

Plain Tote Bag into a Work of Art: Tie-Dye Workshop at Bayongbong Elementary School, Serang Regency, Banten

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Abstract

The main objective of the training is to provide a fun and educational learning experience, while introducing basic tote bag coloring techniques and developing creativity. First and second-grade students are generally unfamiliar with art techniques like tie-dye, which require creative exploration of color and shape. The activity is conducted in groups to encourage collaboration. Students are invited to create simple tie-dye creations using white tote bags, rubber bands, and safe textile dyes. The implementation process begins with a brief introduction to tie-dye and examples of its work to arouse students' interest. Next, students are introduced to the tools and materials needed, namely plain tote bags, textile dyes, and rubber bands. The next step is a demonstration of tote bag tying and coloring techniques. The PKM Team and Teachers, as facilitators, demonstrate several basic techniques slowly and provide guidance to ensure that each student understands how. It is important to give students the freedom to try the tying techniques they want, encouraging exploration and experimentation. Training evaluation is not only seen from the results of the work, but also from the process of students in creating, independence, and collaboration between friends. Effective implementation requires careful planning, availability of materials, and patient and supportive guidance, ensuring that every SDN Bayongbong student can participate and enjoy this creative process. Tie-dye training is very beneficial for children because it trains fine motor skills and hand coordination when tying tote bags, pouring colors, and folding tote bags.

Keywords: *creative, tie-dye, tote bag*

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Introduction

Tie-dye, a long-known fabric dyeing technique, is now popular again as a means of creative expression and business opportunity. More than just producing uniquely patterned fabrics, tie-dye activities offer a variety of benefits, from increasing creativity to contributing to sustainable development. This article discusses tie-dye training, stages of work, its benefits for creativity and children's development, equipment and materials needed, various types of dyes that can be used, and the potential of tie-dye in supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) program, because tie-dye has great potential in supporting the achievement of SDGs.

Art learning in elementary schools can be done in creative and varied ways. One method that can be applied is to introduce and practice tie-dye art to elementary school students. Tie-dye is a form of culture and tradition in creating patterns on fabrics that are widely known, not only in Indonesia but also almost throughout the world. Simply put, the term tie, when translated into Indonesian, can mean 'tie-dye'. Tie-dye means that in the process of making patterns on fabric, the term *ikat* is used, which means blocking or holding back color, while *celup* refers to the process of adding color (Yanti et al., 2023).

In a tie-dye training, participants were taught about various folds and ties that produce different visual effects. One of the main attractions of tie-dye is the variety of motifs and patterns that can be produced. Unlimited creativity allows training participants to create unique and personal motifs. A motif is a pattern or pattern that becomes a picture framework in the form of a combination of lines, shapes, and isen into one unit that embodies batik as a whole. These motifs can be animal, human, geometric, or other motifs (Putra, 2024).

"*Ikat Celup*" technology, as one of the Batik production methods, is one of Indonesia's cultural heritages, with many patterns, motifs, original and unique. Along with the development of the era, the Batik process has received many innovations from craftsmen. This is nothing more than a way in which the nuances, patterns, and motifs of batik are more diverse (Yudhaningtyas et al., 2024). Here are some examples of tie-dye Batik methods with popular motifs:

1. Spiral: The spiral motif is one of the most classic and easy-to-make tie-dye motifs. The method is to rotate the fabric from the middle to form a spiral, then tie it with a rubber band.
2. Marble: The marble motif produces a unique crack effect like marble. The method is to squeeze the fabric randomly, then tie it with a rubber band.

3. Bullseye: The bullseye motif produces concentric circles that resemble an arrow target. The method is to pull the fabric up at several points, then tie it with a rubber band.
4. Stripes: Stripes motif produces horizontal or vertical lines on the fabric. The method is to fold the fabric accordion-like, then tie it with a rubber band.

