are similar, allowing them to be identified by the shape of the object being drawn. As seen in Figure 15, the unity of shape and color in the picture of the child with the initials SM[2] adds harmony and attractiveness to his work. The manifestation of the 3-dimensional form of the Menara Kudus is also clearly visible through the arrangement of regular lines. The balance of the shape and layout of the building and trees is appropriate as the manifestation of the foreground image. The gradation technique and color selection used are appropriate and are a good combination for creating a clear image contrast. The entire space is filled and colored in a way that also draws the center of attention to the shape of the Menara Kudus.



Figure 15. Results of the Child's Drawing with the Initials SM[2]

During the creation process, the child with the initials FI[1] was very patient in drawing the components.

The child had enough time but chose to color only two components: the sun and the shape of the gate. This child decided to use the hatching technique on the shape of the Menara Kudus that was made. The tools he used were pencils, and he borrowed his friend's crayons to color the sun and the gate. The child with the initials FI[1] as seen in Figure 16 was able to recognize the image of Menara Kudus well, making it easier for observers to identify the objects depicted in the picture. In addition, the child added other supporting components, such as the mosque building, gate, surrounding yard, clouds, and the sun as a marker of the morning atmosphere.

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.



Figure 16. Results of the Drawing of a Child with the Initials FI[1]

In the post-creation stage, children describe the process they used to draw Menara Kudus. There are some difficulties in finding a shape similar to the example object. However, all the children tried to complete the drawing of the Kudus Tower. The child with the initials AI[1], who has a hobby of drawing and often visits Menara Kudus, proudly presented the results of his drawing. And confident. This is different from the child with the initials FZ[1,] who provided only a brief description of the drawing process and became embarrassed when asked about his Menara Kudus drawing. Most children said that many people visit the Menara Kudus for pilgrimage to the Tomb of Sunan Kudus, take pictures, and buy souvenirs for souvenirs for people at home.

Most children in the pre-creation stage have direct or indirect experience with the Menara Kudus. Some children have never seen it at all. Children describe objects from the Menara Kudus in square or rectangular shapes. Children's cultural knowledge related to the Menara Kudus varies, connecting perceptions about religious pilgrimage traditions, *"dandhangan"* ritual ceremonies, to *"Jenang Kudus"* food. Children show their enthusiasm for drawing and interest in ideas in various ways. Some experience feelings of pleasure in drawing with environmental themes and their experiences, while others only do it at the teacher's command (if there is drawing practice). Most children have never tried to draw the Menara Kudus because it is challenging to visualize realistically. This finding highlights the importance of an educational approach based on culture in enhancing children's understanding of local cultural values and creative values, one of which is through the process of creating expressive drawing art. Children visualize experiences and motivations as encouragement to express themselves through object drawings about the Menara Kudus. The results of interviews conducted with children concluded that they usually draw using pencils. The use of techniques in coloring is still in the development stage, although the mastery of color gradation techniques is good. The type of children's drawings corresponds to their respective experiences.

Based on the analysis above, the following is a classification of children's drawings based on the creation process and the results of children's work.

a) Drawings with Imitation and Accuracy of Form

Some children draw pictures of the Menara Kudus with accurate shapes and details that resemble the original building. Bat Or et al. (2022) explained that there is a gap between the child's drawing and what is told, and the children clarify the drawing in verbal form. Details and textures are emphasized through coloring using gradation techniques and the addition of lines, as well as square or rectangular shapes, such as in the work of NS[1]. Other works, such as those of the child with the initials TJ[1], also convey the shape of the Menara Kudus, which is almost identical to the original, thanks to a balance of shape and effective coloring techniques. Children with the initials AI[1] and SM[2] exhibit drawings that display a neat unity of shape and color, resulting in a more harmonious, distinctive, and visually appealing appearance. The proper gradation technique, with rotating movements and details, is very similar to that of the Menara Kudus building.

