

# Paper Waste as a Creative Platform for Elementary School Students in Sumberejo Village

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## Paper Waste as a Creative Platform for Elementary School Students in Sumberejo Village

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**Abstract.** Creativity is an individual's ability to create novelty in the form of ideas or tangible works. In order to enhance creativity among students, community service has initiated activities that utilize paper waste to foster creativity, such as handicrafts. The primary objective is to reduce paper waste accumulation while fostering creativity among 5th and 6th-grade students. The method used involves hands-on activities where students transform sheets of newspaper into pencil holders, teaching them the value of recycling and creative problem-solving. The results show that students demonstrated both cognitive creativity traits, such as originality and flexibility, and non-cognitive traits, like curiosity and motivation. The program not only addresses waste management issues but also helps students develop practical skills, raising environmental awareness and instilling values of sustainability. Through this initiative, the creative potential of students is enhanced while contributing to environmental preservation.

**Keywords:** paper waste, creative, environmental education.

**Abstrak.** <sup>8</sup>Kreativitas adalah kemampuan seseorang untuk menciptakan hal baru dalam bentuk ide atau karya nyata. Untuk meningkatkan kreativitas di kalangan siswa, pengabdian masyarakat telah memprakarsai kegiatan yang memanfaatkan limbah kertas untuk menumbuhkan kreativitas, seperti kerajinan tangan. Tujuan utamanya adalah untuk mengurangi penumpukan sampah kertas sekaligus menumbuhkan kreativitas di kalangan siswa kelas 5 dan 6 SD. Metode yang digunakan melibatkan kegiatan langsung di mana siswa mengubah lembaran koran menjadi tempat pensil, mengajarkan mereka nilai daur ulang dan pemecahan masalah secara kreatif. Hasilnya menunjukkan bahwa para siswa menunjukkan ciri-ciri kreativitas kognitif, seperti orisinalitas dan fleksibilitas, serta ciri-ciri non-kognitif, seperti rasa ingin tahu dan motivasi. Program ini tidak hanya menangani masalah pengelolaan sampah tetapi juga membantu siswa mengembangkan keterampilan praktis, meningkatkan kesadaran lingkungan dan menanamkan nilai-nilai keberlanjutan. Melalui inisiatif ini, potensi kreatif siswa ditingkatkan sekaligus berkontribusi pada pelestarian lingkungan.

**Kata kunci:** limbah kertas, kreatif, pendidikan lingkungan.

### 1. **BACKGROUND**

<sup>7</sup>Creativity is an individual's ability to discover and create something new, including ideas or methods that are beneficial for themselves as well as for society. The new thing does not always have to be completely original, but it can be a combination or a new relationship of elements that already exist, resulting in something different and innovative. Creativity is influenced by intellectual aspects such as intelligence, talent, and ability, as well as by emotional factors like attitude, interest, and motivation (Dwi Okti Sudarti, 2020). Creativity arises from an individual's curiosity and openness to the world and to themselves. This requires ongoing commitment despite challenges and tensions. Those tensions can be transformed into

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positive energy that enhances focus and brings individuals closer to their creative process (Idat Muqodas, 2015).

Creativity is not only beneficial in creating something new and innovative, but it also plays an important role in providing solutions to various social and environmental issues faced by society. In the context of the environment, creativity allows a person to see opportunities behind challenges, such as in waste management. The increasing problem of waste, particularly paper waste, is often viewed as a burden on the environment and human health. However, through creative approaches, paper waste that was initially seen as useless can be reprocessed into valuable products, such as souvenirs, mementos, or other handicrafts.

The issue of waste, especially paper waste, is often considered a nuisance to the environment and human health. Paper waste is frequently generated from daily activities and can accumulate if not managed properly. Nevertheless, paper waste can still be utilized by recycling it into useful items, such as functional crafts. In addition to helping reduce waste, this recycling process can also bring economic benefits and reduce negative impacts on the environment, such as greenhouse effects and global warming (Rokilah, 2022). Through paper recycling, not only does it help address environmental issues, but it can also be utilized as an alternative for creating various souvenirs, mementos, and even opening up new job opportunities.

The issue of paper waste in Sumberejo Village, Kendal Regency becoming increasingly concerning as school activities and community events generate more waste. Paper that is usually discarded without proper management can accumulate, pollute the environment, and even impact public health. The lack of awareness and limitations in waste management contribute to worsening this situation. Therefore, there is a need for a solution that not only reduces the accumulation of paper waste but also involves the active role of the community, especially the younger generation, in preserving the environment. With the right approach, paper waste issues can be transformed into opportunities that provide long-term benefits.

One potential solution is to utilize paper waste as a basic material for creative activities among elementary school students. A recycling program that involves students not only serves to reduce paper waste but also provides them with an opportunity to hone their creativity and skills. In this program, students can learn how to turn used paper into pencil cases, souvenirs, or sellable memorabilia, which can ultimately also bring economic benefits. In addition, they can develop these skills in the future, opening up opportunities for them to create innovative products from waste. The main objective of this program is to equip students with an

understanding of the importance of recycling, while also providing them with practical skills that can be utilized sustainably.

## 2. METHOD

The paper waste processing activities are carried out in all elementary schools in Sumberejo Village. The target of this activity is students in grades 5 and 6. The activity was carried out using the method of practicing how to transform sheets of newspaper into a pencil vase. The processing of paper waste aims to reduce waste accumulation by turning it into valuable products. In addition, it is hoped that the paper waste processing activities will enhance the creativity of the students. This activity is carried out through the following stages.

