

Collaboration Of Families, Schools, And Communities Through Tri Education Centers To Support Creativity And Innovation In Basic Education

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Abstrak

Pendidikan dasar merupakan tahap krusial dalam membentuk fondasi intelektual, karakter, dan keterampilan peserta didik. Namun, orientasi pendidikan yang masih berfokus pada capaian akademik membuat pengembangan kreativitas dan inovasi kurang mendapat perhatian. Penelitian ini bertujuan mendeskripsikan bentuk kolaborasi keluarga, sekolah, dan masyarakat melalui konsep Tri Sentra Pendidikan dalam mendukung kreativitas serta inovasi siswa sekolah dasar, sekaligus menganalisis hambatan dan strategi mitigasi untuk menjaga keberlanjutan kolaborasi. Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, melibatkan kepala sekolah, guru, orang tua, dan tokoh masyarakat sebagai informan yang dipilih secara purposive. Data diperoleh melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan studi dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis dengan teknik tematik melalui proses coding, kategorisasi, dan triangulasi sumber. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kolaborasi keluarga terlihat dalam dukungan material, emosional, dan ideatif terhadap anak; masyarakat berperan sebagai penyedia ruang alternatif, mentor, dan sumber daya kreatif; sementara sekolah berfungsi sebagai mediator yang menyinergikan kedua aktor eksternal. Dampak kolaborasi ini tampak pada meningkatnya motivasi, keberanian bereksperimen, serta lahirnya karya inovatif yang relevan dengan konteks sosial-kultural. Hambatan utama mencakup keterbatasan waktu orang tua, kapasitas literasi kreatif, fragmentasi komunikasi, keterbatasan fasilitas, serta komitmen yang fluktuatif. Strategi mitigasi yang terbukti efektif antara lain pelatihan literasi kreatif, penjadwalan fleksibel, pembentukan tim liaison, integrasi ke kurikulum, aliansi pendanaan eksternal, serta evaluasi partisipatif. Kesimpulannya, Tri Sentra Pendidikan berpotensi memperkuat ekosistem pendidikan kreatif dan inovatif apabila didukung dengan strategi keberlanjutan yang sistematis.

Kata Kunci: *inovasi, kolaborasi, kreativitas, pendidikan dasar, tri sentra pendidikan.*

Abstract

Basic education is a crucial stage in forming the intellectual foundation, character, and skills of students. However, the orientation of education that still focuses on academic achievement makes the development of creativity and innovation less attention. This study aims to describe the collaboration between family, school, and community through the concept of Tri Center Education in supporting the creativity and innovation of elementary school students, as well as analyzing obstacles and mitigation strategies to maintain collaboration sustainability. The research method uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, involving school principals, teachers, parents, and community leaders as purposively selected informants. Data was obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation studies, then analyzed with thematic techniques through coding,



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categorization, and triangulation of sources. The results show that family collaboration is seen in material, emotional, and ideative support; the community acts as an alternative space provider, mentor, and creative resource; while schools function as mediators that synergize both external actors. The impact of this collaboration appears in increased motivation, courage to experiment, and innovative works relevant to the socio-cultural context. Main obstacles include limited parental time, creative literacy capacity, communication gaps, limited facilities, and fluctuating commitments. Effective mitigation strategies include creative literacy training, flexible scheduling, liaison team formation, curriculum integration, external funding alliances, and participatory evaluations. In conclusion, the Tri Education Center can strengthen the creative and innovative education ecosystem if supported by systematic sustainability strategies.

Keywords: *basic education; collaboration; creativity; innovation; tri center of education*

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Introduction

Basic education constitutes the fundamental stage in the formation of a child's character, intellect, and skill set, serving as the cornerstone for lifelong learning and personal development. At this level, educational experiences should not only prioritize cognitive mastery but also cultivate a balanced environment that nurtures imagination, creativity, and innovation as integral dimensions of human growth. Creativity enables students to think beyond established conventions, formulate novel ideas, and explore multiple perspectives in addressing problems, while innovation represents the transformation of those creative insights into practical, socially meaningful applications that contribute to individual and collective well-being. These two capacities, creativity and innovation, are central to developing learners who can adapt to rapid social, technological, and economic changes. However, in the context of Indonesia's basic education system, the cultivation of these competencies remains largely underdeveloped. Despite national curriculum reforms that advocate for a more holistic learning approach, classroom practices often continue to prioritize academic achievement as the primary indicator of educational success. Instructional models remain heavily focused on rote memorization, convergent problem-solving, and standardized assessment outcomes, rather than on exploration, reflection, and creative risk-taking. As a result, the dominant pedagogical orientation limits students' opportunities to engage in divergent thinking, self-expression, and independent inquiry, skills essential for innovation in the modern era. Empirical evidence supports this observation, showing that educational systems overly fixated on performance metrics tend to inhibit students' intrinsic motivation and creative development. When the learning process emphasizes the correct answer over the creative process, students internalize a performance-oriented mindset that prioritizes external validation rather than curiosity-driven exploration (Fan et al., 2024). Such conditions undermine the core objective of basic education: to cultivate not only knowledgeable but also inventive and adaptive individuals capable of critical reflection and creative contribution. Therefore, fostering creativity and innovation at the foundational level requires a pedagogical shift toward autonomy-supportive environments that encourage experimentation, problem-finding, and cross-disciplinary learning. This transformation demands both institutional commitment and teacher empowerment to balance academic rigor with creative opportunity, ensuring that the classroom becomes a space for meaningful engagement, idea generation, and authentic learning experiences that prepare students to thrive in complex, evolving societies.

