

# IMPROVING LITERACY AND CREATIVITY CULTURE OF STUDENTS THROUGH THE UTILIZATION OF THE WALL OF EXPRESSION AT PAMULANG TENGAH STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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## Abstract

*This community service project aims to enhance students' literacy and creativity through the implementation of the "Expression Wall" at SDN Pamulang Tengah, South Tangerang. The project was designed to provide a space where students can express their ideas, artistic works, and reflections freely, thus fostering an engaging learning environment. The method used was participatory action with four stages: preparation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. During the implementation phase, students and teachers participated in socialization and hands-on activities to introduce and utilize the Expression Wall. The results show that the Expression Wall effectively increased students' interest in reading, writing, and creative expression. Students became more active in producing and appreciating creative works displayed on the wall, while teachers acted as facilitators to support literacy-based learning. The monitoring phase confirmed a growing sense of collaboration, independence, and responsibility among students. Overall, the project successfully promoted a culture of literacy and creativity, proving that a simple yet innovative medium can significantly improve students' engagement and school atmosphere.*

**Keywords:** Literacy; Creativity; Community Service; Expression Wall.

## Abstrak

Proyek layanan masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan literasi dan kreativitas siswa melalui implementasi "Dinding Ekspresi" di SDN Pamulang Tengah, Tangerang Selatan. Proyek ini dirancang untuk menyediakan ruang di mana siswa dapat mengekspresikan ide, karya seni, dan refleksi mereka secara bebas, sehingga menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang menarik. Metode yang digunakan adalah aksi partisipatif dengan empat tahap: persiapan, implementasi, pemantauan, dan evaluasi. Selama tahap implementasi, siswa dan guru berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan sosialisasi dan praktik langsung untuk memperkenalkan dan memanfaatkan Expression Wall. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa Expression Wall secara efektif meningkatkan minat siswa dalam membaca, menulis, dan ekspresi kreatif. Siswa menjadi lebih aktif dalam memproduksi dan menghargai karya kreatif yang dipajang di dinding, sementara guru bertindak sebagai fasilitator untuk mendukung pembelajaran berbasis literasi. Tahap pemantauan mengonfirmasi adanya peningkatan rasa kolaborasi, kemandirian, dan tanggung jawab di antara siswa. Secara keseluruhan, proyek ini berhasil mempromosikan budaya literasi dan kreativitas, membuktikan bahwa media sederhana namun inovatif dapat secara signifikan meningkatkan keterlibatan siswa dan suasana sekolah.

**Kata kunci:** Literasi; Kreativitas; Pelayanan Masyarakat; Dinding Ekspresi.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a continuous process in shaping human beings so that they can develop all their potential and become a resource that is beneficial to society and the state

(Triyanto, 2018). Through education, children can hone their interests, talents, and creativity, which ultimately contributes to social and economic progress. In the educational process, students' creativity and self-expression are important aspects that need attention. Creativity not only supports intellectual development, but also builds critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation skills that are needed in the modern era (Robinson, 2011). One effective way to foster creativity is to provide a space that allows students to express themselves through various media. In this case, the physical environment of the school plays an important role as a forum that supports freedom of expression and work (Santrock, 2017).

In response to this need, the "Expression Wall" is present as an innovation in the school environment that allows students to pour ideas, artworks, poems, reflections, and positive messages that can inspire the school community. This concept is in line with the Project-Based Learning approach which emphasizes the active involvement of learners in meaningful learning (Blumenfeld, 1991).

The Wall of Expression is one of the forums for channeling interest to hone clear writing potential, students have more freedom to develop creativity. According to Aezaeo, the function of the expression wall includes (1) as an information medium, (2) as a forum for students' creativity, (3) as a growth of students' interest in creativity, (4) as a medium that encourages students to read, assess and respond (Asazeo, 2019). In addition, the "Expression Wall" is also one of the media in training and habituating students in reading and is manifested in the form of writing.

The literacy movement is promoted by the government to maximize the ability to read, write, tell stories, analyze and develop knowledge as well as insight in deepening reading through books both physical and digital. Literacy is a person's ability to process and understand information while reading or writing a reading. Literacy is not only reading and writing but language is also included in literacy. Literacy in language skills requires the ability to process various vocabulary. According to Marthiningsih, knowledge is obtained through oral and written information. Oral information is obtained from reading activities to be able to develop critical thinking skills (Martiningsih, 2019). However, today, interest in reading in Indonesia is still relatively low. In fact, reading is part of literacy that can grow students' information. To increase students' literacy and creativity can be done through school wall magazine (mading) activities, this is in line with research from Ayu Mayendri (2011) entitled Wall Magazine as the Implementation of Short Story Writing Skills of students who participate in extracurricular Journalism at SMPN 4 Singaraja shows that the results of the study found that mading becomes a forum for students' creativity as a growth interest and encourages students to be diligent in reading and writing Short Stories.

