
DEVELOPMENT OF EMPATHY CARE TRAINING MODULES FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract

Preschool children experience rapid development. They enter a golden age characterized by rapid growth and development in various aspects, so during this phase, they must receive optimal stimuli. One of essential attitudes to cultivate in children is empathy. Fostering empathy in children can be effectively accomplished through a structured and systematic educational approach. This research aimed to develop an Empathy Care Training Module specifically for preschool children. The research utilized a research and development (R&D) method, adapting the ADDIE development model, which was simplified by the researchers into three stages: analysis, design, and development. The data collection method used was a feasibility test conducted by five experts on the developed products. For data processing, a Likert scale was used and presented in quantitative form. The results indicated that the average validation score from the experts was 88%, categorized as very feasible. This meant that the empathy care training module for preschoolers was highly suitable for implementation with preschooler children.

Key Words: Preschool children, Emphaty, Module development

INTRODUCTION

Preschool children experience rapid development, each with unique potentials and challenges. Children aged 0-5 are entering a critical stage known as the golden age of human development (Suryana et al., 2022). This stage is marked by significant growth and development in various areas, necessitating optimal stimulation through quality education (Ritonga et al., 2023). Effective learning strategies and methods are essential for teachers and parents to help preschool children internalize positive thinking skills and attitudes (Wahyuni & Laksito, 2021). One important trait to nurture in children is empathy (Woolrych et al., 2024), which is a key component of emotional awareness and moral development that helps them

undertand the feelings of others (Gungordu et al., 2025). Research indicates that preschoolers can express their emotions both verbally and nonverbally; however, they often struggle to inrepret the emotions of others accurately (Richard et al., 2025).

Empathy is defined as the ability to understand and appreciate the feelings of others, involving emotional, moral, cognitive, and behavioral aspects (Feist & Feist, 2010). Empathy allows us to put ourselves in another person's shoes, enabling us to be mindful and non-judgmental about their behavior and feelings (Myers, 2012). This complex ability helps individuals to understand and experience the emotional states of others, fostering compassionate behavior (Riess, 2017).

Researchers found that children in Indonesia and Malaysia exhibit less empathy than children from Western countries, which are typically characterized by individualistic cultures. In Indonesia and Malaysia, a common reaction when a friend's balloon bursts is laughter. In contrast, children in Germany and Israel are more likely to comfort and calm a crying, shocked, or embarrassed friend whose balloon has popped. Some even offer their own balloon to replace the one that burst (Trommsdorff et al., 2007). Additionally, a survey conducted by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) highlights concerning trends: 34,8% of Indonesian children spend 2-5 hours per day on their devices, while 25,4% of them use theirs for more than 5 hours a day (Shabrina, 2022). Excessive exposure to social media and gadgets may hinder children's ability to empathize during face-to-face interactions with (Njiru & Odundo, 2024).

Low empathy in individuals can lead to a decline in caring for others and reduced willingness to help within society (Pang et al., 2022). Research indicates that empathy significantly influences children's prosocial behavior. Specifically, children with low empathy levels tend to engage in fewer prosocial behaviors (Suparmi & Sumijati, 2021). This lack of care and prosocial behavior, resulting from diminished empathy, can also contribute to bullying, both in-person and online (cyberbullying). People become desensitized and overlook the impact of messages shared on social media, which can result in the proliferation of violent content, insults,

aggression, and other forms of violence (Hikmat et al., 2024).

Empathy is often considered an essential foundation of morality and promotes prosocial behaviors, such as helping others out of kindness (Fonseca et al., 2024; Wartinah & Hidayat, 2025). It enables us to move beyond our own perspectives and genuinely care for others (Nasello & Triffaux, 2023). The ability to empathize develops in childhood, with evidence showing that even toddlers under two years old can respond empathetically (Liu et al., 2022). While empathy generally increases with age, it can decline during adolescence (Dorris et al., 2022). Fortunately, empathy can be strengthened or recovered through education, practice, and positive role models demonstrating empathetic attitudes and actions from an early age (Gaspar & Esteves, 2022).

