

DEVELOPING A MODEL OF MOTHER'S EMPOWERMENT TO SUPPORT LEARNING AUTONOMY IN SAWOHAN VILLAGE

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Abstract

This community service program aims to develop a mother's empowerment model to support children's learning autonomy in Sawohan Village, Buduran District, Sidoarjo Regency. The program was initiated because many mothers had limited awareness of their role in supporting home learning, lacked practical skills to assist their children's learning activities, and had minimal access to educational support networks. A Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach was employed, actively involving mothers and community stakeholders in problem identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The empowerment model consisted of four integrated components: awareness building, practical skill training, continuous mentoring, and strengthening community support networks. The activities included community education, hands-on training, consultation, mentoring, and advocacy to ensure program sustainability.

Data were collected through participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation and were analyzed using thematic qualitative analysis. The findings showed increased awareness among mothers regarding their educational roles, improved practical skills in implementing shared reading, storytelling, study time management, and the use of simple learning media at home. The program also encouraged more consistent home-learning practices, produced practical handbooks and learning guidelines, and established a community learning group (Kelompok Belajar Ibu dan Anak) as a sustainable local support network. Overall, the program developed a structured and replicable mother's empowerment model that integrates awareness enhancement, skill development, mentoring, and community networking to strengthen children's learning autonomy and can be adapted in communities with similar social and economic characteristics.

Keywords: *Empowerment Model, Mother's Empowerment, Learning Autonomy.*

Abstrak

Program pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan model pemberdayaan ibu untuk mendukung otonomi belajar anak di Desa Sawohan, Kecamatan Buduran, Kabupaten Sidoarjo. Program ini dimulai karena banyak ibu memiliki kesadaran yang terbatas tentang peran mereka dalam mendukung pembelajaran di rumah, kurang memiliki keterampilan praktis untuk membantu kegiatan belajar anak-anak mereka, dan memiliki akses minimal ke jaringan dukungan pendidikan. Pendekatan Penelitian Aksi Partisipatif (PAR) digunakan, dengan secara aktif melibatkan ibu dan pemangku kepentingan masyarakat dalam identifikasi masalah, perencanaan, implementasi, dan evaluasi. Model pemberdayaan terdiri dari empat komponen terintegrasi: peningkatan kesadaran, pelatihan keterampilan praktis, pendampingan berkelanjutan, dan penguatan jaringan dukungan masyarakat. Kegiatan tersebut meliputi pendidikan masyarakat, pelatihan praktik langsung, konsultasi, pendampingan, dan advokasi untuk memastikan keberlanjutan program.

Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan dokumentasi dan dianalisis menggunakan analisis kualitatif tematik. Temuan menunjukkan peningkatan kesadaran di kalangan ibu mengenai peran pendidikan mereka, peningkatan keterampilan praktis dalam menerapkan membaca bersama, bercerita, manajemen waktu belajar, dan penggunaan media pembelajaran sederhana di rumah. Program ini juga mendorong praktik belajar di rumah yang lebih konsisten, menghasilkan buku panduan praktis dan pedoman belajar, serta membentuk kelompok belajar komunitas (Kelompok Belajar Ibu dan Anak) sebagai jaringan dukungan lokal yang berkelanjutan. Secara keseluruhan, program ini mengembangkan model pemberdayaan ibu yang terstruktur dan dapat direplikasi yang mengintegrasikan peningkatan kesadaran, pengembangan keterampilan, pendampingan, dan jaringan komunitas untuk memperkuat otonomi belajar anak dan dapat diadaptasi di komunitas dengan karakteristik sosial dan ekonomi yang serupa. komunitas lain dengan karakteristik sosial dan ekonomi yang serupa.

Keywords: Model Pemberdayaan, Pemberdayaan Ibu, Otonomi Belajar.

INTRODUCTION

Learning challenges in rural and coastal areas are often closely related to geographical and socioeconomic conditions that limit access to educational support. In Sawohan Village, Buduran District, Sidoarjo Regency, most residents work as fishermen and pond laborers, requiring them to spend long hours outside the home. This condition reduces the availability of parental assistance during children's study time and limits the continuity of learning support at home. This finding indicates that Indonesian students' literacy skills still require serious attention from various parties, including families as the first and closest learning environment for children.

