

Conference Paper

Art Workshop as A Form of Participatory Activity and Stimulation of Community Creativity

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ABSTRACT

Creative potential is formed from experience, also influenced by various factors in the surrounding environment. Community service actions, especially in the arts, also play a role in influencing the creative process of a person or group of people. Community service is identical to activities in the form of workshops as a stimulation of the community's creative power, providing new experiences, and often as a means of entertainment. Creative activities maximally supported from various sides can maximize the work created. This paper aims to map the various things that influence creativity in human art, especially in art workshops, where people participate with creative awareness, and how these stages take place. The method used is descriptive qualitative with a relational aesthetic approach, that the work is not only understood as the creation of one person but also the relationship between the artist and the audience. In the workshop, the community acts as an audience that is also involved or participatory activities. The result of this study is a description of the various things that influence the creative process in the community, especially in workshop activities, as well as how the creative process is formed, related to the different characters of each workshop participant and also the abience that has been built in the workshop location environment.

Keywords: Creativity, participatory activity, art workshop, relational aesthetic.

Introduction

Creativity refers to an activity involving human skills, which arises from intuition, but also requires stimulation, both from within the individual, and factors that come from outside the individual. If creativity is analogous to water, it means that instinct is the nature of water that has a shape according to the container it is placed in, and flows from a high place to a low place, while stimulation is an alternative to how the container is chosen or formed, and how the water is flowed, whether it will be left alone, given direction, or given a barrier to flow in another direction.

The existence of creativity arises because it has a purpose, both personal and various other purposes, even those that are social or involve others.

The term "creativity" is used in three ways: it refers to a set of processes (e.g., "creative" thinking), a cluster of personal characteristics of people (e.g., the "creative" personality), and to results (e.g., a "creative" product). Thus, creativity is treated as both a cause (e.g., creative processes yield products; peoples' creativity causes them to behave in a certain way) and also as an effect or result (a certain kind of product resulting from a person and process) (Cropley, 2011).

Based on the explanation above, there are three perspectives to understanding creativity, the first is seen as a process that is often recognized by the term creative thinking process, the second is creativity as a characteristic possessed by humans, and the third is creativity seen from the

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results or products produced. In this study, the focus of the creativity perspective is on the results, because the observations were made in the workshop-shaped activities.

One way to awaken and develop creativity, which involves social interaction, or is communal, is a workshop. Often it is also an activity organized by certain communities, who have a common vision and mission, or simply common interests and hobbies. As explained by Cobigo et. all. "A community is a group of people that interact and support each other and are bounded by shared experiences or characteristics, a sense of belonging, and often by their physical proximity" (Cobigo et al., 2016). Community can be a place for people who have something in common and will foster a sense of belonging and need.

A workshop is one of the social activities because it is identical involvement of many people in, is a scientific meeting in a similar field to create or produce real work (Sudanta, 2015). Workshop is a familiar term and is often used by those carrying out activities which in standard Indonesian are called "lokakarya", but the difference in name is not a problem and does not affect the running of the activity. The number of workshop participants is determined based on the type of skill being taught and the level of difficulty, because the target of organizing the activity is of course the skills achieved by the participants, so even though the workshop is a communal activity, each needs to receive treatment according to their respective level of ability. The sensitivity of trainers during workshops also needs to be trained, because each participant is an individual who has different needs. In line with what was stated by Józefowski (2015) the workshop abandons the idea of creating a static work – is simultaneous action of a few individuals engaged in artistic creation, focused on intensification of subjective experience, conducive to the feeling of subjectivity.

This research focuses on the process of how creativity is formed and produces a product or work of art, through workshops in which there are participatory activities which are one manifestation of the relational aesthetic approach. Activity as a form of process also depends on personal characteristics and ways of human social interaction.

One of the concrete activities in implementing participatory activities in organizing workshops, namely training activities on processing used cooking oil into aromatherapy candles, was held in Pereng Village, Karanganyar. The location is chosen to take into account the existing potential, both the community and the natural resources of the local village.

One of humans' instinctive abilities to survive is to develop skills related to increasing welfare from an economic perspective. In Pereng Village, many people make their living as cracker producers. One of the processes for making crackers is frying, which uses oil, which then has the potential to leave waste in the form of used oil. There is no further processing of the waste oil. This attracted the attention of researchers, and the second thing that was no less interesting was the discovery of many bamboo trees in Pereng Village, which were still only used sparingly.

These two things ultimately became an idea for holding a workshop to manage oil waste while utilizing bamboo as a potential medium from an artistic perspective and characteristic.

"Bamboo is a versatile raw material from social, economic, and cultural points of view, it has been compared with steel through which it has been noticed that bamboo is much cheaper than steel, bamboo properties like high tensile, flexibility, lightweight, toughness is much better than the other building materials" (Kumar et al., 2021).