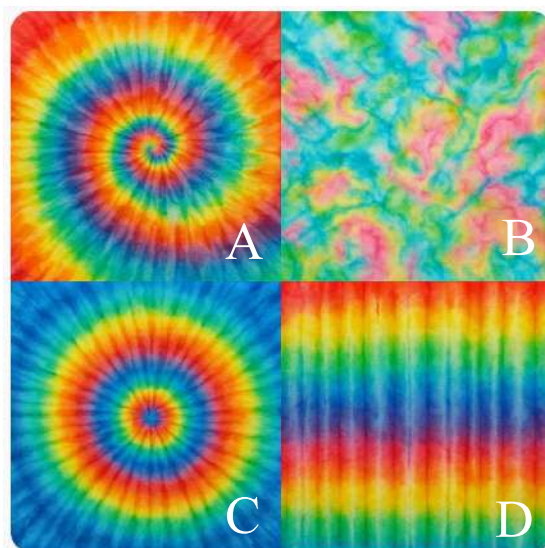


Fig. 1. Illustrations of four tie-dye motifs

Figure 1 illustrates examples of four tie-dye motifs consisting of: a. spiral motif, b. marble motif, c. bull's eye motif, and d. stripe motif.

Choosing the right dye is very important in producing quality tie-dye work. There are various types of dyes that can be used, each with its own characteristics and advantages.

1. Reactive dyes are the most popular type of dye used in tie-dye because they produce bright, long-lasting, and fade-resistant colors. These dyes react chemically with the fabric fibers, creating a strong and permanent bond. Reactive dyes are perfect for cotton, rayon, linen, and other natural fibers.
2. Direct dyes are a type of dye that is easier to use than reactive dyes. These dyes do not require a complicated fixation process and can be applied directly to the fabric. However, the colors produced by direct dyes tend to be less bright and fade more easily than reactive dyes.
3. Acid dyes are used to dye protein fabrics such as wool, silk, and nylon. These dyes produce bright and long-lasting colors on protein fibers.

4. Natural dyes are dyes extracted from plants, animals, or minerals. Natural dyes produce soft and natural colors. Some examples of natural dyes that are often used in tie-dye are indigo (from the indigo plant), turmeric, natural soda, and tea. The use of natural dyes is more environmentally friendly, but the resulting colors tend to be less bright and fade more easily than synthetic dyes. In addition to the types of dyes above, you can also use ready-to-use textile dyes that are widely sold in craft stores. These dyes are usually more practical and easier to use, but the color choices may be limited. The tie-dye technique using natural dyes can still be explored further into a combination of techniques that will produce clothing textiles with new aesthetics in their motifs. Applying design exploration according to design patterns for clothing textiles, with specially designed motifs (Safitri & Affanti, 2022).

Colors have a very wide variety, as do the nuances produced by natural dyes. Natural dyes are able to produce color changes from soft shades to deeper and older ones. One of the advantages of natural dyes is the ability to produce light colors that look more natural. An example of a natural dye is from the indigofera plant, which can produce various attractive and natural colors (Sa'diyah et al., 2023).

Tie-dye training is an important first step for anyone who wants to master the art of dyeing this fabric. Good training will provide a basic understanding of basic techniques, material selection, safe use of dyes, and tips and tricks to produce attractive and quality motifs. Through the activity of making tie-dye tote bags, it is expected that students at SDN Bayongbong can develop their creativity in a fun and interactive way. Through the process of tying and coloring t-shirts, students can develop their imagination freely, independently, and creatively, which will produce unique works (Irsyada et al., 2024).

Tie-dye activities are not only fun but also provide various benefits for the development of children's intelligence. The creative process involved in tie-dyeing can stimulate various cognitive and emotional aspects of children. Through this training, students are encouraged to have a creativepreneur spirit in the field of batik skills as an effort to increase human resource capacity to support optimization in the field of education. Creativepreneur is a form of entrepreneurship that prioritizes creative ideas to produce a work. Creativepreneurs often produce new ideas that are out of the box, where their products become popular with the community (Pujiyanto et al., 2024).

