

Capacity Building for Early Childhood Teachers in Artistic Creativity through Percussion Music

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Abstract

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Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers from the Anggrek Cluster Teacher Working Group (KKG) in Gebang, Purworejo, face challenges in implementing drum band music as a learning medium for their students. In response to this issue, a Community Service Program (Community Service Program) was conducted with the aim of enhancing the artistic creativity of ECE teachers through percussion music training and a workshop. This program was carried out by students of STAINU Purworejo with 18 ECE teachers participating at TK IT Ash Shiddiqiyah. The Community Service Program utilized a structured approach consisting of planning, mentoring, and monitoring stages. The core mentoring sessions covered three main topics: an introduction to basic notation, an introduction to melodies and arrangements of children's songs, and hands-on practice with percussion instruments. The results showed that the teachers successfully acquired both theoretical understanding and practical skills in drum band music, as demonstrated during the final hands-on practice session. This training successfully enhanced the teachers' competencies, equipping them to develop and apply musical arts more effectively and professionally for their students.

Keywords: Artistic Creativity, Percussion Music, Early Childhood Teachers, Teacher Training

INTRODUCTION

The arts play a crucial role and have a significant impact on the growth and development process of children in various contexts. Young children readily adopt engaging and interactive curricula, where their world of play and learning is heavily influenced by the role of art as a learning medium. Music, in particular, which teaches elements of melody, movement, and instrument recognition, effectively creates a joyful atmosphere as children move and sing. Music itself is an auditory language composed of three basic components—pitch, rhythm, and timbre—which can effectively stimulate sensory-motor development as well as early literacy skills in understanding simple song notations or their arrangements (Lestari & Purnomo, 2023).

Nevertheless, arts education in Indonesia often does not receive serious attention. Many educational institutions, including those in the Purworejo region, still implement a curriculum that places a greater emphasis on quantitative technical skills, which indirectly leads to arts education being deprioritized (Susanto, 2022). This phenomenon directly impacts educator competence. Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers, who are expected to be multi-talented role models for their students, face tangible challenges. Based on preliminary observations within the Anggrek Cluster Teacher Working Group (KKG) in Gebang Sub-district, it was found that the skill level of teachers in the field of percussion and drum band music remains low. This limitation is exacerbated by the minimal support of adequate musical instruments in their respective institutions, thus requiring special attention to enhance their professionalism.

The disparity between the importance of music for children and the low competency of teachers creates a gap that requires intervention. A number of studies have affirmed the urgency of professional development for ECE teachers in the arts, yet the majority still focus on a theoretical level or general arts training. Research that specifically discusses the implementation of practical, hands-on training models for drum band percussion music for ECE teachers in non-urban areas like Purworejo is still very limited (Hidayat & Siregar, 2024). This is despite the high demand for these skills, considering the numerous annual events such as cultural parades (pawai ta'aruf), participation in Indonesia's Independence Day (HUT RI) and National Santri Day (HSN) celebrations, as well as various competitions that require drum band performances as a representation of institutional honor in public appearances.

In response to these problems and the identified gap, a Community Service Program (Community Service Program) in the form of training and workshops emerges as a strategic solution. This activity was held at TK IT Ash Shiddiqiyah, which has a routine agenda of art performances and parades but faces similar challenges in its teachers' skill development. This program was designed to directly equip teachers with practical knowledge and skills that can be immediately applied in their respective institutions, thereby filling the existing training void and improving the quality of music arts education at the local level

Based on the identified problems and urgency, the main objective of this Community Service Program (Community Service Program) is to enhance the competence, skills, and artistic creativity of ECE teachers in the Anggrek Cluster KKG, Gebang Sub-district, in designing and implementing percussion and drum band music instruction in an effective and professional manner.

