

Analysis of Extracurricular Dance Activities in Improving the Visuomotor Skills of Grade 1 Students

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Abstract

Visuomotor ability is a crucial aspect of development for lower-grade elementary school students, as it directly affects learning readiness, particularly in activities such as writing, drawing, and movement coordination. One effort that schools can implement to stimulate this ability is through dance extracurricular activities. This study aims to analyze the implementation of dance extracurricular activities in improving the visuomotor abilities of first-grade students at SD Negeri 01 Bebengan, identify the obstacles encountered, and formulate optimization strategies. This research employed a qualitative approach using a case study method. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation involving first-grade students, the dance extracurricular instructor, classroom teachers, and the school principal. The results indicate that dance extracurricular activities contribute positively to the improvement of students' eye-body coordination, balance, and ability to imitate movements. The main obstacles identified include limited practice time, inadequate supporting facilities, and differences in students' interests and abilities. Optimization strategies were carried out through adjustments in teaching methods, enhancement of supporting facilities, and collaboration between classroom teachers and extracurricular instructors. Therefore, it can be concluded that dance extracurricular activities have the potential to serve as an effective medium for improving the visuomotor abilities of lower-grade elementary school students when managed in a structured and sustainable manner.

Keywords: Extracurricular Activities, Dance, Visuomotor Skills, First-Grade Students



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Introduction

Basic education plays a strategic role in developing students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills in an integrated manner. At this stage, students are in the early stages of development, which is crucial in determining their readiness to learn at the next stage. One important psychomotor aspect that needs to be developed early on is visuomotor skills, which is the ability to coordinate vision with body movements. Visuomotor skills are an important foundation for various learning activities in elementary school, such as writing, drawing, cutting, and following visual instructions in classroom learning (Naslichori et al., 2022).

The development of visuomotor skills can be achieved not only through intracurricular learning, but also through targeted extracurricular activities. Extracurricular activities are an integral part of the educational process that aims to develop the potential, interests, talents, personality, and independence of students holistically, as mandated in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 62 of 2014. Through extracurricular activities, students gain contextual, enjoyable learning experiences that support both physical and character development (Rohmah et al., 2023).

Dance is a form of extracurricular activity that involves coordination of body movements, balance, rhythm, concentration, and the ability to imitate movements. This activity requires the simultaneous integration of visual and motor skills, so dance has great potential to stimulate the development of visuomotor skills in elementary school students, especially in lower grades (Uminah et al., 2023). Several studies indicate that student involvement in dance activities can improve gross and fine motor coordination, concentration, and readiness to learn (Naslichori et al., 2022).

However, the reality in the field shows that the implementation of extracurricular dance activities has not always had an optimal impact on the development of students' visuomotor skills. At SD Negeri 01 Bebengan, even though dance activities have been carried out regularly, there are still first-grade students who have difficulty imitating movements accurately, maintaining body balance, and adjusting their movements to the visual instructions of the instructor. This condition shows a gap between the objectives of extracurricular activities and the expected development results.

Based on these issues, a more in-depth study is needed on the implementation of extracurricular dance activities in improving the visuomotor skills of first-grade elementary school students. This analysis is important to obtain an empirical picture of the effectiveness of the activities, the obstacles encountered, and the optimization strategies that can be implemented so that extracurricular dance activities truly contribute to the optimal and sustainable development of students' visuomotor skills.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive and case study research types. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of extracurricular dance activities and their contribution to improving the visuomotor skills of first-grade students. The study was conducted at SD Negeri 01 Bebengan, Kendal Regency.

This research was conducted from May to September 2025. The initial stage of the research consisted of preliminary observations and preparations in May 2025, followed by field data collection in September 2025, and concluded with data analysis and the preparation of the research report.

The research subjects included first-grade students participating in dance extracurricular activities, dance extracurricular advisors, first-grade teachers, and the principal as key informants. Data collection was conducted through direct observation of dance extracurricular activities, semi-structured interviews with key informants, and documentation in the form of photographs and supporting school documents. Data validity was tested using source, technique, and time triangulation techniques, as well as member checks to ensure data credibility and accuracy. Data analysis was conducted interactively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

Results and Discussions

1. Results

1. Implementation of Dance Extracurricular Activities

The dance extracurricular activities at SD Negeri 01 Bebengan are carried out regularly and according to schedule, with the guidance of supervising teachers who play a central role in directing the activities. These activities are specifically designed as a means of developing the visuomotor skills of lower grade students through structured, gradual, and enjoyable movement activities. Each session begins with a warm-up activity aimed at preparing students physically to follow the dance movements, while also reducing the risk of fatigue and injury. This warm-up stage also serves as an initial means for students to train their focus and visual readiness for the activities to be carried out.