This persistent problem is deeply intertwined with the limited external support structures surrounding children's learning environments, particularly the insufficient collaboration among families, schools, and the broader community. The family, as the child's primary social and educational context, often assumes a narrow role confined to monitoring homework completion or tracking academic performance, while engagement in children's creative endeavors remains minimal. Such limited involvement reflects a lack of parental awareness and confidence regarding how to meaningfully nurture creativity at home. Many parents perceive creativity as an innate trait rather than a skill that can be developed through everyday activities such as storytelling, problem-solving, or project-based exploration. Consequently, children receive inconsistent messages, schools may encourage exploration

and innovation, while home environments emphasize results and discipline, creating a fragmented ecosystem that discourages risk-taking and creative experimentation. This lack of reinforcement from the family sphere diminishes students' intrinsic motivation and their willingness to engage in open-ended learning processes that involve uncertainty or potential failure. Empirical evidence underscores the vital role of parental involvement in shaping children's creative capacities. Active participation from parents in learning activities, through dialogue, encouragement, and collaborative exploration, has been shown to significantly enhance children's creative thinking skills, self-confidence, and persistence. The study conducted by Ulhaq and colleagues (2025) on fifth-grade elementary school students found a significant positive relationship between parental involvement and creative thinking ability, confirming that supportive parental engagement contributes to higher levels of creative expression and problem-solving competence. However, the study also highlights a key limitation: its focus was restricted to the dyadic relationship between family and school, without examining the broader influence of community participation in the educational ecosystem. In reality, communities serve as critical spaces where children can encounter diverse experiences, role models, and collaborative opportunities that reinforce creativity beyond the classroom. Therefore, advancing creativity and innovation in basic education requires extending the scope of collaboration, integrating families, schools, and communities into a synergistic network that collectively fosters children's motivation, exploration, and creative confidence.

Beyond the family sphere, the community serves as a crucial yet underutilized pillar in constructing a creative and participatory educational ecosystem. The community offers an expansive reservoir of informal learning opportunities that can complement formal schooling through spaces such as village halls, art studios, local libraries, cultural collectives, and environmental organizations. These community-based spaces have the potential to function as living laboratories for creativity, places where children can experiment, collaborate, and connect their classroom learning to real-world contexts. Ideally, communities should provide experiential learning opportunities that nurture imagination, problem-solving, and social responsibility through activities such as mural painting, local storytelling, environmental stewardship, and digital media creation. However, in practice, this potential remains largely untapped. Most community facilities are seldom integrated into the formal educational process, resulting in a disconnect between the rich cultural and social capital available in communities and the rigid structure of the school curriculum. Existing collaborations between schools and communities are often sporadic and ceremonial, limited to national holidays, local competitions, or incidental social events rather than structured, goal-oriented partnerships. Such collaborations, while symbolically meaningful, do little to create sustained pathways for creative development among elementary students. Empirical evidence strongly supports the value of more systematic school–community partnerships in enriching children's learning experiences. The study conducted by Anderson Butcher et al. (2022) highlighted that active community involvement in school programs expands educational resources, enhances relevance, and provides authentic, real-world learning experiences that textbooks and classroom instruction alone cannot offer. Through these interactions, students gain exposure to diverse perspectives and develop creative problem-solving skills grounded in social engagement. Nevertheless, the existing research, including Anderson-Butcher's study, has largely centered on school improvement and student engagement in general, without specifically examining how these partnerships directly cultivate creativity among elementary learners. This gap underscores the need for a more intentional and sustainable integration between schools and community institutions, where collaboration is embedded into the learning process rather than treated as an extracurricular extension. Strengthening this relationship could transform the community into an active co-educator, enriching students' creative growth through contextualized, culturally relevant, and socially connected learning experiences.

The research gap becomes clearer when reviewing recent literature. Keung, in his study titled *A family-school-community Partnership Supporting Play-based Learning* (Keung & Cheung, 2023) on family-school-community partnerships in play-based learning, found that the involvement of all parties enriches students' creative experiences. However, the focus of this study was still limited to play-based learning, not on innovation as a continuation of creativity. Similarly, Ngoben in his study titled *Establishing Sustainable School Community Partnership* (Ngoben, 2024) examined strategies for building sustainable school–community partnerships and found that collaboration based on trust and open communication can strengthen the educational ecosystem. However, this study only touched on partnership governance aspects, not on the development of students' creativity or innovation.

In addition, studies emphasizing parental involvement also provide important insights. Tang, in his research titled *How do Parents Influence Student Creativity?* (Tang et al., 2022) examined the

influence of parents on student creativity in STEM ideation and found that support in the form of guidance and resources had a positive impact on children's creative abilities. This finding is reinforced by Wang in his study titled *The Effect of Parenting Practices on Creativity* (Wang, 2023), which examined parenting practices and found that parental responsiveness and adequate support greatly determine the level of children's creativity. However, these studies only explored the relationship between parents and children's creativity without linking it to the role of schools and communities integratively.

Several recent studies conducted in various educational contexts further reinforce the importance of school–community collaboration in enhancing the overall quality of educational outcomes. Afrianti et al. (2024), in their study *“School and Community Partnership Model to Improve the Quality of Educational Environment,”* provide compelling empirical evidence that structured partnerships between schools and local communities significantly improve the quality and inclusiveness of the learning environment. Their findings reveal that community engagement acts as a catalyst for creating supportive educational ecosystems where resources, expertise, and cultural capital are shared to enrich students' learning experiences. In this model, communities are not treated merely as external supporters but as active co-creators who participate in program design, implementation, and evaluation. Afrianti's research highlights that such collaboration enhances not only physical learning conditions, such as access to better facilities and resources but also non-material dimensions including students' motivation, sense of belonging, and social-emotional well-being.

