
BOOSTING EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING ENTHUSIASM AT RANGGI LITERACY HOME

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Abstract

The Independent Student Exchange Program (PMM) 2024 is an activity launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. One of the important components in PMM is the Nusantara Module, which is designed to provide students with direct experience of cultural diversity in various regions in Indonesia, especially in North of Sumatra. This program aims to improve students' hard skills and soft skills through various activities. University of Sumatera Utara accepted 189 students from 82 universities in PMM 2024. Boosting Early Childhood Learning Enthusiasm at Ranggi Literacy Home will take place in Sampali, PWI Street, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra, on June 15-16, 2024, which involve 20 young children as participants. The event started at 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM on the first day, where children engaged in coloring activities. On the second day, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, the activities included reading, counting activities, arranging syllabus, making toys from recycled materials, and hand washing. Assessment activities will be conducted to monitor the children's progress in understanding the taught materials. A final evaluation will assess the achievement of activity objectives and their impact on the early childhood learning enthusiasm in the Ranggi literacy community with 10 questions, consist of: 50% happy when the older siblings come and introduce themselves; 50% like coloring with paper and colored pencils; 67% like colouring by colouring pencils, 72% dislike syllable cards; 78% like coloring with paper and colored pencils; 67% counting illustrated paper; 61% like coloring with paper and colored pencils; 78% making toy cars from recycled items; 50% playing the toys; and 50% making toy cars from recycled items. Assessment activities will be conducted to monitor the children's progress in understanding the taught materials. A final evaluation will assess the achievement of activity objectives and their impact on the early childhood learning enthusiasm in the Ranggi literacy community. This activity can increase students' understanding of cultural diversity, strengthen their sense of nationality, encourage active participation in community service activities, and develop social and intercultural skills.

Keywords: *Childhood, boosting, Ranggi Literacy Home, USU, PMN 2024*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education plays a crucial role in developing cognitive abilities and language skills appropriate to age, as well as preparing children to interact with their surroundings [1]. According to [2], the behaviorist approach in early childhood education emphasizes shaping children's character in accordance with their mental development, prioritizing the creation of independent individuals ready to advance to further education. Despite teachers playing a central role in the education process, challenges related to the quantity and equitable distribution of teachers in schools remain a significant issue that needs attention [3].

Education is a lifelong learning process that occurs in various life situations, aiming to develop individuals' potential towards maturity and completeness [4]. In the midst of educational access challenges in remote areas such as Sampali, Ranggi Literacy Home emerges as a local solution with non-formal education programs that focus on children and adolescents, as well as empowering women and their supporters.

A holistic approach with creative learning and active parental participation can significantly enhance children's enthusiasm for learning [5]. Furthermore, the use of visual media in lesson planning has proven effective in motivating children and enhancing their skills as expected (Sulastri et al., 2023).

2. METHOD

With the theme "Boosting Early Childhood Learning Enthusiasm at Ranggi Literacy Home," this event will take place in Sampali, PWI Street, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North of Sumatra, on June 15-16, 2024. The event will involve 20 young children as participants.

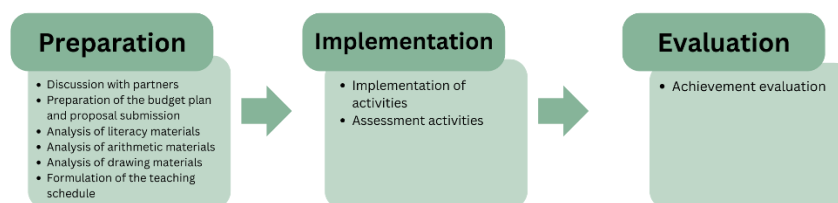


Figure 1. Metodology

The preparation phase begins with discussions with partners to establish suitable goals and methods, followed by the preparation of a Budget Plan and the submission of proposals to relevant parties. Subsequently, a thorough analysis of literacy materials, particularly in counting and drawing, is conducted to tailor them to the needs of children and enhance their learning enthusiasm. Formulating a teaching schedule is also crucial to ensure that each learning session proceeds as planned.