Based on this phenomenon, it is essential to create a systematic learning model aimed at developing empathy in children from an early age (Farjam & Emamirizi, 2024). Research indicates that children who do not receive empathy education early may struggle to integrate into society as adults, and potentially growing into adolescents who lack a sense of caring for others (Farjam & Emamirizi, 2024). One effective approach to fostering empathy in children is through experiential learning methods, where they are encouraged to interact with one another, share roles, and collaboratively complete tasks (Kanza et al., 2025). Additionally, empathy education can involve teaching children to recognize and express the emotions of those around them (Kamil & Diana, 2023). Children's empathy skills can be assessed through three fundamental

aspects: perceptual, cognitive, and affective (Aslan & Akyol, 2020). Based on the background, the researchers aim to further investigate the “Development of Empathy Care Training Module for Preschool Children”.

METHOD

Research and development (R&D) was used as a method in the research conducted. R&D is a systematic process aimed at developing new products or enhancing existing ones. Additionally, this method can be employed to evaluate a product's effectiveness (Okpatrioka, 2023). It is also defined as a method used to create a specific product, accompanied by testing its effectiveness (Sugiyono, 2017). The development procedure in this research follows the steps outlined in the ADDIE model, as developed by Branch (Mesra et al., 2023).

The ADDIE model stands for Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate (Slamet, 2022). It provides a systematic framework for designing, developing, and evaluating educational or training programs effectively (Winaryati et al., 2021). Each stage in this model is interrelated and serves as a foundation for the subsequent stage, ensuring that training needs are accurately identified, solutions are meticulously designed, thoroughly developed, effectively implemented, and successfully evaluated (Judijanto et al., 2024). The ADDIE development model consists of five main phases or stages: 1) analysis, 2) design, 3) development, 4) implementation, dan 5) evaluation (Rayanto & Sugianti, 2020).

The analysis begins with a literature review of various sources, including research articles and theoretical studies. During the design

stage, the structure and initial design of the teaching materials are prepared. These teaching materials are specifically tailored to meet the needs of preschool children and include a teaching module focused on empathy education. In the development stage, the teaching materials are expanded into five learning activities, which are complemented by relevant learning tools and materials for each chapter. These materials are then validated by five experts in the fields of content, language, media, and practical application. The instruments used in this research were developed based on the research finding (Utamy et al., (2021).

RESULT

After the product design was completed, the researchers conducted a feasibility test with the aim of testing the product and obtaining feedback for improvement. The empathy care training module for preschool children was validated by five experts, namely Maliyyassilmi Ainurrakhma, S.Psi. (early childhood education teacher in Surakarta), Wahyu Mahardika Indrayanti, S.Psi, M.Psi., Psychologist (School Psychologist at Al Azhar International Boarding School), Wili Astuti, S.Pd., M.Hum (PGPAUD lecturer at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta), Yanuar Ihtiyarso, S.S., M.Ikom. (lecturer and research partner at the Language and General Science Institute at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta), and Agus Triyono, S.Sos., M.Si. (Lecturer in Communication Science at Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta). The feasibility test results obtained in the study will be described through quantitative data.

The existing quantitative data will be analyzed by: 1) calculating the total score and average score in each aspect, and 2) converting the average

score into qualitative value criteria. The score categories with 5 answer choices are as follows (Andayani et al., 2024):

Table 1. Categorization of Eligibility Assessment

Score (%)	Criteria
81-100	Highly feasible
61-80	Feasible
41-60	Quite feasible
21-40	Less feasible
<20	Not feasible

The results of material feasibility tests on the created products can be seen

from the following material expert assessments:

Table 2. Results of material expert assessment

No	Assessment Aspect	x1	x2	xi
1	Suitability of material with the applicable curriculum	4	4	5
2	Suitability of material with teaching needs	4	5	5
3	Suitability of material with indicators to be achieved by early childhood	5	5	5
4	Benefits of the material for expanding teachers' knowledge	4	5	5
5	Ease of understanding of the material	5	5	5
6	Clarity in providing information	4	4	5
7	Accuracy of concepts	4	3	5
8	Sequence of material presented	4	4	5
9	Suitability of learning materials to the ability level of early childhood	4	5	5
10	Suitability of materials to learning objectives	4	5	5
Total		42	45	50

The data in the table was processed using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{\sum x}{\sum x_i} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage of feasibility level

$\sum x$ = Number of respondents' responses

$\sum x_i$ = Highest number of responses

The results of the material expert feasibility test are as follows:

$$P = \frac{87}{100} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 0,87 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 87\%$$

The results of the material expert feasibility test on the product show that the empathy care training module for preschool children has a highly feasible level of feasibility, or in other words, it is very feasible to use. This is evidenced by the 10 assessment indicators, where the assessment conducted by 2 subject material experts obtained a percentage of 87%.