Moreover, the study emphasizes that the effectiveness of school–community partnerships relies profoundly on the cultivation of mutual trust, shared responsibility, and continuous communication between educational institutions and local stakeholders. These three elements function as the social infrastructure that sustains collaboration and ensures that it remains purposeful and equitable. When communities are engaged through participatory mechanisms such as school committees, local education forums, and community-driven learning projects, they contribute not only material resources but also local wisdom, cultural insights, and practical expertise that expand the scope of formal education. Through such involvement, students are exposed to contextual and experiential learning opportunities that connect classroom knowledge to real-world challenges, thereby fostering deeper understanding, empathy, and social awareness.

The findings of Afrianti et al. (2024) affirm that community participation should not be perceived as a peripheral or optional component of education, but rather as a foundational pillar of quality and inclusivity. Their study illustrates how active collaboration between schools and communities transforms the educational environment into a shared ecosystem of growth and innovation, characterized by collective ownership and a shared commitment to improvement. This partnership approach allows education to transcend institutional boundaries, making learning a communal process rooted in cultural, social, and environmental realities. In doing so, the collaboration not only strengthens the relevance of education but also enhances its sustainability by aligning academic goals with the lived experiences and developmental needs of students.

Based on the above review, several research gaps need to be addressed through this study. First, discussions about family involvement in basic education remain too narrow because they are often directed at academic support, whereas the aspect of developing children's creativity requires equally important attention. This shows the need to expand the scope of study so that family involvement is not only understood as learning supervision but also as facilitation of creativity and innovation (Guo & Zhao, 2025). Second, partnerships between schools and communities have indeed been widely studied, but their orientation generally focuses on school governance and management. Few studies have directed their analysis toward the impact of school–community collaboration on the formation of a creative ecosystem for elementary school students. In fact, communities possess social, cultural, and economic resources that can serve as tools for developing creativity. Third, studies on creativity in basic education often stand alone without linking it to innovation. Creativity is considered complete when students can generate ideas, while innovation as the implementation of those ideas is rarely studied. In fact, these two concepts must be viewed holistically, because creativity without innovation will only stop at ideas, without real contributions to learning or daily life. Fourth, research in the Indonesian context remains very limited, especially studies that integrate the roles of families, schools, and communities simultaneously in supporting students' creativity and innovation. Many studies focus only on one or two actors, thus failing to provide a comprehensive picture of how these three pillars of education can work synergistically. In fact, Indonesia's local dynamics, rich in culture, social structure, and community

wisdom, have great potential to serve as the foundation for developing a creative education model (Moon et al., n.d.).

The primary purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the collaborative relationships among families, schools, and communities in fostering the creativity and innovation of elementary school students within the framework of the Tri Center Education model. Specifically, the study aims to (1) describe the various forms and practices of collaboration established among families, schools, and communities that support creative and innovative learning experiences; (2) analyze the school's role as a central mediator and institutional connector that harmonizes the functions of families and communities to create a coherent and participatory learning ecosystem; (3) identify the contributions of community involvement in providing creative spaces, learning opportunities, and cultural resources that nurture students' innovative capacities; and (4) examine the obstacles and challenges that hinder effective collaboration while proposing strategic mitigation measures to ensure the sustainability and scalability of such partnerships. Through these objectives, the study seeks to contribute both theoretical insights into the dynamics of interinstitutional collaboration and practical recommendations for strengthening creative and innovative education in elementary schools.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to conduct an in-depth exploration of the collaborative dynamics among families, schools, and communities in nurturing the creativity and innovation of elementary school students. The qualitative approach was considered the most appropriate methodology because the research sought to capture the processes, meanings, and lived experiences of educational stakeholders engaged in fostering a creative learning ecosystem. The case study design facilitated a contextualized understanding of collaboration within real-life educational environments, allowing for the identification of interactional patterns and institutional practices unique to the Tri Center Education model. The research participants comprised school principals, classroom teachers, parents, and community leaders directly involved in elementary education activities. Data collection was conducted through multiple qualitative techniques, including semi-structured, in-depth interviews to capture perceptions and experiential narratives; participatory observations of school-based creative programs such as art exhibitions, environmental projects, and performance activities; and document analysis of school policies, activity reports, and community partnership records. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their active involvement in implementing Tri Center collaborations, ensuring that the dataset reflected authentic, experience-based insights across diverse educational contexts.

The data analysis followed a systematic thematic procedure encompassing stages of open coding, categorization, and thematic synthesis, guided by the study's objectives to identify the nature of collaboration, its impacts on creativity, contributions to innovation, and the challenges encountered along with mitigation strategies. The analytical process was iterative, involving continuous comparison between data segments to refine emerging categories and ensure conceptual coherence. To uphold credibility and trustworthiness, the study employed data triangulation across interviews, observations, and documentary evidence, combined with member checking to validate findings with participants and peer debriefing to minimize researcher bias. Analytical rigor was maintained through iterative cycles of data reduction, narrative reconstruction, and interpretive synthesis, enabling the emergence of grounded theoretical insights. This methodological framework provided a comprehensive, contextually grounded understanding of how the Tri Center Education model can be effectively implemented to enhance creative learning environments and innovative capacity among elementary school students, offering both empirical depth and theoretical contribution to the discourse on participatory and collaborative education.

