BEYOND ARTS AND CRAFTS: A DEVELOPMENTALLY RESPONSIVE MODEL OF SCHOOL READINESS IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Background. Rapid changes in educational institutions call for a theoretically defensible interpretation of art-based school-readiness pedagogy. The presence of digital or artistic tools does not itself demonstrate improvement, and fragmented implementation can obscure developmental and professional purposes. Objective. This article examines methodological foundations and develops a context-sensitive model for art-based school-readiness pedagogy within the preschool and teacher-development environment of Uzbekistan. Methods. A qualitative conceptual study was conducted through purposive synthesis of ten identifiable sources published during 2021–2025, comparative conceptual analysis, principle extraction, mechanism mapping and pedagogical modelling. The work neither represents a systematic database review nor reports original participant data. Results. The proposed ASRM articulates five interconnected domains, a five-stage improvement process, suggested observation and decision protocols, illustrative implementation cases and criteria for subsequent validation. The model distinguishes illustrative indicators from empirically demonstrated effects. Conclusion. Art-based school preparation should be evaluated as an intentional, developmentally responsive pedagogical process, not as decorative activity or accelerated academic drilling. Expert appraisal, feasibility pilots, longitudinal observation and independent assessment of equity and ethical risks are necessary before effectiveness can be claimed.

Keywords: preschool education; school readiness; art-based technologies; creative pedagogy; child development; play-based learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education quality has become a multidimensional policy problem rather than a question of supplying more content or additional institutional equipment. The distinction is critical for art-based school-readiness pedagogy, where programme labels can suggest innovation without clarifying what changes in professional practice, children's participation or educational opportunity. A defensible approach begins by specifying the educational purposes at stake, the mechanisms expected to achieve them and the evidence necessary to judge whether those mechanisms function.

The present article examines the problem in the context of Uzbekistan, where institutions responsible for preschool provision and teacher development face the dual challenge of preserving meaningful professional traditions while responding to new tools, public expectations and patterns of inequality. International literature offers useful principles, but institutional design must remain sensitive to local governance capacity, linguistic diversity, parental expectations and access to resources. A borrowed intervention should not be treated as universally valid merely because it has been implemented elsewhere.

This study uses the term art-based school-readiness pedagogy in a precise sense: a developmentally appropriate, inclusive sequence of mediated artistic experiences that integrates imagination, expressive language, self-regulation, social participation, motor coordination and reflective evidence of school readiness. The definition makes three claims. First, the unit of analysis is a connected system of actions rather than an isolated instrument. Second, educational quality depends on interaction and interpretation, not only on visible products. Third, the possibility of responsible adaptation must be built into any model that is intended to support multiple institutions and learners.

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An important gap arises between policy aspiration and operational practice. Reports and contemporary studies identify valuable directions, yet moving from principles to a sequence of decisions, competencies, safeguards and validation instruments remains difficult. The article responds to this design problem through a conceptual rather than experimental contribution. It does not claim to have surveyed institutions or measured changes in achievement; the proposed framework is a hypothesis-generating organisational instrument.

Recent international work provides complementary but non-identical points of reference [6, 3, 10]. It is therefore important to compare what each source actually warrants. Descriptive policy recommendations justify governance considerations; studies of particular interventions support cautious explanations of potential mechanisms; and normative principles identify values that education systems should protect. None, alone, proves that the model advanced here is effective in Uzbek preschool institutions.

The core argument is as follows: Art-based school preparation should be evaluated as an intentional, developmentally responsive pedagogical process, not as decorative activity or accelerated academic drilling. This argument also implies that evaluation cannot be reduced to compliance with a digital platform, the attractiveness of an artistic product or the completion of an administrative form. The underlying educational process must remain visible through evidence collected in authentic settings and interpreted by relevant stakeholders.

The investigation addresses four guiding research questions:

RQ1. Which dimensions of school readiness can be theoretically connected to guided artistic activity?

RQ2. What methodological principles distinguish developmental art-based pedagogy from reproduction-focused craft tasks?

RQ3. How can art activities be sequenced and assessed with attention to inclusion, agency and family participation?

RQ4. Which design and evaluation conditions would be needed to establish actual effectiveness?

The first conceptual challenge is the relationship between expressive language and narration and the larger educational purpose. Children explain images, sequence stories, negotiate meaning and build vocabulary. This consideration is not a marginal technical detail: it determines which kinds of professional activity should be valued, how interpretations might be checked and how errors may be corrected before institutional routines become fixed.

