

Optimizing the Freedom Teaching Platform Application (PMM) Through the Cluster PAUD Learning Community

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Abstract

This public dedication program aims to provide training for School Principals and Early Childhood Education (ECE) teachers in utilizing an independent platform application for the learning process. This activity is conducted by the author with support from the Department of Education and Culture of Palopo City. The main challenge faced by the partners is the institutions' lack of readiness to access the PMM application and use its available features. The program seeks to disseminate information about the Merdeka Mengajar Application and ensure that participants can access, complete topics and modules, and understand how to upload reports practically. The primary partners in this program are the ECE groups in the Ujung and Sore Sub-districts. The mentoring methods include analyzing the partners' needs, assisting in optimizing the use of the PMM application, and evaluating the results of the activities. The results of the mentoring indicate that participants successfully accessed the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, created learning accounts, completed topics and modules in the PMM application, and understood how to upload reports.

Keywords: *Independent Teaching Platform, Independent Curriculum, PAUD cluster*

Introduction

The use of information technology now has a positive impact on various aspects of life. With the help of technology, education-related information has become more accessible (Khan et al., 2020; Löfgren et al., 2022). These benefits are experienced not only at higher, secondary, and elementary education levels but also in early childhood education (Riti et al., 2022; Sabri et al., 2022). During the pandemic, utilizing technology platforms has become crucial for learning and management within educational institutions. This influences educational policies for teachers, schools, and students (Le et al., 2017; Dang et al., 2022). The "Freedom to Learn" program as a technology platform supports the effective implementation of learning during the pandemic (Daulay et al., 2021; Prabowo et al., 2021).

The Free Learning Platform is an educational innovation designed to facilitate teaching and working activities for educators (Islamiyah et al., 2022; Hasan et al., 2020). Educators can access reference sources, as well as gain inspiration and insights through the Free Learning Curriculum application (Umar et al., 2021). For learners, this platform

makes it easier to search for information related to various subjects using gadgets (Abou et al., 2020). However, the implementation of this independent learning program still faces challenges, particularly for teachers who are still learning to advance technologically (Meizar et al., 2022). Some teachers have not yet fully accessed the application, even though most already have a special ID for teachers (Putra et al., 2023).

The platform offers features that assist teachers in becoming more professional educators. These features help teachers find teaching tools, explore new learning paradigms, and acquire clear information about their capabilities and student learning development (Darnita et al., 2022). With this application, teachers can enhance their teaching methods, master teaching materials, and further develop their careers as educators (Surani et al., 2022; Wijaya et al., 2022).

The Free Learning Platform provides teachers with the opportunity to study independently (Siska et al., 2022), offers a space for them to learn and share educational information (Sari et al., 2022), and helps in developing the learning process (Aggraini et al., 2022). To ensure the even distribution of the independent curriculum across all educational levels and to meet the need for knowledge transfer, a program is necessary to facilitate teachers' access to information regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum (Munawar, 2022; Numertayasa et al., 2022). However, the provision of websites and applications as independent teaching platforms still requires further socialization and introduction to educational institutions nationwide (Zhang, 2019). There are variations in institutional readiness to implement the independent curriculum at the preschool, elementary, and secondary levels, along with some significant challenges (Susanti et al., 2023).

A similar situation is observed in early childhood education (ECE) institutions and teachers in Palopo City, where data indicate low achievement levels related to issues at the Department of Education and Culture. The Community Service team, in collaboration with the Department of Education, formed a team to optimize the Freedom to Teach Platform within local ECE clusters. Urgent follow-up is needed based on agreements with ECE PKG administrators in the Ujung and Soreang sub-districts, carried out through mentoring of community ECE groups.

Method

Input Stage

1. Analysis Need Partners: At stage first, the supervisor builder creates a spreadsheet link and shares it through the coaching group, chief schools and teachers fill out the link For know progress account learn. From these links can be known information regarding teachers who have their own account study and yet own account learning and the extent to which teachers use PMM application. Information from the spreadsheet found data on several teachers and principals school Not yet own account study and have not logged in PMM. After doing analysis to need a partner,

found that partners need something possible to facilitate and understand PAUD Educators that can use Free Teaching application in a manner maximum.

2. Determine Objective: Objective devotion This is for sharing information related Merdeka Teaching and sharing platform application practice Good specifically for joining a team in PMM the education office collaborated with Colleague Teacher Practice as well as a joining Master of Mobility with Community the PAUD cluster in the Foster area.
3. Target Activity: Target activity assisting the Merdeka Teaching Platform and Implementation Merdeka Curriculum is an assisted PAUD teacher in Ujung District which consists of: top 10 Kindergarten and District institutions Afternoon consisting of 6 Kindergarten institutions.

Process Stages

In implementation accompaniment this, team give steps Optimization of PMM includes (Kukkar et al, 2023): (1) Instructing the Institute for immediately login Implementation list Merdeka Curriculum (IKM) on the page that has been provided, (2) Accompanying and Recording Institutions that have registration and uploading Statement Letter Willingness with IKM, and (3) Classifying Problem Problems or obstacles encountered every member or institution in matter accessing PMM and IKM in particular Community Group in building.

Output Stages

At this output stage the team evaluates achievement objective assistance. register participants who can use applications with good and what not capable use applications. Besides that done data collection experienced participants constraint or problem For get accompaniment more continue.