The partner that is used as a place for the implementation of the "Expression Wall" is SDN Pamulang Tengah. From the results of observations and observations, it is known that the forum for the distribution of creativity from students has not been provided. Schools do not have a platform that can be used by students in channeling their potential and creativity and there is no place to attach announcements related to the school so that teachers only convey important information in the classroom. It can also be seen that the literacy of SDN Pamulang Tengah students is very lacking, therefore it is necessary to have this "Wall of Expression" to add insight and hone their literacy skills. Thus, the "Expression Wall" project at SDN Pamulang Tengah is a real step in creating an inspiring learning environment, building active student participation, and making the school a space that fosters unlimited creativity.

## METHOD

The target of this project is students of SDN Pamulang Tengah Jl. Pinang No. 10, East Pamulang, Pamulang District, South Tangerang City, Banten Province. Participants who participated in the activity of using the "Expression Wall", this socialization were students of SD Negeri Pamulang Tengah with a total of 18 students and 12 teachers.

This activity is carried out in several stages. Namely: the preparatory stage; the stage of implementation; monitoring level; and the evaluation and reflection stage.

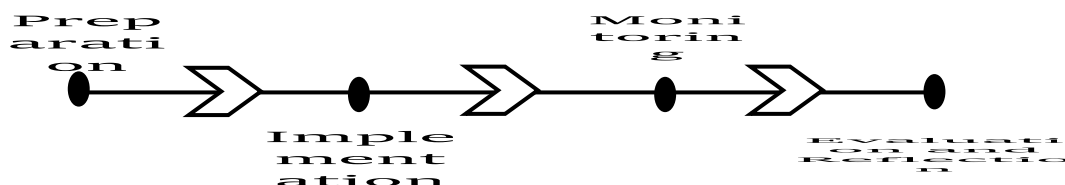


Figure 1: Activity Stages

In the preparation stage, the preparation of a work program for the use of the "Expression Wall" is carried out, socialization aims to make the activities carried out more orderly and directed. This program covers all technical, managerial and scheduling matters. Field coordination is carried out by the team before the implementation of the program, including licensing to partners.

The implementation stage of the activity provides education and socialization about the importance of the "Expression Wall" as developing creativity and improving literacy of SD Negeri Pamulang Tengah students which will be carried out by speakers and practitioners from students. Through this stage, presenters and practitioners are expected to be able to provide education and socialization as much as possible to students by utilizing the resources that were previously prepared.

The monitoring stage is to monitor the activities of students while managing and filling the "Expression Wall", at this stage it is carried out directly by the coaching teacher and students of the project implementation. Has the "Expression Wall" making been used to the maximum by students for activities to develop creativity and literacy.

The stages of evaluation and reflection of activities are to evaluate and reflect on socialization, and the monitoring of activities that have been carried out. This stage also evaluates and reflects on the group's performance during the project from the monitoring orange permitting stage. All group members evaluate and reflect on the roles, strengths, and obstacles faced during the project.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Preparation Stage**

The initial phase of the "Wall of Expression" project comprehensively focuses on the construction of a structured and systematic framework to ensure the smooth running of all activities. This step begins with the preparation of a detailed work program, covering technical, managerial, and scheduling aspects. This work program serves as the primary guide, ensuring that each step of the team is aligned and that all resources are efficiently allocated to achieve project objectives.

Furthermore, field coordination is the main focus in the preparation stage. The project team carries out this coordination before the program begins, which involves communication and formal licensing arrangements. Licensing is required both from the partner, namely SDN Pamulang Tengah, and from the campus, the Open University, to ensure legitimacy and institutional support. The essence of this coordination is to reach an agreement on the planning that has been prepared between the activity organizing committee and the partners. Ensuring alignment of goals and logistics with school staff and principals is essential to integrate projects into the school environment seamlessly.