The first conceptual challenge is the relationship between self-regulation and executive processes and the larger educational purpose. Children plan, switch strategies, share tools and persist after difficulty. This consideration is not a marginal technical detail: it determines which kinds of professional activity should be valued, how interpretations might be checked and how errors may be corrected before institutional routines become fixed.

The first conceptual challenge is the relationship between socio-emotional competence and the larger educational purpose. Children identify feelings and take others' perspectives through shared artistic forms. This consideration is not a marginal technical detail: it determines which kinds of professional activity should be valued, how interpretations might be checked and how errors may be corrected before institutional routines become fixed.

The first conceptual challenge is the relationship between perceptual-motor and symbolic skills and the larger educational purpose. Children manipulate tools, notice shape relations and represent ideas symbolically. This consideration is not a marginal technical detail: it determines which kinds of professional activity should be valued, how interpretations might be checked and how errors may be corrected before institutional routines become fixed.

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The first conceptual challenge is the relationship between creative agency and learning disposition and the larger educational purpose. Children make choices, generate alternatives and become confident learners. This consideration is not a marginal technical detail: it determines which kinds of professional activity should be valued, how interpretations might be checked and how errors may be corrected before institutional routines become fixed.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A qualitative conceptual research design was selected because the immediate research objective was theoretical specification and the construction of an implementable model. No surveys, teacher tests, classroom trials, interviews, institutional administrative datasets or child-level measurements were supplied or collected for this article. Its results are accordingly conceptual propositions and operational examples, not descriptive statistics about a sampled population.

The evidence corpus consisted of ten independently identifiable publications, including research articles, scholarly reports and policy frameworks issued between 2021 and 2025. Sources were selected purposively for direct relevance to the questions, methodological diversity, accessible publisher or institutional records and the ability to explain a particular component of the model. The dates in the final reference list fall within the requested period. Purposive selection is useful for integrating theory, although it does not permit claims of exhaustive evidence coverage or systematic-review effect estimates.

Analysis proceeded through five stages. First, each source was read for its stated educational problem and level of claim. Second, recurring constructs were identified and compared: process quality, professional agency, learner participation, purposeful evidence, inclusion and sustainable institutional practice. Third, constructs were grouped into domains that could be separately defined yet jointly enacted. Fourth, observable indicators were proposed for each domain. Fifth, the domains were organised into a cyclical implementation model and checked for internal consistency against all four research questions.

A distinction was maintained between source-derived propositions and recommendations developed in the present article. For example, international guidance can justify a principle such as transparency or meaningful adult–child interaction; a particular sequence of institutional meetings, observation prompts or decision templates is a proposed design choice rather than a tested result. This distinction prevents the figure or table format from giving the appearance of evidence that is not available.

The analytical lens combines pedagogical coherence, construct validity, ethical proportionality, contextual feasibility and improvement-oriented accountability. Pedagogical coherence asks whether an action plausibly serves a learning goal. Construct validity asks whether an indicator measures the claimed competency. Ethical proportionality asks whether the same educational aim could be achieved with less intrusive procedures. Feasibility asks whether the resources and expertise are realistic. Improvement-oriented accountability asks whether feedback generates constructive action rather than symbolic reporting.

The conceptual unit of analysis is a pedagogical management episode: a goal is identified; relevant evidence is gathered; stakeholders interpret that evidence; a justified response is implemented; and subsequent observations challenge or confirm the initial interpretation. Repeating this sequence in different contexts makes the model amenable to documentation and eventual empirical testing, without requiring a premature assumption that every educational change can be represented by one numerical score.

Table 1. Analytical procedures and intended outputs

Procedure	Analytical task	Conceptual output

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Targeted source selection	Locate dated, identifiable research and institutional reports	Ten-source purposive corpus
Construct extraction	Distinguish the purpose, mechanisms and limitations of each source	Working conceptual definitions
Comparative synthesis	Map convergent and competing propositions	Five-domain architecture
Pedagogical modelling	Arrange actors, evidence, decisions and feedback	Five-stage implementation pathway
Validation planning	Define observable evidence and design safeguards	Pilot and evaluation protocol

The study did not undertake PRISMA screening, pooled effect estimation or inferential tests. Therefore the diagrams and tables below communicate hypothesised relationships and design guidance, not measured effects. This explicit constraint is also a substantive methodological safeguard: governance frameworks should be open to refutation when subsequent institutional evidence contradicts their proposed mechanisms.

