

# Digital Media for the Stimulation of Early Childhood Self Help Skills

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## ABSTRACT

Digital media for early childhood self-help skills is a product of the development of a life skills curriculum model based on local wisdom that has been developed by researchers. This media development aims to make it easier to understand material about self-help skills and that children are ready to face life's challenges in the future. Stimulation of self-help skills does not only need to be practiced but also must use interesting media, namely digital media. Development of digital media for early childhood as a means for children to more easily acquire new knowledge and skills, especially regarding self-help skills. Digital media developed are digital books and animation videos. This digital media has been tested on material and media experts, as well as limited trials. Based on the results of expert trials and limited trials on digital books and animated videos about the stimulation of self-help skills for early childhood, it received an assessment of 84.5% and is very suitable for use as a medium for stimulating self-help skills of children aged 2-6 years.

**Keywords:** Digital Media, Life Skill, Self-Help Skills, Stimulation, Early Childhood

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Life skills curriculum aims to make children ready to face the challenges of life in their future (Nurani & Pratiwi, 2020). According to WHO, life skills are positive and adaptive behavioral abilities that support a person to deal effectively with demands and challenges during life. The World Health Organization divides life skills into five groups (Napitupulu, 2006), namely: (1) self-awareness or personal skills; (2) social skills; (3) thinking skills; (4) academic skills; and (5) vocational skills (Nurani & Pratiwi, 2018). Life skills can be introduced to children through habituation according to the cultural background in the place of residence (Singh, 2016).

Curriculum development for early childhood in all age ranges will greatly assist teachers and other early childhood educators in developing play activities and / or stimulating programs for child development (Mangrulkar & Ede, 2001). Learning objectives based on creative play models will greatly support the optimization of the potential of each early childhood (Nurani & Pratiwi, 2020). Early childhood curriculum development is aimed at developing self-potential in each child. For this reason, early childhood teachers and/or other educators who are responsible and concerned about optimizing potential should know what aspects need to be developed, why

they should be developed and how to develop them in accordance with the developmental tasks and needs of children (Foundation et al., 2019).

The purpose of curriculum development for early childhood is based on creative play models and the development of play activities in all age ranges. The development objectives are: (1) self-awareness development; (2) development of emotional maturity; (3) socialization development; (4) communication development; (5) developing cognitive perceptual; and (6) development of perceptual motor skills (Elcombe, 2017). The development of life skills curriculum design is a creative play activity program for early childhood (West, 2018).

Early education in childhood is believed to have a very vital role for the growth and development of further knowledge (Fahmie & Luczynski, 2018). In providing stimulation about life skills, it needs to be supported by the existence of playing media that is interesting and fun for children (Marsh et al., 2016). Through a variety of ready-to-use media or those created by teachers, including the use of digital playing media. Digital playing media is expected to provide a picture to children in the form of audio and visuals about various life skills (Johnson & Christie, 2009; Rideout, 2014).

## 2. SELF HELP SKILLS

Stimulation about life skills can provide basic provisions and exercises that are carried out correctly to students regarding the value of daily life so that those who care are able, capable, and skilled to carry out their lives in the future. Life skills are needed for early childhood, life skills that need to be stimulated, one of which is self-help skills. These life skills aim to develop children's abilities to be able to organize themselves and also be able to adapt to their environment (Sanz & Menéndez, 2010). In the process of child growth and development, children will continue to acquire new skills, which will continue to make them more independent individuals.

Children's abilities become increasingly complex as their motor skills develop and they are able to look after their physical needs more independently (Moser & Reikerås, 2016). This explains that children's abilities will increase in complex directions and children will be better able to meet their needs independently. Life skills are skills that a person must be brave enough to face life and life problems that make sense without feeling pressured. Important life skills are owned by someone to be brave and willing to face all life's problems actively and proactively so that they can solve them (Meister & Salls, 2015). Based on the above definition, life skills are very important in early childhood education to develop abilities about life skills. The stimulation of early childhood life skills can be carried out in various learning activities at school.

Important self-help skills are taught from an early age so that children grow to be independent, disciplined, responsible, and care for themselves and the environment. When teaching self-help skills, children need guidance from adults around them (Utami & Yunitami, 2014). Self-help ability is a skill that young children need to have so that they grow to be independent which can be taught through routine activities that require simple guidance and instruction from adults (Putra, n.d.). Self-help skills are important things that will be useful for the child's future life.