The results of the language feasibility test on the product created can be seen from the following language expert assessment results:

Table 3. Results of the language expert assessment

No	Assessment Aspect	x	xi
1	Clear and easy to understand sentences	4	5
2	Communicative language	5	5
3	Easy to understand terminology	4	5

4	Spacing (letters and lines)	5	5
5	Text readability	5	5
6	Sequence and coherence between sentences	5	5
Total		28	30

The data in the table was processed using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{\sum x}{\sum x_i} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage of feasibility level

$\sum x$ = Number of respondents' responses

$\sum x_i$ = Highest number of responses

The results of the material expert feasibility test are as follows:

$$P = \frac{28}{30} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 0,93 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 93\%$$

The results of the language expert feasibility test on the product show that the empathy care training module for preschool children has highly feasible level of feasibility, or in other words, from the language aspect, it is very feasible use. This is evidenced by the 6 assessment indicators, where the assessment conducted by one material expert obtained a percentage of 93%.

The results of media feasibility testing on the created product can be seen from the media expert assessment results as follows:

Table 4. Media expert assessment results

No	Assessment Aspect	x	xi
1	Attractiveness of cover design	5	5
2	Font selection	4	5
3	Appropriateness of title and subtitle	4	5
4	Text readability	4	5
5	Colors used attract readers	5	5
6	Accuracy of color composition	5	5
7	Font size selection	4	5
8	Image suitability to concept	4	5
9	Image layout accuracy	5	5
10	Image attractiveness	5	5
11	Image composition and size	5	5
12	Group guidance module as a learning medium	5	5
13	Group guidance module can provide new knowledge	5	5
Total		60	65

The data contained in the table is processed using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{\sum x}{\sum x_i} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage of feasibility level

$\sum x$ = Number of respondents' responses

$\sum x_i$ = Highest number of responses

The results of the material expert feasibility test are as follows:

$$P = \frac{60}{65} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 0,92 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 92\%$$

The results of the media expert feasibility test on the product show that the empathy care training module for preschool children has a high level of feasibility, or in other words, in terms of media, the module is very suitable for use. Based on 13 assessment indicators,

the assessment conducted by one material expert obtained a percentage of 92%.

The results of practitioner feasibility tests on the created product can be seen from the following expert practitioner assessments:

Table 5. Expert practitioner assessment results

No	Assessment Aspect	x	xi
1	Accuracy of title with material discussed	4	5
2	Accuracy of material with learning objectives	4	5
3	Sequence of material presented	4	5
4	Compliance of material with indicators	4	5
5	Language accuracy	4	5
6	Language used is communicative	4	5
7	Terms used are understandable	4	5
8	Accuracy of terminology used	4	5
9	Ease of understanding the flow of material	4	5
10	Module design	4	5
11	Font selection	4	5
12	Accuracy of color composition	4	5
13	Font size selection enhances new knowledge	4	5
14	Group guidance modules as a learning medium	4	5
15	Group guidance modules can provide new knowledge	4	5
Total		60	75

The data in the table was processed using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{\sum x}{\sum x_i} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Percentage of feasibility level

$\sum x$ = Number of respondents' responses

$\sum x_i$ = Highest number of responses

The results of the material expert feasibility test are as follows:

$$P = \frac{60}{75} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 0,8 \times 100\%$$

$$P = 80\%$$

The results of the practitioner expert feasibility test on the product show that the empathy care training module for preschool children has a feasible level of feasibility, or in other words, from a practitioner's point of view, the module is feasible for use. This was demonstrated by 15 assessment indicators, with one material expert and obtained a percentage of 80%.

Table 6. Average Feasibility Test Results

No	Assessment Aspect	Assessment Score (%)	Category
1	Material	87	Highly feasible
2	Language	93	Highly feasible
3	Media	92	Highly feasible
4	Practitioner	80	Feasible
Total average score		88	Highly feasible

Table 6 shows that overall experts' assessments of the empathy care training module for preschool children indicate a highly feasible score. These assessments indicate that the empathy care training module for

preschool children is highly feasible for implementation with preschool children.