3. RESULTS

3.1. A five-domain conceptual structure

The central theoretical contribution is the ASRM, an integrated mechanism built around five mutually reinforcing domains. Their separation allows institutions to diagnose specific weaknesses, while their connections explain why an intervention concentrated on one attractive domain may fail when the others are neglected. No numerical weights are assigned, because weights would require empirical justification and agreement on educational priorities.

Domain 1, expressive language and narration, refers to the expectation that children explain images, sequence stories, negotiate meaning and build vocabulary. An operational interpretation may use dialogic storytelling, visual narratives, teacher observation. The proposed mechanism is that a clearly defined practice becomes more interpretable when participants know what it is intended to improve, which observations could challenge that intention and who is authorised to respond. These elements function as design hypotheses, not as validated measurement properties.

Domain 2, self-regulation and executive processes, refers to the expectation that children plan, switch strategies, share tools and persist after difficulty. An operational interpretation may use process observation during multi-step creative tasks. The proposed mechanism is that a clearly defined practice becomes more interpretable when participants know what it is intended to improve, which observations could challenge that intention and who is authorised to respond. These elements function as design hypotheses, not as validated measurement properties.

Domain 3, socio-emotional competence, refers to the expectation that children identify feelings and take others' perspectives through shared artistic forms. An operational interpretation may use cooperative theatre, role-play, reflection circles. The proposed mechanism is that a clearly defined practice becomes more interpretable when participants know what it is intended to improve, which observations could challenge that intention and who is authorised to respond. These elements function as design hypotheses, not as validated measurement properties.

Domain 4, perceptual-motor and symbolic skills, refers to the expectation that children manipulate tools, notice shape relations and represent ideas symbolically. An operational interpretation may use drawing, collage, clay modelling, pattern construction. The proposed mechanism is that a clearly defined practice becomes more interpretable when participants know what

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it is intended to improve, which observations could challenge that intention and who is authorised to respond. These elements function as design hypotheses, not as validated measurement properties.

Domain 5, creative agency and learning disposition, refers to the expectation that children make choices, generate alternatives and become confident learners. An operational interpretation may use open-ended portfolios, learner explanation, formative feedback. The proposed mechanism is that a clearly defined practice becomes more interpretable when participants know what it is intended to improve, which observations could challenge that intention and who is authorised to respond. These elements function as design hypotheses, not as validated measurement properties.

Table 2. Structural domains and candidate evidence

Domain	Function	Illustrative evidence
Expressive language and narration	Children explain images, sequence stories, negotiate meaning and build vocabulary	Dialogic storytelling, visual narratives, teacher observation
Self-regulation and executive processes	Children plan, switch strategies, share tools and persist after difficulty	Process observation during multi-step creative tasks
Socio-emotional competence	Children identify feelings and take others' perspectives through shared artistic forms	Cooperative theatre, role-play, reflection circles
Perceptual-motor and symbolic skills	Children manipulate tools, notice shape relations and represent ideas symbolically	Drawing, collage, clay modelling, pattern construction
Creative agency and learning disposition	Children make choices, generate alternatives and become confident learners	Open-ended portfolios, learner explanation, formative feedback

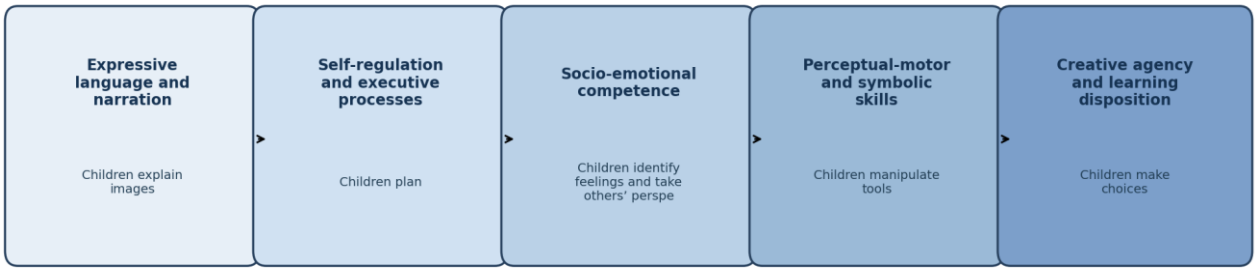


Figure 1. Five interacting domains of the proposed ASRM. Conceptual design; no empirical values.

3.2. The staged improvement mechanism

The mechanism can be represented as a recursive sequence rather than a one-off programme. Diagnosis matters because institutions start from unequal conditions; co-design matters because practitioners hold contextual knowledge; implementation matters because a protocol only becomes meaningful in actual interactions; evaluation matters because optimistic interpretation must be challenged; and institutionalisation matters because temporary pilots are not equivalent to sustainable quality.

