

Free drawing learning to recognize children's characters

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive qualitative study described the personality or characteristics of children based on the colors used in drawing activities. The subjects in this study were the Pembina Kindergarten students in the city of Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia. They were determined by using snowball sampling technique. The data collected through observations and documentation analysis by researchers without being directly involved in activities. The data analysis technique used was an interactive model which consists of three activity lines: i) Data reduction; ii) Data display; and iii) Drawing conclusions and data verification.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The term learning is the equivalent of English, that is instruction, which means making people learn. The goal is to help people learn, or manipulate the environment so it makes it easier for those who learn. Learning is a series of events (events, events, and conditions) that are deliberately designed to influence children so that the learning process can take place easily [1]. Next, learning is the relatively permanent change in a person's knowledge or behavior due to experience. This definition has three components: i) The duration of the change is long-term rather than short-term; ii) The locus of the change is the content and structure of knowledge in memory or the behavior of the learner; and iii) The cause of the change is the learner's experience in the environment rather than fatigue, motivation, drugs, physical condition or physiologic intervention [2].

Learning is not only given to adolescents or adults. Learning is also important for children that can be carry out formally in kindergarten level [3]. Learning in kindergarten is a process of interaction between children, parents, or other adults in an environment to achieve developmental tasks. The interaction is important to achieve the learning objectives. This interaction reflects a relationship between children who will gain meaningful experiences, so that the learning process can take place smoothly. Learning can be effective if children can learn through activities that try to explore with their environment.

Learning in kindergarten prioritizes play while learning and learning while playing [4]. Play motivates children to know something more deeply and spontaneously this can develop their abilities and prioritize process rather than results. Learning in kindergarten should pay attention to situations that provide a sense of security and fun to children. It can be conducted in learning activities to form good behavior. It is the development of various basic abilities of children [5].

One form of learning in kindergarten is learning to draw. Learning to draw is one of the interactions between the teacher and the child in expressing thoughts or feelings in the form of lines, scribbles, and colors to other people, and so on [6]. Learning to draw is a process of expressing feelings and statements about the contents of the soul (including thoughts, feelings, and wills) in their own way which is indispensable for their harmonious development. In other words, learning to draw is an activity that is full of stimulation to the development process of early childhood. Like play activities, learning to draw has benefits for child development. Educatively, learning to draw is a learning method for early childhood that aims to develop the potential or creativity of children [7].

Drawing is a mental and visual expression of what one experiences in the form of lines and colors [8], [9]. Then drawing is an activity that is carried out by scribbling, lining, and incising sharp objects and giving colors, so that images are formed [10]. Drawing is a habit of kindergarten children. Drawing activities can be carried out with full awareness of certain goals and objectives or just making meaningless pictures. Furthermore, drawing is a means of expressing the heart's contents through images or symbols that are universal [11].

Drawing becomes a source of ideas to express all feelings and inspiration about everything that has been touched or experienced. Drawing activity turned out to be a pleasure of children because creating it involves thoughts that are all sourced from the work of the right hemisphere. Drawing activities will help children in the development of motor behavior, fantasy thinking and in the ability to overcome fear and frustration [4]. Drawing can also find out and help children who have problems early and can overcome more quickly [12], [13]. Drawing provides aesthetic experience in the form of expression/creation and appreciation activities through the learning approach or through art learning activities. In addition, drawing is one of the basic potential possessed by children as a form of plural intelligence [14].

Free drawing is drawing freely without using instruments such as rulers or compasses. The results of free drawing have the characteristics of being free, spontaneous, creative, unique, and individual [15], [16]. Soloveiva, González-Moreno, and Quintanar [17] revealed that free drawing is a drawing activity that is not determined by the subject of the drawing, meaning that children are free to draw according to the child's wishes at that time. Children are encouraged to be able to explain and explore the results of the picture. Drawing activities provide a fun and non-threatening way in developing children's report cards or learning outcomes and fostering children's self-confidence. Children can express their deepest thoughts and feelings [18]. In other words, free drawing is drawing with drawing tools that are used freely to express imagination, feelings and expressions without any element of coercion through playing with color textures, patterns and drawing objects. The result of free drawing has the characteristics of being free, spontaneous because it is done at the same time, creative, unique and individual. For children, free drawing is an activity that can explore their imagination, build children's confidence, and provide space for children to talk through children's drawings [19], [20].