Tie-dye involves planning, decision-making, and problem-solving. Children must plan the motif they want to create, choose the colors, and decide on the folding technique to be used. This process trains their logical and analytical thinking skills. While doing tie-dye, children also learn about colors, shapes, and patterns. They experiment with different color combinations and see how colors interact with each other. This improves their visual awareness and understanding of aesthetics. Visual awareness allows for the ability to process stimuli and manage responses for cognitive processing and allocation of cognitive resources (focus), often for the long term (sustained attention) (Khotimah et al., 2019).

The process of folding and tying the fabric itself is a spatial and visual exercise. One must imagine how certain folds will affect the final appearance of the fabric after being dyed. This trains visualization and planning skills. Color selection is also an important aspect of tie-dye that stimulates creativity. One can experiment with different color combinations, learn how colors interact with each other, and create unique color harmonies. The process of dyeing tie-dye fabric is often not completely predictable. The dye can absorb differently than expected, resulting in interesting surprise effects. This teaches one to adapt to change and find beauty in imperfection. Tie-dye activities can also be a medium for expressing emotions and feelings. The colors and motifs chosen can reflect the mood or message you want to convey. Thus, tie-dye can be a personal and meaningful art form. Color appears not just as color, but as a symbol of identity and a glue that unites each individual with different backgrounds but has the same love and appreciation for the aesthetics and meaning of the color (Sudana et al., 2025).

Tie-dye also encourages children to dare to experiment and try new things. There are no strict limits or rules in tie-dye, so children feel free to express themselves and develop their creativity. In addition, tie-dye can also improve children's fine motor skills. The process of folding, tying, and coloring fabrics requires good eye-hand coordination. This trains their fine motor skills and improves their ability to perform tasks that require precision. Fine motor skills are one aspect of development that greatly influences children's academic abilities in elementary education. Fine motor skills also have a significant relationship to functional performance in self-care, mobility, and social function (Muarifah & Nurkhasanah, 2019).

Tie-dye activities can also increase children's self-confidence. When they succeed in creating beautiful tie-dye works, they will feel proud of themselves and motivated to continue working. Tie-dye can also be a fun social activity for children. They can tie-dye with friends or family, exchange ideas, and learn from other people's experiences. This improves their social skills and strengthens interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships are relationships consisting of two or more people who depend on each other and use consistent interaction patterns (Nurrachmah, 2024).

With proper guidance and support from fellow participants, tie-dye training can be an empowering experience, opening the door to a world of limitless creativity. Learning arts and culture at the elementary school level aims to deepen students' appreciation of local culture and develop their innovative abilities. Based on constructivism theory, learning methods that involve practical experiences, such as creating tie-dye batik, can help students understand ideas better. The tie-dye batik technique process, which includes the steps of tying, dyeing, and creating their own patterns, can motivate students to think critically and creatively (Rosila & Mahmudah, 2025).

Methods

The Participatory Action Research (PAR) method is very suitable for tie-dye training because it emphasizes the active involvement of participants in the learning and research process. Participatory means participants are not just objects, but subjects involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation. Action means that there are concrete activities (tie-dye training). Reflection means participants and facilitators jointly evaluate the results and process. The dual goal is defined as developing practical skills and knowledge about the process.

The process of working on tie-dye involves several important stages that must be followed carefully to achieve optimal results. Each stage plays a crucial role in determining the quality and final beauty of the tie-dye fabric that is made.

1. The first stage is preparing the tote bags. The tote bags that will be used are washed first to remove layers of wax or dirt that can prevent dye absorption. After washing, the fabric needs to be dried and ironed so that it is easy to fold and tie. The most suitable type of fabric for tie-dye is cotton or rayon because its natural fibers easily absorb dye.