After the warm-up, the instructor demonstrates the dance movements directly as the main visual stimulus for the students. The demonstration is done slowly and repeatedly so that it is easy for first-grade students, who are still in the early stages of visual and motor coordination development, to understand. Next, the students are invited to imitate the movements together with

the instructor's guidance. This movement imitation exercise is carried out in stages, starting from simple movements to more complex ones, adjusted to the abilities and development of each student. The process of repeating movements is an important part of training the coordination between the students' vision and body movements.

The dance learning that is applied is demonstrative and participatory, in accordance with the characteristics of lower grade students who tend to learn through visual observation and direct imitation. The supervising teacher not only acts as a role model, but also as an active facilitator who provides verbal and visual guidance, corrections, and reinforcement. Through this approach, students are trained to pay attention to movement details, understand movement sequences, and adjust their body movements to the rhythm of the music accompanying the dance. This activity directly involves the integration process between the students' visual and motor systems.

The implementation of extracurricular dance activities at SD Negeri 01 Bebengan shows that dance serves not only as an activity to develop interests and talents but also as an effective learning medium to stimulate students' visuomotor skills. Through a series of structured activities, students gain learning experiences that involve the simultaneous coordination of vision, body movements, balance, and concentration. This reinforces the role of dance as a form of educational activity that is relevant to supporting the development of the visuomotor skills of lower elementary school students.



Figure 1. Extracurricular Activity Implementation

2. Students' Visuomotor Skills Before Participating in Activities

Before participating in extracurricular dance activities, most first-grade students at SD Negeri 01 Bebengan showed visuomotor skills that were still in the early stages of development. This condition was evident in the students' difficulty in imitating the movements demonstrated by the instructor accurately and sequentially. Many students were unable to synchronize what they saw with the expected body movements, so that their movements often did not match the examples given.

In addition, the students' balance was also limited. Some students seemed to lose their balance easily when moving from one place to another or performing movements that required coordination between their hands, feet, and body position. The coordination between hand and foot movements was not yet synchronized, so that students often focused on only one part of the body. This condition shows that the integration between students' visual and motor systems has not developed optimally.

From the affective aspect related to vision-motor skills, some students appear hesitant and lack confidence when asked to follow dance movements in front of their friends. Students' responses to visual cues also tend to be slow, where students need more time to understand and

adjust their movements to the instructions given. In addition, differences in ability between students are quite clear; some students are able to follow simple movements well, while others still need intensive guidance and continuous repetition of movements. These initial conditions indicate the need for targeted and continuous stimulation to develop the visuomotor skills of lower grade students.

3. Development of Students' Visuomotor Skills After Participating in Activities

After participating in dance extracurricular activities on a regular and continuous basis, first-grade students at SD Negeri 01 Bebengan showed significant development in their visuomotor skills. These positive changes were evident in the students' improved ability to coordinate their vision with their body movements in a more focused manner. Students began to be able to imitate the movements demonstrated by the instructor with a higher degree of accuracy, both in terms of movement sequence and body position, compared to their initial condition before participating in the activities.

The development of visuomotor skills was also evident in terms of body balance. Students showed improved ability to maintain body stability when moving, turning, or performing movements that required rapid changes in position. The coordination between hand and foot movements became more harmonious, with students no longer focusing on just one part of the body but able to move their limbs simultaneously in accordance with visual cues and the rhythm of the music accompanying the dance.

In addition to physical aspects, the development of students' visuomotor skills is also reflected in their increased confidence and readiness to perform movements. Students appear more courageous and no longer hesitate when asked to demonstrate dance movements in front of their friends. Their visual response to the instructor's instructions has become faster and more accurate, as demonstrated by their ability to understand movement examples and immediately adjust their body movements without requiring many repetitions.

From these results, students showed an increase in concentration and endurance in following a series of dance movements. Students were able to maintain their focus for longer periods of practice and follow the sequence of movements more consistently. These findings indicate that extracurricular dance activities not only contribute to improving visual and motor coordination skills, but also support students' readiness to learn by strengthening concentration and movement control. Thus, extracurricular dance activities have been proven to make a real contribution to improving the visuomotor skills of first-grade elementary school students.

4. Challenges in Implementing Dance Extracurricular Activities

Although extracurricular dance activities have a positive impact on the development of students' visuomotor skills, their implementation still faces several obstacles that need attention. The main obstacle found is the limited practice time due to conflicts with the academic schedule. Extracurricular activities are carried out after school hours, so the duration of practice is relatively short and not yet fully optimal to provide sufficient repetition of movements for all students.

In addition to time constraints, the facilities supporting dance activities are also limited. The practice rooms used are not fully representative for movement activities, both in terms of space and comfort. This condition affects the students' freedom of movement and practice, as well as limiting the variety of movements that can be taught by the instructor. Limited supporting facilities, such as dance aids or learning media, also affect the effectiveness of the activities.