Result and Discussion

Family collaboration in basic education is increasingly understood as a multidimensional construct that extends far beyond the traditional notions of academic supervision or school compliance, encompassing the emotional, cognitive, and environmental support systems essential for nurturing creativity and innovation in children. Families act as the first and most influential educators, shaping how children perceive learning, problem-solving, and self-expression. Within the home environment, parents have the power to cultivate curiosity and imagination through everyday interactions that invite

questioning, experimentation, and exploration. For instance, providing simple materials for hands-on experimentation such as art supplies, recycled tools, or household items to creates tangible opportunities for children to engage in open-ended creative play. Moreover, emotional encouragement during moments of frustration or creative struggle reinforces persistence and resilience, allowing children to perceive failure not as a threat but as a natural part of the learning and discovery process. Parental participation in discussing new ideas or exploring creative solutions together also signals validation of a child's intellectual and imaginative contributions, strengthening their confidence to think independently. Such patterns of engagement align with psychological research emphasizing that family environments characterized by emotional warmth, autonomy support, and intellectual stimulation produce children with higher levels of divergent thinking, intrinsic motivation, and creative adaptability. In this regard, family collaboration becomes not just supportive but transformative, turning everyday home experiences into microcosms of creative learning. Empirical evidence reinforces this claim: Fan et al. (2024) found that consistent parental involvement at the elementary school level is positively correlated with enhanced creative outcomes, particularly in areas of cognitive flexibility, emotional resilience, and divergent thinking. Their findings suggest that creativity flourishes when material support and emotional reinforcement are interwoven, stimulating both the intrinsic motivation and the perseverance required for creative achievement. Thus, families play a pivotal role not only in academic development but also in cultivating the psychological foundations such as curiosity, confidence, and persistence that sustain creativity and innovation throughout a child's educational journey.

Moreover, family participation in reflective dialogue and idea-centered discussions plays a crucial role in cultivating children's critical reflection, metacognitive awareness, and creative problem-solving abilities. When parents engage their children in open-ended conversations to posing exploratory questions, encouraging alternative viewpoints, and affirming creative attempts, they effectively model the cognitive flexibility and curiosity that underpin creative reasoning. Such interactions extend beyond the transfer of knowledge, they shape the very processes by which children learn to think critically, assess ideas, and generate innovative solutions. By creating a conversational space where questioning and experimentation are normalized, parents help children internalize the notion that ideas are dynamic and improvable rather than fixed or absolute. This dialogic process serves as a form of *guided discovery*, in which adult scaffolding supports the child's gradual movement toward independent creative thinking and reflective self-regulation. Empirical findings reinforce this conceptual view. Tang et al. (2022) demonstrated that when parents engage in conceptual guidance, provide material resources for inquiry, and participate in shared exploration, children's creative thinking skills significantly improve, particularly in STEM-oriented and problem-based learning contexts. These forms of parental engagement strengthen both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of creativity by combining encouragement with structure, thereby mirroring the same autonomy-supportive and scaffolded balance that effective teachers employ in classrooms. Consequently, family collaboration functions not merely as moral or emotional support, but as a dynamic learning partnership that bridges imagination with the early practices of innovation. When families assume the role of active co-creators rather than passive observers, children experience creativity as an embedded aspect of daily life, not as an extracurricular pursuit or isolated school project. This reconceptualization positions the family as a critical agent in the educational ecosystem, capable of transforming creativity and innovation from aspirational goals into lived, continuous experiences that sustain curiosity and inventive thinking across both home and school environments.

The quality of family interaction plays a pivotal role in determining the effectiveness of collaborative efforts within basic education. Meaningful parental engagement in creative education is highly dependent on the quality and continuity of communication established between families and schools. Productive collaboration arises when schools maintain open channels for feedback, promote reciprocal communication, and value parental perspectives as integral to the learning process (Arrazola & Bozalongo, 2015). This underscores that family support should not be confined to the provision of logistical or material assistance, but should instead be conceptualized as part of an ongoing dialogical relationship between home and school. Within this framework, family collaboration can be classified into three interrelated dimensions such as material support, which involves providing learning resources and creative tools like psychological support, which encompasses encouragement, appreciation, and emotional reinforcement, and ideational support, which includes active participation in discussions, brainstorming, and shared problem-solving. Together, these dimensions foster a nurturing domestic

ecosystem that sustains creativity, bolsters confidence, and enables the emergence of innovative ideas in children's learning processes.

Expanding beyond the familial domain, community involvement within the framework of the Tri Center Education concept functions as an essential extension of the learning environment, effectively bridging formal education with real-life experiences. Community institutions, such as village halls, art studios, libraries, and cultural associations, offer authentic contexts that broaden children's exposure to diverse creative practices. When communities participate in school programs, they provide students with opportunities to access wider resources, engage in experiential learning, and contextualize creativity within societal and cultural realities (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2022). This perspective positions the community not merely as a supplementary component but as a co-educator and social laboratory for creative and innovative development. In practice, community-based activities, such as local exhibitions, art workshops, and collaborative cultural events, have been shown to strengthen students' intrinsic motivation and highlight the social relevance of creativity. Such engagements allow students to experiment, test ideas in authentic settings, and receive informal mentorship from practitioners and artisans. As Keung and Cheung (2023) note, community participation enriches the creative learning process by integrating social, cultural, and experiential dimensions, thereby reinforcing the transformative potential of creativity and innovation in holistic education.

Beyond the provision of physical infrastructure, communities serve as dynamic catalysts for educational innovation through the mobilization of social capital, a form of collective resource encompassing networks, trust, shared norms, and cultural assets that directly enhance students' creative and intellectual growth. Community involvement transforms education from a school-centered endeavor into a collaborative ecosystem where diverse actors, including cultural leaders, local artists, entrepreneurs, and environmental advocates, contribute complementary expertise and perspectives. By integrating these voices into the educational process, students gain access to a plurality of experiences that transcend disciplinary boundaries, fostering interdisciplinary and contextually grounded learning. Such exposure allows learners to connect academic concepts with authentic social and environmental challenges, thereby reimagining creativity not merely as a mental process but as a socially embedded and collaborative practice. These authentic learning encounters also nurture empathy, cultural awareness, and civic responsibility, key attributes of 21st-century creative citizenship.