2. The next stage is folding and tying the fabric. This stage is the key to creating the desired motif. There are various folding and tying techniques that can be used, such as spiral, marble, bullseye, and many more. Each technique produces a different visual effect. Use of rubber bands, string, or thread to tie the fabric tightly according to the desired pattern, and to make sure the ties are tight enough so that the dye does not seep into the tied area.
3. After the fabric is folded and tied, it's time to dye it. The textile dyes are prepared according to the instructions for use by utilizing an applicator bottle, brush, or sponge to apply the dye to the fabric. One can use a color, several colors, or even a combination of gradient colors to create interesting effects. It's important to make sure that the dye is evenly absorbed into all parts of the fabric that are not tied. After the dyeing is complete, the dye is soaked in for a few hours or according to the instructions for use of the dye.
4. The last step is to untie and wash the fabric by carefully untying all ties on the fabric. Wash the fabric in cold water to remove any remaining dye. Wash separately from other clothes during the first wash to avoid color transfer. Dry the fabric in a shady place to prevent color fading. Once dry, iron the fabric to remove wrinkles and emphasize the tie-dye motif created (Dharma et al., 2024).

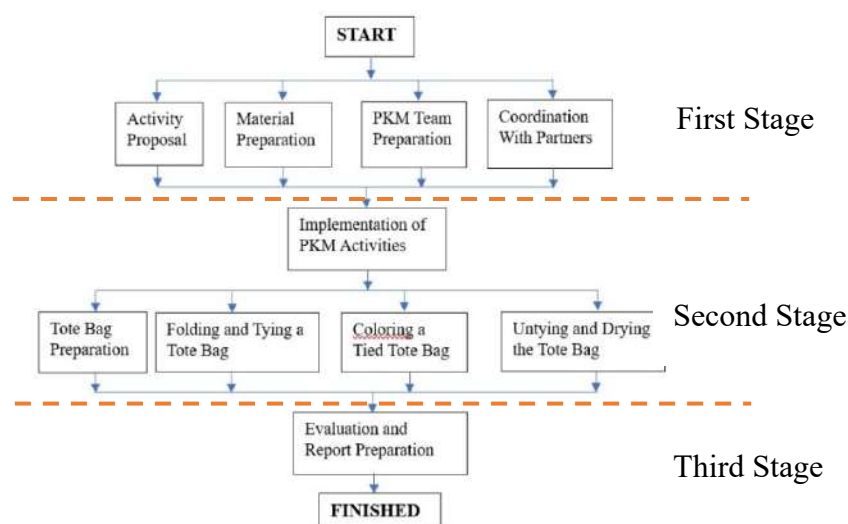


Fig. 2. Flowchart of tote bag coloring training activities

Figure 2 illustrates the stages of the tie-dye training implementation process; the first stage is preparation, the second stage is activity implementation, and the third stage is the evaluation and preparation of activity results reports.

Results and Discussions

Tie-dye training is a modern Batik activity by tying and coloring cloth using a color-dipping technique. This activity is suitable for elementary school students because it involves creativity, color exploration, and motor skills.



Fig. 3. Preparation of PKM in the teachers' room of Bayongbong elementary school

Figure 3 illustrates team preparation by coordinating with homeroom teachers and preparing materials and equipment to be used.

Activities in the training stages are:

1. Introduction to tie-dye techniques; types of patterns (spiral, fan folds, twists, etc.).
2. Selection of fabric and color; usually using white cotton cloth.
3. Tie technique; using rubber bands or rope.
4. Fabric coloring; with textile dyes that are safe for children.
5. Drying and final results; evaluation and reflection of the work.

Because it involves children, safety aspects must be a primary concern. Here are some important aspects:

1. The use of safe materials: Using non-toxic and environmentally friendly textile dyes, and avoiding harsh chemicals such as caustic soda.
2. Personal protection: Using plastic or latex gloves to protect hands, an apron or protective clothing to avoid stains on clothes, and a mask if using dye powder (to avoid inhaling dust).