1. Observe is operationalised as follows: Document children's interests, accessibility needs, family culture and starting abilities. Its documentary output is narrative developmental profile. At the end of each stage, the responsible team should ask whether the evidence is understandable to the

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people expected to act on it, whether any relevant stakeholder has been excluded and whether unanticipated burdens warrant redesign. The stage should be revisited when those questions receive an unsatisfactory answer.

2. Co-plan is operationalised as follows: Set one or two observable developmental intentions and choose safe art materials. Its documentary output is activity plan and inclusion checklist. At the end of each stage, the responsible team should ask whether the evidence is understandable to the people expected to act on it, whether any relevant stakeholder has been excluded and whether unanticipated burdens warrant redesign. The stage should be revisited when those questions receive an unsatisfactory answer.

3. Explore is operationalised as follows: Offer open-ended sensory, visual, musical or theatrical invitations. Its documentary output is child-selected representations and participation records. At the end of each stage, the responsible team should ask whether the evidence is understandable to the people expected to act on it, whether any relevant stakeholder has been excluded and whether unanticipated burdens warrant redesign. The stage should be revisited when those questions receive an unsatisfactory answer.

4. Scaffold is operationalised as follows: Pose dialogic prompts, model safely and support peer collaboration. Its documentary output is documented adult mediation and child revisions. At the end of each stage, the responsible team should ask whether the evidence is understandable to the people expected to act on it, whether any relevant stakeholder has been excluded and whether unanticipated burdens warrant redesign. The stage should be revisited when those questions receive an unsatisfactory answer.

5. Reflect is operationalised as follows: Invite child explanations; triangulate portfolios, observations and family perspectives. Its documentary output is formative readiness evidence and subsequent plan. At the end of each stage, the responsible team should ask whether the evidence is understandable to the people expected to act on it, whether any relevant stakeholder has been excluded and whether unanticipated burdens warrant redesign. The stage should be revisited when those questions receive an unsatisfactory answer.

Table 3. Proposed implementation stages

Stage	**Institutional action**	**Expected documentation**
1. Observe	Document children's interests, accessibility needs, family culture and starting abilities	Narrative developmental profile
2. Co-plan	Set one or two observable developmental intentions and choose safe art materials	Activity plan and inclusion checklist
3. Explore	Offer open-ended sensory, visual, musical or theatrical invitations	Child-selected representations and participation records
4. Scaffold	Pose dialogic prompts, model safely and support peer collaboration	Documented adult mediation and child revisions
5. Reflect	Invite child explanations; triangulate portfolios, observations and family perspectives	Formative readiness evidence and subsequent plan

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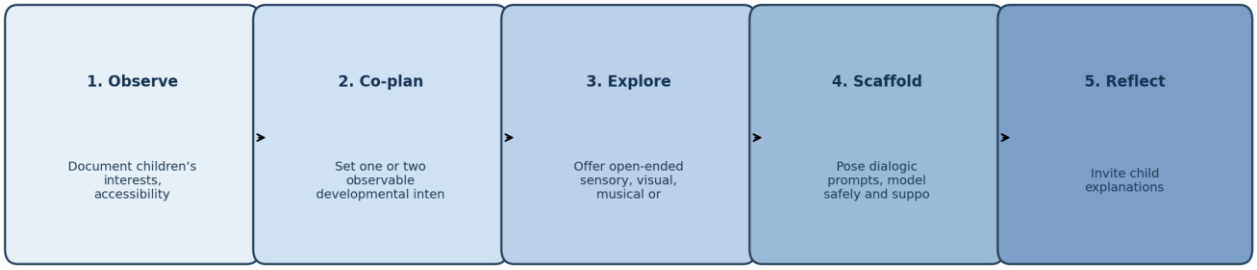


Figure 2. Proposed implementation sequence, with iterative feedback after every review.

3.3. Illustrative institutional and classroom scenarios

The scenarios below were designed to make the framework falsifiable and usable. They are hypothetical case designs, not reports of observed institutions or evaluated participants. Each scenario includes a trigger, an educationally defensible response and an evidentiary question that could be followed in a real pilot. Together they illustrate how practical decisions change when quality is treated as a developmental process rather than a completed administrative output.