The workshop target is local residents, both cracker entrepreneurs and non-entrepreneurs, limited to 10 participants with consideration to maximizing individual potential. Because of good stimulation, it will be optimal if the treatment for each individual is also optimal, it doesn't matter if workshop participants are neglected and minimizes reluctance to be fully involved. What must not be forgotten is that the interactions that occur in a communal activity such as a workshop are not only between participants and mentors but also between one participant and another participant.

Implementation of the workshop by fully considering the artistic process as something that dominates. Therefore, the approach used in the workshop is relational aesthetic. The researcher

is an academic in the arts field, so how does the product creation process also maximize the sense of art.

Material and Methods

This research uses qualitative methods which are presented descriptively. The research was carried out by directly observing the workshop which took place in Pereng Village, located at the Pereng Village sub-district office, Mojogedang District, Karanganyar Regency, Surakarta, Central Java. The workshop focused on the process of processing waste oil into aromatherapy candles, and bamboo was used as a container for the candles. The approach used is relational aesthetics, put forward by Louis Althusser (Borruiaud, 2002) which is not necessarily only related to art, but more to form. Refers to the coherence between materials contained in a feature or object, or also an activity.

Relational aesthetics

Talking about relational aesthetics will indirectly lead to a term that exists in the realm of art because the word 'aesthetic' simply reminds us of a form that is comfortable to look at or enjoy (from any branch of art). Meanwhile, the word 'relational' is related to things that are connected to each other. However, this approach actually has a much deeper understanding, because relationships are not just interactions that produce one outcome or product, but have a wider impact.

Bishop (2004) explains that Bourriaud does not regard relational aesthetics to be simply a theory of interactive art. He considers it to be a means of locating contemporary practice within the culture at large: relational art is seen as a direct response to the shift from a goods to a service-based economy Bishop (2004) in the sense that in an approach, one impact can give rise to other impacts, depending on where and how this approach is applied.

Participatory activity and stimulation

There are two main activities in the workshop activities which can be categorized into the realistic aesthetic approach, namely participatory and stimulating. In the world of fine arts, the term participatory art is popular, where the audience or art appreciators can interact directly with the artist's work, while the stimulation is close to perception related to human motor abilities.

Results and Discussion

Both small and large-scale workshops need careful preparation, starting from the preparation of the committee or organizer, the venue, the media, the concept of delivering the material, as well as the concept of communication with the participants, which of course must be finalized before the day of the workshop. It was found that artistic activity is a game, whose forms, patterns and functions develop and evolve according to periods and social context; it is not an immutable essence (Borruiaud, 2002). So, there are many things to consider before organizing a workshop, how to build an atmosphere that is neat, without pressure, and of course fun. At the same time, consider the needs of the workshop participants.

The workshop activity of making aromatherapy candles made from waste cooking oil, by utilizing bamboo as a container, which based on the analysis has applied the relational aesthetic approach by looking at various aspects, from planning to completion of activities. Seeing how the workshop committee prepares the material presented, the preparation of materials and tools, experiments before organizing the workshop, the division of job desks, and consideration of the time of organizing activities. This section describes the outputs generated in the methodology section.

The workshop of making aromatherapy candles is actually not a new thing or has been widely practiced in various places/regions, but of course, it always has differences in the application or flow of activities because each location has a different culture, and different personal

characteristics, which then makes this relational aesthetic unique. Moreover, the organizers of the workshop are not always academics within the scope of fine arts, so the end result of the targeted product is certainly different, because of the different creative processes.

The workshop preparation stage is filled with determining the number of workshop participants, which is limited from 10 to a maximum of 15 people. Limiting the number of participants was done as an effort to maximize the objectives of the workshop, namely that all participants have the opportunity to participate fully. Indirect participants are limited to 10 to anticipate if there are residents who attend without being planned, because of course not everyone has the same free time or due to unexpected agendas.

The next step was to determine the duration of the workshop. It was set at two hours, considering the effectiveness of time and minimizing the boredom of the workshop participants. If there is an extension of time, the estimation will only be carried out with a talk agenda between participants and mentors, in addition to further breaking the atmosphere, as well as stimulating participants if there are other things they want to convey, whether technically processing waste oil, processing bamboo media or related to marketing, and so on. The possibility of topics submitted by residents is unlimited.

Training activities will be attended by someone who has an interest in the topic being taught so that there is a sense of enjoyment during the workshop, which will support the creation of maximum results. Participants are invited by the local village government and, more precisely offered to take part in the workshop activities, there is no element of coercion.

Workshop activities by applying participatory and stimulating elements in the relational aesthetic approach create conditions for activities by considering various perspectives. In addition to two things such as the number of participants and the estimated duration of the workshop, the next is the stage of material preparation, which is prepared in such a way as to increase the interest of the participants in the activity, spark curiosity, bring up the desire to try, and minimize boredom and of course as a stimulation so that participants feel happy during the activity.