3. Strict supervision: Each small group is guided by a teacher or supervisor; children are not allowed to mix their own materials without supervision.
4. Cleanliness and health: By providing a place to wash hands and clean water, and ensuring adequate ventilation if done indoors.
5. Storage and handling of tools: By keeping sharp materials and tools out of reach of children, store dyes and tools in a closed place after use.



Fig. 4. Conditioning of tie-dye training venue and participants

There was a conditioning of Grade 1 and Grade 2 elementary school students by the homeroom teacher so that they are ready to receive training materials on making tie-dye creations, as shown in Figure 4.

To take part in tie-dye training and produce quality work, one needs to prepare the following equipment and materials:

1. Fabric: By choosing cotton or rayon fabric, its natural fibers easily absorb dye. One can use plain t-shirts, meter cloth, handkerchiefs, or other clothing items.
2. Textile dye: By using textile dyes specifically designed for tie-dye. Reactive dyes are a good choice because they produce bright and long-lasting colors. One needs to read the dye usage instructions carefully before use.
3. Applicator bottle: Bottles with pointed applicator tips make it easy for one to apply dye precisely to the fabric. One can utilize used bottles or buy special applicator bottles at craft stores.

4. Rubber bands: They are utilized to tie fabrics and create tie-dye patterns. Rubber bands can be prepared in various sizes to produce different binding effects.
5. Gloves: By using latex or nitrile gloves to protect the hands from the dye.
6. Mask: By using a mask to protect your respiratory tract from dust.
7. Bucket or container: They are utilized to mix the dye and soak the cloth.
8. Water: It is used to dissolve the dye and rinse the cloth.
9. Plastic bag or airtight container: They are utilized to store the dyed cloth so that the dye can be absorbed optimally.
10. Scissors: They are used to cut the rope or thread used to tie the cloth.



Fig. 5. Singing and quizzes as ice breaking methods to familiarize with concepts

Figure 5 shows that the students are invited to sing and play quizzes as a method of breaking the ice, and students can get to know the mentors. Equipment and materials used during training in making tie-dye works can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Equipment and material requirements per participant

Tools & Materials	Quantity/Unit
Tote Bags	2 pieces
Textile dye	3 colors
Rubber bracelet	10 pieces
Plastic gloves	1 install
Dye bottle	3 piece
Soda ash	100 grams
Small bucket	1 piece
Plastic table mat	1 sheet
Clean water	as needed

The first step in tie-dye training is to prepare all the tools and materials needed. The main material in this training is a tote bag made of natural fiber fabric, such as cotton, rayon, or linen,

because these fabrics absorb dyes more easily. The fabric should be clean, and has been washed beforehand to remove wax or dirt that can prevent color absorption (Istiharoh, 2013). Tie-dye is not just a fabric dyeing technique, but it is also a very good activity to increase creativity. The process of creating tie-dye motifs involves imagination, experimentation, and problem-solving skills, all of which are important components of creativity.



Fig. 6. Explanation of material and demonstration of tie-dye creation in training

Figure 6 illustrates an explanation of the stages of making tie-dye and the demonstration of how to fold and tie tote bags. When participants do tie-dye activities, they have the freedom to choose the colors, folding techniques, and patterns they want. There are no strict limits or rules, thus providing ample space to explore and try new things. In addition, tie-dye can also be done in groups, which allows for interaction and collaboration between individuals. Exchanging ideas, providing feedback, and learning from other people's experiences can enrich the creative process and produce more innovative works.

Figure 7 illustrates teachers and mentors accompanying students when making folds and tying tote bags. Assisting students when folding and tying tote bags.



Fig. 7. Assistance to participants in making folding techniques

In creating a motif on a tote bag by folding and tying it using rubber, the tighter the folds and the tighter the ties, the more difficult it will be for the color to absorb into the tightly tied part. If done correctly, it can create a contrasting color display between the part that is colored and the part that is not colored.