Illustrative scenario 1: Story-drawing studio. Children construct a shared story from illustrated cards, draw an alternative ending and verbally explain the choice. The focus is on narrative coherence and expression rather than copying an approved picture. Educators notice vocabulary, turn-taking and ability to explain choices, then offer prompts adapted to each child's language resources. The crucial evaluation question is not whether an activity or record exists but whether independently interpretable evidence indicates that the intended educational process became more equitable, meaningful or responsive. Any strong claim would require baseline description, an appropriate comparison or temporal logic and attention to competing explanations.

Illustrative scenario 2: Clay shape laboratory. Small groups create shapes from non-toxic clay and transform them into imaginative scenes. Materials allow tactile investigation while the teacher introduces spatial vocabulary. Observation attends to grip, coordination, categorisation, collaboration and attempts to solve material challenges. The crucial evaluation question is not whether an activity or record exists but whether independently interpretable evidence indicates that the intended educational process became more equitable, meaningful or responsive. Any strong claim would require baseline description, an appropriate comparison or temporal logic and attention to competing explanations.

Illustrative scenario 3: Rhythm and movement theatre. Children invent simple rhythmic patterns and perform a scene with role rotation. Participation can be adapted for mobility and hearing differences. Educators document attention, sequencing, flexibility, social reciprocity and emotional recognition without grading artistic talent. The crucial evaluation question is not whether an activity or record exists but whether independently interpretable evidence indicates that the intended educational process became more equitable, meaningful or responsive. Any strong claim would require baseline description, an appropriate comparison or temporal logic and attention to competing explanations.

Illustrative scenario 4: Community-pattern collage. Children examine authentic local motifs, discuss shapes and colours, and create original collages while learning to respect the cultural sources of visual designs. Review assesses constructive pattern recognition, respectful dialogue and creative variation rather than cultural stereotyping. The crucial evaluation question is not whether an activity or record exists but whether independently interpretable evidence indicates that the intended educational process became more equitable, meaningful or responsive. Any strong claim would

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require baseline description, an appropriate comparison or temporal logic and attention to competing explanations.

Illustrative scenario 5: Emotion puppet workshop. Children build puppets from safe recycled materials and practise narrating how characters face uncertainty on their first day of school. The educator listens for emotional vocabulary, peer empathy, self-regulatory strategies and willingness to ask for help. The crucial evaluation question is not whether an activity or record exists but whether independently interpretable evidence indicates that the intended educational process became more equitable, meaningful or responsive. Any strong claim would require baseline description, an appropriate comparison or temporal logic and attention to competing explanations.

Illustrative scenario 6: Family arts documentation. Families contribute optional descriptions of songs, artistic practices or stories and review children's portfolios. Participation is possible without high-cost equipment or public sharing. Teachers use narratives to contextualise development and ensure that children from diverse home backgrounds see their experience respected. The crucial evaluation question is not whether an activity or record exists but whether independently interpretable evidence indicates that the intended educational process became more equitable, meaningful or responsive. Any strong claim would require baseline description, an appropriate comparison or temporal logic and attention to competing explanations.

Table 4. Example alignment of practice with evaluation

Illustrative setting	Proposed response	Evidence to examine
Story-drawing studio	Educators notice vocabulary, turn-taking and ability to explain choices, then offer prompts ada…	Process observation, stakeholder reflection and follow-up documentation
Clay shape laboratory	Observation attends to grip, coordination, categorisation, collaboration and attempts to solve …	Process observation, stakeholder reflection and follow-up documentation
Rhythm and movement theatre	Educators document attention, sequencing, flexibility, social reciprocity and emotional recogni…	Process observation, stakeholder reflection and follow-up documentation
Community-pattern collage	Review assesses constructive pattern recognition, respectful dialogue and creative variation ra…	Process observation, stakeholder reflection and follow-up documentation
Emotion puppet workshop	The educator listens for emotional vocabulary, peer empathy, self-regulatory strategies and wil…	Process observation, stakeholder reflection and follow-up documentation
Family arts documentation	Teachers use narratives to contextualise development and ensure that children from diverse home…	Process observation, stakeholder reflection and follow-up documentation

3.4. An assessment and implementation rubric

Table 5. Four-level developmental rubric (proposed; not validated)

Level	Interpretive descriptor

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1. Initial	Unclear aims or fragmented activity; limited evidence of intentional adaptation.
2. Emerging	Stated aims and occasional documentation; reliance on individual staff initiative.
3. Established	Coherent processes, triangulated evidence and documented reflective decisions.
4. Sustained	Equitable, independently reviewable practice with continuous adjustment and institutional support.

