

**EXPERIENCIAS EDUCATIVAS**

# **CRITICS OF THE TENDENCY OF ART EDUCATION FOR AUTISTIC CHILDREN IN INDONESIA**

**CRÍTICAS A LA TENDENCIA DE EDUCACIÓN ARTÍSTICA PARA NIÑOS AUTISTAS EN  
INDONESIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper parses the problem that art education for autistic children in Indonesia is only a compliment. Furthermore, it invites us to explore the nature and essence of art education as a solution again. Art education, which offers the concept of play, actually becomes “mathematical” learning and removes the essence of creative freedom from art education itself. The teacher does not understand the nature and essence of art education, which causes a shift towards the objectification of autistic children as students. This is due to the fact that the paradigm of art education for children with autism in Indonesia is still a discourse. Thus, the intimacy between teacher and student is no longer visible. Therefore, this paper argues about the need to take specific steps towards understanding art education by art teachers, prospective art teacher-students, and parents. It aims to restore the essence and essence of fine arts education as a medium of expression that can help children with autism in expression, taste processing, creative power, and communication skills.

## **KEY WORDS**

art education; art education tendency; autistic children; Indonesia

## INTRODUCTION: POSITIONING OF AUTISM CHILDREN'S ARTS EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

Autism is a complex communication disorder in children that causes them to be isolated and like living in their world (Bagasra & Heggen, 2018; Kalyva, 2011; Matson, 2017; Shore & Rastelli, 2006). Education for autistic children is needed to help improve their communication skills (Magnusen, 2006), and train autistic children to have self-competence (Matson, 2017). There are many models of education, ranging from inclusive education, independence education, therapy-based education, and art education (Chiang, 2017; Magnusen, 2006).

Discourse about the importance of art for children with special needs, especially autism, has become a trend in the Western (Hadley & McDonald, 2019; Kellman, 2001; Martin, 2009). Art has the flexibility that makes it able to become an educational model for children with autism in which there is a therapeutic concept (Dubowski & Evans, 2001; Magnusen, 2006). The discourse has been rife in Indonesia with several experiments related to art education for children with autism. However, what happens is that it is not optimized in its implementation, because actually art education in Indonesia is not a vital discipline (Kasiyan, 2019).

For children in general, art is considered to be a complement to the exact world. Likewise, in the education of autistic children in Indonesia, art is only used as a complement to therapeutic models, and the public is not yet aware of the importance of art in the education of autistic children. Yasin, who was the initiator of the Bina Anggita Autism Special School, stated that education for autistic children had noticed the arts as part of an educational model, but the implementation has not been optimal ... most parents pay more attention to the educational model that integrates Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) therapies, which are already widespread. Yasin's statement supported by Novi, who is a parent, stated that he believed more in the success of education integrated with ABA therapy because, according to him, the arts could not shape children's confidence and children's behavior in daily life. This fact is sad because some people say that based on lack of knowledge about art education, or indeed autism education, using art is still less explored in Indonesia.

The position of arts in Indonesian education actually becomes an irony, because Indonesia through the Ministry of Culture Education states that cultural arts should not be marginalized (2019). The argument is not without reason, because art education is following Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophy (the father of Indonesian education), namely the essence that needs to be targeted from education is character. Which defined as creativity, taste, and intention, all of which were contained in art education. So if applied to an autistic child, the autistic child will get creative power (critical thinking skills and creativity), taste (training on taste and empathy), and 'karsa' (ability to will, autonomy, and independence of himself) (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004).