The tying technique is the main key to creating unique and interesting tie-dye motifs. Various tying techniques can be applied to produce different visual effects. One of the most common techniques is the spiral technique. To create a spiral motif, one needs to pinch the center of the fabric and twist it into a tight spiral. Then, by tying the spiral with rubber bands crosswise and lengthwise to hold its shape. Another popular technique is the folding technique. The fabric can be folded horizontally, vertically, or diagonally to produce stripes or geometric patterns. After folding, tie the fabric with rubber bands or string at certain intervals to hold the folds. The third technique that is often used is the *jumputan* or the marble technique. One needs to pinch several parts of the fabric randomly and tie them with rubber bands. This technique will produce an abstract motif like marble with colors that blend together. In addition to these basic techniques, there are many more variations of tying techniques that can be explored to create more complex and personal tie-dye motifs (Rahmawati & Sarwono, 2023). Table 2 shows the tying technique and the corresponding motifs that will be produced.

Table 2. Tie-dye technique in tie-dye craft training

Motive	Description
Spiral	Tote bags are spun like a vortex, then tied and colored.
Line Pattern	The cloth is folded lengthwise like a fan, then tied and dyed.
Circle Pattern	The middle part is clamped and pulled out, then tied.
Crumple	The cloth is randomly crumpled and then colored
Mandala	Symmetrical folding technique forms a flower/mandala-like
Spiral	Tote bags are spun like a vortex, then tied and colored.
Line Pattern	The cloth is folded lengthwise like a fan, then tied and dyed.
Circle Pattern	The middle part is clamped and pulled out, then tied.
Crumple	The cloth is randomly crumpled and then colored

After the fabric is tied according to the desired motif, the next step is the dyeing process. This process involves dissolving the dye, applying the dye to the fabric, and the fixation process to lock the color into the fabric fibers. One needs to dissolve the textile dye according to the instructions on the packaging, and by making sure that the dye is completely dissolved, so there are no lumps. If using multiple colors, one needs to prepare a separate container for each color.



Fig. 8. Participants gave color to the tote bag that had been tied

Figure 8 shows students enthusiastically participating in the training and enthusiastically coloring the tote bags. Benefits of tie-dye craftsmanship training for elementary school students:

1. Developing Creativity: Children learn to create unique color and pattern combinations.
2. Training Fine Motor Skills: The process of folding, tying, and coloring trains hand coordination.
3. Increasing Self-Confidence: Children feel proud because they can produce their own work.
4. Instilling Expression and Art Values: Providing space for visual expression through color.
5. Encouraging Teamwork: Through group activities, children learn to work together and share roles.

6. Cultivating Environmental Awareness: If using natural dyes, children learn the concept of recycling and being environmentally friendly.