On the other hand, the child with the initials FI[1] has quite detailed work but prefers to use hatching techniques to create texture and contrast in his drawings. Children with this type of drawing have direct experience and strong motivation to draw on cultural aspects surrounding the Menara Kudus, observing sensory aspects through physical visits, mobile phones, and books. Some children have experience drawing the Menara Kudus, such as those with the initials AI[1],

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

SM[2], and FI[1]. According to Istanto (2022), children aged 9-12 years enter the early realism phase, characterized by increasingly detailed forms in drawings and an increased awareness of themselves and their environment. This is supported by the interest in drawing and engaging children in the creative process illustrated in Figure 17.

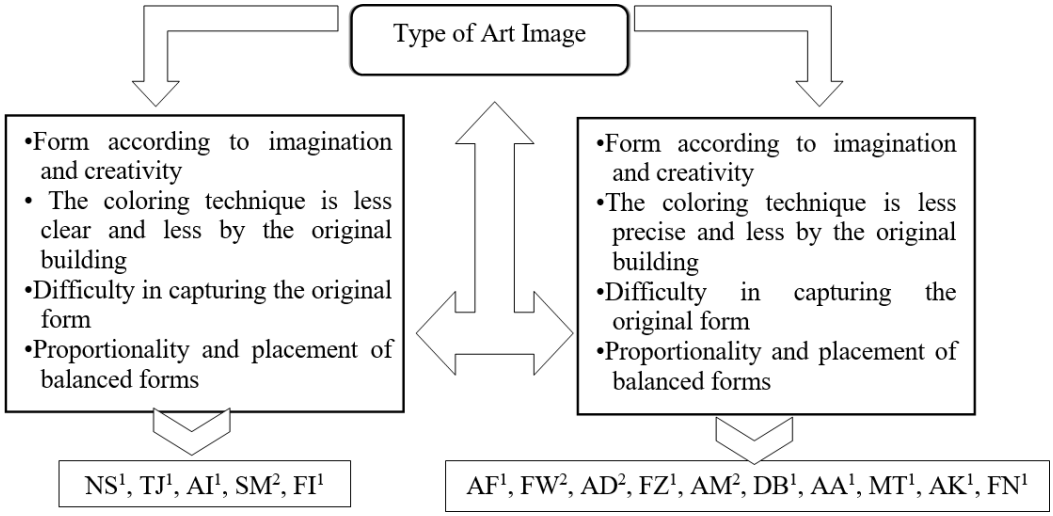


Figure 17. Conceptual Chart of Children's Drawing Results in Knowledge and Experience

b). Drawings with High Imagination and Creativity

Children with high imagination mostly improvise and add shapes or colors that are in their minds. The difficulty of creating a picture similar to the Kudus Tower encourages children to create works according to their own wishes, without paying attention to the original shape's similarity. This is the opinion of Tabrani (2012) that creativity will only develop if there are difficulties so that there is a desire to solve the problem. Like the child with the initials AD[2], who has not yet captured the shape of the Kudus Tower image, the child adds an imaginary shape of something that he thinks is similar to the Kudus Tower, namely a castle. In addition, the child with the initials DB[1] draws with additional components such as trucks even though, in reality, there are no such things around the Menara Kudus. The same is true for the child with the initials FN[1], who adds a lamp shape to express the atmosphere at night.

c) Drawing with Good Techniques but Still Needs Improvement

Some children demonstrated good drawing techniques, but their work differed from the original form. A child with the initials FW[2] employed geometric drawing techniques with the aid of a ruler, but the integrity of the shape, proportion, and balance of the Menara Kudus shape still fell short of the standard. In addition, some pictures had many components, but the choice of coloring was not appropriate, such as the work of children with the initials MT[1] and AK[1]. The image of Menara Kudus demonstrates good coloring techniques, but the proportions of the picture fell short of the standard, and there was excessive space. Therefore, in this case, educators can appreciate the various types of children's drawings and gain insight into the characteristics of children's drawings (Sitepu et al., 2020).

d) Drawings with Difficulty in Capturing the Original Form

Children who show no interest in drawing tend to produce results that are less appropriate and adequate. Children often struggle with and are reluctant to draw. This has an impact on the quality of the resulting images. This is because some children have never visited the Menara Kudus in person or have visited but only know the objects drawn through cellphones, books, and stories. Children rely on less in-depth knowledge to depict Menara Kudus. The child with the initials AA[1] drew the shape of the Menara Kudus as a rectangular building without a roof, showing a less clear imagination of the original shape. Similarly, the child with the initials AF[1] drew the shape of a Mosque as a representation of the Menara Kudus, and the child with the initials AM[2] drew the Menara Kudus with a less appropriate shape. Likewise, the child with the initials FZ[1] chose to plagiarize his friend's drawing despite having direct experience observing the Menara

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Kudus.