Results and Discussion

Activity Accompaniment PMM Application

The assistance was conducted on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, at 11:00 AM. This activity included support for the Merdeka Mengajar Platform and registration for the Merdeka Curriculum Implementation (IKM). Two kindergarten principals and teachers were present, while the total number of principals and teachers receiving assistance was 100. However, during the Merdeka Mengajar Platform assistance and IKM registration event, only about 50 people (educators and kindergarten principals) attended due to some schools dividing teacher duties, particularly the accompanying teachers. The event was directly attended by the Head of Kindergarten from the Palopo City Department of Education and Culture (Lu et al., 2021). This activity was carried out because there are still some educators and staff who do not know how to access the PMM application and several institutions that have not registered for IKM this year, given the limited time, resulting in some schools, in particular, still not being registered.

Table 1. List of Educational Units

No	NPSP	Nama Satuan Pendidikan	Alamat	Kec
1	40314698	Tk Negeri Pembina Palopo	Jl. Kh. Muh. Hasyim	Wara
2	40315070	Tk Negeri Telluwanua	Jl. Kunnu	Telluwanua
3	40315071	Tk Islam HikmaBirrulWalidain	Jl. EnggangPerumnas	Bara
4	40315073	Tk Islam Al Ikhsan	Jl. Bangau 6	Bara
5	40315074	Tk Islam DatokSulaiman Putra	Jl. Dr. Ratulangi	Bara
6	40315076	Tk Kristen Balandai	Jl. Manggis	Bara
7	40315077	Tk Prisma Rampoang	Jl. Dr. Ratulangi	Bara
8	40315079	Tk TerpaduBabussalam	Jl. Dr. Ratulangi Km 7	Bara
9	40315080	Tk Andhira	BtnPepabri C6 No 11	Bara
10	40315083	Tk AisyiyahBustanulAthfal Peta	Jl Andi Paso	Sendana
11	40315084	Tk WaladunShalih	Jl Dr Ratulangi Km 9	Telluwanua
12	40315085	Tk AisyiyahBustanulAthfal Ii	Jl Rambutan No.3 Palopo	Wara
13	40315088	Tk Darul Hikmah	JlPatiandjalaLr	Wara
14	40315092	Tk Mutiara Bangsa	JlPongsimpin Ii	Wara
15	40315093	Tk Pertiwi	JlAnggrek No 25	Wara
16	40315094	Tk Sejahtera	JlBatara 132	Wara
17	40315095	Tk Putra Ii	JlTandi Pau	Wara Barat
18	40315097	Tk Satu Atap	JlJenderal Sudirman	Wara Selatan
19	40315099	Tk Cokroaminoto	Jl Andi Kati	Wara Timur
20	40315101	Tk Masyitha	Jl A. Kambo	Wara Timur

The Community Service team invited all the kindergarten principals and teachers in the building to collaborate with the established PKG, to provide assistance and help with creating accounts and logging into PMM. In the initial stage of this activity, the material provided was related to the Merdeka Mengajar Platform application.



Figure 1. Presentation Merdeka Learning Platform materials

Additionally, this activity aims to enable educators and education staff to share knowledge with fellow educators and kindergarten principals about early childhood education (PAUD), as well as important information or sites for internet access relevant

to the Early Childhood Education profession. One of the focuses is on how to log into PMM and register for IKM. The kindergarten supervisors also provide guidance on how to create monthly reports using available applications, such as Microsoft Excel. This activity is conducted regularly by the supervisors, particularly in the Ujung and Soreang sub-districts. Participants in the assistance program use the independent platform application taught by the community service team, with support from other participants (peer tutors) who are skilled in logging in and using the features of this PMM application (Ye et al., 2023). At the beginning, participants will be assisted in activating their learning accounts as shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Participants carry out activity processes account Study

There is a digital platform that can accelerate the improvement of educational quality. Users can utilize application technology according to their needs (Nishikubo et al., 2018). The PMM application is available for free download on the Play Store and is designed to assist teachers in carrying out their duties (Ketaren et al., 2022). The Merdeka Mengajar Platform can be accessed in two ways: (a) through a browser by visiting the page <https://guru.kemdikbud.go.id/>, and (b) via an Android device by downloading the Merdeka Mengajar app from the Play Store.

Generated Output

The outcomes of the PMM assistance activity are as follows: (1) Participants understand the function and purpose of the PMM application, (2) Participants have their own personal belajar.id accounts, (3) Participants have successfully logged in and begun working on topics and modules in the PMM application, and understand the methods for real actions (real examples) and how to upload reports, (4) Participants can share their experiences and skills as peer tutors within their institutions, particularly in the Fostered PAUD Group, (5) Institutions are expected to understand the differences and register for IKM by choosing one of the three options: Independent Study, Independent Change, or Independent Share, and (6) The Devotion team has recorded institutions that have selected the Independent Change option in IKM up to the stage of uploading the willingness statement.



Figure 3. Activities Assistance by the Service Team

Obstacles Faced

Although the accompaniment activities were carried out well, there were some issues encountered by the team and participants, such as internet network disruptions during account activation, which caused the activation process to take longer than expected.



Figure 4. Activities Assistance by the Service Team

Participants were able to complete various topics on the PMM application but faced difficulties with practical tasks, such as uploading reports. After the accompaniment activity was completed, the devotion team, along with the Supervisor, will continue to provide guidance by maintaining communication with school principals to ensure that participants fully benefit from the activity.

Conclusion

From the activities of assisting with the Merdeka Mengajar (PMM) Platform application, it was found that 99% of School Principals and Kindergarten Teachers have their own learning accounts, and 75% have logged into the PMM application and are using its features. To maximize the use of the PMM application in real action menus, it is highly recommended to conduct further assistance in the form of targeted guidance and training to support early childhood education institutions.

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