



Empowering Preschool Teachers: Excel Mastery for Report Writing and Teaching Module Development

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Abstract

Early childhood education is one of the most basic levels of education for children's growth and development. Teachers who provide education for early childhood are required to have a special level of education and competence in compiling teaching modules for learning activities. Information technology literacy supports teachers in solving administrative problems. One of the administrative things that teachers routinely do is make report cards for their students. Using Microsoft Excel software has many features and functions that can help in creating reports. Apart from that, teaching materials in learning need to be considered, including teaching modules which must be developed by teachers themselves to suit the environmental context and learning needs of their students, including teachers in Early Childhood Education (PAUD). The aim of this service is to create teaching modules for learning activities. The method used in the activity was training using lecture, question and answer and discussion methods, with a total of 156 participants which was carried out over two days. Through this activity, participants' skills and understanding increased regarding the use of Microsoft Excel software and all teachers understood more about teaching modules, preparation steps and the use of Excel in making report cards.

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INTRODUCTION

Education for early childhood is conducted through both formal and non-formal channels. Formal early childhood education includes institutions such as Kindergartens (TK) and Raudhatul Athfal (RA), while non-formal education comprises Child Care Centers (TPA), Play Groups (KB/PG), and PAUD Posts (Astriani, M. M., & Alfahnum, M. A., 2020). Recently, various types of early childhood education have emerged and developed in society, reflecting an increasing public awareness of the importance of education that is appropriate for children's developmental stages from an early age. This growth also signifies the success of policies launched by the government (Prihatin, E., 2012). PAUD teachers or educators play a crucial role in shaping the character of students, who will become the nation's next generation (Hariyanti, D.P.D., 2012).

In the independent curriculum, Learning Outcomes (CP) describe the competencies used to measure student achievement. These outcomes include a set of competencies and a scope of material that allows each child to gain learning experiences according to their level of competency. CP also serves as a guide for teachers and students, indicating what must be achieved by the end of learning.

To achieve CP, educators utilize teaching tools such as textbooks, teaching modules, learning videos, and more. A teaching module is a document that contains objectives, steps, learning media,

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and assessments required for one topic, based on the flow of learning objectives (Khikmiyah et al., 2022). Educators have the freedom to create, choose, or modify available teaching modules according to the characteristics and needs of their students. The teaching module components typically consist of learning objectives, learning steps, and assessments used to monitor the achievement of learning objectives.

Several criteria must be met in a teaching module: 1) Essential, meaning that students gain an understanding of concepts through learning experiences that span across disciplines; 2) Interesting, meaningful, and challenging, where learning is designed to foster interest and actively involve students in the process; 3) Relevant and contextual, meaning it relates to previous knowledge and experience and aligns with the context of the students' environment; and 4) Continuous, ensuring a link between learning activities according to the student's learning stages (Kemendikbudristek RI, 2021). However, observations have shown that PAUD teachers still lack a good understanding of the concept of teaching modules, how to develop them, and how to tailor them to the characteristics of students and their environment.

The skills of PAUD educators are also challenged by the introduction of the independent curriculum, which requires them to be capable of designing teaching modules. A teaching module is a document that outlines the objectives, steps, learning media, and assessments needed for one topic, following the flow of learning objectives (Mendikbudristek, 2021). As a new concept, developing teaching modules poses a challenge for PAUD educators. Among the challenges faced is the lack of a correct understanding of the teaching module concept (Sutama, 2021). The abundance of references related to module development also adds to educators' confusion. Teaching modules are a set of tools or resources, including media, methods, instructions, and guidelines, systematically and attractively designed to implement the flow of learning objectives developed from learning outcomes (Mendikbudristek, 2021). As Maarif, N. S. (2022) notes in the development of teaching modules for PAUD teachers, many educators still struggle with the steps and techniques of creating these modules. According to Ricu Sidiq & Najuah (2020), teaching modules are learning resources containing material, methods, limits, and evaluation methods systematically and attractively designed to achieve the curriculum and predefined goals.

Teacher creativity is necessary to reduce learning difficulties and limitations so that the teaching materials can be effectively conveyed and understood by students (Putra, Ida Bagus Ardhi, 2022). Teaching modules are essential documents that encapsulate the objectives, steps, and learning media (Kemendikbud, 2022). Additionally, the assessments required within a unit or topic are based on the flow of learning objectives. Educators are given the flexibility to modify teaching modules according to the context, characteristics, and needs of their students. Moreover, educators are expected to be able to utilize the internet as a learning medium (Kemendikbud, 2022). They use various teaching tools from multiple sources, and in this context, literacy skills are crucial for educators. These teaching tools can be directly used by educators for teaching and designing learning processes (Rahayu et al., 2022). According to the research by Jaya, S., Handoko, P., & Purnama, D. G. (2019), there is a need to enhance understanding and train skills in using computers, particularly for completing tasks related to digital administration, such as word processing, data processing, and presentation preparation.