Children who drew works that resembled the original Menara Kudus building demonstrated a better understanding of the original. In contrast, other children imagined the Menara Kudus building in more creative and free forms and colors. Children who were confused in finding the shape of the Menara Kudus gained various inspirations through other children's drawings during the drawing process. This treatment is a manifestation of the aesthetic experience carried out during the creation process. This is based on the statement by Junaedi (2016) that there is flexibility in the stages of the art creation process, allowing an artist who has experienced an aesthetic experience at the pre-creation stage to revisit it at the creation stage. The following is a recapitulation of the results of children's artistic experiences in drawing the expression of the Menara Kudus. The post-creation stage shows how children can present the process of creating art that they have experienced. For children, the most important thing is the process of drawing, not the result (Tabrani 2012). Although most children struggle to accurately define the shape of the Menara Kudus, they always try to complete the drawing according to their respective abilities. Menara Kudus is regarded as a symbol of Islamic culture, closely tied to the pilgrimage to the Tomb of Sunan Kudus, a popular spot for selfies, and a hub for buying and selling food and souvenirs. Several children created unique drawings depicting cloudy and rainy scenes, incorporating complementary elements such as mosques, trees, and vehicles to complete their artwork. Overall, this post-creation stage highlights the importance of direct experience, interest in drawing, and understanding the drawing process in conveying images of local cultural themes, such as Menara Kudus. This statement aligns with Kottak (2025), who notes that awareness of the cultural environment around children is not inherited biologically but rather acquired through the learning process.

The results of the qualitative data analysis were then strengthened by taking a quantitative approach. The quantitative approach was carried out by distributing a valid and reliable questionnaire on artistic experiences. The results of the quantitative data analysis are as follows.

Table 2. Results of Descriptive Statistical Analysis

		Pre-Creation	Creation	Post-Creation	General
N	Valid	56	56	56	56
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		22.57	80.95	15.91	119.43
Median		23.00	80.00	16.00	115.00
Mode		25	65[a]	18	94
Std. Deviation		4.898	15.445	3.909	22.927
Variance		23.995	238.561	15.283	525.631
Range		21	57	17	84
Minimum		11	50	6	74
Maximum		32	107	23	158

Based on Table 2 the results of the descriptive analysis, it can be concluded that the categorization of children's artistic experiences is by the table of categorization of children's artistic experiences in the interval range of 43, namely low (43 - 86), medium (87 - 129), and high (129 - 172), as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Categorization of Children's Artistic Experiences

Category	Range Value	Number of Children
Low	43 – 86	4
Currently	86 – 129	31
Medium	129 – 172	20
Max	158	2
Min	74	1

Children's artistic experience in the process of creating artworks that express the local cultural theme of Menara Kudus is generally categorized as moderate. The stages of the analysis process consist of Pre-creation, creation, and post-creation. The pre-creation stage in this study

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

falls into the moderate category, with an average of 22.57%, or approximately 70.5%. Pre-creation, as a whole, is related to everything that children do, feel, or experience before creating a work. The pre-creation stage is very closely related to the creation stage. This is based on Stuart Hall's Representation Theory, which encompasses both mental and linguistic representations (Hall, 1997). Mental is an abstract concept that exists in a person's mind. Abstract concepts in a person's mind take the form of imagination or fantasy, which is then manifested in language. A person can use visual language before spoken language. Expression into visual language can be realized through image expression carried out at the creation stage.