METHODS

Location, Time, and Participants

This Community Service Program (Community Service Program) was conducted during the first semester of the 2023/2024 academic year. The primary location for the program was the formal educational institution of TK IT Ash Shiddiqiyah, situated in Berjan Village, Gebang Sub-district, Purworejo Regency. The subjects and primary beneficiaries of this activity were 18 Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers, all of whom are active members of the Anggrek Cluster Teacher Working Group (KKG) in Gebang Sub-district. The selection of these participants was based on a needs analysis that identified a collective and urgent problem related to their low proficiency in implementing drum band music as a learning medium.

Program Design and Method Rationale

This program was designed using a participatory training and hands-on workshop method. This methodological choice was grounded in several fundamental considerations. Firstly, the mastery of musical skills is a psychomotor competency that cannot be effectively acquired through theoretical exposure alone. Secondly, this approach aligns with the principles of adult learning (andragogy), where participants (teachers) are encouraged to be actively involved, learn from direct experience (experiential learning), and collaborate with their peers, thereby making the knowledge transfer process more effective. The three-stage model (planning, implementation, and monitoring) was adopted to ensure the intervention was systematic, well-managed, and goal-oriented to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the program's impact.

Program Implementation Stages

The execution of this Community Service Program was divided into three main, interconnected stages to ensure the entire series of activities ran effectively: First, Planning Stage: This initial phase included a series of crucial preparatory activities, comprising: (a) coordination with an expert resource person from the PIAUD department of STAINU Purworejo; (b) outreach and securing permission from the head of the Anggrek Cluster KKG to ensure member participation; (c) collaboration with TK IT Ash Shiddiqiyah as the facilitator of the venue and facilities; and (d) procurement of marching kids instruments as the primary tools for the practical sessions. Second, Implementation Stage: This core phase was realized through an intensive workshop divided into three material sessions. The first session focused on the introduction to basic musical notation and instruments. The second session

continued with material on melody and simple arrangements, using a children's song as a case study. The workshop culminated in the third session, which was fully dedicated to hands-on practice of the balera percussion instrument under the instructor's guidance. Third, Monitoring and Evaluation Stage: This final stage aimed to measure the program's success and ensure the sustainability of its outcomes. Monitoring activities were conducted through direct observation of the participants' abilities during the final practice session and through a reflective feedback and discussion session. This stage also served to identify any challenges faced and to formulate recommendations for the teachers to continue developing their skills independently.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Community Service Program (PkM), which focused on training and a workshop on percussion and drum band music, was successfully conducted as planned. The activity took place at the hall of TK IT Ash Shiddiqiyah Berjan, Purworejo, on Saturday, September 30, 2023. This program specifically targeted Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers who are members of the Anggrek Cluster Teacher Working Group (KKG) in the Gebang Sub-district. Based on preliminary observations by the program implementers, these teachers were identified as having a common problem in implementing drum band music as a learning medium for their students.

The participation and enthusiasm of the participants were notably high throughout the event. The workshop was held over one full day and was divided into three core material sessions, structured to ensure an effective transfer of knowledge and skills. The details of the activity's implementation are as follows:

Session 1: Introduction to Music Notation (10:00 – 11:00 AM WIB)

The first session focused on introducing the basic theory of music, namely staff and numerical notation. The resource person delivered the material interactively, ensuring that the teachers understood the fundamental concepts that would serve as a foundation for the subsequent sessions. Participants actively asked questions and took notes on the material presented.

Session 2: Introduction to Melody and Simple Arrangement (11:00 AM – 12:00 PM WIB)

In the second session, music theory began to be applied in the form of melody. To facilitate understanding, the resource person chose a popular and easy-to-remember children's song, "Balonku Ada Lima" by A.T. Mahmud. Participants were guided to analyze the melody and attempt to create a simple arrangement of the song.



Figure 1. The Atmosphere during the Delivery of Theory on Notation and Melody by the Resource Person

Session 3: Hands-on Practice with Percussion Instruments (12:30 – 01:30 PM WIB)

This session was the culmination of the workshop, where participants directly practiced the theories they had learned using drum band (marching kids) percussion instruments. Each participant was given the opportunity to try the instruments under the direct guidance of the resource person. A clear improvement in understanding from theory to practice was observed, as participants were able to play basic rhythms together.