In summary, the preparation stage aims to mitigate potential obstacles by establishing a strong foundation, both logistically and administratively. In the design of the activity, this project is named "The Utilization of Expression Walls to Improve the Literacy and Creativity of SDN Negeri Pamulang Tengah Students," chaired by Alexius Easton Ance, and is scheduled to take place at SDN Pamulang Tengah in the period of February to April 2025.

### **Implementation Stage**

The implementation stage is a direct manifestation of the planning that has been prepared, with a strong emphasis on education and socialization about the "Wall of Expression". The main purpose of this socialization is to inform and convince students about the importance of this media in developing creativity and improving literacy at

SDN Pamulang Tengah. The socialization and installation of the actual expression wall took place on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at SDN Pamulang Tengah. This activity successfully involved around 30 participants, including students, teachers, and supervisors. The structured series of events began with remarks from student representatives, principals, and lecturers, followed by core activities.

The core activities involved the delivery of socialization materials and the implementation of making by speakers from students (Feni Auliansah and Nia Anjani), as well as the practice of pasting works by students in grades 4 and 5. Through this stage, the team seeks to provide education by utilizing previously prepared resources, actively involving students in simulations or direct practice of using expression walls. Despite facing challenges such as a lack of learner participation during socialization, the team responded with an interactive and participatory approach, such as asking questions directly and engaging students in practice. The activity ended with a Q&A session, Forum Group Discussion (FGD), and documentation.



Figure 2: education and socialization about the "Wall of Expression"

### **Monitoring Levels**

The monitoring stage is a critical follow-up activity, designed to observe and supervise the activities of students in managing and filling the "Expression Wall". This monitoring is carried out directly by the supervisor teachers and project implementing students, ensuring that the initiative does not stop after socialization. The main purpose of the monitoring was to assess whether the "Expression Wall" has been utilized to the fullest by students as a medium to develop creativity and literacy. This includes observing students' involvement in filling in walls, looking at their friends' work, and reflecting on their daily feelings in sessions such as "My feeling today?".

Formal follow-up and monitoring activities were carried out on Monday, May 19, 2025, at SDN Pamulang Tengah. In addition to observing, the team also participated in filling the expression wall with posters and pamphlets to provide new knowledge to students. The results of the monitoring showed satisfactory achievements, where learners have shown awareness to fill, see, and appreciate their friends' work on the wall of

expression. The strategic placement of expression walls and often passed by students proved effective, as seen from the habit of students gathering there during break hours to see the pasted works.



Figure 3: Follow-up and monitoring activities

### Evaluation and Reflection Stage

The final stage of the project is evaluation and reflection, which focuses on a critical assessment of the entire set of activities, including socialization, monitoring, and group performance. This evaluation aims to measure the success of the project and analyze the achievement of project objectives, using methods such as VTR Traffic Light.

Overall, the project activities are considered successful and sufficiently in accordance with the pre-prepared plan. The assessment shows that the time allocation of activities is appropriate according to the rundown of the event, and that each member of the group has carried out their duties to the maximum, allowing the activities to be carried out smoothly. This experience teaches group members about collaboration, systematic activity planning, and responsibility.

Nonetheless, the team also identified obstacles and things that needed to be improved. The main obstacles are the time-bound schedule for the implementation of socialization, the lack of student participation, and the lack of in-depth FGD. The solutions implemented include creating a realistic timeline and using an interactive approach. The results of reflection determined that the need to improve time management is an important lesson so that it does not happen again. The main suggestions for improvement include the selection of making administrators that must be carried out in advance, and the implementation of FGDs that must be more detailed and in-depth.



Figure 4: Evaluation and reflection activities.

Table 1. Stages of activity.

Implementation Stage	Important Dates/Periods	Key Results Achieved	Main Obstacles & Solutions
I. Preparation Stage	February - April 2025 (Plan)	Structured Work Program: Technical, managerial, and project scheduling plans are formed. Field Coordination: Permits and agreements are obtained from the partner (SDN Pamulang Tengah) and the campus.	Constraints: Time management of early planning has the potential to be missed (seems slower). Solution: Create a more realistic and systematic timeline to catch up on lost time.
II. Implementation Stage	Thursday, 24 April 2025	Socialization and Installation: The core activities of socialization and implementation of the "Expression Wall" were successfully implemented. Participation: Involving ±30 participants (4th & 5th graders, teachers, lecturers). Education: Students are given an understanding of the function of mading as a forum for literacy and creativity.	Obstacle: Lack of active participation of some students during socialization sessions. Solution: Implement an interactive and participatory approach (e.g., simulation of live work pasting) to increase student engagement.
III. Monitoring Levels	Monday, 19 Mei 2025	Media Function Achieved: Students have shown awareness to fill, see, and appreciate the work of friends on the wall of expression. Location Effectiveness: Strategic placement encourages students to gather in the mading area during break hours. Further Action: The team participated in filling in the content (posters/pamphlets) to add new knowledge to students.	Constraints: Monitoring activities need to be a routine task of schools to maintain sustainability. Solution: Establish a team of mading management of teachers and students on an ongoing basis.
IV. Evaluation & Reflection Stage	After Monitoring	Project Success: Activities are judged successful and in accordance with the <i>event rundown</i> . Group	Obstacles: The implementation of the FGD is not in-depth/detailed. Solution: Follow up