During the implementation phase, the activities will focus on implementing literacy materials using interactive and engaging methods according to the established schedule. Assessment activities will be conducted to monitor the children's progress in understanding the taught materials. A final evaluation will assess the achievement of activity objectives and their impact on the early childhood learning enthusiasm in the Ranggi Literacy Home community.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The event "Inspiring Early Childhood Learning Spirit at "Ranggi Literacy Home" was held from June 15, 2024, to June 16, 2024, with 20 children participating. The event started at 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM on the first day, where children engaged in coloring activities. On the second day, from 10:00 AM to

2:00 PM, the activities included reading, counting activities (Figure 2), arranging syllabus (Figure 3), making toys from recycled materials (Figure 4), and hand washing. Through these interactive and creative activities, the aim was to make learning a fun and beneficial experience for the children, fostering a love for learning from an early age.



Figure 2. Counting activities

In the educational activities at Ranggi Literacy Home, children were taught counting in a creative and enjoyable way. They were given math problems and asked to stick pictures corresponding to the answers. This method made learning mathematics more engaging and easier to understand, as the children could visualize the numerical concepts they were learning. This activity not only improved their counting skills but also honed their fine motor skills.

Furthermore, the children were encouraged to create toys from recycled materials such as plastic cups, bottle caps, straws, balloons, plasticine, and sticks, turning them into cars that could move with the force of blown balloons. This activity was highly beneficial in developing fine motor skills, creativity, and understanding basic scientific principles. By making these toys, the children learned about recycling and reusing materials while experiencing the joy of creating their own toys. Through these diverse activities, the children were expected to become more motivated to learn and explore the world around them.



Figure 3. Arranging syllable cards

Additionally, the children were taught reading through a fun game involving the assembly of syllables into coherent sentences. The sentences were predetermined by the mentors, allowing the children to learn to recognize and arrange syllables correctly. This game not only enhanced their reading abilities but also fostered teamwork and creativity. The children found learning to be more enjoyable and interactive.



Figure 4. Playing with toys (balloons, toy, sticks)

Furthermore, the children were encouraged to create toys from recycled materials such as plastic cups, bottle caps, straws, balloons, plasticine, and sticks, turning them into cars that could move with the force of blown balloons. This activity was highly beneficial in developing fine motor skills, creativity, and understanding basic scientific principles. By making these toys, the children learned about recycling and reusing materials while experiencing the joy of creating their own toys. Through these diverse activities, the children were expected to become more motivated to learn and explore the world around them and taking session photos (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Taking a Photo Together in Front of Ranggi Literacy Homewith the children

From the survey results among a number of children, it is evident that the presence of older siblings is highly meaningful in their learning and playing activities. The children showed high levels of satisfaction with various activities such as coloring, learning to read, counting, and making toys from recycled materials. The survey provides a clear picture of how enjoyable their interactions with older siblings are in the context of learning and playing.

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Sumatra, on June 15-16, 2024. The event will involve 20 young children as participants. The preparation phase begins with discussions with partners to establish suitable goals and methods, followed by the preparation of a Budget Plan and the submission of proposals to relevant parties. Subsequently, a thorough analysis of literacy materials, particularly in counting and drawing, is conducted to tailor them to the needs of children and enhance their learning enthusiasm. Formulating a teaching schedule is also crucial to ensure that each learning session proceeds as planned.

During the implementation phase, the activities will focus on implementing literacy materials using interactive and engaging methods according to the established schedule. Assessment activities will be conducted to monitor the children's progress in understanding the taught materials. A final evaluation will assess the achievement of activity objectives and their impact on the early childhood learning enthusiasm in the Ranggi literacy community. The questioner consists of 10 questions such as described Figure 6-15.

