

EMPOWERING FAMILY WELFARE AND MEMBERS THROUGH BLENDED LEARNING TRAINING AND DIGITAL APPLICATION UTILIZATION FOR HOME-BASED ENGLISH LEARNING ASSISTANCE

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Abstract. This article discusses a community service program focused on introducing the concept of blended learning and its implementation in English language learning for members of the family welfare and empowering the RW 01 community organization in Sangkrah Village, Pasar Kliwon District, Surakarta. The program aimed to introduce blended learning as a flexible and effective instructional model to enhance participants' English language proficiency. The methods employed included interactive lectures, video presentations on blended learning, group discussions, and simulations of technology-assisted learning. Throughout the program, participants were encouraged to identify the characteristics and practical applications of blended learning in educational settings. The results indicated that participants developed a better understanding of the blended learning concept and demonstrated increased motivation to learn English. Furthermore, they were able to utilize supporting technologies, such as smartphones and learning applications, to facilitate a more flexible, effective, and engaging English learning experience. This program is expected to serve as an initial step toward improving digital literacy and English language proficiency among family welfare and empowerment members while providing an example of an innovative learning model that can be adapted to various community-based educational activities.

Keywords: blended learning, English language learning, family welfare empowerment

Abstrak. Artikel ini membahas kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat yang berfokus pada sosialisasi konsep blended learning serta penerapannya dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris bagi anggota Pemberdayaan dan Kesejahteraan Keluarga (PKK) RW 01 Kelurahan Sangkrah, Pasar Kliwon, Surakarta. Kegiatan ini bertujuan untuk memperkenalkan blended learning sebagai alternatif model pembelajaran yang lebih fleksibel dan efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris. Metode yang digunakan meliputi ceramah interaktif, pemaparan video mengenai blended learning, diskusi kelompok, serta simulasi pemanfaatan teknologi pendukung pembelajaran. Selama kegiatan, peserta diberi kesempatan untuk mengidentifikasi berbagai karakteristik dan penerapan blended learning dalam proses pembelajaran. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan bahwa peserta memperoleh pemahaman yang lebih baik mengenai konsep blended learning dan menunjukkan peningkatan motivasi untuk belajar bahasa Inggris. Selain itu, peserta juga mampu memanfaatkan teknologi pendukung, seperti smartphone dan aplikasi pembelajaran, sebagai media untuk mendukung proses belajar bahasa Inggris yang lebih fleksibel, efektif, dan menarik. Kegiatan ini diharapkan menjadi langkah awal dalam meningkatkan literasi digital dan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris di kalangan anggota PKK, sekaligus menjadi contoh penerapan model pembelajaran inovatif yang dapat diadaptasi dalam berbagai kegiatan pembelajaran di masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, pembelajaran bauran, pemberdayaan dan kesejahteraan keluarga

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INTRODUCTION

The progress of information and communication technology (ICT) in the 21st century has led to a major change in the way people learn. Learning is now seen not only as something that takes place within the classroom but also as a flexible, multimodal process that is linked with digital technology. In the area of education, the impact of technological developments can be seen in the way they are used to support learning both in and outside the classroom. In the case of face-to-face teaching, the use of technological advances in the form of digital learning materials is referred to as blended learning. The blended learning approach is one that is considered both highly relevant and well adapted to the current demand for innovative

methods of learning. According to Graham (2006), blended learning means the intentional combination of face-to-face instruction with online, technology-based learning, thus allowing for more flexible, interactive and learner-focused educational experiences. Hrastinski (2019) also states that blended learning is not just about the use of technology but also involves pedagogical design that strikes a balance between direct interaction, learner autonomy and the use of digital learning resources. Blended learning can be defined as a model of learning that brings together direct or offline or synchronous instruction with indirect or online or asynchronous instruction. In practice, the blended learning method in the classroom makes use of advances in information and communication technology, such as mobile phones, laptops, computers, internet access, and applications which support learning activities.

When English is being learned as the main foreign language in Indonesia, blended learning has been shown to have a positive effect on learners' motivation, their level of participation in lessons, and the acquisition of language skills (Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019; Poláková & Klímová, 2022). It allows learners to obtain a wider variety of materials via digital media and at the same time get guidance through direct interaction. As a result, blended learning is seen as a method that can overcome the limitations relating to time, place, and learning facilities, especially for people who have different social roles, for example, homemakers and adult members of the community.