Early childhood is a sensitive period for receiving various efforts to develop the full potential of children. A sensitive period in which the maturity of physical and psychological functions are ready to respond to the stimulation provided by the environment [21]. At this age the opportunity for child development is very valuable. So the role of parents provides stimulation and continuous monitoring in order to more quickly know the aspects of development that have been achieved by the child [22].

What has happened so far in early childhood education, teachers only focus on assessing the colors that exist in the images created by children. In fact, teachers do not understand how the characteristics of early childhood are based on the color chosen. In fact, the color chosen by the child to draw saves a lot of information about the child's condition. Then there are also parents who do not understand the character of their own children. Besides that, there are also children unable to recognize colors. As found by Krisdayanti and Sudarto [23], the low ability to recognize colors in kindergarten is an obstacle for children when following further learning activities. Another phenomenon that occurs is that learning to draw tends to be monotonous because the teacher always asks students to make the same picture [24].

Therefore, color recognition is very important to be implanted in children as early as possible, because through knowing a person's color can stimulate the senses of vision, brain, and emotions. Next according Muliani, Gading, and Mahadewi [25] stated that the average ability to recognize the concept of color in children is still underdeveloped. This is because children are only given knowledge through the lecture method, thus making children not interested in getting to know colors. Research results from Izadkiah and Gibbs [14] revealed that almost 40% of teachers who teach for young children do not understand the personality and emotions of children based on the colors children use to draw. So that raises the question: i) Is color really a symbol of a child's personality?; ii) Can free drawing lessons be a medium to get to know children's characteristics? Then, based on the description and phenomena that have been explained, this study describes the colors and personalities of children based on the color chosen for drawing.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed a qualitative method that is descriptive in nature [26]. Descriptive analysis is research that describes systematically, actual and accurate about the facts and the nature of a particular population, or tries to describe the phenomenon in detail [27]. This research involved Pembina Kindergarten students who were in the city of Padang, West Sumatra, Indonesia. The study lasted for five months (May to October 2019). The research subjects were determined through snowball sampling techniques. The data collection techniques include observations and documentation analysis by researchers without being directly involved in activities. The credibility test used in this study are: i) Extending the participation time of researchers in the field; ii) Increase the persistence of observation; iii) Triangulation according to the rules; iv) Analyze negative cases; and v) Use appropriate references. The data analysis technique used was an interactive model [28], which consists of three activity lines: i) Data reduction; ii) Data display; iii) Drawing conclusions and data verification. This research is also supported by an analysis of various literatures and the results of previous studies related to the problem under study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, researchers conducted a color analysis used in making free expression images by students of the City of Padang Pembina Kindergarten students. Researchers also pay attention to students in drawing using marbles, yarn pulling, in block, finger painting, drawing of leaf stamp, and graffito drawing. Based on images made by early childhood, information is obtained that overall, among the many colors used by children, there are some of the most dominant ones used, namely red, blue, green, yellow, black, and orange. The types of colors and images made by children in free drawing lessons are can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of color usage in pictures

No.	Pictures	Types of color					
		Red	Blue	Green	Yellow	Black	Orange
1	Image using marbles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
2	Image using thread pulls	Yes	Yes				
3	Drawing using ink block techniques			Yes	Yes		Yes
4	Drawing using the finger-painting technique	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
5	Image using leaf stamp	Yes		Yes	Yes		
6	Drawing using the Graffito technique		Yes		Yes	Yes	
	Amount	4	4	4	5	1	3

Based on the Table 1, it is known that the color red is used by children in four types of images, blue is used in four types of images, yellow is used in five types of images, black is used in one image, and orange is used in three types of images. These results indicate that children use yellow more dominantly than other colors. This means that the child is able to use several colors in the drawing process. Then the color used can be a symbol of the child's personality.