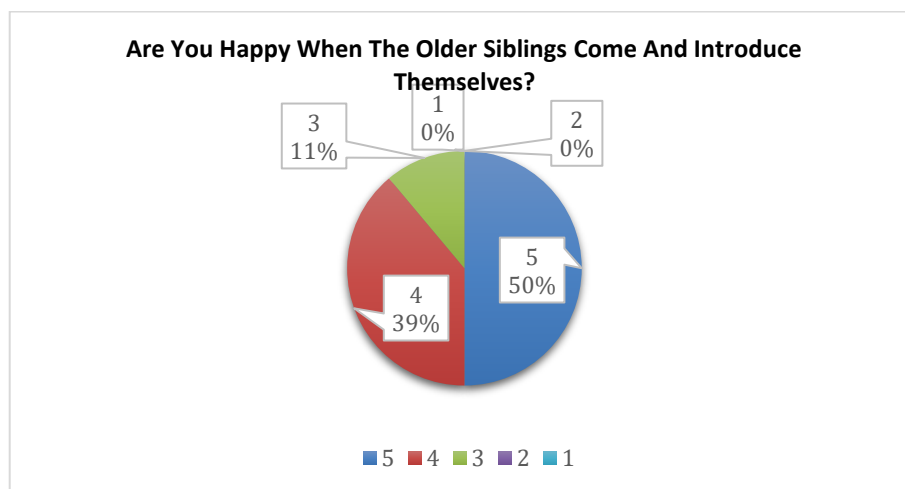


Figure 6. Answer to the Question 1

From Figure 6 described into ten respondents expressed very happy (rating 5), six respondents felt happy (rating 4), and two respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.44, indicating that the majority of children feel very enthusiastic and happy when older siblings come and introduce themselves. This shows that the presence of older siblings has a positive impact and creates a pleasant atmosphere for the children.

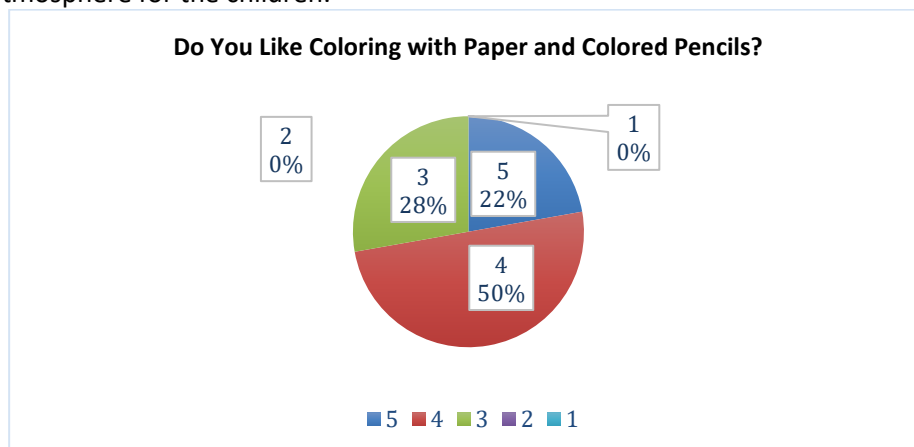


Figure 7. Answer to the Question 2

In this question, 4 respondents felt very happy (rating 5), 9 respondents felt happy (rating 4), and 5 respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 3.94. While most children enjoy

coloring activities, some find it average. However, the average rating indicates that coloring remains a favored activity among the children (Figure 7).