Meanwhile, the average value of children's artistic experience in drawing expressions related to the Menara Kudus cultural theme is evident at each step, as described below. The pre-creation stage, which involves children's artistic experience in the process of drawing expressions related to the Menara Kudus cultural theme, includes indicators of aesthetic experience and motivation to work. It can be seen that children's experience and motivation in working on the Menara Kudus culture have a moderate value with an average of 22.57. The minimum value is 11, with a maximum of 32. This suggests that there are differences in the experiences and motivations of one child compared to another. According to (Nursalis et al., 2021), art serves as a medium for conveying the ideas of its creator to many people, as everyone has different experiences and perspectives.

The creation stage in children's artistic experience, particularly in the process of drawing expressions, is a manifestation of imagination that stems from children's experiences and motivations, as seen in their drawings of Menara Kudus. The representation of this imagination is driven by the availability of tools and materials, drawing and coloring techniques, and the ability to express ideas that children have. The average value at this stage is 80.95 or 69.78%, indicating that the creation stage is of moderate value. There is a decrease in the percentage from the pre-creation stage to the creation stage. This is common, according to Yu (2024), who suggests that some children require guidance in converting abstract understanding into graphic elements. The creation stage in children's artistic experience, as part of the process of drawing expressions on the cultural theme of Menara Kudus, includes indicators of mastery of tools and materials, understanding of work techniques, communication skills, the ability to express objects or experiences, and the ability to imagine. The average value of 80.95% indicates that the creation stage is of moderate value. Children who can communicate forms well and appropriately demonstrate that they possess individual skills in expressing ideas, knowledge, and information through images (Anas & Sapri, 2022). The minimum score of 50 and the maximum score of 107 indicate that each child's emotional outburst in expressing the image of the Menara Kudus is different (Nugroho et al., 2020). Additionally, the children's work displays images that do not accurately represent the original shape of Menara Kudus, specifically the castle. The shape of the castle is a development of children's thinking power, enabling them to overcome their difficulty in capturing the original shape and imagine without being limited by reality (Pangestu & Kurniawati, 2019).

The last stage is post-creation, where the process of interpreting the image of the cultural theme expression of Menara Kudus yields 66% with an average value of 15.91, indicating a moderate level of understanding. Children express the media of the images created in verbal form. The ability of spoken language (66%) is lower than visual language at 69.78%. This confirms the opinion Tabrani (2012) regarding the mastery of visual language rather than verbal language by children. These three stages (pre-creation, creation, and post-creation) are interrelated in shaping children's artistic experiences. Variations in creating works of art reflect differences in the pre-creation, creation, and post-creation stages by each individual. The following is a visualization of the theory of cultural representation through children's artistic experiences in the process of creating art that depicts the local cultural theme of Menara Kudus. Children's artistic experiences in the process of drawing expressions of the cultural theme of Menara Kudus, including indicators of understanding the process of creating and interpreting works of art, have an average of 15.91, which indicates a moderate level. Children can grasp the meaning and express the culture around the Menara Kudus (Ayuwardani, 2023). A minimum score of 6 and a maximum score of 23

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

indicate that no maximum score has been achieved by children at this stage. This is by Bat Or et al. (2022), which explains that there is a gap between children's drawings and stories; they clarify the drawings in verbal form. The results of the questionnaire, which have been obtained and processed, show that children's artistic experiences in the process of drawing expressions of the Menara Kudus cultural theme fall into the moderate category. The same point was also expressed by Gilang et al. (2019), who found that the average understanding of art among students who use art appreciation learning activities is greater than that of children who participate in direct learningThe total score on the children's artistic experience questionnaire in the process of drawing expressions of the Menara Kudus cultural theme is 74, 85, 92 each amounting to two children (1.8%), 83, 95, 101, 102, 103, 110, 111, 112, 112, 115, 121, 125, 127 each amounting to two children amounting to 3.6%, 143 amounting to three children amounting to 5.4%, 134, 150 each amounting to four people amounting to 7.1%, and 94 amounting to six children amounting to 10.7%. According to the Description above, the majority of the questionnaire scores obtained were 94, representing six children, or 10.7%.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Children's artistic experience in the process of creating artworks that express the cultural theme of Menara Kudus in Pladen Village, Kudus Regency, enables them to produce works of art tailored to the experiences and interests of each child. The stages in pre-creation include direct and indirect experiences and differences in motivation (interest and command). Creation encompasses the availability of tools and mastery of techniques (gradation and shading), effective time management, clear communication of images, and overcoming difficulties, all of which foster imagination. Post-creation includes self-confidence and the meaning of the Menara Kudus image. The resulting works of art feature visual image types that exhibit good imitation and accuracy of form. While haptic, namely images with high imagination and creativity, images with good use of techniques but still require improvement, and images that struggle to capture the original form. The children's artistic experience in the process of creating artwork, which expresses the cultural theme of Menara Kudus in Pladen Village, Kudus Regency, is moderate. This is evident from the average value (mean) of 119.43. in the pre-creation stage, it has an average of 22.57, creation an average of 80.95, and post-creation with an average of 15.91.