Furthermore, active community participation deepens relational synergy among families, schools, and local stakeholders by creating networks rooted in shared values of collaboration, sustainability, and innovation. This triadic partnership ensures that creativity and problem-solving are continuously reinforced across the multiple environments in which children learn and grow. When communities actively engage in educational initiatives, they provide both material resources and intellectual mentorship, expanding students' opportunities to engage in reflection, inquiry, and applied innovation. As Li and Li (2025) underscore, such engagement plays a pivotal role not only in supplying tangible and cognitive support but also in cultivating critical reflection, a foundational skill that underpins innovative and analytical thinking. Through these mechanisms, communities evolve into co-educators, living extensions of the classroom that contextualize students' creative ideas within the cultural, social, and environmental realities of their surroundings. In doing so, they transform education into a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and creativity, where learning becomes a collaborative act of cultural preservation, social participation, and forward-looking innovation.

In this broader educational ecosystem, communities assume strategic and multidimensional roles that complement and extend the functions of families and schools in cultivating creativity and innovation. Their contributions can be understood across three interrelated domains that collectively strengthen the foundation of participatory education. First, communities operate as providers of alternative learning spaces, creating environments beyond formal classrooms where experiential, project-based, and inquiry-driven learning naturally unfold. These spaces such as local art studios, community gardens, libraries, science clubs, or cultural centers, enable students to engage with tangible projects that connect knowledge to lived experience, transforming learning from abstract instruction into authentic practice. By situating education in real-world contexts, communities make creativity more accessible, personally meaningful, and socially relevant.

Second, communities serve as sources of mentorship and social capital, linking students with local practitioners, artisans, professionals, and cultural figures who act as informal educators and role models. These intergenerational exchanges enrich students' understanding of creativity as both a cognitive and cultural act, fostering resilience, collaboration, and ethical awareness. Mentorship also

bridges the gap between theory and application, showing students how innovative thinking operates in domains such as entrepreneurship, environmental conservation, and the arts. Third, communities facilitate network expansion, transforming individual creative ideas into socially impactful innovations by providing exposure to diverse audiences, resources, and collaborative opportunities. Through exhibitions, festivals, local competitions, and digital platforms, communities amplify students' voices and validate their contributions to collective well-being.

Together, these interconnected roles redefine the relationship between education and society, positioning creativity and innovation not as isolated personal traits but as shared social endeavors sustained through cooperation and mutual learning. This triadic synergy linking families, schools, and communities, creates an inclusive and participatory ecosystem that supports children's holistic growth. It fosters an educational culture in which imagination, collaboration, and civic engagement intertwine, ensuring that creative development becomes both a personal pursuit and a communal responsibility essential for building resilient, future-ready generations.

Beyond the roles of families and communities, schools serve as the central and integrative mediators that weave together the diverse elements of the educational ecosystem into a coherent, collaborative, and sustainable framework. This mediating function is realized through systematic program coordination, effective communication facilitation, and joint agenda-setting that ensure the initiatives of families, communities, and external stakeholders remain harmonized with shared educational goals. As institutional anchors, schools hold the unique capacity to translate abstract visions of creativity and innovation into concrete, actionable programs that can be consistently implemented across different learning environments. Their strategic position allows them to function as organizational nodes—bridging the nurturing potential of families with the experiential and cultural capital of communities, while aligning both with the pedagogical structures and curricular frameworks of formal education.

In fulfilling this integrative role, schools not only provide direction and coherence to collaborative initiatives but also cultivate shared ownership and accountability among all participating actors. By aligning creative learning goals with institutional planning, schools ensure that innovation becomes embedded within everyday educational practices rather than treated as a temporary or extracurricular pursuit. This capacity to coordinate and unify multiple stakeholders highlights schools as key agents of transformation in the Tri Center Education model, responsible for sustaining synergy, maintaining program continuity, and fostering a learning culture that consistently nurtures creativity, collaboration, and innovation among elementary school students.

However, this mediating role is not without its complexities. Renbarger et al. (2025) emphasize that one of the most persistent obstacles in educational collaboration is communication fragmentation among stakeholders, a problem that often leads to overlapping initiatives, inconsistent expectations, and disjointed program execution. This fragmentation underscores the critical need for schools to serve as institutional mediators capable of harmonizing diverse perspectives, clarifying objectives, and establishing common ground for cooperation. Through structured coordination mechanisms such as inter-sectoral committees, joint planning workshops, and continuous dialogue platforms, schools can facilitate the flow of information, align stakeholder goals, and promote accountability across collaborative networks. In this capacity, schools transcend their traditional role as instructional institutions and evolve into collaborative learning hubs, spaces where multiple actors converge to co-design, implement, and evaluate creative learning initiatives. By functioning as integrative nodes within this triadic relationship, schools ensure program coherence, reinforce shared responsibility, and foster sustainable synergy among families, communities, and educational authorities in nurturing creativity and innovation from the ground up.

Schools occupy a central and strategic position in orchestrating the collaborative framework that sustains the effectiveness of the Tri Center Education model, which integrates the complementary roles of families, schools, and communities in nurturing creativity and innovation. Their responsibilities extend far beyond the traditional realm of instructional delivery; schools serve as collaborative leaders and institutional coordinators, ensuring that the synergy among all educational stakeholders is systematically organized, purpose-driven, and enduring. The success of this triadic relationship hinges not merely on goodwill or informal cooperation, but on the establishment of clearly defined roles, structured communication channels, and shared leadership mechanisms that cultivate transparency, mutual accountability, and sustained trust. As Anderson-Butcher et al. (2022) assert, effective

educational collaboration requires intentional design, where institutional coordination functions as the connective tissue that transforms fragmented efforts into cohesive, goal-oriented action.