Pictures produced by children can be a means to find out the child's level of development, children's feelings, children's emotions and even the colors used when drawing can be a guide for teachers and parents to get to know children more closely [29]. Color science is the study of colors in relation to human behavior. It aims to define how color impacts our day to day decisions [30]. Color meanings may have an effect on why we choose certain colors at others. The same color may also have several meanings that are depending on our heritage, gender, position, beliefs, and a variety of different factors [31]. Color science indicates that other colors may provoke mental responses.

Furthermore, when viewed from the meaning of colors in the pictures that have been made, can be found various kinds of characters possessed by children. First, red has a meaningful color, giving meaning to passion and giving energy to call for action. In psychology, red gives a symbol of courage, strength and energy, as well as a passion for action, and symbolizes the joy of a warm color group. Besides that, the meaning of red can describe the strongest physical reaction of ourselves. Also, as a color of greatness in the world of power. Second, the blue color means giving a professional impression and trust. The blue color is believed to stimulate communication skills, artistic expression and also as a symbol of strength. Based on the perspective of psychology, blue can stimulate clear thinking and help win minds and increase concentration. If associated with blue personality type associated with the type of melancholy [32], [33].

The third color is green. The green color is closely related to the feel of nature that gives the impression of being relaxed. Based on the perspective of psychology, the green color helps a person to become more able to balance emotions and facilitate openness in communication. The green color is a

symbol for people with phlegmatic personality types, those who like peace. Next, the fourth color is yellow. Yellow gives the meaning of warmth, and a sense of happiness seems to cause a desire to play. Besides, the yellow color also has an optimistic meaning, full of enthusiasm and full of fun. This color is usually used by people who want to be noticed by others. In other words, the color yellow is closely related to people who have extroverted personalities [34], [35].

The fifth color is black. The black color gives a dark and frightening meaning, but also elegant. Black philosophy contains positive meanings, including: i) Reflecting courage, ii) The center of attention (especially the opposite sex), iii) Calmness and dominance, and iv) Dexterity and determination. Children who like the color black tend to be indifferent and not think about what other people say and always do what they like [31]. The sixth is orange. The color orange gives a warm meaning and spirit and is a symbol of adventure, optimism, confidence and the ability to socialize [36].

Based on the results of observations on the process of making drawings by children, information is obtained that the colors used in the images become symbols of the characteristics of children who use these colors. This is evidenced from some children who use red. Children who choose red have courage and have a strong desire to try and be energetic. In addition, children who choose blue tend to be calmer in the learning process and more likely to avoid conflicts with other friends. Children who like green are able to control themselves and have good communication skills. Children who choose yellow tend to be active and like to be the center of attention when learning. For some children who choose black, they tend to be indifferent to their surroundings and busy doing what they like. As for children who like the color orange, they like to make something new, and always feel confident with their abilities.

From the results of interviews with teachers got information about the characters or beliefs needed by children in accordance with the meaning of the colors used in the drawing process. As issued by the teacher who teaches, children who like the color red must have a brave character and full of enthusiasm than other children. Children who like the blue color have a quiet character when studying and they have a top level of education in learning. Children who like the color blue are also more often avoid fights with friends in class. The teacher who teaches also reveals that children who like to choose green have the need to argue, can socialize with the good and prefer quiet learning needs. Similarly, children who like the color yellow, they have a cheerful personality and have a strong curiosity. Children who like the color orange, they have characteristics that are friendly, happy with others and also want to stand out. Finally, children prefer black, they have sensitive feelings and they also care more about the situation.

To strengthen the results of observations and interviews with teachers, the researchers interviewed with several parents of children. Based on interviews with parents of children who like the color green, got information that the child can maintain an emotional calm, more obedient, and also likes things that nuanced nature. From the parents of children who like the color orange, information is obtained that the child can get along with anyone, both his age or older, and also the child also has a great curiosity and always wants to look prominent. Based on interviews with parents of children who like the color blue, it is known that if the child does something high enough level of concentration, able to convey what he wants well and also can often draw on the walls of the house. On the other hand, parents of children who like the color yellow, it is known that the child always wants to play with anyone, wants to be noticed by anyone and has high self-confidence. Besides that, from the parents of children who like the color red, information is obtained that the child is more active than other children his age, the child has the courage to deal with things that have never been found before and behaves like a leader when playing with a child the same age as him. Finally, from interviews with parents of children who like black, information is obtained that children who like black are more likely to be indifferent to their surroundings, the child also likes to play alone. In addition, children who like black also do what they like.