In the area of family education, parental involvement plays a strategic role in supporting the child's learning. Epstein (2011) states that when parents take part in educational activities, either at home or in the community, this has a significant effect on children's motivation and their academic achievement. Yet there is still an uneven level of digital literacy and understanding among parents regarding technology-based learning methods. Knowles' (1984) theory of andragogy stresses that adults learn more effectively if the material they study is relevant to their own life experiences, meets the demands of their social roles, and can be applied to everyday activities. It therefore goes beyond simple knowledge transfer for members of the family welfare and empowering to include a process of empowering the family as part of the community (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024).

The family welfare and empowering group in the Sangkrah subdistrict of Pasar Kliwon, Surakarta, consists mostly of homemakers coming from a variety of social backgrounds and engaged in different domestic activities. The Sangkrah Subdistrict is in the Pasar Kliwon area of Surakarta, an urban area known for high levels of mobility. Yet the district still has shortcomings when it comes to digital learning infrastructure and the availability of technological devices for educational use. According to initial surveys and interviews, about 65% of family welfare and empowerment members do not have computers, even though 80% do have smartphones, which allow them to access the internet. However, these devices are not well used for blended learning, the main purpose being communication and entertainment rather than educational activities. Moreover, there is still a lack of understanding of new learning methods such as blended learning. These circumstances show a gap between the available technological infrastructure and the ability to make effective use of it to support children's learning, including the teaching of English. In addition, people's understanding of the concept, advantages, and ways of implementing blended learning is still rather limited.

Under these conditions, the community service activity was carried out with the following aims: (1) to introduce the concept of blended learning and its relevance to the teaching of English; (2) to improve the family welfare and empowering members' understanding of how to make use of digital technology as a means of learning support; and (3) to promote among family welfare and empowering members awareness and self-confidence when acting as learning companions to children in the family setting. It is expected that the activity will contribute to raising family digital literacy, to strengthening the role of education at home, and to establishing a community empowerment model through the socialisation of appropriate and context-specific technology-based learning.

Looking at its contribution to community service, this program has social utility value (social novelty) in that it does not see blended learning just as a method of instruction in formal institutions but also regards it as a form of learning that takes place within families and

communities. By doing this, the activity helps to strengthen the community's digital literacy ecosystem while at the same time improving the quality of the learning support given to children through more effective, focused, and educational use of technology.

METHOD

The method employed in the implementation of this community service activity was designed using a participatory-educative approach that positions the partners as active subjects throughout the entire series of activities. This approach aligns with Chambers' (1997) assertion that community empowerment proves more effective when the community is directly involved in the process from problem identification to activity evaluation. Conceptually, this community service methodology is also grounded in the theory of adult learning (andragogy) as articulated by Knowles (1984). Knowles posits that adult learners are characterized by autonomy, orientation toward real problem-solving, and a need for learning that is relevant to their social roles and lives. Consequently, the blended learning socialization and training methods were designed flexibly, contextually, and applicatively in accordance with the needs of family welfare and empowering RW 01 Sangkrah Subdistrict members, through the following stages:

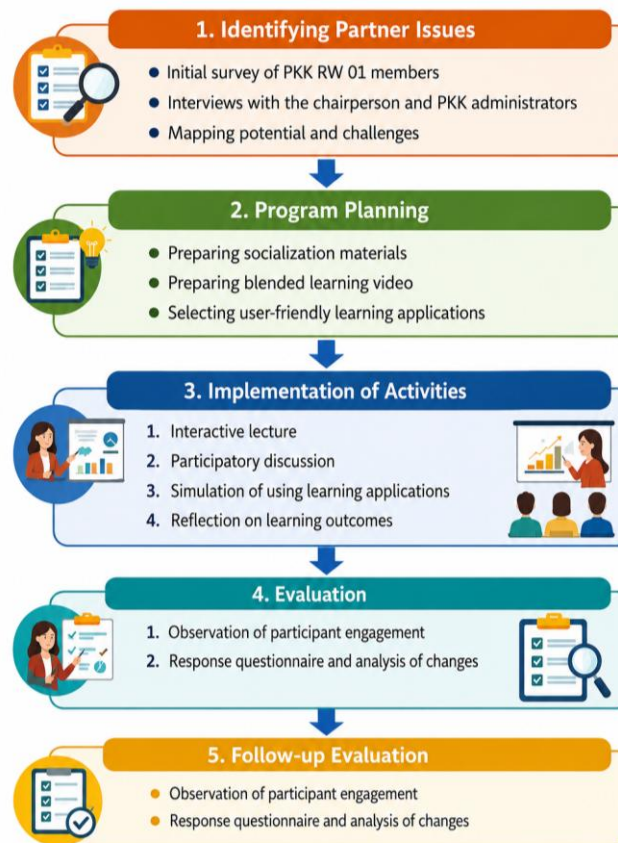


Figure 2. *Flow of community service activity*

Preparation Stage

The preparation stage commenced with internal team briefings to align perceptions regarding objectives, targets, and the activity implementation flow. Subsequently, the service team developed service instruments, including socialization materials in PowerPoint presentation format, blended learning instructional videos, discussion sheets, and guides for using digital (mobile)-based English language learning applications. At this stage, an initial survey and informal interviews were also conducted with the chairperson and administrators of family welfare and empowering RW 01 Sangkrah Subdistrict. This survey aimed to identify the level of digital literacy, availability of technological devices, and smartphone usage habits in

daily life. These preliminary data served as the basis for designing materials and training strategies appropriate to the partners' actual conditions.

Implementation Stage

The implementation stage of the community service activity was conducted face-to-face at the family welfare and empowering RW 01 Sangkrah Sub-district hall. The activity implementation was divided into several structured sessions. The first session involved the socialization of the blended learning concept delivered through interactive lectures. The interactive lecture method was selected because it facilitates two-way dialogue between the service team and participants, as recommended by Sudjana (2010), who asserts that adult learning must provide space for discussion and reflection. The second session consisted of screening and observing instructional videos depicting the implementation of blended learning in English language classrooms. Videos were employed as visual media to assist family welfare and empowering members in comprehending abstract concepts in concrete terms. The use of audiovisual media in learning has been proven to enhance participant comprehension and retention (Mayer, 2009).

The third session comprised group discussions and question-and-answer sessions. During this session, members were invited to identify elements of blended learning present in the video and discuss potential applications for supporting children's learning at home. This discussion aimed to cultivate critical awareness and self-confidence among family welfare and empowering members as learning facilitators within the family environment. The fourth session involved direct practice using smartphone-based English language learning applications. The applications introduced were selected based on criteria such as ease of access, free availability, and suitability for children's learning. This direct practice aligns with the principle of learning by doing as proposed by Kolb (1984), which asserts that direct experience constitutes the primary means of building understanding.

Evaluation Stage

The evaluation stage of this community service activity was conducted through observation of family welfare and empowering members' participation during the activity, collective reflection, and final discussions regarding perceived benefits and constraints. The evaluation was qualitative and descriptive in nature, intending to identify changes in understanding, attitudes, and motivation toward blended learning and digital technology utilization.

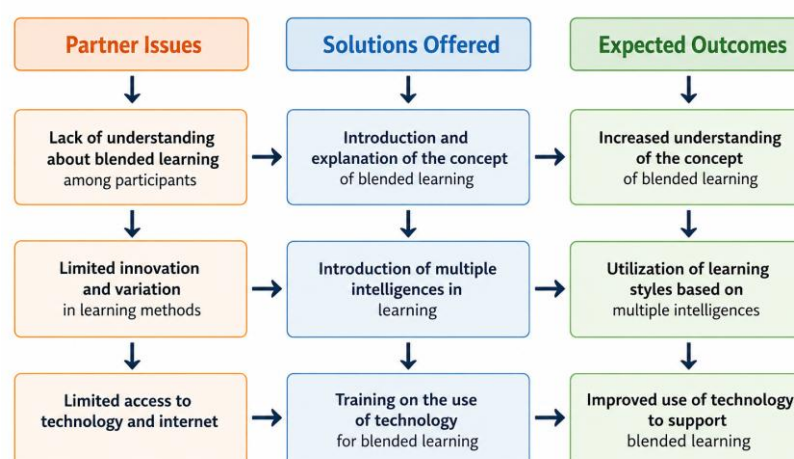


Figure 2. Framework of partner issues, solutions and expected outcomes

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the survey results obtained by the service team during the preparation stage, most family welfare and empowering RW 01 members were homemakers engaged in daily family care and work. Family welfare and empowering RW 01 members had not fully comprehended blended learning and the use of videos and learning applications in its implementation, particularly in English language instruction, for their children. The reasons for this included limited time to study instructional videos and learning applications, with most members also lacking sufficient understanding of what instructional videos and learning applications entailed. Although most family welfare and empowering RW 01 members introduced their children to technological advancements such as smartphones, the children generally used smartphones to watch entertainment videos such as cartoons rather than instructional videos, or to play games.

Furthermore, family welfare and empowering RW 01 members who were young mothers tended to utilize smartphones exclusively as communication tools and for entertainment purposes. In greater detail, the survey revealed that smartphone usage among family welfare and empowering RW 01 members comprised 75% for work, communication, and entertainment purposes. Meanwhile, 13% of the group reported using their smartphones to acquire knowledge and search for national and international news, 8% responded that they used them to fill leisure time, and 7% used smartphones for both entertainment and knowledge acquisition.