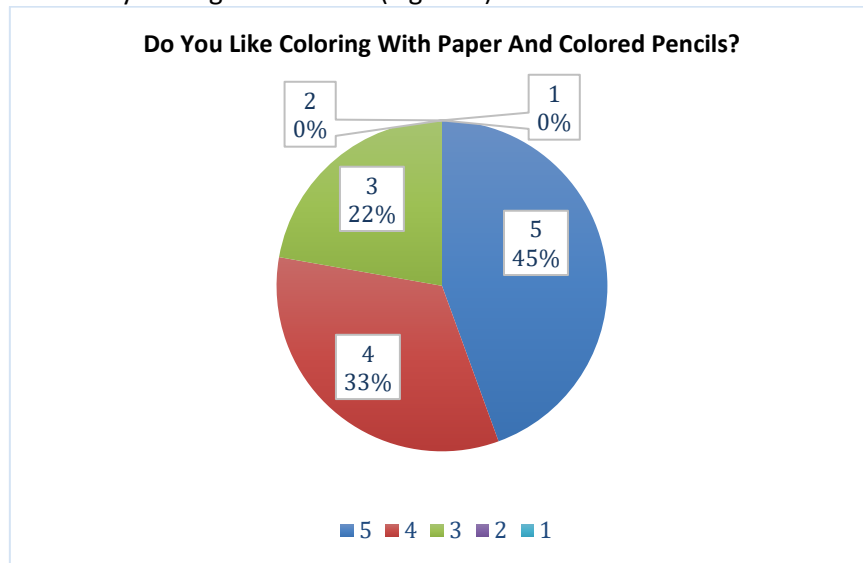


Figure 8. Answer to the Question

Figure 8 showed seven respondents felt very happy (rating 5), eight respondents felt happy (rating 4), and three respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.22, indicating that coloring together with older siblings is more enjoyable compared to coloring alone. This suggests that interaction with older siblings enhances the enjoyment of coloring activities.

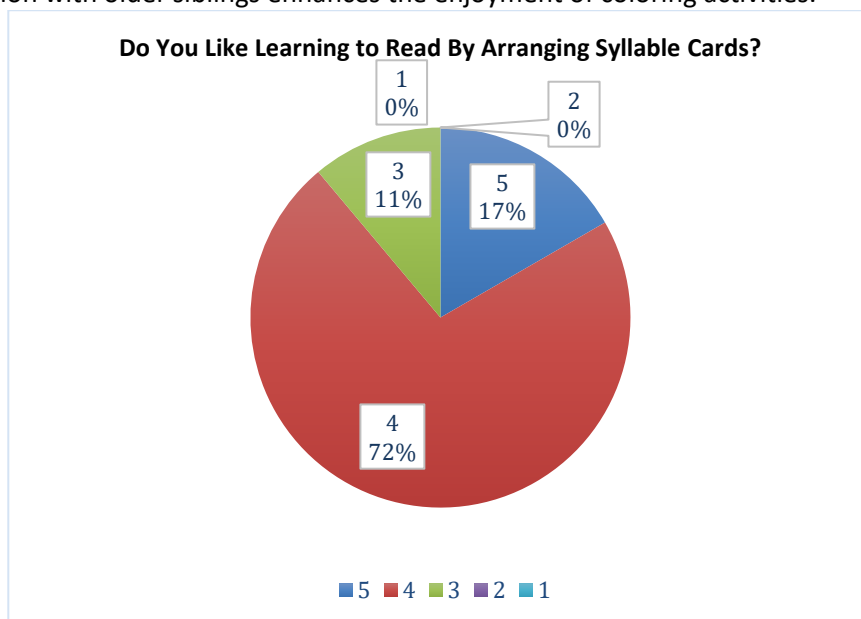


Figure 9. Answer to the Question 4

Three respondents felt very happy (rating 5), thirteen respondents felt happy (rating 4), and two respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.06, indicating that learning to read with syllable cards is quite liked by the children, with the majority feeling happy with this learning method (Figure 9).