1. Prepare 11 sheets of newspaper, then roll them up straight.
2. The straight rolled paper is rolled again to form a circle, then the end is glued using paper glue.
3. Once all the paper is rolled into circles, place the largest roll at the bottom.
4. Attach the other rolled papers to the side of the bottom roll to form a pencil holder and secure them using a hot glue gun.

In the production stage, the students were also provided with insights that paper waste can be repurposed into other items, allowing them to practice at home by creating other useful goods.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Creativity is an individual's ability to create something new, whether an idea or a physical work, that is relatively different from what has existed before, whether in the fields of science, literature, or other arts. (Idat Muqodas, 2015). A person can be considered creative if they produce something new, whether it be an idea or a tangible work. In realizing creativity, there needs to be a strong natural interest and a high level of commitment.

The important potential of creativity lies in its characteristics, which consist of cognitive and non-cognitive traits. Cognitive traits stem from originality, flexibility, fluency, and elaboration. Meanwhile, non-cognitive traits include motivation, personality, and a creative attitude (Munandar, 1999).

Community service activities have been carried out in Sumberejo Village, Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency. In this paper waste utilization activity, the main target is the elementary school students of Sumberejo Village. Sumberejo Village has 3 public elementary

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schools, so this activity only involves 5th and 6th-grade students, with each class consisting of 40 students.

This activity is carried out through the method of practicing how to transform sheets of newspaper into a pencil holder vase. The utilization of this paper waste aims to reduce waste accumulation by turning it into a valuable product. The Kaliwungu district has a waste care program because floods often occur due to the accumulation of waste. Therefore, the activity of utilizing paper waste can align with the programs established by the government. In addition, with the implementation of large-scale paper waste processing activities, there is great hope that students can develop their creativity through this initiative. There are several stages before carrying out the activities, namely: **Audience with the School Authorities**

Before implementing the activities, there is a stage of audience with the principals of each elementary school in Sumberejo Village to inform and reach an agreement that activities will be conducted utilizing paper waste as a platform for student creativity. After the hearing stage, it was concluded that: (1) the target participants involved in the activities are fifth and sixth-grade students, (2) the schedule for each activity at Sumberejo Village Elementary School. Therefore, this stage of the audience is very important to carry out before taking action or implementing activities directly.

#### **Preparation of Tools and Materials**

In the pre-implementation phase of the activity, the community service team prepares tools and materials as an essential part of the process. The main materials needed for this activity are newspaper waste. In addition, tools are also required to assist in the process, such as a hot glue gun, paper glue, and scissors.

#### **Stage of Work by Students**

Accompanied by the community service team, the students began their first activity, which was to prepare sheets of newspaper. Second, roll the ends of the newspaper together to form a straight roll. Third, roll the straight paper roll back into a circle, then glue the ends together using paper glue. Fourth, place the largest roll at the bottom. Fifth, attach the other paper rolls to the sides of the bottom paper roll to create a pencil holder, securing them with a hot glue gun.



Figure 1. Documentation of the Stages of Paper Waste Utilization Work



Figure 2. Documentation of the Stages of Paper Waste Utilization Work

In addition to providing guidance on creating creative art for students, the community service team also offers insights regarding the Earth, which is increasingly burdened by waste. Moreover, Sumberejo Village is still experiencing flooding disasters caused by waste, which highlights the need for waste utilization and knowledge for students regarding waste processing that can be transformed into useful products. Thus, this waste utilization also serves as a way to preserve the earth's sustainability.

In the understanding of creativity itself, it is a process of creating something new that can take the form of ideas or tangible works. The utilization of paper waste creates a new item that initially consists of sheets of newspaper, which are then transformed into a tangible work. Thus, the use of paper waste can enhance students' creativity in processing waste into a work of art.

In addition, it is also explained how the characteristics of creativity consist of cognitive and non-cognitive traits. In this case, the cognitive traits evident in the utilization of paper waste are that students learn to think fluently by solving waste problems occurring in their area by turning it into a work of art. Students also inquire about the utilization of paper waste, questioning whether it can only be made into one craft, namely a flower vase. Thus, this question can enhance the cognitive traits of students in terms of flexible thinking.

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However, in addition to cognitive traits, students also successfully demonstrated non-cognitive traits, namely a high level of curiosity. This was evidenced by the students, the majority of whom asked questions and approached the community service team during the implementation phase. Then the students also felt challenged when faced with the newspaper that was difficult to roll up, and they were very interested in solving that problem. Thus, the activity of utilizing paper waste can serve as a platform to enhance students' creativity, encouraging them to think and use their imagination to create innovations in the form of ideas or tangible works

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The paper waste utilization activities carried out in Sumberejo Village not only contribute to efforts in reducing waste accumulation but also play a role in developing the creativity of elementary school students. Through the practice of transforming paper waste into pencil vases, students are trained to think creatively, which includes cognitive traits such as originality, flexibility, and fluency of thought. In addition, motivation, curiosity, and students' ability to face challenges also reflect the non-cognitive traits of creativity.

This activity demonstrates that with the right guidance and support, students' creativity can be enhanced, even through real issues such as waste management. Thus, this activity not only encourages students to create new works from recycled materials but also fosters awareness of the importance of preserving the environment and optimally utilizing existing resources. This program demonstrates that environmental-based education can be an effective medium for developing creativity while instilling sustainability values in the younger generation.

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