Table 1. Survey results on smartphone usage by family welfare and empowering RW 01 members

Percentage	Usage Purpose
75%	Work, communication, entertainment
13%	Knowledge acquisition, news searching
8%	Leisure time activity
7%	Entertainment and knowledge acquisition

Based on the survey and interview results conducted by the service team, the community service activity was implemented on Monday, May 13, 2024, at the family welfare and empowering RW 01 Sangkrah, Pasar Kliwon, Surakarta. A total of 30 family welfare and empowering RW 01 members attended. The service activity commenced with brief introductions by the service team members, followed by joint prayer and the singing of the family welfare and empowering anthem. Following the opening activities, the service team initiated the presentations. During the implementation of the service activity, three topics were presented, namely: multiple intelligences, blended learning, and the practical use of digital learning media applicable in blended learning. During the presentation on blended learning, the service team opened with general prompting questions regarding blended learning addressed to family welfare and empowering RW 01 members. Subsequently, the topic of blended learning was explained in greater depth. An instructional video depicting the implementation of blended learning methods in the classroom, specifically English language classes, was then screened. Family welfare and empowering RW 01 members were invited to observe the video collectively.



Figure 3. Documentation of community service activity implementation

While observing the video on blended learning method implementation, family welfare and empowering RW 01 members received explanations regarding the nature of blended learning. Graham (2005) posited that blended learning constitutes instruction that integrates offline and online learning. From Graham's straightforward explanation, blended learning may be generally defined as a learning model combining direct or offline or synchronous instruction with indirect or online or asynchronous instruction. Through the video presentation, it was explained that classroom instruction employing blended learning methods leverages advancements in information and communication technology, including the use of computers, laptops, internet access, and other devices. Additionally, instruction through blended learning methods also utilizes learning applications. Consequently, classroom instruction becomes more varied as it is not solely focused on books and paper nor exclusively centred on the teacher (Janse van Rensburg & Oguttu, 2022). Blended learning itself encompasses numerous types, including station rotation blended learning, lab rotation blended learning, flipped classroom blended learning, remote blended learning/enriched virtual, flex blended learning, and individual rotation blended learning.



Figure 4. *Presentation session on the concept of blended learning*

The utilization of blended learning methods in classroom instructional activities can cultivate an enjoyable and non-monotonous learning atmosphere, thereby enabling students to learn more optimally (Awang et al., 2025). One benefit of blended learning implementation is that classroom instruction becomes more student centred. Consequently, students can become more actively engaged in learning activities and have opportunities to explore more extensively (Hsbollah & Hassan, 2022).

Following the material presentation, the service team invited family welfare and empowering RW 01 members to engage in discussion and question-and-answer sessions regarding blended learning. The service team posed two questions to participants and provided opportunities for those able to respond. The questions addressed the topic raised in the video presentation and the digital devices or learning media utilized in the blended learning instruction depicted. Family welfare and empowering RW 01 members responded enthusiastically and provided correct answers. Subsequently, the activity continued with the third material presentation on learning applications usable as instructional media in blended learning. The selected applications were free, provided practice exercises across various subjects, and were accessible through various digital devices, particularly smartphones. Beyond material presentation, the service team also invited family welfare and empowering RW 01 members to practice using one of the learning applications. Family welfare and empowering RW 01 members participated in the service activity with high enthusiasm. Participants' responses to the topics presented were also positive. As evidenced by participants' responses to questions during the discussion and question-and-answer session, socialisation participants demonstrated good comprehension of the material presented.

CONCLUSION

Blended learning denotes a learning method that integrates direct learning methods with indirect learning methods. The blended learning method has been employed since 2007 and became increasingly prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Owing to its utilization of technological advancements, the blended learning method has continued to gain wider adoption to the present day. Nevertheless, many individuals remain unfamiliar with the concept of blended learning, its benefits, its various types, and its implementation procedures. Introducing blended learning is particularly important for parents and guardians, as the method is increasingly employed in educational settings.

The socialization and training regarding blended learning, instructional videos, and learning applications as its implementation can assist parents within the family welfare and empowering RW 01 Sangkrah Subdistrict, Pasar Kliwon, Surakarta community. Through participation in the socialization and training, participants gained an understanding of blended learning, its benefits, and the devices or learning media employed. Through the acquisition of new information and knowledge, socialization participants responded positively to the program implemented.

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