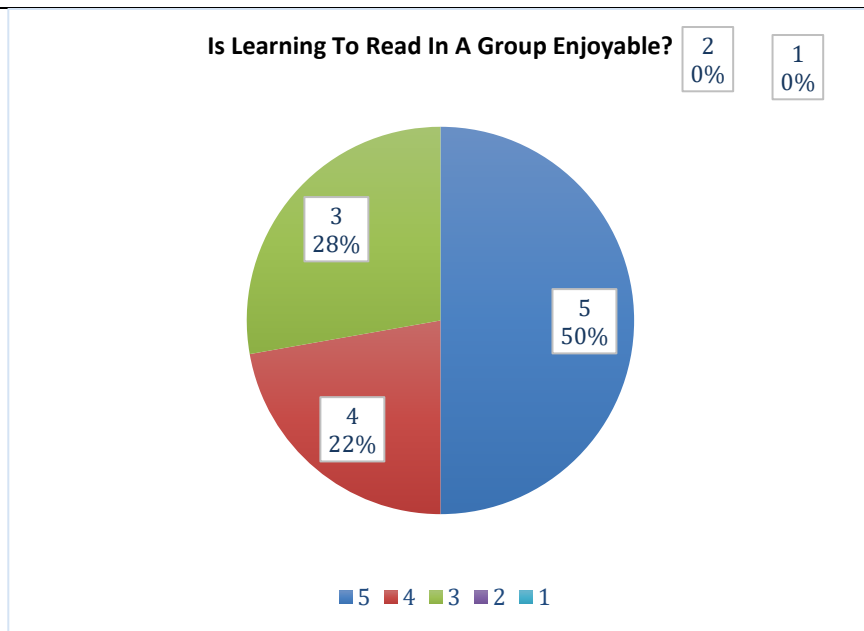


Figure 10. Answer to the Question 5

Figure 10 resulted seven respondents felt very happy (rating 5), eight respondents felt happy (rating 4), and three respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.22. This indicates that learning to read in groups is considered enjoyable by the majority of children, possibly due to social interaction and peer support.

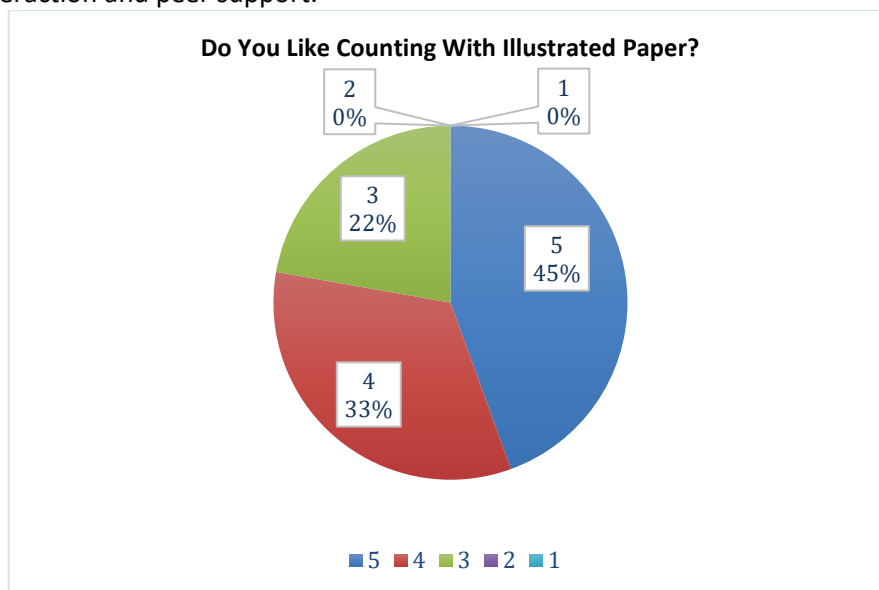


Figure 11. Answer to the Question 6

Nine respondents felt very happy (rating 5), six respondents felt happy (rating 4), and three respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.33, indicating that learning to count with illustrated paper is quite liked by the children, providing a fun and visual learning experience (Figure 11).