The role of teachers who do not understand the essence in educating autistic children exacerbates the non-optimal arts education for autistic children (Magnusen, 2006). The teacher does not understand the characteristics of their students, so the educational model applied tends to be conventional and mainstream, not innovative, and general (Germain-Williams, 2017; Wiorkowski, 2015). In the education of autistic children, the teacher is like a double-edged knife. The teacher has a positive effect, but it is also possible to hurt the child. Teachers often create children in a box, which indirectly makes them more autistic because they do not express themselves freely. Children are required to be disciplined, which inhibits the expenditure of both potential and emotional self (Linton et al., 2015; Tay et al., 2019). Also, in the education of children with autism with art, there is intervention carried out by the teacher in the creative process of the child when creating art. The excessive intervention has a devastating effect on the creativity that children have (Brown, 2008). The teacher provides interventions in the form of boundaries of understanding to children, including human form 'must' like this, trees 'must' so, the color of the object 'must' match, until the use of colors that 'must' use gradation techniques, everything is like normal children in general. Too many interventions will only make children lose the benefits of art, and the resulting works are classified in mainstream works and do not show their originality (Chatfield et al., 2014; Pentassuglia, 2017). Indeed, this will make a child's painting more 'good' and according to mainstream aesthetic tastes, but one ironic thing is that the intervention of the teacher causes damage to the creativity and spontaneity of autistic children who are unique.

This is related to the function of painting as a medium to train children's memories, reminiscent of the term representation (Chilvers, 2007; Hagman, 2010; Kellman, 2001). All memories will appear when the child is painting. Painting can train the overall thought process that teaches children to package various events into a visual note (Chatterjee, 2014). The painting also has the potential to offer all children the opportunity to integrate knowledge, skills, and understanding into painting media (Chatterjee, 2004).

I identified that the problem was with the internal and external factors of the teacher. The internal factor lies in the competence of teacher education and empathy they have. The teacher's knowledge about the nature of art education needs to be reminded. Also about teacher behavior when children creating art, children produce unique, innovative, creative ideas and make a way out of their problems (Barnes, 2002; Lewis & Laverty, 2015; Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1982). This will be realized if the child is given the freedom to pour his ideas into his artwork. Without excessive intervention from the mentor, both the teacher and parents. Or if you provide intervention in the form of an example, then the example raised is close to the world of the children themselves, especially the world of children in their nature (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004, p.341).

Another upstream of this problem is clear, namely autistic children (as students) who are objects in the educational process, not the subject. Children are always positioned to receive, not allowed to give. Teacher intervention and dictation of children occur in the creative process of creating art. When children become objects, there is a shift like children's art education (Barnes, 2002). The teacher has power over the class he manages, including the students in it. However, the teacher does not have an ideology that can help him maintain the nature of children's art education. Teachers are considered not to master 'education' because they do not have substantial cultural capital and habitus as teachers. Though teachers, as educators, must know and understand the character of each student to get maximum results of their potential. The life of the growth of these children lies outside the skills or desires of the educators. Children as creatures, as human beings, as living things, lightly live and grow according to their nature (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004, p.21).

The absence of negotiations between the position of teacher and student in education makes children less trustworthy. Children become not confident in expressing opinions, do not experience critical thinking power, cannot solve problems that are solute for themselves because too much depends on the teacher. When viewed from the study of education, then, of course, this repeats Freire's writings on the education of the oppressed, which makes students as objects and 'reservoirs of knowledge' (1970). He wrote it in the background of 1968 and has now entered 2020. Furthermore, Bourdieu in *Homo Academicus* also said the same thing and added symbolic violence from teacher to student, which can reduce children's creativity and critical thinking skills (1984). Both of these great works seem to be a whip for the education system in Indonesia, which until now has not been separated from the paradigm of 'the teacher is always right,' especially in terms of art education for autistic children.

These internal factors are exacerbated by the demands of the teacher's external factors, namely parents. They have the mindset that this is an instant action to make an autistic child like a normal child. Encouragement by parents indirectly affects the principle of teachers in teaching children with autism, which had been processing oriented to be result oriented. Introduction to parents must be done early on related to educational models for children with autism. They can understand, support the educational process, and become the right educational partners in education in the family (McDonald, 2014; Webster et al., 2017; Widyanawan et al., 2020).