For instance, color is much believed to have an effect on moods and emotions. Sometimes these responses are associated with the level of the color, while in different cases they are the result of experience and social influences [37]. Color science is the study of color as the determinant of human behaviors. It is a branch of science devoted to examining the effects of colors on human behavior and beliefs. Some interior decorators, who study color science, say that different colors cause specific emotional reaction at other people [38].

Color plays an important part in the emotional world of preschool kids. Kids in the age bracket are usually spontaneous and full of life. Their favorite colors are crimson, orange, yellow and pink. These colors help them unleash their feeling energies, making them think greater [39], [40]. Kids in the age bracket, who choose cold colors like blue and green at warmer hues, are usually more circumspect and less spontaneous. Color is also a symbol in recognizing the personality possessed by children, especially those who have not entered school age. This can be seen from the colors that are often used by children in the drawing process [39], [41]. The color chosen by the child is not just decoration, but also has meaning. The color is a symbol for emotions or personality of early childhood [42], [43].

According to Yu, Yuqing, and Wen [44], individuals who like the color blue usually are people who are open and sociable. Furthermore, Mallandain and Davies [45] revealed that people who like the color red are usually very open, confident and not afraid of anything. According to Liyanage and Bartlett [46], green fans are people who like to be honest and loyal. However, they will think too much about the opinions expressed by others. Green enthusiasts always want to feel safe. Therefore, they will place their interests in things they think are valuable.

Haas *et al.* [47] stated that individuals who like the yellow color have a high optimistic attitude and like to add new knowledge, then share it with others. This one-color fan also likes happiness. People who like orange tend to have friendly and sociable characters. They are also very happy to be the center of attention. They do not like to think about things too seriously, because their characters are quite relaxed [48]. Finally, black enthusiasts often experience mood swings and are attracted to new things. In addition, they are also more sensitive and creative. Black enthusiasts are not closed people, but will be very careful with others [38].

It is crucial to see that different colors convey different emotions. For instance, dark color is generally associated with mystery, quality, ability or death, whereas white color stands for hope, innocence, simplicity and good. Red is the color that conveys love, anger, desire and relationship. Blue conveys emotions of trust, harmony and unity, while gray color represents maturity, authoritativeness, stability and safety [43], [49]. Besides that, researchers results, states that each color used by humans can determine how the behavior and characteristics of these humans [30], [50], [51].

The way that color is used within drawings indicate and emphasize specific emotional states or qualities of the creator with kids using color in their art as a way of conveying their underlying emotional status. Color plays an important part in expressing emotion. Bright colors often convey joy, while duller or darker people may convey ease, sadness, drowsiness, or other low-key emotions. Contrast may also convey feeling. The picture which uses shades of color in the same range can have a different emotional color than a picture that uses hues from other spectra.

4. CONCLUSION

This research concluded that the color can be one of the media to recognize the characteristics or personality in early childhood. This has been proven through the results of the pictures and also observations made to children during the process of coloring pictures. From the coloring process, the colors that are of interest to children are red, blue, green, yellow, black and orange. The character of the child based on the color chosen: i) Red symbolizes a child having a brave and energetic personality; ii) A child who likes blue signifies a calm and peaceful nature; iii) Children who like green tend to have stable emotions and can convey something well; iv) Children who like yellow are more likely to be seen active to be the center of attention; v) Children who like black have a character who does not care about the circumstances and more often do something they like; vi) Children who like orange are children who like challenges and they are experts in socializing. Free drawing lessons are suitable to be used as a medium to help recognize children's characteristics. In learning to draw, the teacher should not ignore the colors used by children. The colors used by children contain personal information about them.

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