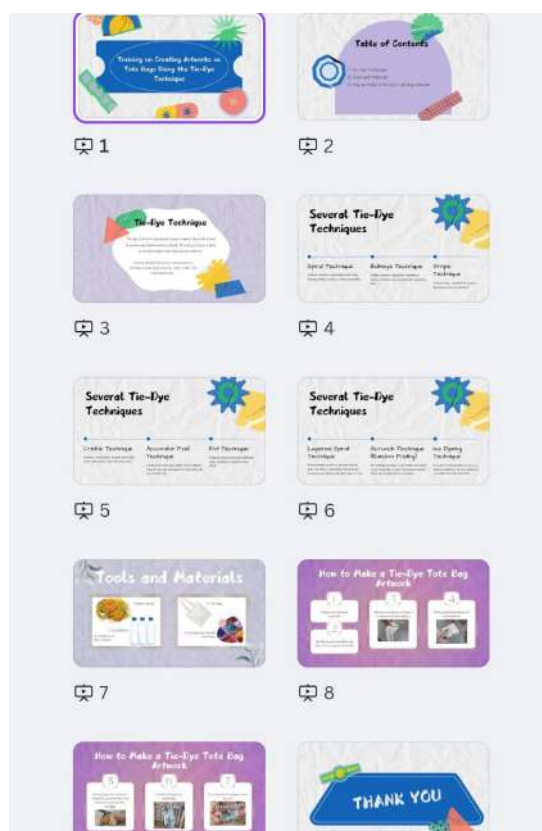


Fig. 9. Training materials for making tie-dye works on tote bags

The final step in the tie-dye process is finishing, which encompasses the careful removal of ties, washing, drying, and ironing of the fabric. All ties on the fabric must be removed carefully, taking care to avoid pulling or tearing the material. Once the ties are gone, the fabric is to be washed in cold water with a mild detergent; the tie-dyed material should not be mixed with other clothing during this washing to prevent color transfer. Following the wash, the fabric is dried in a shady area, and direct exposure to the sun is avoided, as this can cause the color to fade. After drying, the fabric is ironed at a temperature suitable for the fabric type; this ironing helps to smooth the material and lock in the color for increased longevity. Upon completion of the ironing, the tie-dye creation is ready for use or display, and further experimentation with other techniques and colors is encouraged to create more unique and personalized pieces.



Fig. 10. Untying the ties and the results of tie-dye on tote bags

Figure 10 illustrates students completing the training and proudly showing off their tie-dye creations on their homemade tote bags. Assessing the success of tie-dye training activities in improving the creativity of grade 1 and 2 elementary school students, both in terms of process, work results, and participant responses. Evaluation techniques by conducting direct observation and being involved in the training process, teachers and facilitators observe: student interaction during the training process, enthusiasm, and independence of students in creating work.



Fig. 11. Tie-dye on tote bags, work of Grade 1 and Grade 2 of elementary school students

The result of evaluated aspects are as follows:

1. Process Aspects: (a) Active involvement of students: Do students participate fully during the training?, (b) Understanding of instructions: Can students understand and follow directions well? (c) Cooperation and discipline: Are students able to work together and follow the training rules? Assessment Weight: Very Understand: 52%, Understand: 37%, Quite Understand: 9%, Do Not Understand: 2%.

2. Creativity Aspect: (a) Color exploration: To what extent do students dare to try different color combinations?, (b) Richness of patterns: Variations in shapes and tying techniques used by students, (c) Originality: How unique is each student's work compared to their friends. Weight of the selected Color Value: 1 Color: 14%, 2 Colors: 17%, 3 Colors: 37%, 4 Colors: 32%.
3. Aspects of the Work Results: (a) Neatness and coloring techniques: Are the patterns produced in accordance with the techniques taught?, (b) Aesthetics: Is the final result visually appealing? Work Results Value Weight: Very Good: 52%, Good: 37%, Fairly Good: 9%, Less Good: 2%.
5. Student Emotional Response by asking questions:
 - "What color do you like the most from your work?"
 - "What was the most exciting thing about making tie-dye?"
 - "If there is another one tomorrow, do you want to join?"
 - "Do they feel happy, proud, and satisfied with the work they made?"
 Student Response Value Weight: Very Happy: 70%, Happy: 18%, Average: 12%, Less Happy: 0%.