In practical implementation, schools can institutionalize collaboration by establishing dedicated liaison or coordination teams composed of teachers, parent representatives, and community leaders, functioning as intermediaries that ensure effective communication, participatory decision-making, and alignment between collaborative programs and the school's pedagogical vision. These cross-sectoral teams provide a formal structure through which ideas are exchanged, initiatives are evaluated, and responsibilities are distributed equitably. They also play a crucial role in translating abstract goals of creativity and innovation into operational programs that can be continuously monitored and refined. Through these mechanisms, schools prevent collaboration from deteriorating into sporadic, ceremonial, or symbolic engagement; instead, they embed it as a permanent and integral dimension of the educational process. In doing so, schools become institutional anchors that stabilize and amplify the collaborative energy generated by families and communities, transforming collective participation into a systematic and sustainable force for educational innovation and student development.

Furthermore, schools function as mediators that reconcile the often-divergent expectations and priorities of families and communities, ensuring that collaboration remains cohesive and purpose-driven. Parents commonly emphasize academic performance, discipline, and the provision of tangible learning resources, while community stakeholders may focus on broader objectives such as cultural enrichment, environmental awareness, and social participation. These differences, if left unmanaged, can lead to fragmented efforts and misaligned goals. Thus, schools must assume the role of dialogue facilitators, bridging these perspectives through structured communication and consensus-building processes that translate multiple viewpoints into a shared educational vision grounded in the joint cultivation of creativity and innovation. This mediating role requires schools to exercise both relational sensitivity and strategic leadership, balancing the pragmatic concerns of families with the transformative aspirations of community actors.

This integrative capacity aligns with Preston's (2024) assertion that the success of school-community partnerships largely depends on the school's ability to orchestrate a unifying vision and consolidate various stakeholder interests into coherent, goal-oriented initiatives. In fulfilling this function, schools transcend their traditional identity as mere formal learning institutions and evolve into catalysts of dynamic collaboration, shaping ecosystems where creativity is not treated as an incidental byproduct but as a systematically nurtured value embedded in everyday pedagogical practice. Through regular consultation forums, co-designed programs, and participatory evaluation cycles, schools maintain alignment across stakeholders, ensuring that collective initiatives remain responsive to both local contexts and student developmental needs. By preserving this integrative and facilitative role, schools secure the continuity, inclusiveness, and strategic direction necessary to sustain Tri Center collaboration as a cornerstone of creative and innovative elementary education. This sustained synergy not only enhances the quality of learning experiences but also embeds innovation as a shared cultural practice, reaffirming the school's position as the institutional nexus of educational transformation.

This integrative capacity aligns with Preston's (2024) assertion that the success of school-community partnerships largely depends on the school's ability to orchestrate a unifying vision and consolidate various stakeholder interests into coherent, goal-oriented initiatives. In fulfilling this function, schools transcend their traditional identity as mere formal learning institutions and evolve into catalysts of dynamic collaboration, shaping ecosystems where creativity is not treated as an incidental byproduct but as a systematically nurtured value embedded in everyday pedagogical practice. Through regular consultation forums, co-designed programs, and participatory evaluation cycles, schools maintain alignment across stakeholders, ensuring that collective initiatives remain responsive to both local contexts and student developmental needs. By preserving this integrative and facilitative role, schools secure the continuity, inclusiveness, and strategic direction necessary to sustain Tri Center collaboration as a cornerstone of creative and innovative elementary education. This sustained synergy not only enhances the quality of learning experiences but also embeds innovation as a shared cultural practice, reaffirming the school's position as the institutional nexus of educational transformation.

Collaboration among families, schools, and communities forms the cornerstone of students' creative development in basic education, as it integrates emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of learning into a cohesive framework. Family participation, particularly through ideational and emotional support, plays a vital role in nurturing children's confidence to articulate ideas and explore imaginative possibilities. A home environment that values curiosity and responsiveness creates the psychological

safety necessary for experimentation and divergent thinking, key indicators of creative potential (Albari et al., 2013). Within this ecosystem, schools act as facilitators and incubators of creativity, providing structured opportunities for imagination, reflection, and problem-solving through cross-disciplinary learning. Integrating creative projects into the core curriculum enables students to practice ideation within authentic contexts, fostering self-expression and reflective inquiry. Davies et al. (2013) highlight that such integration not only strengthens cognitive flexibility but also encourages students to view creativity as a transferable skill applicable to diverse learning domains. Meanwhile, community engagement further amplifies this process by extending creative experiences beyond the classroom. Community-based spaces, such as art studios, local museums, and cultural centers, expose children to broader social and symbolic contexts that shape creative meaning-making. Bae (2020) and Barrett (2020) confirm that culturally rich environments significantly enhance children's creative dimensions, offering stimuli that connect imagination with local identity and collective expression.

Importantly, the creativity nurtured through family-school-community collaboration transcends the stage of ideation and evolves into practical innovation when supported consistently across all three educational centers. When children's initial ideas, such as drawings, stories, or conceptual sketches, are further developed with teacher guidance and community resources, they gain the capacity to transform abstract ideas into tangible products or performances. Families contribute to this transformation by providing moral encouragement and material support, allowing children to experiment and refine their ideas through hands-on activities. Taneri (2018) emphasizes that such parental involvement, both instructional and logistical, significantly facilitates the translation of creativity into innovation. Communities complement this process by offering access to non-formal mentors, local artists, cultural practitioners, or artisans, who guide children in applying their creative ideas in real-world contexts. The visibility of these role models reinforces the connection between imagination and practical realization, demonstrating how creative thinking can yield meaningful, socially embedded outcomes (Bricheno & Thornton, 2007). Collectively, the Tri Center collaboration, linking families, schools, and communities, functions as a holistic creative ecosystem that not only cultivates ideation but also sustains the continuous transformation of imagination into socially and culturally valuable innovations.