Several recent studies have shown that active parental participation in children's learning activities at home contributes significantly to improving students' academic engagement and learning motivation (Barger et al., 2019)

A similar condition can be found in Sawohan Village, Buduran District, Sidoarjo Regency. In addition, restricted access to transportation and the absence of nearby tutoring facilities make it difficult for children to obtain additional academic support outside school hours. The geographical characteristics of the area also affect the distribution of educational resources and reduce opportunities for direct interaction with qualified educators. As a result, children rely heavily on home-based learning environments that are often not adequately supported. A supportive and structured home learning environment has been widely recognized as an important factor that

enhances children's literacy development, academic performance, and motivation to learn (Silinskas & Kikas, 2019)

This situation aligns with (Bronfenbrenner, 2000), which explains that a child's development is influenced by multiple environmental systems, including family, community, and socioeconomic factors. Likewise (Coleman, 1988) emphasizes that family involvement and access to community resources strongly affect children's educational outcomes. The mothers' group in Sawohan Village, as explained by (Rohmah et al., 2021) represents an informal organization based on solidarity and cooperation that has the potential to strengthen community capacity in the field of education. These conditions indicate that the main issue is not merely low motivation or lack of parental involvement, but rather limited home-learning support and restricted access to educational resources due to geographical and socioeconomic constraints. Therefore, strengthening family-based learning through a context-based empowerment approach becomes an important strategy to address these challenges. The program develops a parent training model to support children's learning independence during the COVID-19 pandemic (Maryuni et al., 2022). The study showed that consistent mentoring sholhelped parents better manage their children's home learning activities.

Although previous studies have demonstrated the importance of parental involvement in children's education, most have focused on general parental participation or literacy activities rather

than developing a structured, community-based empowerment model specifically designed to strengthen mothers' capacity in fostering children's learning autonomy. Furthermore, existing programs are generally implemented as short-term interventions and provide limited mechanisms for continuous mentoring, community networking, and long-term sustainability. Consequently, there remains a need for an empowerment model that systematically integrates awareness building, practical skill development, mentoring, and community collaboration to support sustainable home-learning practices.

A structured intervention is essential to ensure that participants are able to understand, apply, and sustain the knowledge and skills introduced during the program. Educational interventions implemented through systematic learning stages have been shown to enhance participants' engagement and improve the effectiveness of the learning process (Andayani & Hastuti, 2026). Therefore, this community service develops a structured empowerment model that integrates awareness building, practical skill training, continuous mentoring, and community networking to strengthen children's learning autonomy.

Mother's empowerment in the educational context refers to the process of strengthening mothers' awareness, confidence, and capacity to actively support their children's learning at home. It involves enhancing mothers' knowledge of effective learning strategies, fostering self-efficacy, and enabling them to take initiative as primary educators within the family. Recent research shows that structured empowerment programs for mothers that include participatory training and mentoring can significantly improve

parental self-confidence, engagement in children's learning, and student outcomes (Jeynes, 2012). This indicates that empowering mothers is not merely about giving information, but about building sustainable competency that reinforces family-based learning.

Interviews with community partners further revealed that low parental involvement, limited knowledge of effective learning strategies, and generally low parental education levels were key factors contributing to children's low learning motivation. This aligns with Epstein's *Theory of Parental Involvement* (2001), which states that active parental participation is essential for improving children's academic achievement and motivation. Moreover, the absence of local tutoring facilities and a shortage of qualified educators have made it difficult for children to develop literacy and numeracy skills. Recent studies show that parental involvement in children's learning activities at home significantly supports cognitive development and learning motivation ((Hagan et al., 2021)

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the community's needs, the community engagement team conducted a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and preliminary observations involving representatives of the Sawohan mothers' group and community leaders. The findings revealed that most mothers relied solely on schools for their children's education, had limited knowledge of practical home-learning strategies, rarely implemented structured learning routines at home, and lacked opportunities to share experiences or receive educational support from the community. These findings confirmed the need for a structured empowerment program that combines awareness

building, practical skill development, and continuous mentoring to strengthen children's learning autonomy.

In this study, an empowerment model is defined as a structured and systematic framework designed to enhance mothers' capacity to actively support their children's learning autonomy. The model emphasizes participation, capacity building, and sustainability as its core components, ensuring that empowerment is not merely a short-term intervention but a continuous developmental process within the community. Contemporary perspectives on community empowerment highlight that effective empowerment models integrate local participation, collective decision-making, and long-term sustainability strategies to strengthen social and educational outcomes (Laverack & Pratley, 2018). Therefore, the empowerment model developed in this study adopts these principles to position mothers not only as beneficiaries of training but as active contributors in fostering a supportive home-learning environment.

Empowering mothers to support their children's learning is expected to enhance students' learning independence while strengthening family-based education. Furthermore, meta-analytic evidence shows that parental involvement is positively associated with higher student engagement and motivation in academic activities ((Barger et al., 2019).

Previous studies support the importance of empowerment activities. Family educational involvement plays an important role in sustaining children's learning motivation and academic development (Sivabalan et al., 2024). Therefore, enhancing mothers' competence in supporting learning at home is essential.