Improving self-help skills will help children carry out daily activities, such as wearing and removing their own clothes, taking their own food and drink, and other routine activities. In particular, Catron and Allen (2003) also describe the goals of developing self-help abilities, such as:

1. To improve children's ability to dress and tidy up their own clothes.
2. Encourage children to regulate their own needs for activity and quiet and to signal themselves to calm down for rest / sleep when necessary.

3. Fostering independence in serving and eating a variety of foods at mealtimes.
4. Help children to learn to set toilet patterns.

This explains that through the introduction of self-help skills children will have the ability to take off and wear clothes, strengthen children's independence in preparing their own food, and help children learn to clean themselves. Early childhood who are in can begin to be introduced and taught about self-help skills. Early childhood needs to be given opportunities to try to serve themselves, so that children can say: "I can do this myself". According to Hussey-Gardner, there are five main types of self-help skills: eating, dressing, grooming, household skills, and toileting. There are 5 important things that children need to have in helping themselves, namely in eating, wearing clothes, taking care of themselves, cleaning things, and toileting. The ability to help themselves in children in several routine activities carried out every day will make children accustomed to independence and always maintain cleanliness (Feldman, 2004).

It can be concluded that the skills to help themselves in children from an early age that need to be developed include the skills to use cutlery and prepare food (eating skills), skills to use and take off clothes (dressing), self-care skills (grooming), skills practical (household), and toileting. The development of self-help abilities is needed by children to be able to survive and adapt to every condition throughout their life (Akhmetzyanova, 2014). The stimulation of these self-help skills activities can be done through habituation activities for early childhood must be done flexibly, can be done routinely, spontaneously and programmed. Of course, this habituation activity must also be supported by the availability of varied and attractive media for early childhood (Children, 2015).

## 3. DIGITAL MEDIA

Digital play media provides opportunities for children to get knowledge from various sources, but there is still need for assistance by adults. Digital media not only provides knowledge, children can also gain experience, skills, and even behavior change which is of course positive (Marsh et al., 2016)). Early childhood is now involved with digital technology in playing and learning at home (Palaiologou, I, 2016; Dreier et al., 2014). The digital world is currently developing rapidly, educators must prepare themselves and follow the way children learn, so they can design a fun play environment (Nikken & Oprea, 2018).

The development of technology, currently television is no longer the only technology pervasive but a variety of technologies including mobile devices (mobile

devices) or gadget technology which is today’s pervasive technology. Some examples of gadget technology include cellphones, smartphones, ipads, ipods, tablet PCs, digital cameras, game consoles and so on (Ulfa, 2016). Early childhood is currently categorized as a digital native generation, namely those who have been familiar with electronic and digital media since birth. This is what early childhood educators need to anticipate to prepare play media in accordance with the times and technological changes in designing play activities for children (Howell & McDonald, 2013; Edwards et al., 2017).

Play activities for early childhood are of course prepared and designed by educators using various media. The use of digital playing media is an option for teachers to keep up with technological advances. The use of technology for early childhood can be integrated through play activities (Technology used in play activities for early childhood must be considered properly and in accordance with the learning objectives that have been determined in the curriculum (Ulfa, 2016).

Digital play media is good for children, of course, it must be adapted to their age, needs and stages of development. Digital playing media can be a means for children to more easily acquire new knowledge and skills (Srivastava, 2016; Edwards et al., 2017) The use of digital playing media with various technologies as well provide opportunities for children to access unlimited information. The use of this technology certainly supports children’s development and gain meaningful experiences (Marsh, 2010).

The development of digital media to stimulate children’s self-help skills in this study is in the form of digital books and animated videos. The use of digital media in this research is by utilizing gadget technology or mobile devices that are currently developing. The use of digital media here must be under the supervision of parents or adults. This approach can be found by using an internet connection.

Choosing technology as the right medium for the classroom is similar to choosing other learning materials. Educators must continually make reflective, responsive, and deliberate judgments to promote positive outcomes for each child (NAEYC, 2009). Developmentally appropriate teaching practice should always be the guiding goal when selecting any type of material for the classroom, including electronic and digital materials. Educators must take the time to evaluate and select technological tools for their use in the classroom and must monitor their use so that educators are able to identify constraints and challenges in their use (Murcia et al., 2018).