Differences in students' interests and abilities are also challenges in implementing dance extracurricular activities. Not all students have the same interest in dance, so the level of student participation and enthusiasm varies. In addition, students' visuomotor skills vary; some students are able to follow movements quickly, while others still need intensive guidance and continuous repetition of movements. This condition requires instructors to apply a more flexible and individualized learning approach.

Student fatigue after attending classroom activities also affects their concentration and enthusiasm in participating in extracurricular activities. Some students appear to lack focus and tire easily, preventing them from following the sequence of movements to the fullest. This condition highlights the importance of proper time management and learning strategies to ensure that dance extracurricular activities remain effective and do not burden students. By understanding these various obstacles, schools can formulate improvement measures to enhance the quality of dance extracurricular activities in a sustainable manner.

5. Strategies for Optimizing Activity Implementation

To overcome various obstacles in implementing extracurricular dance activities, the school and supervising teachers implemented a number of optimization strategies tailored to the developmental characteristics of lower grade students. One of the main strategies was to adjust the duration and intensity of practice. Practice times are set so that they are not too long, but are carried out consistently, so that students are still able to participate in activities in optimal physical condition without experiencing excessive fatigue.

The next strategy is the application of more varied and enjoyable learning methods. The supervising teacher packages dance movement practice through a playful approach, gradual repetition of movements, and the use of music that is interesting and appropriate for the students' age. This method aims to increase student motivation and active participation, while also helping students understand and remember the sequence of movements. Through a fun learning atmosphere, students become more enthusiastic and focused in participating in dance extracurricular activities.

In addition to learning methods, efforts to improve supporting facilities are also carried out gradually. The school strives to provide a more comfortable and safe practice space for students, as well as to equip supporting facilities that can facilitate the smooth running of activities. The availability of adequate facilities provides more space for students to move, so that movement exercises can be carried out optimally and safely.

Collaboration between classroom teachers and extracurricular instructors is an important strategy in monitoring and optimizing the continuous development of students' visuomotor skills. Through good coordination, classroom teachers can provide information about student progress in learning, while instructors adjust dance exercises to student needs. This synergy allows dance extracurricular activities to function optimally as a medium for developing the visual-motor skills of first-grade students in a structured and continuous manner.

2. Discussions

The results of the study show that the implementation of extracurricular dance activities at SD Negeri 01 Bebengan plays an important role in developing the visuomotor skills of first-grade students. The demonstrative and participatory learning pattern allows students to learn through visual observation and direct movement imitation, which are the main characteristics of lower grade student development. A series of structured activities, ranging from warm-ups, demonstration of movements, imitation exercises, to gradual repetition, provide consistent stimulation for the coordination between students' vision and body movements. This shows that dance not only serves as an activity to develop interests and talents, but also as an effective learning medium in stimulating the integration of students' visual and motor skills.

A comparison of students' conditions before and after participating in extracurricular dance activities shows significant development in their visuomotor skills. Before participating in the activities, students tended to have difficulty imitating movements, maintaining body balance, and coordinating hand and foot movements simultaneously. After participating in the activities regularly, students showed an increase in their ability to adjust their movements to visual cues, maintain balance, and follow a series of movements more accurately and consistently. In addition to physical aspects, improvements were also seen in affective and cognitive aspects related to visuomotor skills, such as increased confidence, concentration, and students' visual responses to

teacher instructions. These findings reinforce that movement stimulation through dance can support the learning readiness of lower grade students more comprehensively.

However, the effectiveness of dance extracurricular activities is still influenced by several constraints, such as limited practice time, suboptimal supporting facilities, and differences in interests and visuomotor skills among students. Student fatigue after attending classes also affects their concentration during activities. Therefore, optimization strategies, such as adjusting the duration of practice, using varied and enjoyable learning methods, improving facilities, and collaboration between classroom teachers and extracurricular advisors, are important steps in maximizing the benefits of the activity. With structured and sustainable management, dance extracurricular activities have great potential to be used as a medium for developing the visuomotor skills of lower elementary school students.

Conclusion

The extracurricular dance activities at SD Negeri 01 Bebenan have been proven to contribute positively to improving the visuomotor skills of first-grade students, particularly in terms of coordination between vision and body movements, balance, and the ability to imitate movements accurately. Through regular and focused practice, students showed better development of their visuomotor skills compared to before participating in the extracurricular dance activities. Various obstacles that arise in the implementation of activities, such as time constraints, supporting facilities, and differences in students' interests and abilities, can be minimized through more structured, collaborative, and tailored activity management strategies that are adapted to the developmental characteristics of lower grade students. Thus, dance is worthy of being considered as an alternative medium for the sustainable development of the visuomotor skills of lower grade elementary school students.

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