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TRAINING ON CHILDREN'S INDEPENDENCE IN LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN MATARAM CITY

[1]Zulfakar

[1]Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika
[1]zulfakar@undikma.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Independent learning is a key competency in developing the character of 21st-century students. A child's ability to learn independently not only reflects mental and emotional readiness but is also a crucial indicator of success in basic education. Through this community service activity, the implementing team strives to foster and strengthen independent learning in elementary school students in Mataram City through a structured and participatory training program. The activity took place on March 14–15, 2025, at one of the partner elementary schools, with direct involvement of students, teachers, and parents. The methods used included an active learning approach, independent learning simulations, the use of simple digital learning media, and discussion sessions between teachers and parents to foster a shared understanding of the importance of supporting, but not dominating, their children's learning process. During the activity, students were presented with various learning challenges that guided them to manage their time, determine strategies for completing assignments, and self-evaluate their learning outcomes. The results of the activity showed improvements in several indicators of independent learning, such as increased student initiative in completing assignments without direct guidance, the ability to organize simple study schedules, and the courage to express opinions. Teachers began implementing learning strategies that provide space for student exploration, while parents better understood how to support their children's learning without over-interference. Overall, this community service activity had a positive impact on collective awareness of the importance of developing a culture of independent learning from an early age. This program is expected to serve as an initial model for developing contextual and sustainable character education in elementary schools.

Keywords: independent learning; elementary school; child training; parental participation; character strengthening; Mataram.

INTRODUCTION.

Elementary education is the primary foundation for developing a child's character and life skills. One crucial competency instilled from an early age is independence in learning. Children who demonstrate independence in learning tend to be more active, confident, and responsible for their own learning. In today's global and digital era, this competency is not only a personal need but also a requirement of 21st-century education,

which emphasizes learner agency, self-regulated learning, and lifelong learning (Papamitsiou & Economides, 2019; Petit, 2020).

However, the reality on the ground shows that many elementary school students in Indonesia, particularly in Mataram City, Lombok, still rely heavily on teachers and parents for their learning. This is due to various factors, ranging from teacher-centered teaching methods and a lack of varied learning approaches that stimulate learning autonomy to teachers' lack of understanding of strategies for fostering student independence (Agustina, 2017; Melvina & Suherdi, 2019).

Various studies have shown that training and innovative learning approaches can significantly encourage the growth of independent learning in elementary school students. Models such as Brain-Based Learning (BBL) have been shown to increase students' learning resilience (grit) and mathematical connection skills through an approach that actively stimulates the brain (Setyoningrum et al., 2020). Similarly, the flipped classroom approach in inclusive elementary schools can shift students' roles from passive to active in learning (Khasanah et al., 2022).

In addition to the approach, aspects of educational leadership and learning management also play a vital role. Research by Lisdawati (2022) and Mas & Zulystiawati (2022) emphasizes the importance of independent curriculum-based learning management and a supportive leadership style to create a learning climate that encourages student independence.

Equally important, the use of technology such as interactive multimedia (Purnamasari & Herman, 2017), digital storytelling (Petit, 2020), and project-based learning packaged within a playful learning approach (Sujino et al., 2025) has been shown to increase student motivation and active engagement. Parental support and healthy communication at home are also external factors that can encourage children to become independent learners (Nursaptini et al., 2020).

In the context of Mataram City, with its diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, training in independent learning in elementary schools is a crucial strategy in building the foundation of sustainable education. This effort aligns with the principles of independent education, which positions students as autonomous learning subjects (Lisdawati, 2022), as well as research by Orakcı (2021), which shows that cognitive flexibility and reflective thinking are crucial aspects in strengthening autonomous learning.

Based on this background, this community service activity aims to provide independent learning training targeting students, teachers, and parents in elementary schools in Mataram City. This training is designed to integrate innovative and evidence-based approaches to create a learning ecosystem that supports student autonomy from an early age.

THEORETICAL STUDY

1. Definition and Importance of Learning Independence in Elementary School Aged Children.

Learning independence is the ability of students to independently manage their learning process, including planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. Learning independence is crucial to develop from elementary school age as a foundation for lifelong learning. According to Najeeb (2013), learner autonomy is a condition in which individuals are able to control their own learning through awareness, initiative, and personal responsibility for their learning process.

In the Indonesian context, Agustina (2017) emphasized that teachers' understanding of the concept of learning autonomy has a direct impact on classroom teaching practices, which can strengthen or hinder student independence.

2. Learning Strategies and Models that Support Independence.

Several innovative strategies have proven effective in fostering children's learning independence, particularly through active and reflective learning approaches.