For the expressive language and narration domain, reviewers should begin by describing authentic evidence: dialogic storytelling, visual narratives, teacher observation. An initial-level judgement would be justified by isolated or undocumented practice; an emerging-level judgement by partial but inconsistent enactment; an established-level judgement by recurring and interpretable examples; and a sustained-level judgement by evidence that practice remains inclusive under changes in personnel or circumstances. The same criteria should be applied cautiously and checked through independent review before aggregation.

For the self-regulation and executive processes domain, reviewers should begin by describing authentic evidence: process observation during multi-step creative tasks. An initial-level judgement would be justified by isolated or undocumented practice; an emerging-level judgement by partial but inconsistent enactment; an established-level judgement by recurring and interpretable examples; and a sustained-level judgement by evidence that practice remains inclusive under changes in personnel or circumstances. The same criteria should be applied cautiously and checked through independent review before aggregation.

For the socio-emotional competence domain, reviewers should begin by describing authentic evidence: cooperative theatre, role-play, reflection circles. An initial-level judgement would be justified by isolated or undocumented practice; an emerging-level judgement by partial but inconsistent enactment; an established-level judgement by recurring and interpretable examples; and a sustained-level judgement by evidence that practice remains inclusive under changes in personnel or circumstances. The same criteria should be applied cautiously and checked through independent review before aggregation.

For the perceptual-motor and symbolic skills domain, reviewers should begin by describing authentic evidence: drawing, collage, clay modelling, pattern construction. An initial-level judgement would be justified by isolated or undocumented practice; an emerging-level judgement by partial but inconsistent enactment; an established-level judgement by recurring and interpretable examples; and a sustained-level judgement by evidence that practice remains inclusive under changes in personnel or circumstances. The same criteria should be applied cautiously and checked through independent review before aggregation.

For the creative agency and learning disposition domain, reviewers should begin by describing authentic evidence: open-ended portfolios, learner explanation, formative feedback. An initial-level judgement would be justified by isolated or undocumented practice; an emerging-level judgement by partial but inconsistent enactment; an established-level judgement by recurring and interpretable examples; and a sustained-level judgement by evidence that practice remains inclusive under changes in personnel or circumstances. The same criteria should be applied cautiously and checked through independent review before aggregation.

Rubric ratings should be accompanied by narrative justification and concrete examples; ordinal categories must not be mistaken for interval-scale measurements. A combined score is not proposed, because compensation across important domains could conceal serious weaknesses in child

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safety, professional rights or inclusion. For subsequent empirical validation, two independent raters should assess a sample of artefacts, reconcile disagreements and refine operational definitions.

3.5. Testing the model as a research programme

Table 6. Future empirical validation design

Element	Proposed test
Design	Multi-site feasibility pilot followed by a comparison-based or longitudinal evaluation
Sampling	Document institution characteristics, staffing, access and learner diversity before recruitment
Evidence	Baseline and follow-up observations, anonymised work artefacts, teacher reflection and stakeholder interviews
Validity	Expert content review, cognitive interviewing and pilot refinement of indicators
Reliability	Independent coding, inter-rater agreement and documented disagreements
Ethics	Consent and appropriate lawful basis; data minimisation, secure storage and opt-out alternatives
Inference	Compare changes while considering implementation fidelity and plausible confounders

The proposed tests explicitly separate feasibility, fidelity, acceptability and educational outcomes. Feasibility determines whether a procedure can be carried out; fidelity determines whether the intended mechanism was enacted; acceptability determines whether participants found the design legitimate and manageable; and outcomes assess what changed. A successful software installation or well-attended art exhibition is at most process evidence, never sufficient evidence of developmental impact.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Interpreting the model in relation to recent literature

Product versus process. A visually polished drawing is not a reliable proxy for developmental learning; the decisions, explanations and interaction observed during creation provide richer evidence. This tension clarifies why a simple addition of tools or activities is unlikely to deliver sustained quality. The proposed ASRM treats the relationship as a design problem requiring justified choices rather than as an argument that one side should always dominate. The relevant source literature offers important but context-bound guidance [6, 3]. In implementation, a reviewer should look for evidence that professionals recognised the tension and documented how their decision advanced learning aims while limiting foreseeable harm.

The practical consequence of the product versus process distinction is especially apparent where institutions operate with heterogeneous staff experience and resource levels. A single mandate may produce administratively comparable outputs while leaving important contextual differences invisible. Teams should therefore articulate the reason for an intervention, specify minimal acceptable conditions and preserve space for professional adaptation. Such flexibility is not an exemption from accountability; it is accountability grounded in a transparent explanation of why a particular response fits the educational situation.