The Strategic Plan of the Department of National Education explicitly mentions three pillars of national education policy: (1) expanding and equalizing access, (2) improving quality, relevance, and competitiveness, and (3) strengthening governance, accountability, and the public image of education. These pillars aim to realize quality, accountable, affordable, and equitable education for all. The strategic role of information and communication technology (ICT) in the first pillar, expanding and equalizing access to education, is prioritized as a medium for distance learning. For the second pillar, improving quality, relevance, and competitiveness, the role of ICT is emphasized in its application in education and learning processes. Finally, to strengthen governance, accountability, and the public image, ICT's role is prioritized for integrated management information systems. However, the utilization of ICT is not evenly distributed across all levels of education.

In addition to challenges in creating modules, PAUD educators also face difficulties in using technology in learning and other administrative activities. With technological support, modules can become more attractive and innovative, and in administrative reports, technology can simplify the process of preparing student activity reports. Many teachers still struggle to use technology,

particularly Excel, in making report cards. One of the fields significantly impacted by technological development is education, where education is fundamentally a process of communication and information transfer from educators to students. This process includes educators as sources of information, media as tools for presenting ideas and materials, and students as recipients, all of which are influenced by information technology (Primawati, A., & Marlina, D., 2022). In education, mastering information technology (IT) is essential to embrace the era of globalization and rapid technological advances (Nurhafizah, N., 2018).

Based on the situation analysis and the existing problems, steps or alternative actions are needed to address these issues. The proposed solution is to establish training and mentoring activities focused on teaching module development and the use of Excel for making report cards, especially for Early Childhood Education (PAUD) teachers. Universities should take on this task as part of fulfilling the Tridharma of Higher Education, offering various forms of service to the community. One such service program is training, which provides a platform for lecturers or student coaches to channel their interests and talents by practicing professionalism in their scientific disciplines within society.

METHOD

The method used in this community service project follows a training concept, where participants are provided with material and practical training in creating teaching modules and using Excel for report cards. The aim is for participants to be able to utilize appropriate teaching modules tailored to their students' needs. Additionally, the Excel training is designed to equip teachers with the skills to use Excel effectively for report card preparation. This aligns with the goal of carrying out the classroom learning process in accordance with both theory and practice to achieve national education standards (Wasi'ul Maghfiroh, 2020). The community service activity was conducted on Saturday, September 16, 2023, at the KKG RA in Bogor Regency, with a total of 156 participants. The community service activities were carried out according to the following scheme:

1. Preparatory stage.

Internal coordination among the community service teams was conducted to determine the activity themes, form the team, prepare proposals, schedule, secure funding, and make necessary preparations for implementation. The next step involved conducting a field survey to observe the situation and conditions of the targeted location. Afterward, a series of stages were implemented as follows:

a. Coordination with partners

The community service implementation team coordinated with partners, specifically the chairman of KKG RA Kab. Bogor, to reach a consensus on the concept and implementation plan for the community service activities.

b. Preparation of module and excel training materials

The community service implementation team prepared the training materials in the form of modules. These modules included content on developing learning media and a training guide for using Excel in preparing report cards.

c. Activity Publication

The purpose of this stage was to inform PAUD teachers in Bogor Regency about the planned series of activities.

2. Implementation stage

a. Preparation of tools and materials

Before creating the learning media, all necessary tools and materials were prepared. This included laptops, screens, and projectors to visualize the training materials, as well as equipment kits that participants would use to develop learning media.

b. Implementation of activities

The training sessions on creating learning modules and using Excel for report cards were conducted through demonstrations, hands-on assistance in developing innovative and engaging learning modules, and Excel training for report card preparation.

3. Evaluation of activities

An evaluation of the implemented programs was conducted by the community service team in collaboration with the partners. This evaluation aimed to identify obstacles encountered, gather feedback, and discuss continued collaboration and future training improvements.