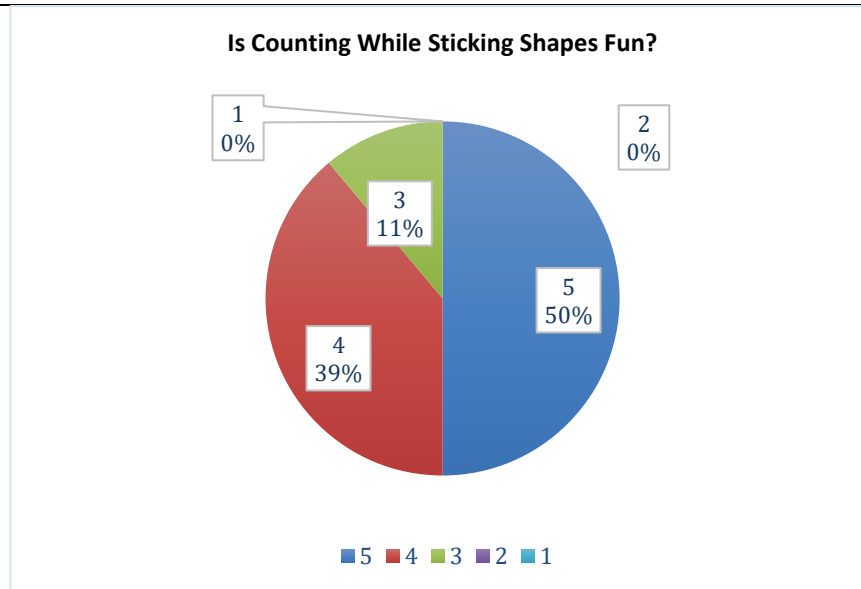


Figure 12. Answer to the Question 7

Figure 12 described eleven respondents felt very happy (rating 5), six respondents felt happy (rating 4), and one respondent felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.56, the highest among all questions. This indicates that the activity of counting while sticking shapes is very engaging for children and considered very exciting.

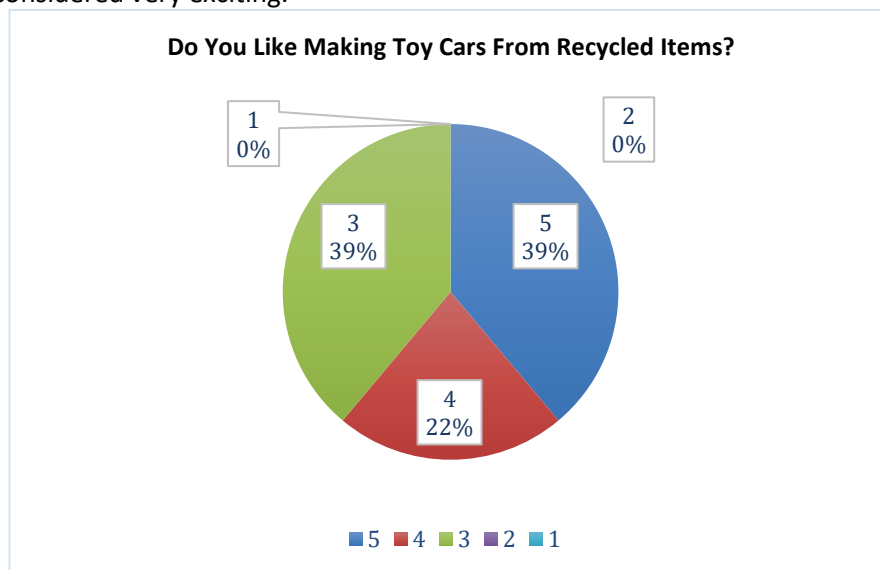


Figure 13. Answer to the Question 8

Six respondents felt very happy (rating 5), five respondents felt happy (rating 4), and seven respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 3.94. This result indicates that making toy cars from recycled materials is quite liked, although some children find this activity average (Figure13).