REFERENCES

Anas, N., & Sapri, S. (2022). Komunikasi Antara Kognitif dan Kemampuan Berbahasa. *EUNOIA (Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia)*, *1*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.30821/eunoia.v1i1.997

Ardianti, S. D., Wanabuliandari, S., Saptono, S., & Alimah, S. (2019). Respon Siswa dan Guru Terhadap Modul Ethno-Edutainment Di Sekolah Islam Terpadu. *Edukasia : Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam*, *14*(1), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v13i2.3693

Ayuwardani, M. (2023). Pemahaman Materi Terhadap Hasil Belajar Mahasiswa pada Matakuliah Praktek. *Jurnal Ekonomi Bisnis Dan Manajemen*, *1*(2), 213–221. https://doi.org/10.59024/jise.v1i2.130

Bat Or, M., Ben-Shoshan chen, M., & Shalev, O. (2022). Problem-solving expressions in preschool children's "Person Picking an Apple from a Tree" drawings and verbal narratives. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, *81*, 101964. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.AIP.2022.101964

Bautista, A., Moreno-Núñez, A., Bull, R., Amsah, F., & Koh, S. F. (2018). Arts-related pedagogies in preschool education: An Asian perspective. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *45*, 277–288. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2017.12.005

Fajrie, N., & Purbasari, I. (2024). REPRESENTASI GAMBAR ANAK DALAM PERSEPSI FENOMENA PANDEMI COVID-19 DI KABUPATEN KUDUS. *PRASI*, *19*(02), 118–135. https://doi.org/10.23887/prasi.v19i02.75316

Gilang, O., Pangestu, A., & Kurniawati, Y. (2019). Upaya Meningkatkan Kemampuan Imajinasi Sejarah Siswa melalui Model Edutainment. *FACTUM: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Pendidikan*

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Sejarah, *8*(2), 225–236. https://doi.org/10.17509/factum.v8i2.22153

Goodman, G., Dent, V. F., Tuman, D., & Lee, S. Y. (2022). Drawings from a play-based intervention: Windows to the soul of rural Ugandan preschool children's artistic development. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, *77*, 101876. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2021.101876

Hall, S. (1997). Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices. In *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practices.* Open University Press. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1997-36930-000

Hallam, D. J., Gallagher, M. L., & Owen, D. K. (2022). "I'm not the best at art": An exploration of children's growing sense of artistry within an outdoor, arts-based intervention. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, *44*, 101038. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2022.101038

Handayani, R., Fajrie, N., & Rondli, W. S. (2023). Representasi Visual Pemandangan Alam dari Ekspresi Gambar Anak Di Desa Wotan Kecamatan Sukolilo Pati. *Magelaran: Jurnal Pendidikan Seni*, *6*(2), 375–383. https://doi.org/10.35568/magelaran.v6i2.3882

Huang, L., Leung, S. K. Y., Li, J. W., & Wu, Z. (2025). How Does Comprehensive Art Education Facilitate Children's Creativity? A Mixed-Methods Study in China. *Early Education and Development*, *36*(2), 460–476. https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2024.2404822

Istanto, R. (2022). *Metodologi Penelitian Bahasa rupa*. Thafa Media. https://library.walisongo.ac.id/slims/index.php?p=show_detail&id=34845

Junaedi, Deni. (2016). *Estetika: jalinan subjek, objek, dan nilai*. ArtCiv. https://books.google.com/books/about/ESTETIKA_JALINAN_SUBJEK_OBJEK_DAN_NILAI.html?hl=id&id=waOZAQAACAAJ