Based on these considerations, this community service program aims to develop a mother-empowerment model to strengthen children's learning autonomy in Sawohan Village. Unlike previous community engagement programs that primarily emphasize parental involvement or short-term training activities (Barger et al., 2019; Sivabalan et al., 2024), this program contributes by developing a structured community-based empowerment model that integrates awareness building, practical skill training, continuous mentoring, and community support networks. This integrated framework is grounded in the principles of community empowerment proposed by Laverack and Pratley (2018) and is designed to strengthen mothers' capacity as primary facilitators of home learning while fostering sustainable learning practices through the *Kelompok Belajar Ibu dan Anak*. In line with Benson (2022), strengthening mothers' competencies through this integrated model is expected to enhance children's learning autonomy by encouraging responsibility, initiative, and self-directed learning in the home environment.

METHOD

This community engagement program aims to develop a mother-empowerment model that supports children's learning autonomy in Sawohan Village, Buduran District, Sidoarjo Regency. The program combines several community service methods to ensure that its implementation is effective, relevant, and sustainable according to the local community's needs.

The participants consisted of 10 mothers who were members of the Sawohan Village mothers' group. Participants were selected purposively

based on the following criteria: (1) having school-aged children, (2) residing in Sawohan Village, (3) willingness to participate throughout the program, and (4) recommendations from village officials and community leaders. The target families generally came from fishing and fish-pond farming households with limited access to educational support. The program was implemented collaboratively with the Sawohan Village administration, community leaders, and representatives of the mothers' group, who assisted in participant recruitment, program coordination, and sustainability activities.

The main activity was conducted using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach as described by (Kemmis1, 2013) and (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) in which the community was actively involved in every stage of the program—starting from problem identification, planning, implementation, to evaluation. Through this participatory approach, the mothers in Sawohan Village acted as agents of change who directly contributed to the development of the children's learning autonomy model.

To support the implementation of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, several data collection techniques were employed to understand community needs and evaluate program activities. These included semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The program was implemented over a three-month period through systematic stages to ensure that the empowerment process was effective, participatory, and sustainable.

Semi-structured interviews with participating mothers and community leaders

to explore their needs, experiences, motivations, and challenges in supporting children's learning.

Participatory observation during training sessions and home-learning practices to observe how the introduced strategies were implemented.

Documentation, including photos, videos, field notes, and training materials, was gathered as evidence for reflection and evaluation.

Stages of Implementation

The program was carried out over a three-month period, consisting of three main stages:

1. Stage I – Identification and Planning: Conducted collaboratively with the mothers' group to identify local educational problems and training needs.

Community education was carried out through short counseling sessions and in-house training to raise awareness and improve mothers' understanding of child-centered, enjoyable, and effective learning strategies.

This activity was based on (Freire, 1970), which emphasizes participatory learning that enables individuals to become active agents of change in their social environment.

2. Stage II – Implementation and Mentoring: Included counseling sessions, training, practical simulations, and direct consultation activities.

The training sessions focused on demonstrations and simulations of home-learning practices, such

as shared reading techniques, time management for study, and the use of simple learning media.

This approach aligns with (Bandura & Walters, 1977) Social Learning Theory, which explains that children learn through observation and imitation of role models, particularly their parents. Therefore, strengthening mothers' teaching skills can help create positive learning behaviors for children at home.

Consultations were carried out individually and in groups to help mothers overcome challenges in guiding their children's learning process at home.

These sessions also facilitated collaboration between community members and university experts, following (Coleman, 1988), which highlights the importance of social networks and community support in fostering educational success.

3. Stage III – Evaluation and Advocacy: Focused on evaluating outcomes, refining the empowerment model, and developing follow-up plans for sustainability.

Advocacy was conducted to ensure program sustainability, by mentoring mothers and community leaders in creating a conducive home-learning environment.

This included developing simple guidelines and practical recommendations to help mothers apply appropriate learning methods that suit their children's characteristics and

family conditions.

Expected Outcomes

Through this method, it is expected that the mothers in Sawohan Village will enhance their competence in supporting children's learning at home, children will develop stronger learning autonomy, and the program will produce a replicable empowerment model that can be adapted in other communities with similar characteristics.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The implementation of the community service program in Sawohan Village generated findings that are closely aligned with the objectives of empowering mothers to support children's learning autonomy. Referring to the Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework (Kemmis1, 2013) and the empowerment perspective proposed by (Freire, 1970), the results are discussed by integrating empirical findings with relevant theoretical foundations used in this study. Based on participatory observations, interviews, and documentation, four interrelated themes emerged.