Teacher direction versus autonomy. Some explicit scaffolding is helpful, but rigid templates can prevent experimentation and conceal the individual strategies that matter for readiness. This

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tension clarifies why a simple addition of tools or activities is unlikely to deliver sustained quality. The proposed ASRM treats the relationship as a design problem requiring justified choices rather than as an argument that one side should always dominate. The relevant source literature offers important but context-bound guidance [5, 9]. In implementation, a reviewer should look for evidence that professionals recognised the tension and documented how their decision advanced learning aims while limiting foreseeable harm.

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School readiness versus schoolification. Preparation should strengthen dispositions and foundational competencies without imposing prematurely formal academic routines on preschool children. This tension clarifies why a simple addition of tools or activities is unlikely to deliver sustained quality. The proposed ASRM treats the relationship as a design problem requiring justified choices rather than as an argument that one side should always dominate. The relevant source literature offers important but context-bound guidance [2, 10]. In implementation, a reviewer should look for evidence that professionals recognised the tension and documented how their decision advanced learning aims while limiting foreseeable harm.

The practical consequence of the school readiness versus schoolification distinction is especially apparent where institutions operate with heterogeneous staff experience and resource levels. A single mandate may produce administratively comparable outputs while leaving important contextual differences invisible. Teams should therefore articulate the reason for an intervention, specify minimal acceptable conditions and preserve space for professional adaptation. Such flexibility is not an exemption from accountability; it is accountability grounded in a transparent explanation of why a particular response fits the educational situation.

Cultural relevance versus stereotyping. Local visual heritage creates meaningful entry points, but cultural materials require accurate context and room for children’s own interpretations. This tension clarifies why a simple addition of tools or activities is unlikely to deliver sustained quality. The proposed ASRM treats the relationship as a design problem requiring justified choices rather than as an argument that one side should always dominate. The relevant source literature offers important but context-bound guidance [4, 1]. In implementation, a reviewer should look for evidence that professionals recognised the tension and documented how their decision advanced learning aims while limiting foreseeable harm.

The practical consequence of the cultural relevance versus stereotyping distinction is especially apparent where institutions operate with heterogeneous staff experience and resource levels. A single mandate may produce administratively comparable outputs while leaving important contextual differences invisible. Teams should therefore articulate the reason for an intervention, specify minimal acceptable conditions and preserve space for professional adaptation. Such flexibility is not an exemption from accountability; it is accountability grounded in a transparent explanation of why a particular response fits the educational situation.

Digital amplification versus embodied learning. Digital galleries can document and share work, while hands-on sensory, social and material experiences remain central to age-appropriate art practice. This tension clarifies why a simple addition of tools or activities is unlikely to deliver sustained quality. The proposed ASRM treats the relationship as a design problem requiring justified choices rather than as an argument that one side should always dominate. The relevant source

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literature offers important but context-bound guidance [7, 8]. In implementation, a reviewer should look for evidence that professionals recognised the tension and documented how their decision advanced learning aims while limiting foreseeable harm.

The practical consequence of the digital amplification versus embodied learning distinction is especially apparent where institutions operate with heterogeneous staff experience and resource levels. A single mandate may produce administratively comparable outputs while leaving important contextual differences invisible. Teams should therefore articulate the reason for an intervention, specify minimal acceptable conditions and preserve space for professional adaptation. Such flexibility is not an exemption from accountability; it is accountability grounded in a transparent explanation of why a particular response fits the educational situation.

4.2. Methodological significance of interpretation, participation and evidence

One implication concerns the status of professional judgement. Teachers possess situated knowledge of learner behaviour, classroom relations and the cumulative meaning of small events. Such knowledge is indispensable but is also fallible: experience can be distorted by expectations, selective attention and institutional pressure. A strong framework neither romanticises professional intuition nor replaces it with mechanically generated classifications. Instead, it establishes occasions for triangulation, colleague discussion, documentation of disagreement and revision of decisions when new evidence emerges.

A second implication concerns organisational learning. Feedback has developmental value only when participants can modify the conditions that produced an observed difficulty. Institutions therefore need explicit decision rights, time for reflective discussion, shared resources and legitimate pathways for raising concerns. A model that demands constant evidence collection but allocates no opportunity to interpret or act on evidence would intensify staff workload while weakening the link between measurement and educational improvement.

