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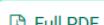
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## Implementation of Concrete Media in Improving Numeracy Skills in Elementary Schools

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### Abstract

Numeracy skills are one of the basic competencies that elementary school students must possess. However, National Assessment results indicate that the numeracy skills of students at SDN Sumberjaya 01 Tambun Selatan are relatively low. This community service activity aims to provide training to teachers in implementing concrete media as a numeracy-based mathematics learning strategy. The implementation method included outreach, implementation, workshops, and evaluation. The results showed an increase in teacher understanding and student learning motivation. Concrete media such as numeracy puzzles, multiplication boards, cashiers, and snakes and ladders proved effective and enjoyable in numeracy learning. Evaluations showed an increase in students' ability to solve numeracy problems more logically and contextually.

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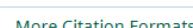
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### Section

# Implementation of Concrete Media in Improving Numeracy Skills in Elementary Schools

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## ABSTRAK

Kemampuan numerasi merupakan salah satu kompetensi dasar yang harus dimiliki oleh siswa Sekolah Dasar. Namun, hasil Asesmen Nasional menunjukkan bahwa kemampuan numerasi siswa SDN Sumberjaya 01 Tambun Selatan tergolong rendah. Kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat ini bertujuan memberikan pelatihan kepada guru dalam mengimplementasikan media konkret sebagai strategi pembelajaran matematika berbasis numerasi. Metode pelaksanaan meliputi sosialisasi, implementasi, workshop, dan evaluasi. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan peningkatan pemahaman guru dan motivasi belajar siswa. Media konkret seperti puzzle numerasi, papan perkalian, kasir-kasiran, dan ular tangga numerasi terbukti efektif dan menyenangkan dalam pembelajaran numerasi. Evaluasi menunjukkan peningkatan kemampuan siswa dalam menyelesaikan soal-soal numerasi secara lebih logis dan kontekstual.

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## ABSTRACT

Numeracy skills are one of the basic competencies that elementary school students must possess. However, National Assessment results indicate that the numeracy skills of students at SDN Sumberjaya 01 Tambun Selatan are relatively low. This community service activity aims to provide training to teachers in implementing concrete media as a numeracy-based mathematics learning strategy. The implementation method included outreach, implementation, workshops, and evaluation. The results showed an increase in teacher understanding and student learning motivation. Concrete media such as numeracy puzzles, multiplication boards, cashiers, and snakes and ladders proved effective and enjoyable in numeracy learning. Evaluations showed an increase in students' ability to solve numeracy problems more logically and contextually.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial foundation for advancing individual potential, as it is through the educational process that a person gains knowledge that can change their life. As a result, the quality of a nation will improve as the quality of its citizens' education increases (Dewi, S & Nursiwi, 2024). As stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System (Sisdiknas), Article 1, paragraph 1, "Education is a planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and a learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed for themselves, the community, the nation, and the state" (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 20 Tahun 2003 Tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional).

Mathematics is a subject taught from elementary school to university because it plays a vital role in shaping students' mindsets. Through learning mathematics, students are trained to think critically, logically, systematically, analytically, and creatively, while also developing their ability to work together (Purwanto et al., 2019). This discipline not only has theoretical value but also holds great practical benefits in daily life, where calculating and problem-solving activities are an inseparable part of a person's routine.

However, a deep understanding of mathematical concepts beyond memorizing procedures is a fundamental aspect that is often overlooked. Without a strong conceptual understanding, students tend to follow mechanical steps without truly understanding the meaning behind the operations. This leads to difficulties in translating real-world situations into mathematical language and results in errors in problem-solving (Unaenah et al., 2023).

The Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM), which replaced the National Examination, requires schools to focus on literacy, numeracy, and character. Numeracy is defined as the ability to use mathematical concepts and skills in everyday life. Unfortunately, many elementary students still struggle to understand basic numeracy concepts due to abstract learning approaches and a lack of concrete media. SDN Sumberjaya 01 Tambun Selatan is one of the schools facing this challenge, as indicated by low numeracy scores in the national assessment. Based on this, a community service activity was conducted in the form of teacher training on the use of concrete media. The goal of this activity is to equip teachers with the skills to develop and implement contextual and enjoyable learning media for students.

## METHOD

The community service program is a collaboration between the Elementary School Teacher Education lecturers' Community Service program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Prof Dr Hamka and the 8th Cohort of the Campus Mengajar program, which is placed at SDN Sumberjaya 01 Tambun Selatan, Bekasi Regency. The Campus Mengajar program is organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) (Arini & Mulyawati, 2023; Fauzi et al., 2021; Syamsuddin et al., 2021). The Campus Mengajar program is currently in its 8th cohort. The students participating in this program come from various different universities. These students passed a selection process and were placed in target schools to help improve students' literacy and numeracy. The lecturers and Campus Mengajar students will synergize and collaborate to improve numeracy learning through concrete media. The stages and guidance for the implementation of this concrete media are presented in several phases, which include:

### ***Stage 1. Socialization of the use of Concrete media in mathematics learning.***

In this first stage, partner participation is involved in the preparation, which includes conducting interviews and observations regarding the school's condition. The partner (the school) is involved in determining when the concrete media implementation program will be carried out. Next, a community service program implementation team is formed, consisting of Uhamka lecturers and involving several 8th Cohort Campus Mengajar students as well as Uhamka students. The socialization phase for the use of concrete media was carried out in October when the Campus Mengajar program's socialization was running.