1. Increased Awareness and Knowledge.

Prior to the implementation of the program, most mothers perceived children's learning as solely the responsibility of schools. Of the ten participating mothers, eight consistently attended all training sessions, while two attended more than 75% of the activities. During the final reflection session, all participants were able to explain at least two strategies for supporting children's learning at home, indicating improved awareness of their educational role. This finding is

consistent with Epstein (2005) in the Theory of Parental Involvement, which emphasizes that limited parental engagement often results from a lack of awareness of parents' educational roles. The participatory learning process encouraged mothers to actively reflect on their experiences, leading to increased confidence and awareness in supporting their children's daily learning activities. Furthermore, this improvement indicates that awareness-building activities are essential in strengthening parents' roles in creating a supportive learning environment at home.



Picture 1 : Increased Awareness and Knowledge.

2. Improved Practical Skills in Home Learning Facilitation

The training and simulation sessions enabled mothers to develop practical skills in facilitating home learning activities. Mothers practiced simple and contextual strategies such as shared reading, storytelling, time management, and the use of recycled materials as learning media. During the mentoring period, seven mothers regularly implemented shared reading activities at least three times per week. Six mothers introduced structured study schedules at home, while five utilized simple learning media made from recycled household materials. These practices were confirmed through participatory observations and

mentoring records. These findings support Bandura & Walters (1977) in Social Learning Theory, which highlights that learning occurs through observation, imitation, and direct practice. By positioning mothers as role models, children were encouraged to adopt positive and independent learning behaviors. In addition, the availability of simple handbooks and practical guidelines further supported mothers in consistently applying these strategies at home. This demonstrates that equipping parents with practical skills significantly enhances their effectiveness in supporting children's learning.



Picture 2: Practicing skill.

3. Strengthened Collaboration and Motivation

Beyond individual capacity building, the program also strengthened collaboration among mothers within the community. Through group discussions and consultation sessions, mothers were able to share experiences, challenges, and best practices in supporting their children's learning. The mothers organized regular weekly discussion meetings to exchange experiences regarding children's learning. A community WhatsApp group was also established to facilitate continuous consultation with fellow participants

and the community service team. This finding aligns with Coleman (1988), which emphasizes the importance of social networks and trust in improving educational outcomes. The collaborative environment fostered mutual support and increased motivation among participants. Furthermore, continuous mentoring involving mothers, community leaders, and the university team contributed to maintaining program consistency and sustainability. This indicates that collaboration and social support play a crucial role in reinforcing learning practices within the community.



Picture 3 : Strengthened Collaboration.

4. Program Sustainability and Development of a Replicable Empowerment Model

From a sustainability perspective, the program successfully encouraged the formation of a community learning group known as *Kelompok Belajar Ibu dan Anak*. This group functions as a support system that allows mothers to continue mentoring activities, exchange learning experiences, and maintain program outcomes beyond the formal implementation period. At the end of the program, the community agreed to conduct monthly learning-group meetings coordinated by local community leaders. A practical handbook containing home-learning strategies was distributed to all participating families as a guide for continued implementation.



Picture 4 : Program Sustainability and Development.

The evaluation phase demonstrated that the integration of participatory approaches, continuous mentoring, and community-based support resulted in positive behavioral changes among participants. The empowerment model developed through this program consists of four main components: awareness building, skill enhancement, collaborative support networks, and sustainability through community learning groups. These components ensure that the program is not only effective in the short term but also adaptable and replicable in other communities with similar characteristics.

In accordance with Afdhal et al. (2023), this empowerment process strengthens community independence and ensures that the model is replicable in other villages with similar social and economic characteristics.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, this community service program successfully developed a mother-empowerment model to support children's learning autonomy in Sawohan Village, Buduran District, Sidoarjo Regency. Through the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, mothers were actively involved in every stage of the program, resulting in increased awareness of their

educational roles, improved practical skills in facilitating home learning, and strengthened collaboration among community members.

The findings indicate that empowering mothers as primary learning facilitators has a positive impact on creating a supportive and independent learning environment at home. The integration of community education, practical training, continuous mentoring, and advocacy activities enabled mothers to apply contextual and child-centered learning strategies consistently. In addition, the establishment of social support networks among mothers and community leaders contributed to sustaining motivation and shared responsibility in guiding children's learning.

This program also produced tangible outputs in the form of simple handbooks and practical guidelines, as well as the formation of a community learning group (*Kelompok Belajar Ibu dan Anak*), which functions as a local support system to maintain program outcomes beyond the formal implementation period. These elements reflect the sustainability aspect of the program and strengthen community independence in supporting children's education.

Overall, the empowerment model developed in this program emphasizes four key components: awareness building, skill enhancement, collaborative support networks, and sustainability through community-based learning groups. This model is considered replicable and adaptable for implementation in other villages with similar social and economic characteristics. Future community service initiatives are recommended to strengthen institutional support and long-term mentoring to further enhance

the sustainability and impact of family-based learning empowerment programs.

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