Seeing the complexity of the positioning of art education and autistic children, the discussion related to art education as an autistic child education model is a long road to restore its essence as an educational model for autistic children.

### **The painting of an autistic child: evidence of autism, not a privilege to be pitied**

Autism is in the spectrum of disorders called Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This category of the disorder is classified through the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual (DSM) under the Pervasive Developmental Disorder label, which includes a diagnosis of autism, Asperger's syn-

drome, and *Pervasive Developmental Disorder not Otherwise Specified* (PDD-NOS) (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Autism is a disorder that is characterized by disability groups (Arendell, 2015; Matson, 2017). The concept of 'difiable' (different abilities) is considered appropriate because autistic children have different abilities, and indeed every human being is given different abilities. It is undeniable, children with autism have different abilities; have specificity, or I am more comfortable using the term 'privilege' in each of its behavior. This behavior seems to lead to the next dimension of dynamism in its features, one of which is the dimension of art.

There are at least two things that are thought of when you first see autistic children's artwork. First, "good, great, or even phenomenal" works of art, without emphasizing that the painter is an autistic child, or secondly, instead of talking about works of art, they stigmatize their creators. This becomes a mild prefix that can be used as reflective thinking about "actually, what is wrong with autism if we are not able to distinguish his work with people in general?", or "what is wrong if it is a painting of autistic children who both offer beauty", for example. That is precisely the superiority of art. Art provides a dimension of universality for the culprit by showing that autism is not an object to be pitied.

The specialty of autistic children's artwork (I focus on the painting), often discussed in the mat of activities titled fine arts, inclusive education, art education, and therapy (Brown, 2008; Kusimo & Chidozie, 2019; Maclagan, 2009; Moon, 2002; Schweizer et al., 2014). If we look closely, autistic children painting is a 'delicious meal'. This can be enjoyed by various groups, ranging from art academics through art exhibitions, the psychologist that focuses on behavioral aspects, and art psychotherapy did through painting activities, health through art therapy, and educators (Fraser, 2018; Siebers, 2010; Stanback, 2016). Art and autism, therefore, cannot be separated because the relationship between the two is dynamic and flexible.

The unique features of a child's painting (read: autism), like a magnet invaded by connoisseurs of art, observers of children with autism, and educators. From the viewpoint of an art audience, the sign that outlined by an autistic child in his paintings has a psychological

impact almost or even in some cases resembles a sensation of 'taksu' (Hagman, 2010; Maclagan, 2009). When we see a picture of an autistic child, we are actually forced to enter their world, a world that we did not think of before (Kellman, 2001; Kelly, 2004; Lane et al., 2019; Painter et al., 2012) we examine methodological issues qualitative researchers encounter when they engage in research with children. Within this view, qualitative research is employed with children but not on children and focus is placed upon children's voices, agency, and the ways they participate with researchers in the research process (Einarsdóttir, 2007). Although sometimes we want to be indifferent to the contents of the paintings he made, especially we do not understand the purpose of the relation of the symbols that exist in his paintings. However, over time it seized attention. The sign system that is poured is quite intriguing and plays the imagination and even feelings, as well as when we spontaneously say "wow" when seeing works of art from famous artists. A piece of the ideas and experiences outlined can be a work of art full of meaning.

If you borrow a term popularized by Siebers (2010), Stanback (2016), and Fraser (2018), they invite us to redefine 'disability' and 'aesthetics' so that it can show that disability is not only crucial for modern art but also the way we understand and interact with the body. Based on this definition, the paintings of autistic children are reflective. They invite their viewers to enter the mind and world of autism, understand it, feel it, and ultimately be able to accept the ideas and world of autism-like life in general. So, there is nothing wrong with autism when viewed from an aesthetic point of view. Instead, we are the ones who make distance and are unable to match their unusual thoughts.