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Performance: All members perform their duties to the maximum.	the FGD in the form of a reflection or presentation
Character Impact: Projects have a positive impact on character formation (cooperation, independence, creativity).	assignment and suggest a more detailed FGD in the future.

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## Discussion

The implementation of the "Expression Wall" project at SDN Pamulang Tengah has proven the effectiveness of the project-based learning approach in improving students' literacy and creativity. The systematic preparation stage, despite the challenges of scheduling, managed to build the necessary administrative and logistical foundations. Success in this stage, particularly the coordination with the school, ensures that the project is fully supported and can be integrated into the learning environment (Kusuma, Untari, & Purnamasari, 2023). This is crucial, considering that community service projects often rely on close collaboration between implementers and partners to ensure the relevance and continuity of the program.

Key results were achieved at the implementation stage where the socialization of the "Expression Wall" media was carried out directly. Despite facing obstacles to passive participation from some students, the response of the implementation team to implement an interactive and participatory approach is a strategic step that should be appreciated. The use of methods involving simulation and hands-on practice has proven to be more effective in the context of primary education, where the learning process must be fun and *hands-on*. The success of this stage lies not only in the physical installation of mading, but also in conveying an understanding to students that the media is a container for their free expression.

The monitoring phase provides the most significant empirical data on the impact of the project. Observations made on May 19, 2025, show that the "Wall of Expression" has not only served as a display, but has become a center for interaction and appreciation of students' work. Students' awareness to fill, see, and appreciate their friends' work is a strong indicator that a culture of literacy and creativity is beginning to take shape. The placement of mading in strategic locations, which students often pass during breaks, proves that physical environment factors play a major role in encouraging active participation and social interaction.

The impact of the Expression Wall on student character development is also an important finding. This media implicitly encourages values such as independence, creativity, cooperation, and care. When students actively fill in the content, they practice

independence and courage to express themselves. When they appreciate the work of their friends, the values of care and mutual cooperation in the school community are formed, in line with the educational goals that focus not only on academics but also on character building (Baroroh & Zahrotul, 2021).

The evaluation and reflection stage confirms that the project is generally successful and in accordance with the plan. This achievement was strengthened by the maximum performance of all group members. However, obstacles such as missed scheduling and in-depth FGDs indicate that there are areas for future project management improvements. This reflection demonstrates the team's critical attitude towards the process, which is a hallmark of effective leadership practices.

## **CONCLUSION**

The "Expression Wall" project implemented at SD Negeri Pamulang Tengah is a concrete implementation of the project-based learning approach that emphasizes character development, creativity, and active participation of students. This project aims to provide a space for positive expression for students to channel their ideas, aspirations, and creativity. Through visual media that is permanently placed in the school environment. Through a series of structured stages, starting from observation of needs, coordination with the school, socialization, preparation of resources, to the implementation and evaluation of this activity—has shown a collaborative process involving students, teachers, principals, and students. Each stage makes an important contribution to the success of the project, from the collection of ideas, design, technical implementation, to the formation of a mading management team.

The tangible result of this project is the presence of a Wall of Expression in the school environment that not only serves as a means of communication and creativity, but also as a symbol of student empowerment. Through this activity, students learn to work in teams, communicate effectively, and take responsibility for the results of their joint work. In addition, teachers play an active role as facilitators, who accompany and provide direction in the entire process of activities.

Overall, this project not only has a visual impact on a more lively and expressive school environment but also has a positive impact on the formation of students' character, especially in terms of cooperation, independence, creativity, and concern for the environment. This project is also proof that collaborative activities between higher education institutions and primary schools can have a significant impact on the development of students and the school environment in general.

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