- Brain-Based Learning (BBL): BBL prioritizes a neuroeducational approach proven to improve students' mathematical grit and connections and encourage independent learning (Setyoningrum et al., 2020).
- Flipped Classroom: This learning model allows students to access materials independently before face-to-face sessions, strengthening their responsibility for learning (Khasanah et al., 2022).
- Project-Based Learning (PjBL) and Playful Learning: Integrating games into real-life projects has been shown to increase children's active engagement and independence (Sujino et al., 2025).
- Digital Storytelling and ICT-Based Learning: Digital media can enhance students' agency and reflective skills in designing and reflecting on their learning (Petit, 2020; Simoes & Faustino, 2019).

3. The Role of Curriculum, Teachers, and School Leadership.

The implementation of the independent curriculum provides greater space for the development of students' learning autonomy. Lisdawati (2022) noted that learning management in an independent curriculum encourages flexibility and personalization of learning. This requires the support of adaptive learning leadership (Mas & Zulystiawati, 2022) as well as teachers' understanding of the principle of student autonomy (Melvina & Suherdi, 2019).

4. Factors Supporting and Inhibiting Independence.

Internal and external factors play a crucial role in supporting children's independent learning. Nursaptini et al. (2020) found that effective communication between parents and children and self-confidence significantly contribute to independent learning.

Furthermore, cognitive aspects such as metacognition, flexible thinking, and reflection have been shown to correlate with increased learner autonomy (Orakcı, 2021; Papamitsiou & Economides, 2019).

5. The Role of Media and Technology in Supporting Independence.

Purnamasari & Herman (2017) demonstrated that interactive multimedia significantly improves students' conceptual understanding and learning independence. Technology is not only a learning aid but also a key driver in developing responsibility and self-regulation in learning.

6. Temporary Synthesis of the Theoretical Foundation.

The theoretical foundation of various approaches and research suggests that training for independent learning in elementary schools must include the integration of innovative learning strategies, curriculum support and school leadership, the active role of teachers and parents, and the use of educational technology. With the support of these

factors, elementary school children, including those in Mataram City, have a significant opportunity to grow as active, reflective, and resilient independent learners in facing future learning challenges.

7. Activity Objectives.

This community service activity has the following general and specific objectives:

General Objective:

To improve independent learning among elementary school students in Mataram City through integrated training involving students, teachers, and parents using an innovative and participatory learning approach.

Specific Objectives:

- To provide teachers with an understanding of the importance of developing independent learning in elementary school-aged children and strategies that can be applied in daily learning.
- To increase parents' capacity to support their children's independent learning at home, including through positive communication and consistent learning habits.
- To train elementary school students to plan, manage, and evaluate their own learning activities independently, in accordance with their developmental stage.
- To implement innovative learning approaches, such as brain-based learning, flipped classroom, project-based learning, and the use of interactive multimedia, to foster student interest and engagement in learning.
- To build collaboration between schools, parents, and local communities in creating

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

This community service activity was held on March 14–15, 2025, at an elementary school in Mataram City, Lombok. The activity implementation method used a participatory approach with the following stages:

1. Activity Preparation:

- Coordination with the school, including the principal, class teachers, and the school committee.
- Identification of training participants consisting of 4th and 5th grade elementary school students, homeroom teachers, and parent representatives.
- Preparation of training modules, interactive learning media, and evaluation tools.
- Organization of the implementation team (facilitator, moderator, documentation, evaluator).

2. Activity Implementation (March 14–15, 2025).

First Day (March 14, 2025):

- Official opening and remarks from the school and the community service team.
- Teacher and Parent Training Session:
  - Topic 1: The concept and urgency of independent learning for elementary school children.
  - Topic 2: Learning strategies based on brain-based learning and flipped classroom.
  - Simulation and practice: Teachers and parents practice designing independent learning activities at home and in the classroom.

- Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Session:
    - Teachers and parents discuss challenges and solutions in fostering independent learning in children.

Day Two (March 15, 2025):

- Student Training Session:
    - Icebreaker and motivation for independent learning.
    - Topic 1: "I Can Learn by "Myself"—short video and reflective discussion.
    - Topic 2: Learning to create a personal study schedule (learning planner).
    - Simulation: Students carry out independent learning activities using the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) approach.
- Use of interactive multimedia and digital storytelling to strengthen student motivation and active participation.
- Closing and joint reflection, initial evaluation by students, teachers, and parents of the training results.

3. Evaluation and Follow-up.

- Evaluation of activities was conducted through simple pre- and post-tests, teacher observation sheets, and interviews with parents.
- Preparation of implementation reports and recommendations for further program development.
- Follow-up included monitoring the implementation of independent learning strategies by teachers in the classroom and parents at home for one month after the training through WhatsApp groups and limited visits.