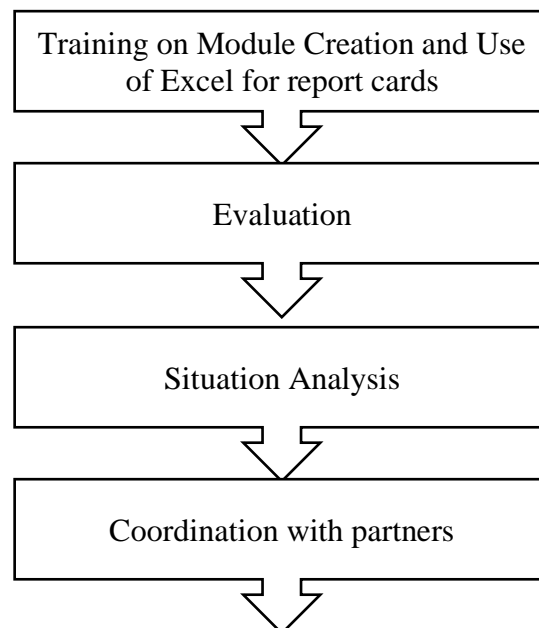


Figure 1. Method of implementing activities

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of this community service project involved training 156 participants from the KKG RA Bogor Regency. The focus was on understanding and practicing the creation of teaching modules and using Microsoft Excel for report cards. This activity was conducted at the Bogor Regency Ministry of Religion. As outlined in the previous section, the initial stage of this community service activity involved analyzing the partner's situation. The material was delivered using a combination of lectures, question-and-answer sessions, and workshops for creating teaching modules and using Excel in report card preparation. The training was conducted through practical methods and monitored with assistance.

The training was divided into three sessions, as detailed below:

1. **First Session (08:30-10:30 WIB):**

After the opening by the MC, recitations, and speeches, Mrs. Deswita, S.E., M.M., delivered a session on the importance of using media in PAUD learning activities. This session focused on making PAUD learning activities fun by utilizing various learning media that can be applied.

2. **Second Session (10:30-11:30 WIB):**

This session, led by Mr. Lubban Anwari Alhamidi, M.Pd., and Mr. Arie Purwa Kusuma, M.Pd., focused on creating teaching modules. Participants were asked to develop media according to the presenters' guidance and their own creativity. The community service team provided assistance to help participants overcome any obstacles or difficulties in creating teaching modules.

3. **Third Session (11:30-12:00 WIB):**

In this session, led by Mrs. Rifa Atiyyah, M.Pd., and Mrs. Nurina Kurniasari Rahmawati, M.Pd., participants were trained on using Excel for report card preparation. The session included both a presentation on the use of Excel and a practical exercise where participants were given a ready-made Excel application to try out.



Figure 2. Training Activities for Making Modules and Using Excel for Report Cards

The community service activities were successfully implemented without any significant obstacles and received very positive feedback from the participants, particularly the Chair of the KKG RA PAUD in the Bogor Regency area. The enthusiasm and active participation of the attendees during the training sessions on making teaching modules and using Excel for report cards were clear indicators of this success.

The outcomes of this service activity are as follows: the head of the KKG RA in Bogor Regency now has a better understanding of how to use effective teaching modules for PAUD students, making learning activities more engaging and effective. Additionally, participants gained a better understanding of using Microsoft Excel for report card preparation. They also acquired experience with various learning media and teaching modules that are engaging for students, as well as knowledge of Excel formulas that can be used for filling out student report cards.

The results of the community service showed that participants were highly enthusiastic about the activities. This enthusiasm was evident from the numerous questions asked regarding the teaching modules and the functions of each Excel formula explained. Some of the questions included: 1) Was the material presented understandable? 2) Did the material increase your knowledge? 3) Was the material relevant to your needs?

The success of this service activity was evaluated after its completion. Indicators of success were measured by the positive responses from participants, with 80% expressing satisfaction with the activities. This training significantly assisted teachers in implementing learning processes, from planning lesson plans (RPPH) to gaining hands-on experience in the appropriate learning practices expected by the government (Wiguna, I. B. A. A., 2021). Through the module preparation assistance, teachers developed a better understanding of student-centered learning, gained the ability to design teaching modules as part of the learning tools used in the implementation of the independent curriculum, and learned to design assessments aligned with the established learning objectives (Khikmiyah, F., Huda, S., & Yunita, N., 2022). Training participants responded positively to the training on independent curriculum module preparation, noting that it enhanced their knowledge and insights (Widayati et al., 2022). Participants' understanding of designing mathematics and science learning increased after the workshop compared to before the training (Sari et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

Overall, the community service activities were successfully carried out. The teachers who participated in the training were enthusiastic and actively engaged in the activities organized by the community service team. With the knowledge and skills gained regarding the development of teaching modules for PAUD students, teachers can enhance their insight, interest, and creativity in developing learning modules. They are also motivated to apply these skills in developing and using learning media in their teaching activities, thereby fostering the knowledge and motor skills of early childhood students. Initially, the participants were unaware that Microsoft Excel could be used to create student report cards. After completing the training, they found it helpful in understanding

Microsoft Excel, which made it easier for them to create report cards for their students. Training activities like these are essential for developing teaching materials and incorporating technology, as they are critical for teachers in PAUD learning environments. Such training will help teachers continue to develop their skills. This community service is expected to provide PAUD educators with additional knowledge in developing engaging and enjoyable teaching modules. Furthermore, the assistance in using Excel for report card preparation will lighten the workload of PAUD educators in their teaching activities.

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