A third issue concerns inclusion. Learners and professionals may differ in language, disability, access to equipment, confidence and social circumstances. Uniform exposure should not be equated with fair opportunity. Quality management must examine who participates, who benefits, whose experience remains undocumented and whether adjustments preserve educational expectations without requiring all children to use the same pathway. Disaggregated data may be useful but should be limited to what is ethically and legally justified.

A fourth issue is the role of families and communities. Their perspectives provide contextual information that educational settings may not observe directly. However, family input should neither become an unexamined substitute for pedagogical assessment nor be collected in intrusive ways. Constructive participation requires clear communication about aims, accessible formats, realistic expectations and careful differentiation between observations, interpretations and preferences.

A fifth issue is the tension between innovation and institutional sustainability. Small pilots can rely on unusually motivated teachers, specialist support and discretionary time. Scale-up modifies these conditions. Any transition to routine practice should therefore include realistic estimates of materials, workload, maintenance, orientation for new staff, quality assurance and non-digital or low-resource alternatives. Sustainability is both a financial and pedagogical consideration.

Finally, the proposed architecture depends on constructive governance rather than merely on procedural compliance. Policies should clarify responsibilities for safeguarding children, approving changes, responding to incidents and reviewing unintended consequences. At the same time, excessive documentation can undermine the practices being protected. Proportionality requires collecting only evidence that is useful for a specific decision and removing redundant indicators after periodic review.

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4.3. Contextualisation for professional development in Uzbekistan

In the Uzbek preschool context, the ASRM may be introduced through short professional-development cycles rather than through a full institutional reorganisation. An initial cycle could bring directors, pedagogical staff, methodologists and inclusion specialists together to agree on a limited set of educational priorities. Each priority should be linked to observable practice, and participants should determine in advance what evidence would lead them to revise their approach. Such sequencing recognises the importance of strong existing professional routines while creating space for responsible innovation.

Training should include worked cases, guided observation, opportunities to practise feedback and peer moderation of rubrics. Staff members need to know not only how to apply a tool but how to recognise misleading evidence, how to accommodate a learner without lowering expectations and when to involve other professionals. Training quality itself should be assessed through the transfer of reasoning to real cases, rather than through certificates or platform attendance alone.

Institutional leaders should avoid competitive tables that rank staff or children on a narrow set of indicators. Such comparisons may encourage gaming, selective reporting or unhelpful pressure. A more productive use of records is to identify where additional materials, mentoring, adapted space or protected collaboration time would allow educators to strengthen provision. The goal is a system capable of learning from its own imperfections.

4.4. Limitations and future directions

This study has important limitations. The sources were purposefully selected rather than identified through a reproducible systematic search; some are international policy frameworks with normative objectives rather than causal evaluations. The proposed dimensions reflect analytical integration and have not been confirmed statistically. No actual teachers, children, directors or institutions were measured. Consequently, neither effectiveness percentages nor significance tests, effect sizes or claims of local impact would be defensible.

The model also depends on the accuracy of its implementation assumptions. Institutional workloads, language variation, resource differences and professional trust could alter what is feasible. Future work should test these assumptions through participatory design with practitioners, content validation by independent specialists, pilot observations and adaptation for diverse preschool settings. Researchers should explicitly record negative or unintended effects instead of documenting only encouraging examples.

A subsequent multi-site study could preregister primary outcomes, identify realistic comparison conditions and distinguish educational improvements from selection effects or maturation. Qualitative interviews and observations could explain why an intervention worked in some settings but not others. Transparent reporting of attrition, missing data and implementation modifications would help other researchers judge whether findings transfer beyond participating institutions.

5. CONCLUSION

The article has advanced a theoretical interpretation of art-based school-readiness pedagogy and formulated the ASRM as a design-oriented mechanism joining five domains, five implementation stages and a four-level developmental rubric. The contribution is an explicit set of connections among purposes, professional actions, evidence, institutional responsibility and iterative learning rather than evidence of a completed successful intervention.

The proposed framework suggests that effective practice requires purposeful design, educator participation, contextually interpretable evidence and safeguards against exclusion or ethically unjustified procedures. Art-based school preparation should be evaluated as an intentional, developmentally responsive pedagogical process, not as decorative activity or accelerated academic

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drilling. Its application should remain conditional on institutional feasibility, transparent documentation and sustained review rather than a promise of automatic improvement.

Priority next steps are expert evaluation of the indicators, co-design with educators, small-scale feasibility testing, independent assessment of implementation fidelity and carefully designed longitudinal or comparison studies. The framework will be scientifically stronger if future findings are allowed to refine, simplify or reject its proposed components. This openness to revision is a necessary feature of responsible educational research.

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