### ***Stage 2. Implementation of Concrete Media Use in Mathematics Learning in Elementary School.***

There are four numeracy activities that will be implemented at SDN Sumberjaya: numeracy puzzles, cashiers, numeracy boards, and numeracy snakes and ladders. This implementation was carried out for approximately two months, involving the 8th cohort Campus Mengajar students.

### ***Stage 3. Workshop on the Implementation of Concrete Media Use in Mathematics Learning.***

This activity is a work program that has been implemented and also serves as an effort to socialize the work program created so that it can be carried out sustainably. The community service activities in this third stage are carried out with various implementation methods:

- a. Lecture: This is done in the form of a seminar where the community service team delivers material and socializes the use of concrete media.
- b. Discussion: This method involves a question-and-answer session between the community service team and the resource person to gather information related to the concrete learning media that will be implemented in the learning process.
- c. During the activity, the opening ceremony was led by the Headmaster of SDN Sumberjaya 01 Tambun Selatan, witnessed by teachers and partners. This opening activity provided information and guidance to participants on the technical implementation of the training activities so that all participants could follow and benefit from the activities effectively and smoothly. The materials in this workshop were as follows: learning media, the function of learning media, and concrete learning media in mathematics learning.

### ***Stage 4. Evaluation of the program's implementation and program sustainability in the field after the activity is completed.***

In this evaluation process, a post-test will be conducted to find out how the students' numeracy has improved with the use of concrete media. This community service program is inseparable from the roles and duties of each team member according to their competencies and student assignments.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The stages and guidance for the implementation of this concrete media are presented in several phases, which include:

### ***Stage 1. Socialization of the use of Concrete media in mathematics learning.***

In this first stage, partner participation is involved in the preparation, which includes conducting interviews and observations regarding the school's condition. The partner (the school) is involved in determining when the concrete media implementation program will be carried out.



**Figure 1.** Socialization of the Use of Concrete Media in Mathematics Learning

### ***Stage 2. Implementation of Concrete Media Use in Mathematics Learning in Elementary School.***

The implementation of this community service activity yielded several important findings that support the improvement of students' numeracy through the implementation of concrete media.

### **Discussion**

Based on the results of observations, activity documentation, as well as qualitative and quantitative evaluations, the following was obtained:

#### **1. Teacher and Student Response to Concrete Media**

Teachers who participated in the workshop stated that they felt helped by the concrete media training. Previously, mathematics learning tended to be abstract and lacked media variation. Concrete media such as numeracy puzzles, cashiers, multiplication boards, and numeracy snakes and ladders were considered capable of bridging difficult-to-understand concepts into contextual and enjoyable learning activities. Students appeared more active, enthusiastic, and not shy about answering questions related to arithmetic operations.

#### **2. Effectiveness of Concrete Media Implementation**

Each type of media made a unique contribution to the students' numeracy aspects:

- a. Numeracy Puzzles: Trained students' logical skills, creativity, and cooperation. The questions on the puzzle pieces encouraged students to think systematically to put the picture together.
- b. Cashiers: Provided a learning experience in the form of a real-life simulation, namely buying and selling transactions. This increased students' understanding of money value, subtraction, and addition in a contextual way.
- c. Multiplication Boards: Helped students understand multiplication patterns in a visual, concrete, and interactive way. It could be used for both group and individual learning.

- d. Numeracy Snakes and Ladders: This game combined elements of a traditional game with numeracy and literacy problems. Students learned to solve problems while playing, which increased their motivation to learn.
- 3. Improvement in Learning Outcomes  
Based on the post-test and pre-test evaluations of the 5th-grade students involved in the activity, there was an increase in the average numeracy score, but it did not have a significant impact. The significant increase was in student activity during the program, at 80%, and student engagement, at 75%. Students were faster and more accurate in solving simple arithmetic problems and were able to apply mathematical concepts in everyday life.
- 4. Teacher Reflection and Implementation Readiness  
The teachers involved stated that concrete media provided a new and applicable alternative in learning. Some teachers admitted they were not accustomed to making their own teaching media, but through this activity, they were encouraged to be more creative and exploratory. This activity also opened up opportunities for further collaboration between universities, teachers, and students in developing numeracy-based teaching modules. The implementation of concrete media showed positive results. Students appeared more active and enthusiastic in following numeracy learning. For example, in the cashiers activity, students could learn arithmetic operations while understanding buying and selling transactions. Meanwhile, numeracy puzzles trained logic and cooperation skills. From the post-activity evaluation, it was found that students experienced an increase in the accuracy and speed of solving numeracy problems. Teachers also stated that this approach was easy to implement and could increase learning interest.

## CONCLUSION

The training on the use of concrete media successfully improved teachers' understanding and students' numeracy skills. Concrete media proved effective in bridging the understanding of abstract mathematical concepts to a concrete and enjoyable level. It is recommended that this activity be continued with further training and regular mentoring to ensure the sustainability of its implementation in schools.

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