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The Role of Dance Education in Enhancing Visual and Kinesthetic Creativity among Elementary School Students

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Abstract

This study examines the role of dance learning in improving the visual and kinesthetic creativity of elementary school students in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Dance learning in elementary schools still tends to focus on movement imitation, causing students' creativity to develop less optimally. Therefore, this study aims to analyze dance learning as a strategy to improve students' visual and kinesthetic creativity. This study employed the *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) method. Data were collected through scientific article searches from Google Scholar, SINTA, Garuda, and ResearchGate using keywords related to dance learning, visual creativity, kinesthetic creativity, and elementary schools. The analyzed articles were published between 2020 and 2025. After the selection process, 10 relevant articles were analyzed using a qualitative-descriptive approach. The findings show that dance learning through movement exploration and improvisation can improve students' imagination, movement coordination, self-confidence, and active participation. In addition, dance learning in the Merdeka Curriculum supports creative and student-centered learning.

Keywords: dance learning, visual creativity, kinesthetic intelligence, elementary school students, arts education.

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Introduction

Dance education in elementary schools is an important component of fostering students' creativity and skills development. Dance not only teaches bodily movement but also promotes creative thinking, imagination, self-expression, and motor coordination. Through the learning process, students are encouraged to understand rhythm, observe movements, and express their ideas through enjoyable physical activities. According to Wafa et al. (2025), dance education can enhance students' visual and kinesthetic creativity because it simultaneously engages observation, imagination, and bodily movement.

However, the implementation of dance education in elementary schools continues to face several challenges. Many teachers still employ teacher-centered and monotonous instructional methods, limiting students to merely imitating movements without opportunities to explore their own creativity. In addition, limited learning resources and insufficient teacher understanding of creativity-based arts instruction often hinder the optimal development of students' potential. As a result, dance lessons may become less engaging, leading to reduced student participation during the learning process.

Dance, as a movement-based art form, plays a significant role in supporting the motor, emotional, social, and creative development of elementary school students. At this stage of development, children are naturally active and tend to enjoy learning experiences that involve physical activity. Through dance education, students can learn to control their body movements, build self-confidence, and develop collaborative skills. Sumarna, Ruqoyyah, and Kuswendi (2024) argue that dance instruction incorporating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches can more effectively enhance elementary students' creative thinking abilities.

Within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum, dance education serves as a means of developing students' character, creativity, and potential according to their interests and talents. The curriculum provides teachers with greater flexibility to design innovative, active, and enjoyable learning experiences, enabling students to express themselves more freely through artistic activities. Dance learning under the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes not only performance outcomes but also the processes of creativity, exploration, and meaningful learning experiences. Ummah and Nadlir (2024) state that the implementation of dance education within the Merdeka Curriculum can support the development of creativity, cultural appreciation, and kinesthetic abilities through more flexible and student-centered learning approaches.

Based on these issues, this study aims to examine the role of dance education in enhancing the visual and kinesthetic creativity of elementary school students. Furthermore, it seeks to investigate the significance of movement-based arts education within the Merdeka Curriculum and how its implementation can contribute to the development of students' creativity and skills in elementary schools.

Methods

This study employed the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. SLR is a research approach that systematically collects, identifies, evaluates, and synthesizes findings from previous studies relevant to a particular topic. In this study, the SLR method was used to examine the role of dance education in enhancing the visual and kinesthetic creativity of elementary school students. According to Triandini et al. (2020), the Systematic Literature Review method enables researchers to obtain more structured, objective, and comprehensive findings through a systematic research process.

The article search was conducted using several academic databases and reliable scholarly sources, including Google Scholar, SINTA, Garuda, and ResearchGate. The search process employed keywords relevant to the research topic, such as *"dance education," "movement arts," "visual creativity," "kinesthetic creativity," "Merdeka Curriculum," "elementary school dance education,"* and *"Systematic Literature Review."* The identified articles were then collected and screened based on their relevance to the focus of the study.

To ensure the quality and relevance of the selected literature, this study applied specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria consisted of articles that discussed dance education or movement-based arts at the elementary school level, addressed students' visual and kinesthetic creativity, were published between 2020 and 2025, and were available in full-text format. In addition, the selected studies were required to be related to creative learning approaches or the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Articles that were unrelated to dance education, did not focus on elementary school students, were unavailable in full text, or originated from non-scholarly sources were excluded from the review.

The initial search identified 35 articles related to the research topic. Following the processes of identification, screening, and eligibility assessment based on the predetermined criteria, 10 articles were selected for further analysis. These articles were then analyzed in depth to examine the implementation of dance education, the instructional strategies employed, and their impact on enhancing the visual and kinesthetic creativity of elementary school students.