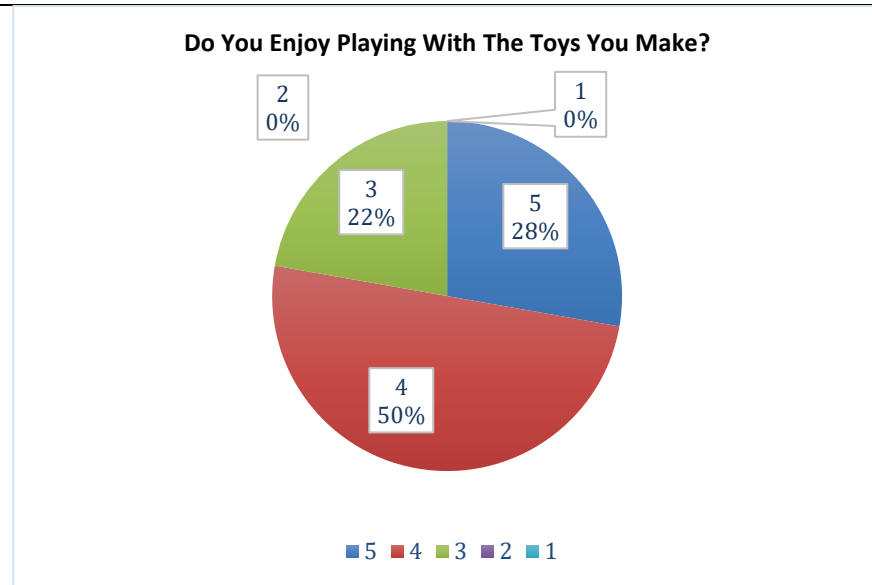


Figure 14. Answer to the Question 9

Figure 14 showed seven respondents felt very happy (rating 5), nine respondents felt happy (rating 4), and two respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.28, indicating that playing with self-made toys brings satisfaction and enjoyment to children. Then [5] reported the workshop was given to 25 participants representing the youth community of the West Java Language Ambassadors Association which was held in Bandung for 6 hours consisting of theory, practice, and discussion with predetermined environmental literacy material, then continued with 3 days of supervision of digital content creation in the form of posters, photography, or writing on social media such as Instagram, Twitter, TikTok and personal blogs.

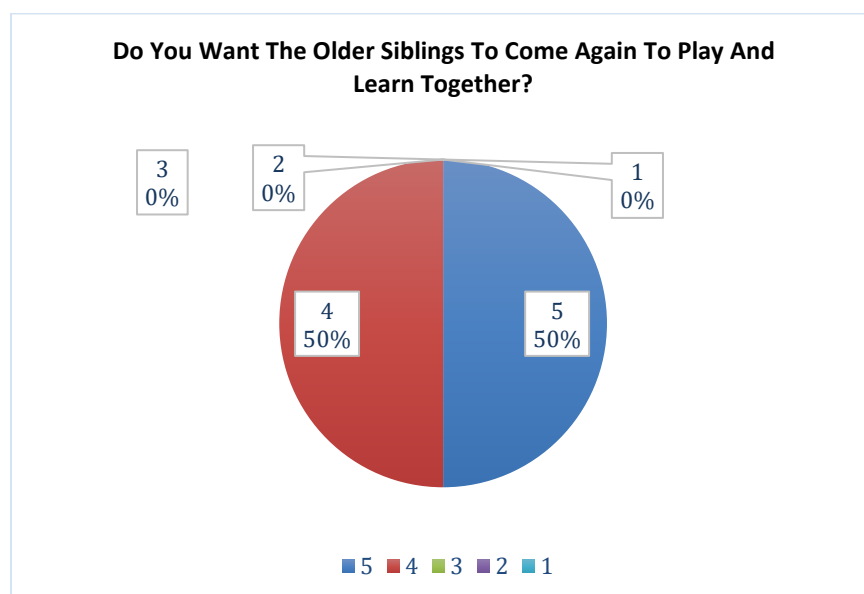


Figure 15. Answer to the Question 10

Ten respondents felt very happy (rating 5), six respondents felt happy (rating 4), and two respondents felt neutral (rating 3). The average rating is 4.44, indicating that the majority of children are eager for the older siblings to return for more play and learning sessions together (Figure 15).

The community service program conducted by PMM4 Inbound USU Si Beru Dayang Group 4 at Ranggi Literacy Home has successfully boosted the learning enthusiasm of young children. The

majority of respondents expressed great satisfaction with the presence of older siblings, with an average rating of 4.44. Coloring activities received a fairly positive response with an average rating of 3.94, although there was some variation in enjoyment levels. Reading activities using syllable cards were well-received, with an average rating of 4.06, and were more enjoyable when conducted in groups, averaging 4.22. Counting activities received high ratings with an average of 4.33, especially the activity of sticking shapes which was considered very exciting and enjoyable, receiving the highest average rating of 4.56. Making toys from recycled materials received varied responses with an average rating of 3.94, but many children expressed joy in playing with these toys, averaging 4.28. Many children expressed a desire for the older siblings to return for more play and learning sessions, with an average rating of 4.44, indicating that the program has created a significantly positive impact and is desired to be continued.