This collaborative framework exerts a profound influence on students' motivation, self-confidence, and sense of agency, reinforcing the emotional and social dimensions of learning that underpin sustained creativity. When children perceive that their ideas are acknowledged, valued, and celebrated by both their parents and community members, they develop a stronger sense of self-worth and creative ownership. Such recognition nurtures self-efficacy, a psychological determinant that motivates children to persist in creative exploration and take intellectual risks essential for innovation (Valqueresma et al., 2022). The participatory nature of family-school-community collaboration transforms learning into a socially meaningful experience, where students view their creative efforts not as isolated tasks but as contributions to a collective enterprise. Moreover, the innovative outputs generated through this collaborative model often transcend cognitive and aesthetic dimensions to embody social, ethical, and cultural values. For instance, when students create artworks or functional objects from recycled materials provided by parents, they not only engage in creative problem-solving but also internalize principles of environmental stewardship and sustainability. This finding aligns with Sahlberg et al. (2019) and Zurita et al. (2025), who emphasize that community-based creative projects simultaneously cultivate sustainability values and enhance students' innovative competencies by connecting ecological awareness with creative production.

The analysis further elucidates that creativity and innovation are inherently interdependent processes within the Tri Center Education paradigm. Creativity serves as the generative phase, encompassing imagination, ideation, and conceptual exploration, while innovation represents the transformative phase that converts these ideas into tangible, socially relevant outcomes. The seamless transition from creativity to innovation depends on the coexistence and mutual reinforcement of support from families, schools, and communities. In isolation, creativity risks remaining latent and unexpressed, while innovation devoid of creativity lacks originality and transformative potential. As Runco (2019) articulates, creativity without innovation is "unrealized potential," and innovation without creativity is "mechanical replication" (Zurita et al., 2025). Therefore, sustaining creative and innovative behavior in elementary education requires an integrated ecosystem in which emotional encouragement, institutional facilitation, and communal engagement converge to transform imagination into meaningful, value-driven innovation.

Parental time constraints represent one of the most persistent barriers to sustained engagement in fostering children's creativity within basic education. The demands of modern life, such as extended working hours, dual-income family structures, and inflexible occupational schedules, often result in what researchers describe as "time poverty," a condition that severely limits parents' ability to participate meaningfully in school-based or home-based creative activities. This constraint not only reduces opportunities for joint creative exploration but also diminishes the frequency of communication between parents and educators, which is essential for maintaining alignment in creative learning goals. As Conway et al. (2021) note, the limited availability of time prevents parents from providing consistent ideational or emotional support, confining their engagement to occasional events such as exhibitions or school performances. Consequently, the absence of sustained parental presence may lead to fragmented creative experiences, undermining the continuity required for the long-term development of students' innovative capacities.

Beyond the issue of time constraints, the lack of creative literacy among parents and community members represents an equally critical barrier to the development of effective and sustainable collaboration in the educational ecosystem. Many parents remain unaware of their potential role as active facilitators of creativity, often limiting their support to tangible or financial contributions such as providing art materials or sponsoring school events, rather than engaging in the cognitive and reflective dimensions of creativity. This narrow perception perpetuates a transactional model of engagement, where parental involvement is confined to meeting material needs rather than nurturing ideation, curiosity, and independent thinking at home. Consequently, children's creative potential is underdeveloped, as home environments fail to function as spaces of dialogue, experimentation, and critical reflection that could complement school-based creative learning.

Epstein (2018), through a comprehensive systematic review, underscores that disparities in both educational and creative literacy among families significantly hinder equitable collaboration within family-school partnerships. When parents and community members lack the conceptual understanding, confidence, and pedagogical awareness needed to support creativity, their engagement becomes sporadic and superficial, reducing collaboration to occasional participation rather than sustained partnership. To overcome this challenge, targeted capacity-building initiatives are essential. Programs such as parental workshops, creative literacy training sessions, and community-based learning initiatives should be systematically integrated into school outreach efforts to empower all stakeholders with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to foster creative learning. These initiatives must also be contextually responsive, acknowledging local cultural values, socioeconomic realities, and varying levels of educational attainment to ensure inclusivity and effectiveness. By strengthening creative literacy across all stakeholder groups, schools can transform passive parental support into active, reflective collaboration, thereby building a more cohesive and participatory foundation for the cultivation of children's creativity and innovation.

Discontinuity in communication among key stakeholders families, schools, and communities often generates misaligned expectations regarding the goals and outcomes of collaborative efforts. Each actor tends to prioritize distinct objectives: parents frequently emphasize academic performance as a primary measure of success, schools focus on cultivating creativity and problem-solving skills, while communities place greater importance on cultural preservation and social engagement. When communication channels are weak or informal, these differing priorities can lead to fragmented initiatives and misunderstandings that undermine the coherence of collaborative programs. Sustaining effective collaboration therefore requires structured, transparent, and reciprocal communication mechanisms that facilitate the alignment of goals and foster mutual understanding among stakeholders. Ngoben (2024) emphasizes that open and trust-based communication is the cornerstone of enduring school-community partnerships, as it nurtures shared accountability, prevents role ambiguity, and promotes continuous feedback essential for adaptive program development. Schools must thus serve as mediating institutions that coordinate these interactions through regular meetings, collaborative planning sessions, and reflective forums where all voices (families, teachers, and community members) are equally valued.