The purpose of this study was to develop an empathy care training module for preschool children. The

research used the ADDIE development design, which consists of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation (Judijanto et al., 2024). This research and development only involved three stages: the development

stage, which was followed by expert testing. The implementation and evaluation stages served as the design for further research. The following is a description of the procedures:

Table 7. ADDIE design procedure

No	Procedure	Description
1	<i>Analysis</i>	This is the initial stage, where researchers examine problems related to the urgency of empathy education and empathy education models that have been implemented in preschool environments. Researchers conduct a rationalization analysis related to the list of problems and product development plans that are in line with the needs of the environment.
2	<i>Design</i>	The design stage is where researchers design product concepts related to module structure, descriptions, competency achievements, and activity designs for preschool children.
3	<i>Development</i>	The product design realization stage is where the previously designed products are translated into the form of modules that are being developed. At this stage, product feasibility tests are also conducted by five experts, and product improvements or developments are made in accordance with the feasibility tests that have been conducted.
4	<i>implementation</i>	Conducting a trial of the developed product at the intended location.
5	<i>Evaluation</i>	This stage consists of process evaluation and outcome evaluation of the implemented product development.

The development of empathy care training module was developed as an innovative step by researchers to stimulate the character development of preschool children, particularly in terms of empathy. Preschool children experience a critical phase of social-emotional development (Ramiz, 2023). They experience simultaneous social and emotional development, where the environment plays a significant role in stimulating children's ability to interpret emotional expressions and increase pro-social behavior (Salerni & Caprin, 2022). Optimally developed empathy skills will become an important foundation for emotional regulation skills, cooperation skills, and the prevention of aggressive or antisocial behavior in the future (Aulia

et al., 2024). Empathetic behavior in preschool children consists of three basic dimensions: Affective empathy, Cognitive empathy and Behavioral empathy (Simon & Nader-Grosbois, 2023). Empathy skills in children are strongly influenced by gender, parenting style, language comprehension, and appropriate training methods (Dechsling et al., 2025; Kalland & Linnavalli, 2023; Zeng et al., 2024).

The empathy care training module for preschool children consists of five chapters, they are developing children's naturalistic intelligence, five relationship-building words, what do you feel, understanding friends' feelings, and we are a team. The results of module's feasibility test conducted by

five experts demonstrated excellent quality in terms of content, language, media, and practitioner. In terms of material, the five-chapter module was developed in accordance with the indicators of empathy development in preschool children. In terms of language, the module uses simple, communicative sentences that are easy to understand for both teachers and children. The media aspect is considered engaging, with the use of illustrations, colors, and activities that stimulate learning interest. While in terms of practitioners, the layout, typography, and visual design are child-friendly and in line with the intended locations requirements. This aligns with the finding of Royati et al., (2022) that teachers are required to be creative and innovative in using learning media when conducting teaching and learning activities with preschool children. Other research suggests that engaging visual media can improve early childhood learning concentration (Khotimah et al., 2020). Visual-based learning media can make children more active and enthusiastic in carrying out learning activities (Haerudin & Gustiana, 2023).

The empathy care training module has several advantages. First, it is based on theory and scientific findings regarding empathy development and character education in early childhood. Second, the module uses an experiential learning approach, providing learning experiences through play, storytelling, discussion, and social practice, enabling children not only to understand concepts but also to experience and practice them. Third, the module is designed with consideration for the values of empathy towards

fellow humans, animals, and the environment. The materials are structured to facilitate the internalization of children's empathy skills within the school environment. Fourth, the module is equipped with clear implementation guidelines, achievement indicators, and the use of simple tools so that it can be easily implemented by teachers. Research indicates that education using an experiential learning approach – whether online or offline – can enhance empathy skills in early childhood (Wu et al., 2020). Offline activities may include traditional games or other activities that emphasize peer interaction (Kılıç & Aydın, 2025). Additionally, other research suggests that education focused on empathy for nature can cultivate pro-environmental attitudes in young children (Li et al., 2024).

Based on previous studies, the module developed by the researchers has the potential to enhance children's empathy skills, making it suitable and feasible solution for implementation.

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that developing an empathy care training module for preschool children can effectively guide the internalization of empathy in young children. The overall results of this development were found to be very appropriate and feasible. This assessment shows that the module met expert evaluation criteria concerning material, language, media, and practical application. A validation test conducted by five experts on the product development resulted in an average score of 88%. Therefore, based on the assessment categorization, the module developed by the researchers is classified as “very good” or “very

appropriate". This aligns with the research objective of creating empathy care training modules for preschool children. The developed module is a teaching material book that can be used as a guide for teachers in internalizing empathy skills in preschool children. The module is systematically organized, featuring easy-to-understand instructions and an attractive display with vibrant colors.

Based on the research findings, several recommendations are made: teachers can utilize this module as a practical resource to instill empathy in preschool children. Parental support through daily practices, such as

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