The material prepared was in the form of video tutorials that were shown at the beginning of the workshop activities, then material delivered verbally by several mentors which were carried out in conjunction with direct demonstration practices, as well as exposure to the potential of waste processing products related to the economic side, because it cannot be denied that the long-term orientation is that the product can have a selling value and improve the welfare of residents.

The most lively stage was when participants participated in trying to practice making aromatherapy candles. After the previous stimulation stage, it is at this practical stage that the creativity of the participants is tested, to what extent, and tries to be maximized again. The role of the mentor is very important because good communication between parties will maximize the purpose of organizing the workshop, in addition to igniting the psychological side, as well as the benefits obtained by the participants. Baurriaud states that human relationships are the raw material for the creation of art.

The selected mentor is someone who has good communication skills, as a means for the material to be conveyed optimally. The selection of language adapts to the local village culture, is not standardized, and tends to be relaxed but not offensive. Full participation of participants is carried out with the assumption that there is no distance between mentors and participants.

Here the artwork refers to the recycling of used cooking oil into aromatherapy candles, by collaborating with containers made of bamboo material. The workshop stage is the main concern, as a consideration for the placement of participatory activities. Activities related to creativity.

The focus of the workshop as a form of participatory activity has the purpose of providing knowledge and skills, sparking creativity, a means of mental refreshment or entertainment, and also maintaining the existence of science or expertise.

The results of the application of participatory activities can be seen directly during the workshop activities until the workshop is over. First, during the screening of the video tutorial,

which was made as a form of visual stimulation for workshop participants. With relaxed language and created scenes such as everyday storylines, participants feel comfortable, and entertained and give full attention to the video being shown (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Video tutorial on making aromatherapy candles from used cooking oil waste

The consideration of making videos is also related to the effectiveness of the duration of the activity, as well as so that the committee can immediately bring product samples to the location, with real products that are ready, participants will be more stimulated to enthusiastically participate in the workshop. The tutorial video for making aroma therapy candles was uploaded on YouTube so that after the workshop was over, participants could still easily access and learn the process of processing used cooking oil waste. (link akses video: https://youtu.be/epA1_EeNCow?si=NxSixcIQ5GLxMmYi).



Figure 2. Demonstration of aromatherapy candle-making practice

The next stage was a demonstration from the mentor, where at the same time there was a question and answer process with the participants. The host provided stage-by-stage knowledge of making aromatherapy candles in a communicative manner so that while waiting for each stage to be completed, the participants still gave their full attention and felt minimal boredom. Hands-on practice of making aromatherapy candles by going through one of the processes because it takes quite a long time, namely the process of refining or distilling used cooking oil which requires at least 24 hours to remove the smell of food waste.

The most exciting stage was when participants were given the opportunity to directly hold the finished product, and practice directly the process of making aromatherapy candles. Starting from seeing one by one the materials available on the practice table. Stimulation in the form of touch, so that participants recognize tools and materials more deeply. While practicing together as a form of participatory practice, the activity became more fun because of the two-way communication.



Figure 3. Participants observe recycled aromatherapy candles



Figure 4. Participants try to practice the process of making aromatherapy candles

After the workshop, there were still some participants who continued the conversation, sharing information and current cases. It can be seen that participants do not position themselves as the most ignorant, but bring experiences that have been lived or mastered, or encountered daily to share and compare with the experiments that have been carried out by workshop mentors.

The process of interaction between mentors and participants does not only occur during the workshop process but also afterward. It is said to be successful if, after the implementation of the activity, the interest of the participants does not fade, there is still a participatory element. The form of the relationship between mentors and participants is not only limited to that so that mentors can also act as recipients of information and knowledge. Participants have the right to confirm or correct anything that has been delivered. So, if there is a next workshop, it will be better organized. Mentors make this an opportunity to gain new knowledge, which will be used to improve if the next workshop is held.

Participants also have the potential to become mentors in the same field of expertise, becoming a kind of successor, this is how the process of preserving knowledge works, of course, accompanied by the development of existing novelties.

Conclusion

The simplicity of the process of creating a work that has an element of complexity was successfully created from the relationship between the trainer (workshop organizer and participants). Participation does not only apply in one direction but can also be said to be mutual because it is related to social activities. Participation is interpreted as something more detailed, not just about the activity of participating, but how the participation system is carried out.

Participatory activities include stimulation activities, which are not unidirectional, workshop participants can even provide stimulation to the workshop mentor, in the form of questions or input. The results of the simulation will also be returned to the participants in the form of workshop results that maximize product creation creativity. The keyword participatory is also the element of collaboration. Harmony in carrying out activities without any unequal roles or domination by one party.

Creativity is formed from within the individual, external stimulation is to spark and help maximize the creative process within a person. What starts with intention and interest, can lead to results that are not only enjoyed for their own benefit, but also for others, or even many people.

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