Another significant challenge lies in the limited availability of material and creative infrastructure to support innovation-oriented educational activities. Many elementary schools, particularly in resource-constrained settings, lack adequate facilities such as art studios, maker spaces, or multipurpose halls that could accommodate hands-on, collaborative projects. Likewise, communities often face similar limitations in providing access to creative venues or equipment that encourage

sustained engagement. These material constraints restrict students' opportunities for experimentation and cross-disciplinary learning, thereby curbing the full realization of the Tri Center Education model. According to Anderson-Butcher et al. (2022), budgetary constraints remain one of the most pervasive barriers to the development and continuity of school–family–community collaborations. In many cases, financial limitations hinder the establishment of creative programs, professional development for teachers, and joint initiatives with community partners. Overcoming these challenges requires strategic resource mobilization, including partnerships with local governments, NGOs, and private sectors, to ensure that collaborative creative education is both inclusive and sustainable.

To effectively address these capacity-related challenges, schools must implement a strategic, inclusive, and systemic approach that builds the competencies of all stakeholders within the Tri Center collaboration between families, schools, and communities. Strengthening collaboration requires not only structural coordination but also the development of human capacity through continuous learning and empowerment. One critical strategy involves designing and delivering targeted training programs for parents and community leaders, with a focus on enhancing their understanding of creative pedagogy, participatory roles, and co-learning practices. These programs should prioritize practical and contextualized strategies, such as facilitating open-ended dialogue with children, integrating creative thinking into daily routines, providing access to diverse materials for experimentation, and encouraging inquiry-based exploration at home and in community settings. Such initiatives transform parents and community members from passive supporters into active co-educators, capable of fostering curiosity, problem-solving, and creative resilience in children.

To address time-related constraints and accessibility issues, schools can employ flexible participation mechanisms that accommodate the realities of modern family life. This includes the use of hybrid or asynchronous engagement models, such as online workshops, digital learning platforms, and interactive mobile applications, which allow parents to participate in creative learning activities regardless of location or schedule. Furthermore, the establishment of liaison or coordination teams comprising teachers, parent representatives, and community figures can significantly improve communication flow and collaborative decision-making. These teams serve as mediating structures that bridge institutional gaps, synchronize planning, and monitor the implementation of joint programs. This approach embodies the principles of the Community Collaboration Model, which advocates for distributed and collaborative leadership frameworks that prevent communication breakdowns, reduce role ambiguity, and ensure the sustainability and accountability of educational partnerships (Anderson-Butcher et al., 2022). By institutionalizing such inclusive structures and adaptive practices, schools can create a robust support system that not only mitigates existing barriers but also sustains long-term, innovation-oriented collaboration, enabling families and communities to become integral partners in shaping creative and future-ready learners.

In parallel, effectively addressing resource and infrastructure limitations in basic education demands the adoption of innovative financing mechanisms and multi-sector partnerships that transcend traditional funding models. Schools can strategically collaborate with private sector entities, local governments, and civil society organizations through diverse frameworks such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs, community grant schemes, and social entrepreneurship initiatives to mobilize financial and material support for creativity-oriented learning facilities. These partnerships not only mitigate financial constraints but also foster collective ownership and shared accountability in the long-term sustainability of creativity-based education. By leveraging cross-sector collaboration, schools can access a broader range of resources like technological tools, expertise, mentorship networks, and cultural capital that enrich the learning environment and expand the scope of creative pedagogical practices. Such initiatives also have a multiplier effect, as they strengthen the social fabric between educational institutions and the communities they serve, cultivating a shared vision for developing adaptable and innovative future generations.

However, for these collaborations to be genuinely transformative, they must move beyond symbolic or ad hoc engagement. Institutionalization is critical, creative partnerships should be systematically integrated into the school's curriculum, governance structures, and annual academic cycles rather than treated as supplementary or extracurricular endeavors. Embedding creative and innovative projects into curricular frameworks ensures that they receive consistent administrative support, assessment mechanisms, and resource allocation. Moreover, establishing regular joint evaluations among families, schools, and community representatives enhances transparency and ensures program continuity. These evaluations serve as participatory platforms where stakeholders collectively

identify achievements, address implementation gaps, and co-develop adaptive strategies responsive to evolving educational needs. As Renbarger et al. (2025) highlight, periodic collaborative assessments empower all parties to reflect critically on progress, refine pedagogical approaches, and sustain a shared commitment to creativity and innovation within the foundational years of education. Through such structured partnerships, creativity ceases to be an optional enrichment activity and instead becomes a core pillar of educational development, embedded within institutional culture, community collaboration, and national educational goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings demonstrate that the effectiveness of the Tri Center Education model, integrating families, communities, and schools depends on the depth and sustainability of collaboration among its three pillars. Families provide the emotional and cognitive foundation for creativity by nurturing curiosity, resilience, and self-expression within supportive home environments, while communities extend this foundation by offering authentic, socially grounded learning spaces that connect creativity with real-world contexts and collective values. Schools, positioned at the center of this ecosystem, function as institutional mediators and collaborative leaders, translating the creative potential of families and communities into structured, goal-oriented educational programs. Their capacity to coordinate communication, harmonize diverse expectations, and institutionalize creative initiatives ensures that innovation is not incidental but systematically embedded in educational practice. Together, these interdependent actors transform creativity and innovation from isolated aspirations into sustained, participatory, and culturally embedded processes, enabling basic education to evolve into a holistic platform for shaping adaptive, imaginative, and socially responsible learners prepared to thrive in an ever-changing global landscape.

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