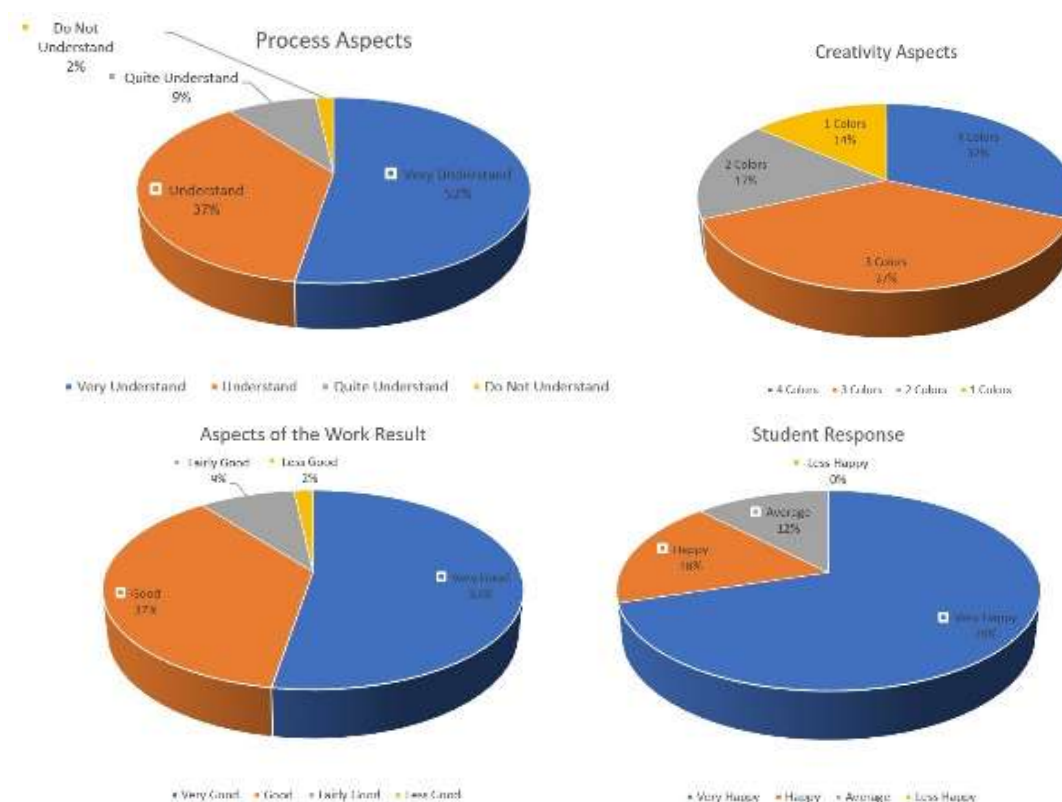


Fig. 12. Evaluated aspects

The evaluation results showed an increase in creativity, so the training is expected to be a routine program or an annual art project. Meanwhile, for obstacles that arise, such as students having difficulty understanding techniques or a lack of focus, the training can be adjusted to the playing method or carried out in smaller groups.

Tie-dye training is very beneficial for children (Susanto et al., 2025) because:

1. Fine motor skills: Tying tote bags, pouring colors, and folding tote bags train hand coordination.
2. Creativity: Children learn to create unique colors and patterns.
3. Visual-spatial intelligence: Helps understand shapes, colors, and composition.
4. Independence and self-confidence: Children are proud to see their own work.
5. Naturalist intelligence: If using natural dyes, children learn from natural materials.



Fig. 13. Group photo of training participants, teachers, and the community service teams

Figure 13 illustrates teachers, community service team, and students take a photo together after completing the tie-dye craft training.

Conclusion

Tie-dye is a versatile and empowering art, offering a wide range of benefits to anyone involved. From training that opens the door to creativity, to stages of work that involve a step-by-step creative process, to increasing creativity through the exploration of motifs and colors, to its contribution to supporting the SDGs program, tie-dye has unlimited potential. With easily available equipment and materials, and a variety of dyes that can be used, anyone can create

unique and personal tie-dye works. More than just producing beautifully patterned fabrics, tie-dye also provides benefits for the development of children's intelligence, preserving local culture, and supporting sustainable development. Let's continue to develop the art of tie-dye and make it a medium for creative expression that empowers and benefits the community.

The results of the tie-dye artwork making activity: a) Process aspect; 52% of students really understand the instructions, are active in activities, disciplined, collaborative, and have good cooperation, b) Creativity aspect; 37% of students are very creative in exploring colors, rich patterns, and originality, c) Work result aspect; 52% of the work displays visually appealing aesthetics and good coloring techniques, d) Emotional response aspect; 70% of students are very happy with the tie-dye artwork making activity and hope there will be another activity.

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