Figure 2. ECE Teachers Enthusiastically Participating in the Hands-on Percussion Instrument Session

In addition to technical skills, an important result of this Community Service Program was the transfer of strategic knowledge. The resource person provided practical tips and tricks to overcome common problems during performances, one of which was how to manage children's fatigue during long parades. The solution offered was to play a monotonous and

simple musical rhythm during transit and only showcase the full musical performance at specific points of interest. This strategy was well-received by the teachers, who deemed it highly applicable to overcoming real-world challenges.

Discussion

The successful implementation of this Community Service Program indicates that the participatory training and workshop model is an effective solution to address the low skill level of ECE teachers in the field of music. The high level of enthusiasm from participants confirms the findings of the initial observation that there is an urgent need for professional development in this area. This result is in line with the findings of Nugroho & Sari (2024) and Wijayanti et al. (2023), who state that community service activities based on the real needs of partners (a bottom-up approach) tend to have higher levels of participation and impact. Practical training has been proven to enhance teachers' competence and self-confidence, as reported by Pratiwi & Hidayat (2023) in a similar Community Service Program program.

The workshop's structure, which divided the material into three stages—basic theory (notation), simple application (melody), and hands-on practice (instruments)—proved to be highly effective. This approach adopts the scaffolding principle, where knowledge is built gradually from simple to complex. According to Santoso (2022), such a structured training model makes it easier for adult learners to absorb new skills, especially in the arts, which require a combination of cognitive understanding and psychomotor abilities. The success of the participants in playing basic rhythms during the practice session indicates that the skill transfer was effective, a result consistent with the research of Rahman & Fauzi (2025), which emphasizes the importance of a dominant practical component in music workshops. This is also supported by Utami & Firmansyah (2024) and Lestari & Setiawan (2022), who found that experiential learning is key to the success of teacher training.

One of the interesting findings from this Community Service Program was the transfer of strategic knowledge in the form of tips for managing children's fatigue during performances. This shows that the training was not only successful on a technical level but also equipped teachers with creative solutions for contextual problems in the field. A teacher's ability to innovate and solve problems is one of the essences of professionalism, as emphasized by Abdullah et al. (2025). Providing such "tricks" is often more valuable than rigid theory because they are applicative and relevant to daily challenges (Siregar & Mulyani, 2023; Anwar & Prasetyo, 2022).

This Community Service Program activity is also highly relevant to the spirit of the Kurikulum Merdeka (Merdeka Curriculum), which grants educational units the freedom to develop an operational curriculum that suits local conditions and needs. By enhancing the competence of teachers in music, they become more capable of creating a learning environment that provides "freedom for children to play, freedom to learn, and freedom to share," as mandated by the Decree of the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology No. 008/H/KR/2022. Creative and skilled teachers are the spearhead of the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Wulandari & Setiawan, 2023; Hakim & Lubis, 2024). Therefore, Community Service Program programs focused on enhancing teacher capacity like this one not only solve problems at the local level but also support the achievement of national educational goals (Putra & Jamilah, 2024; Effendi et al., 2022; Yuliana & Suhendar, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This Community Service Program (PkM) successfully addressed the identified challenges faced by Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in Gebang Sub-district regarding the implementation of drum band music. The participatory workshop, conducted by students of STAINU Purworejo at TK IT Ash Shiddiqiyah, proved to be an effective intervention for enhancing the teachers' competencies. The program's success, demonstrated by the participants' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in a final hands-on practice session, confirms that the practical training model was highly effective for acquiring skills in percussion and drum band music. Consequently, this initiative not only transferred technical knowledge but also empowered the teachers, equipping them with the necessary confidence and skills to enrich their arts-based learning activities. To ensure the sustainability and significant long-term improvement of these newly acquired abilities, it is strongly recommended that the teachers establish a routine practice schedule and foster collaborations with the local community of marching kids coaches in the Purworejo region.

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