Good knowledge about the principles and ideology of educators and the appreciation of the work of art needs to be instilled in the teacher when he was still in his status as a prospective art teacher-student. It is intended that educators' principles and ideology can be formed early and can be developed as long as he is educating an art teacher. When it is time to become an art teacher, principles and ideology will be formed as an excellent educator, which can facilitate students' needs to increase their students.

**About himself, and what is around**

## him: the complexity of the painting of an autistic child

Cathy Malchiodi (2007, 2003), Temple Grandin (2008, 2009, 2014), Nicole Martin (2009), Julia Kellman (2010), Christy Magnusen (2006), Tony Attwood (2013), and Roseline Davido (2012) said that art plays a role in psychological development, as well as art can be read psychologically to find out what is experienced, felt, and can be the determination of the next treatment model for autistic children. The painting's complexity begins to be demonstrated from the process of pre-creating art, the process of creating art, the final result of the painting, and how the autistic child responds when the painting is displayed. The collaboration of psychology and art maximizes it as an improvement in communication skills, therapeutic models, education, and expression (Martin, 2009; Schweizer et al., 2014).

Psychologically, the painting of an autistic child is understood as a narrative that comes from within him and tends to emphasize his egocentrism about what he feels, knows, experiences, and wants (Chilvers, 2007; Davido, 2012). The painting of an autistic child plays about how he sees and how he is seen. Sometimes, his paintings have unexpected messages from most people in general. That is because some autistic children (usually classified as savant syndrome and high-functioning autism) can penetrate the dimensions of space and time, penetrate the boundary space of ordinary vision, and exceed normal vision possessed by ordinary people (Attwood et al., 2013; Crane et al., 2011; Treffert, 2010). The ability by some experts such as Temple Grandin (2014) and Rebecca Chilvers (2007) about the idiosyncrasy of autistic children, which he calls 'qualitative leaps,' has led to opportunities for the development of art-based autistic children. Its creation overrides the concepts of right and wrong that are commonly understood by people in general. He instead gives a new and different perspective to others in seeing a phenomenon.

When I see an autistic child painting, I like being invited into his world and enjoy the wildness of his imagination. Once when I saw a painting of a 10-year-old autistic child, he described an object identified as Gladiator, a moss-colored lion, a chicken, and a colossal stage as a place (Figure 1).

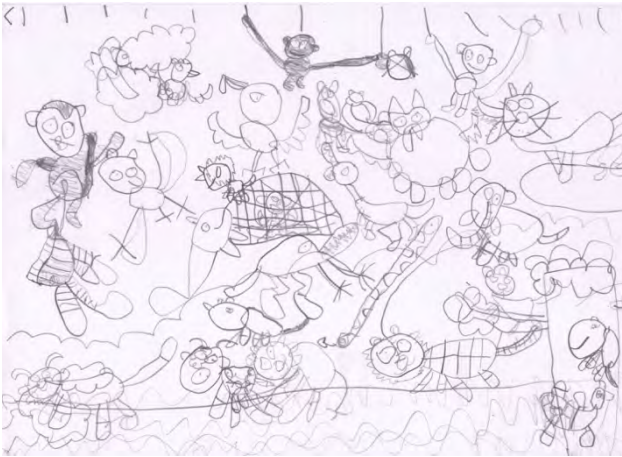


Figure 1. "Battle in colloseum"

In plain view, he clearly described the Gladiator-style battle against wild animals. But why is there chicken? He told the story politely about his family, where his father is a hobby of raising and caring for chickens so that sometimes he forgets to play with him. This made him furious and wanted to kill the chicken.

With the understanding that fighting or fighting is taboo to do now, then he invites us to go back to the past when the Gladiator fight was still often held. He is like a Gladiator who mightily kill a lion as his opponent. He put a chicken in his fight so that when he defeated the chicken, his father's attention would be fully obtained. Furthermore, he will not be convicted of a murder case because he tells with a Gladiator-style story, a display that is true to be used for the battlefield. The appearance of the Gladiator's battle story shows that art can provide a depth dimension to the autistic child's thinking. He expressed his anxiety as 'politely'.