Results and Discussions

1. Results

Table 1.
Synthesis of Previous Research Findings

No.	Author(s) /Year	Method	Objective	Findings
1.	M. Shidqul Wafa et al. (2025)	Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with qualitative-descriptive analysis using Google Scholar, SINTA, and DOAJ databases.	To analyze the effectiveness of integrating visual and kinesthetic stimuli in dance education to enhance the visual-spatial creativity of elementary school students.	The integration of visual and kinesthetic stimuli through movement exploration and improvisation effectively enhances the creativity, imagination, and visual-spatial abilities of elementary school students.
2.	Sholihatul Ummah, Nadlir (2024)	Descriptive qualitative research using observation, interviews, and documentation.	To describe the implementation of dance education within the Merdeka Curriculum in elementary schools.	Dance education within the Merdeka Curriculum enhances students' creativity, movement skills, and active participation through a more flexible and student-centered learning approach.
3.	Nana Sumarna et al. (2024)	Classroom Action Research (CAR) using descriptive quantitative and qualitative approaches.	To analyze the implementation of the Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) model in enhancing students' creativity in elementary school dance education.	The VAK model effectively enhances students' creativity, engagement, and creative thinking skills in dance education.
4.	Intan Sandita 2019	Quasi-experimental research using a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. The study involved 36 students, with data collected through tests and analyzed using a t-test.	To determine the effect of the Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) learning model on the dance learning outcomes of fifth-grade elementary school students.	The VAK learning model had a positive and significant effect on students' dance learning outcomes. The experimental group achieved a higher mean score (75.66) than the control group (68.77).
5.	Nana Sumama, and Asep Samsudin 2022	Classroom Action Research (CAR) using the Kemmis and McTaggart model. The study	To improve the creativity and dance learning outcomes of fifth-grade elementary school	The VAK learning model successfully improved students' creativity and learning outcomes. The mean score increased

		involved 43 students, with data collected through observation, documentation, and tests.	students through the Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) learning model.	from 52.48 (pre-test) to 79.67 (post-test), and the learning mastery rate reached 93%.
6.	Triana et al. (2024)	This research used a descriptive method with a qualitative approach.	This study aims to describe the Visualization Auditory Kinesthetic (VAK) learning model in elementary school dance education.	The results show that the Visualization Auditory Kinesthetic (VAK) learning model can optimize the dance learning process in elementary schools. The teacher acts as a facilitator by guiding students through the implementation of the VAK model, which creates a more varied and meaningful learning experience.
7.	Ediyanto (2023)	Qualitative research using a descriptive approach. Data were collected through questionnaires designed to identify the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles of elementary school students.	To identify the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles of elementary school students.	Visual and kinesthetic learning styles were found to be the most dominant among elementary school students, while the auditory learning style showed a relatively lower level of dominance. These findings highlight the importance of adapting instructional strategies to students' learning style characteristics in order to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process.
8.	Sabahiyah, et al. (2023)	The program was implemented through a series of stages, including surveys, discussions, demonstrations, music orientation, practice sessions, performances, and evaluations as part of dance education	To develop the creativity of elementary school students through dance education training activities.	Dance education training activities were effective in enhancing students' creativity. This was demonstrated by their enthusiasm and active participation throughout the program, as well as their ability to create and develop dance movements into a

		training in elementary schools.		complete, although still simple, dance performance.
9.	Syakhruni, Heriyati et al. (2022)	The methods employed included preliminary discussions, discussions on creative dance works, demonstrations, music orientation, costume and makeup orientation, practice sessions, evaluations, and dance performances.	To enhance the creative intelligence of elementary school students through creative dance training.	Creative dance training had a positive impact on enhancing students' creative intelligence. Students were able to create dance movements based on their own experiences, ideas, and creativity, resulting in more innovative and meaningful dance performances.
10.	Yanyan Yuliana (2025)	A participatory-educational approach implemented through preparation, implementation, and evaluation stages in the revitalization of traditional and modern performing arts.	To revitalize traditional and modern performing arts as a means of enhancing the creativity of elementary school students.	The performing arts revitalization program successfully enhanced students' creativity, collaboration skills, and self-expression. In addition, teachers demonstrated increased confidence in managing creative arts instruction. The program received positive responses from the school community and was recommended for further development as a sustainable extracurricular activity.

2. Discussions

Based on the synthesis of previous research findings presented in Table 1, it can be concluded that dance education in elementary schools plays a significant role in enhancing students' creativity, creative thinking skills, and overall competencies. Numerous studies indicate that dance education extends beyond the development of movement skills, contributing to the growth of imagination, self-expression, and visual-spatial abilities. These findings suggest that dance serves as an effective learning medium that supports students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development in a balanced manner.

Previous studies also demonstrate that the integration of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches in dance education has a positive impact on both the learning process and student outcomes. Learning models such as the Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic (VAK) model have been shown to improve creativity, active participation, and academic achievement among elementary school students. Furthermore, the incorporation of visual and kinesthetic stimuli through movement

exploration and improvisation enables students to better understand learning materials while enhancing their divergent thinking and visual-spatial skills.

In addition to instructional models, several studies emphasize that creative dance training and student-centered learning approaches contribute significantly to the development of students' creativity. Through activities such as practice sessions, demonstrations, movement exploration, and dance performances, students are provided with opportunities to transform their ideas, experiences, and creativity into simple dance works. Such learning experiences create a more active and enjoyable classroom environment while allowing students to express themselves freely.

Overall, previous research indicates that dance education in elementary schools has a positive impact on the development of creativity, creative thinking skills, movement abilities, and visual-spatial competencies. These findings also highlight the importance of implementing innovative, interactive, and learner-centered instructional strategies that align with students' learning characteristics to achieve optimal outcomes in dance education.

Conclusion

Dance education in elementary schools plays an important role in enhancing students' visual creativity, creative thinking skills, and kinesthetic abilities. Based on the synthesis of previous research findings, the implementation of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic approaches in dance education has been proven to create a more active, interactive, and student-centered learning process. The integration of visual and kinesthetic stimuli through exploration, improvisation, practice, and dance performance activities also has a positive impact on the development of elementary school students' visual-spatial abilities, imagination, and self-expression.

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