Kahfi, A. (2022). IMPLEMENTASI PROFIL PELAJAR PANCASILA DAN IMPLIKASINYA TERHADAP KARAKTER SISWA DI SEKOLAH. *Dirasah: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Dasar Islam*, *5*(2), 138–151. https://doi.org/10.51476/dirasah.v5i2.402

Karyono, T., Isa, B., & Masunah, J. (2025). Stimulation of drawing expression to strengthen character learning. *Cakrawala Pendidikan*, *44*(2), 286–298. https://doi.org/10.21831/cp.v44i2.76617

Kottak, C. Phillip. (2025). *Anthropology: appreciating human diversity*. McGraw Hill. https://archive.org/details/anthropologyappr0000kott_k0g8/page/n9/mode/2up

Lowenfeld, V. (1957). *Cerative and Mental Growth* (3rd ed.). New York: The Macmillan Company. https://archive.org/details/creativementalgr00lowe_0/page/n3/mode/2up

Mayar, F. (2020). *Menggambar Melalui Ekspresi Bebas bagi Anak Usia Dini*. Yogyakarta: Deepublish. https://id.scribd.com/document/621340737

Nugroho, P. A., Fenriana, I., & Arijanto, R. (2020). Implementasi Deep Learning Menggunakan Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) pada Ekspresi Manusia. *ALGOR*, *2*(1), 12–20. https://jurnal.ubd.ac.id/index.php/algor/article/view/441

Nursalis, N., Husen, W. R., & Dharma, B. (2021). Analisis Artefak Cinta Dalam Karya Lukis Abstrak Ekspresionis Acep Zamzam Noor. *Magelaran: Jurnal Pendidikan Seni*, *4*(2), 127–141. https://doi.org/10.35568/magelaran.v4i2.1407

Pangestu, G. A., & Kurniawati, Y. (2019). Upaya Meningkatkan Kemampuan Imajinasi Sejarah Siswa Melalui Model Edutainment. *FACTUM: Jurnal Sejarah Dan Pendidikan Sejarah*, *8*(2), 225–236. https://doi.org/10.17509/factum.v8i2.22153

Pantaleo, S. (2021). Student Meaning-Making of the Artwork in a Science Trade Book: An Interdisciplinary Opportunity for Developing Visual Literacy. *Literacy Research and Instruction*, *60*(4), 332–351. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388071.2020.1854906

Septaria, L., Wulandari, R., & Fahmi. (2023). Penerapan Metode Ekspresi Bebas Untuk Meningkatkan Kreativitas Menggambar Anak Kelompok Bermain Usia 5-6 tahun. *Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains Dan Teknologi*, *2*(2), 171–175. https://doi.org/10.47233/jpst.v2i2.691

Sitepu, C., Ibrahim, A., & Azis, A. C. K. (2020). Tinjauan Gambar Ekspresi Objek Manusia Berdasarkan Teori Lowenfeld Menggunakan Krayon Oleh Anak TK B Methodist Berastagi. *Gorga : Jurnal Seni Rupa*, *9*(1), 32–38. https://doi.org/10.24114/GR.V9I1.17022

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

Sugiyono. (2015). *Metode Penelitian dan Pengembangan*. Jakarta: Penerbit Alfabeta. https://id.scribd.com/document/878869113

Tabrani, P. (2012). *Bahasa Rupa*. Kelir. https://books.google.com/books/about/Bahasa_rupa.html?hl=id&id=Vs7aAAAAMAAJ

Versitano, S., Tesson, S., Lee, C. W., Linnell, S., & Perkes, I. (2025). Art therapy with children and adolescents experiencing acute or severe mental health conditions: A systematic review. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, *59*(10), 863–887. https://doi.org/10.1177/00048674251361731

Yu, L. (2024). A study on creative drawing strategies based on the human head features in children's realistic figure drawings. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, *53*, 101589. https://doi.org/10.1016/J.TSC.2024.101589

Copyright (c) 2026 Mohammad Ridlo, Nur Fajrie, Mohammad Kanzunnudin, Hisbulloh Als Mustofa. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.