There is also a story about an autistic child painting that contains anxiety about being an autistic child (Figure 2). He is ten years old, describing with a pencil that can be erased. His paintings include many objects that are identified as animals, and there is a human figure that represents him. Strangely, the human figure is confined in a cage, while animals roam free.



**Figure 2.** "Why always me"

He expressed sorrow in his paintings. Grief, which sometimes we are not aware of as humans in general, is related to features that are often seen as strange to a few people. Autistic children in their art tend to play with us at the same time. He is conducting experiments related to the understanding of beings referred to as humans, especially on intellectual knowledge and feeling. He expressed his anxiety paradoxically by displaying the atmosphere of a zoo, but with free animals. It's not strange when we naturally go to the zoo, what is seen is an animal in a cage, but what is conveyed by an autistic child is precisely the opposite: he is in a cage! It feels like being hit by a huge stone. He delivered his audience to the awareness of empathy, which had been hiding somewhere.

Qualitative leap as a form of idiosyncrasy (Chatfield et al., 2014; Egberg Thyme et al., 2013), and the specialty of autistic children's paintings lies in the thoughts that are not thought by children in general in expressing anxiety. He is always able to play around with the minds of connoisseurs of his paintings through autistic children's painting patterns, which are predominantly intrinsic (formal), extrinsic (instrumental), and affective (emotional). This complexity forces us to better understand ourselves about how we behave and our true nature before commenting on others. It forces us to delve into the thoughts, imagination, the wildness of ideas, and the creative delivery of autistic children so that we can imagine what they are telling us. This can be obtained by seeing in detail the behaviors and creative processes exhibited by children with autism, ranging from work to the final results. With sharp details,

someone who is accompanying or seeing an autistic child working, watching the work of an autistic child, can undoubtedly enter the conscious realm as well as the imagination created by him. This is important because not only is the specialty of his paintings, but the creative behavior surrounding him while he works in art is also seen as a language and the way autistic children communicate with their surroundings (Brown, 2008; Vivaldi et al., 2020) events and ideas about the world, they also represent the intentions of artists as well as other artist attributes (age, skill, originality and knowledge, mood, style and sentence.

The world represented in the imaginative works of art typical of autistic children is a new world, a reconstruction of human consciousness that the world is. Art is not just a representation of the external world, or as a representation of universal general characteristics of reality, or an escape from the real world to merely enter the transcendental world. (Carter, 2008; Soemardjo, 2000, p.129). It is a mistake to think of representations in visual art as a simple attempt to 'copy' what is 'seen'.

The power of a child as an artist is not to reproduce what is 'there, but to create an impression to make sure that we see something that is represented. (Gombrich, 1984; Graham, 1997, p.89). Most representations that are similar to life cannot be thought of as mere plagiarism. It is appropriate to show the nature of art, which is the embodiment of the soul. Art provides self-confidence to children with autism, with the appearance born of his soul, which arises from the mental will of the autistic child himself and the 'essence of feeling' which is limited by the sense of the beauty of each individual (aesthetic feeling) (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004, p.327).

Children with autism have their vision to represent what they see and think in the painting (Arendell, 2015). Thus, after tracing the development of artistic thought as a false representation of reality or the subject's expression of truth, it can be concluded that there are six views about what should be realized in works of art namely (1) art is a representation of scientific attitudes towards natural reality and social reality, (2) art is a representation of the general characteristics of nature and human emotions, (3) art represents general characteristics in nature and humans, which are seen subjectively by the artist, (4) art represents an ideal form attached to the realm of reality and the realm

of the artist's mind, (5) art is a representation of a perfect kind that is transcendental, and (6) art is a representation of the art world itself. That view is entirely in the artwork produced by autistic children. They work spontaneously, expressively, and of course, original, which is the result of the processed ideas and ideas they have.