4. Activity Success Indicators.

Components	Success Indicator
1. Participant Participation	-At least 90% of participants (teachers, parents, and students) attended the two-day training. - Participants actively participated in discussion sessions, workshops, and practical sessions.
2. Material Understanding	-80% of participants demonstrated an increased understanding of the concept of independent learning through simple pre- and post-tests.
3. Practical Skills	-Teachers/parents were able to develop independent learning activity plans for students. - Students were able to create their own study schedules and carry out small projects.
4. Participant Evaluation	-A minimum satisfaction score of 85% on the participant evaluation sheet regarding the training material, facilitator, and effectiveness.
5. Activity Output	-Training modules, video documentation of activities, implementation reports, and publication of activities in local/school media.

Components	Success Indicator
6. Follow-up	- A WhatsApp group for ongoing mentoring was established one month after the training. - Program follow-up was provided by the school.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.

A. Training Results.

This community service activity proceeded according to the established plan. The activity took place on March 14–15, 2025, at a public elementary school in Mataram City and involved:

- 12 fourth- and fifth-grade teachers
- 38 fourth- and fifth-grade students
- 15 parents
- 4 resource persons/facilitators.

The activity was divided into two days with different focuses. The first day focused on increasing the capacity of teachers and parents to understand the concepts and strategies of independent learning, while the second day focused on direct training for students.

B. The results achieved from this activity include:

1. Increased Teacher and Parent Understanding:

- Pre-test and post-test results showed an average increase in understanding scores of 30%.
- Teachers and parents better understand the importance of providing space for children to learn independently without excessive intervention.
- Most participants expressed interest in adapting the brain-based learning and flipped classroom methods introduced.

2. Increased Student Awareness and Independence:

- Students appeared enthusiastic when creating learning planners and participating in project-based learning simulations.
- Based on facilitator observations, 82% of students demonstrated basic skills in managing study time and setting simple learning goals.
- Student response to the video materials and digital storytelling sessions was quite high, as evidenced by their reflections, which demonstrated an understanding of the importance of independent learning.

3. Physical and Documentary Outputs:

- Training modules were distributed to all participants.
- Activities were documented with photos and videos for reporting and publication purposes.
- A follow-up WhatsApp group was established for teachers and parents to serve as a platform for post-training monitoring and consultation.

DISCUSSION

This training activity demonstrates that an interactive and contextual educational approach can shape new mindsets for teachers, parents, and students in fostering independent learning. Learning independence in elementary school-aged children, according to Zimmerman (2000), is an important component of self-regulated learning that can be fostered from an early age through habitual practice and a supportive environment.

In the context of this activity, the involvement of parents and teachers in the training proved crucial. They are not only primary facilitators at home and in the classroom but also learning models for children. Therefore, building their capacity must be an integral part of such training efforts.

Furthermore, the project-based learning approach and the use of digital media have been shown to increase active student participation. This aligns with research by Hmelo-Silver (2004), which states that involving children in activities with personal meaning increases their motivation and responsibility for learning.

This activity also demonstrates that even short training sessions can have a positive impact when conducted systematically and participatorily. However, to ensure more sustainable training outcomes, long-term mentoring strategies, regular monitoring, and cross-stakeholder collaboration (schools, families, and communities) are required.

OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS.

Obstacles:

- Some students still rely on teachers for independent learning assignments.
- Not all parents are accustomed to using digital media to support their children.

Solutions:

- Provide simple and easy-to-use templates and guides for independent learning.
- Provide regular online follow-up training and mentoring sessions for parents.

IMPLICATIONS

This activity has important implications for developing an independent learning training model at the elementary school level. Going forward, this activity can serve as a pilot project to be replicated in other schools in Lombok or other regions, using a similar approach but adapting to local conditions.

CONCLUSION

The community service activity in the form of independent learning training for elementary school children in Mataram City, held on March 14–15, 2025, was successfully implemented and achieved most of the planned objectives. **This training has improved:**

1) Teachers' and parents' understanding of the concepts and strategies for fostering independent learning in children.
2) Students' awareness and ability to manage time, design learning goals, and carry out simple independent learning activities.
3) Collaboration between the school, parents, and the community service team in supporting children's continuous learning development. From observations, group discussions, and training evaluations, it can be concluded that an active, interactive, and project-based learning approach can encourage children to be more confident and take responsibility for their learning process.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Based on the results of the implementation and evaluation of the activities, the following recommendations are suggested:

1) Follow-up training for teachers and parents should be conducted periodically to deepen strategies for supporting independent learning based on children's character.

2) Schools are expected to integrate the independent learning program into routine classroom activities, such as personal project assignments, independent study schedules, and weekly learning reflections.
3) Ongoing post-training support is needed, both through digital platforms (communication groups) and limited visits to ensure the strategy is implemented effectively.
4) Documentation and publication of activities are important to serve as a model of good practice that can be adapted by other elementary schools in Lombok and the surrounding area.
5) Researchers or academics are advised to develop longitudinal evaluation instruments to assess the development of students' learning independence in a more in-depth and sustainable manner.

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