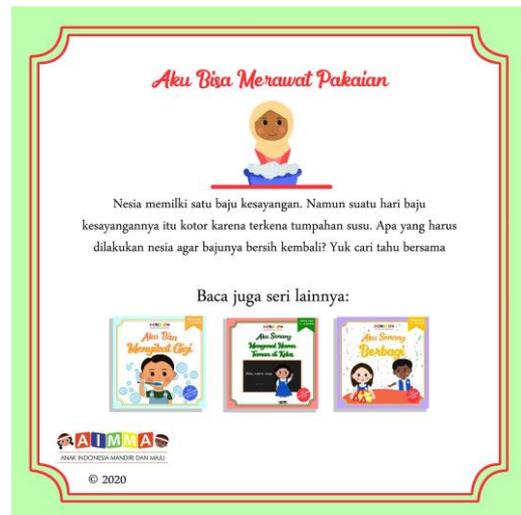
The use of digital media is of course expected to have a positive impact on children’s development. Digital books and animated videos that are developed as a medium for stimulating educational assistive skills in children can provide opportunities for children to acquire knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will later become habits that children do in their daily lives (Konca & Koksalan, 2017).

**4. DIGITAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT**

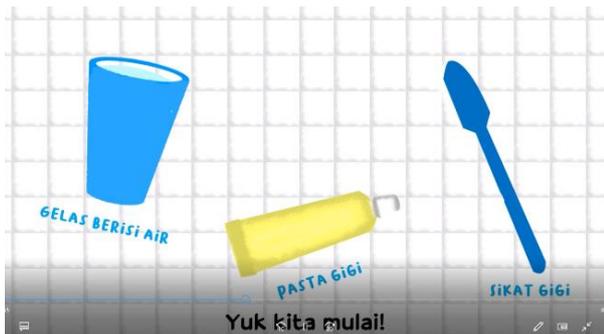
The development of digital media will be assessed as a means of conveying information or messages to children about self-help skills. Researchers compiled the instruments used to assess the products developed, namely in the form of digital books and animated videos. The following is an overview of the digital books and animated videos developed in this study (Figure 1, Figure 2, Figure 3).



**Figure 1.** Cover



**Figure 2** Back Cover



**Figure 3** Content of Animation Video

Digital Media that has been developed is given an assessment through instruments aimed at material experts who are compiled by taking into account aspects of product assessment, namely aspects of clarity, material and conformity to creative play models. The instrument for media experts which is prepared takes into account the aspects of product assessment, namely aspects of clarity, attractiveness and suitability which are arranged in the form of a questionnaire sheet.

**Table 1** Result of Media Development

Product	Expert Content	Media Expert	Small Group Activities
Digital Book	85%	82%	87%
Animation Video	83%	85%	85%

Assessment product for material experts and media experts is carried out by filling in the instrument which consists of aspects of clarity, material and suitability. Meanwhile, the media expert product validation questionnaire consists of aspects of clarity, content, attractiveness and suitability. The questionnaire is given via google form.

Limited trials were conducted on early childhood and early childhood educators in small groups. The questionnaire given to educators is done via google form. Product trials are carried out, educators provide suggestions, criticism, and input in order to find out the shortcomings. These deficiencies are revised and corrected in order to get maximum results until the product is feasible to be implemented to stimulate children’s self-help skills.

Material experts rated 84% of the digital books and animated video media developed. Media experts also gave an 83.5% assessment of the digital book media and animated videos that were developed. Limited trials conducted on teachers and children in small groups received an assessment of 86% for the developed digital media. This shows that the digital books and animated videos developed fall into the 84.5% assessment category and are very suitable to be used as digital media to

stimulate early childhood self-help skills (Table 1). The development of digital media to stimulate early childhood life skills is a form of implementation of the early childhood life skills curriculum model based on local wisdom. Early childhood educators can carry out various play activities according to the needs and stages of children’s development by utilizing digital media that has been developed.

**5. CONCLUSION**

Development of digital media for early childhood as a means for children to more easily acquire new knowledge and skills, especially regarding self-help skills. Digital media developed are digital books and animation videos. This digital media has been tested on material and media experts, as well as limited trials. Based on the results of expert trials and limited trials on digital books and animated videos about the stimulation of self-help skills for early childhood, it received an assessment of 84.5% and is very suitable for use as a medium for stimulating self-help skills of children aged 2-6 years.

**AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTIONS**

Yuliani Nurani, Niken Pratiwi conceived of the presented idea, conceived and planned the experiments, supervised the findings of this work. All authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

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