### Restore the nature of playing in the education of autistic children

Education of children with special needs requires special educators and methods. However, starting from this, I prefer to invite to restore the nature of playing in the education of autistic children. My invitation is not without a basis. Supported by the statements of Herbert Read (1970), Ki Hadjar Dewantara (2004), Viktor Lowenfeld (1982), Christine MacIntyre (2010, 2016), and Julia Moor (2008), they explain the role of play in education, even the last three names focus on children with special needs. Education while playing seems trivial, but the reality is complicated. Many aspects must be considered. Starting from the delivery model, the nature of the teacher in learning, to the positioning of autistic children as playmates (Brabazon, 2016; Macintyre, 2016). Indeed, to include aspects of play in education is often difficult, mainly to how learning is fun and how to teach, especially for children with autism. However, if we define art as a social, educational practice, it certainly can help introduce education by playing well.

The art of providing complex learning materials for autistic children can be developed in other fields, such as communication, excellent motor integration, sensory integration, memory, and self-confidence (Kellman, 2001; Magnusen, 2006; Martin, 2009). Moreover, most importantly, because it offers an educational method by playing. The art of training autistic children to play with their imagination. Art education for children with autism is fundamental in a dynamic and unifying human process, with great potential for autistic children's education. The process of drawing, painting, or composing a composition is a complex entity in which the child brings together various elements of his experience. To make a whole new and meaningful one, he has given us more than just symbols in paintings; he has given us a part of himself: how he thinks, how he feels, and how he sees, of course, with fun things like playing

so that he positions himself carefree. Education as a fun activity builds sensitivity, knowledge, critical thinking skills, collaborative abilities, and reflective thinking (Ip et al., 2017; Rubin, 2005). They explore ideas and ideas, communicate, interact, and connect with the surrounding environment.

Art is seen as a medium to balance intelligence, sensitivity, rationality, and reason, helping autistic children improve their cognitive abilities and reasoning abilities (Cutter-Mackenzie et al., 2014; Machon, 2009). Also, art and play are often regarded as educational media that provide a range of aesthetic experiences that have a profound effect on the development of the individual's soul, based on the internalization of the aesthetic experience that will be obtained to train sensitivity. Through this sensitivity, the mentality of autistic children is more easily filled with etiquette values (Farokhi, 2011).

Returning to the first topic in this section, the education of autistic children must consider the 'play and fun' point of view rather than the educational product's outcome. Let us imagine how great our childhood was when playing. Without burden, laughing out loud, screaming, showing sometimes silly behavior, and it is all neatly stored as a beautiful experience that can be used as a lesson, told to others, and remembered again. The concept is expected to exist in education that puts play and fun with art as its medium; the essence of education for children with autism is prioritizing aspects of the game in the art which contains elements of education (Farokhi, 2011; Green & Drewes, 2014).

Playing is a way for autistic children like 'not to do anything', because basically, someone does not need specific rules when playing (Schousboe & Winther-Lindqvist, 2013). Playing does not make children with autism experience pressure. If it is said hyperbolically, play is considered the only way to survive because it facilitates children's psychological needs. Therefore, with this model, an autistic child will not feel that he is being educated, do not feel that he is under educational pressure, even do not feel that he is taking a therapeutic action. Furthermore, play can be an effective medium for increasing children's stimulus responses to the material being taught (Schulte & Thompson, 2018). Playing does not make children with autism experience pressure. If it is said hyperbolically, play is considered the only way to survive because it facilitates children's psychological needs. The-



refore, with this model, an autistic child will not feel that he is being educated, do not feel that he is under educational pressure, even do not feel that he is taking a therapeutic action. Furthermore, play can be an effective medium for increasing children's stimulus responses to the material being taught. The concept of play is a functional pleasure that comes from the process, not from the result. This is in line with the nature of art education, which also considers the process as an essential point because, in the creative process, imagination, ideas, and ideas of autistic children will emerge and try to be represented in the form of symbols.