Based on these results, it is recommended to maintain and develop popular activities such as counting with shape sticking and making toys from recycled materials. Coloring activities could be enhanced by adding various coloring tools or interesting themes. The effective group learning methods observed can be applied to more learning activities. Considering the high enthusiasm of the children, regular evaluations of the program are necessary, followed by improvements and innovative developments in activities. Overall, this program has successfully achieved its goals and has the potential to have an even greater impact in the future.

Results from various community service and learning programs demonstrate success in enhancing children's learning enthusiasm and skills through diverse methods and approaches. The Work Practice Lecturer Program (Kuliah Kerja Nyata, KKN) by Group 19 of UPN "Veteran" East Java in Japan Village successfully improved basic literacy skills such as writing and reading, while instilling values of discipline, responsibility, and independence in kindergarten and early childhood children at Dahlia [6,7]. Similarly, the social contribution program by PMM4 Inbound USU Si Beru Dayang Group 4 at Ranggi Literacy Home also shows a very positive impact in boosting children's learning enthusiasm through interactive activities like counting with shape sticking and making toys from recycled materials, which are highly favored by the children [8].

Furthermore, lesson planning using visual media at YMI Inecda Kindergarten has proven effective in enhancing children's learning enthusiasm and skills, with 93% of children developing as expected after implementing visual media-based learning [9]. At the Izzatul Islam Islamic Boarding School Foundation, PKM activities successfully increased student learning motivation despite the COVID-19 pandemic conditions, showing participants were very enthusiastic and motivated to study harder for a better future [10]. Moreover, PKL-1 activities at the Mercy Clement Indonesia Orphanage provided positive impacts not only on educational aspects but also on the character development of orphanage children, especially through the use of the "Calistung Challenge Book" activity book that enhanced children's learning enthusiasm and creativity [11,12, 13].

Then [14] reported students who manage broadcast media as a means of digital da'wah. The media managed include YouTube, Instagram, and radio. Training through presentation of materials and interactive discussions on Digital Literacy Skills is carried out onsite in the LPD Al-Bahjah Cirebon area. Meanwhile [15] reported obstacles in learning activities faced by elementary school children in Candi Hamlet, Wonosobo are low motivation to learn, economic constraints, and limited facilities for technology-based learning. The contribution of TBM "Pondok Baca Puspita" in providing learning facilities for elementary school children is carried out in the Sedekah Ilmu Program, as a learning concept at TBM "Pondok Baca Puspita", which is a form of non-material contribution. The provision of mobile phones as a form of material contribution. TBM "Pondok Baca Puspita" collaborates with several parties to develop services on a small scale and large scale.

Overall, all these programs demonstrate that various methods such as direct mentoring, visual media usage, interactive activities, and activity books can yield significant results in enhancing participants' learning enthusiasm and skills. These results underscore the importance of adapting and innovating teaching methods to achieve maximum impact according to the context and needs of the participants.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The social contribution program conducted by PMM4 Inbound USU Si Beru Dayang Group 4 at Ranggi Literacy Home has successfully sparked the learning enthusiasm of young children. Based on the questionnaire results from 18 child respondents, the majority of children were very happy with the presence of the PMM4 older siblings, as evidenced by the high average scores in the initial introduction question. Coloring activities with paper and colored pencils received positive feedback, although there was variation in enjoyment levels. Children enjoyed the reading activities using syllable cards, particularly preferring it when done in groups.

Counting activities with illustrated paper were highly favored, especially the shape-sticking activity during counting which was considered very exciting and enjoyable, receiving the highest average rating among all activities. Making toys from recycled materials received varied responses, but children were happy to play with the toys they made themselves. Many children expressed their desire for the older siblings to return for more play and learning sessions, indicating that the program has created a significantly positive impact and is desired to continue.

Implications from these results suggest that popular activities such as counting with shape-sticking and making toys from recycled materials should be maintained and further developed. Coloring activities could be improved by adding various coloring tools or interesting thematic drawings. Group learning methods have proven effective and can be applied to more learning activities. Given the high enthusiasm of the children, this program needs regular evaluation and follow-up with improvements and the development of more innovative activities. Overall, this program has successfully achieved its goals and has the potential to have an even greater impact in the future.

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