The concept of playing in art education will return children to be subjects in the education process. This is because playing is indeed the real-life that children have. The concept of education by playing makes children have no burden. Education with the concept of play will provide opportunities for children to express themselves spontaneously (Singer et al., 2006). The concept of playing in education is called functional pleasure, which is a pleasure that comes from the process, not from the final result (Singer et al., 2006). This is by the nature of art education, which also considers the process as an essential point because, in the creative process, imagination, ideas, and ideas of children will emerge and try to be represented in the form of symbols (Read, 1970).

In art education with the concept of play, the role of the teacher is very central. Adapting the Ki Hadjar Dewantara concept "*Ing ngarsa sung tuladha, ing madya mangun karsa, tut wuri handayani*", the teacher acts as a negotiator or counterweight (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004). The teacher in this method returns as a child guide, which is equivalent to the child. Teachers are not in front to attract children, nor are they behind to encourage children. Teachers and children go hand in hand because they are all subjects in their respective assignments. What must be done by the teacher is to make children feel happy by putting forward the connection between themselves, learning material, space, and autistic children (Jacobs et al., 2016; Josilowski & Morris, 2019). Artistic activities during learning are represented by these connections, which provide a sense of comfort for children with autism so that the educational materials provided by teachers can be well received. The teacher's role is increasingly central because he is required to put forward what autistic children need and why this is done. Compared to

a perfect world, all teachers will have the competence, energy, enthusiasm, and creativity to teach all children, including autistic children, even though in reality, this is rarely the case. However, I firmly believe that with these rare exceptions, many teachers want to help autistic children to succeed and develop.

Art education with a playful concept is quite successful when autistic children, teachers, and parents can discover new things through the educational process. It does not matter how small or how big the discovery of new things, because what is emphasized is about the process. Slowly but surely, children with autism will develop more with the confidence that they can do it. They need positive support for every achievement.

### Make autistic children become subjects in education

Someone who wants to educate others must consider three essential factors, (1) know the nature of the material to be delivered, (2) every educator must master the material to be taught, (3) the educator has no right to refuse about the situations and conditions in which he teaches, but still runs on the nature of education (Hurwitz & Day, 2007, p.1). The first discussion about the nature of art, in which to understand it, an 'art educator' must understand art according to his needs. The teacher not only gives necessary and useful knowledge but also has to educate the student to find that knowledge and use it for public benefit charity. Excellent and necessary knowledge that is useful for physical and spiritual purposes in living together in collaboration (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004; Shepherd et al., 2017).

Art educators in various countries have begun to shift their attention by directing the education process in the art class toward a volitional aesthetic basis that does not limit itself to artifacts that have been identified as works of art, but also incorporates images from all visual culture to emphasize the role content, value, and meaning (Carter, 2008). The historical, social, cultural, and content context of the image or artifact will have an advantage over the quality of the form because it is precisely the answer to the needs of children with autism who have impairments in communication.

The purpose of art education for autistic children is not to educate students later to become

art experts such as art-brutism or outsider art (Maclagan, 2009). However, the cultural intention is that with education smoothing the feelings, our children should get broad and perfect intelligence from their spirits, souls, cultures so that they should get a slightly superior level as a human being (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004, p.324). In the creative process, there is a child's artistic and aesthetic experience externalized in the form of typical child symbols (Dewey, 1980, 1997). Besides, with the connection between teachers and children with autism in art education, it also develops aspects of children's feelings related to aesthetic education (Ki Hadjar Dewantara, 2004, p.323). So autistic children can develop variations in their feelings, their feelings are no longer static and repetitive, the emergence of self-confidence that negotiates positively with the ability to communicate and think critically. Therefore, it needs to be returned about art education with the concept of play to suit its nature, which offers a creative process as a way to train children's abilities and become a therapeutic potential for autistic children.

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