

Enhancing High School Teachers' Online Teaching Capacity Through Contextualized Training in Southern Thailand

Meningkatkan Kapasitas Pengajaran dalam Jaringan Guru Sekolah Menengah melalui Pelatihan yang Kontekstual di Thailand Selatan

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ABSTRACT. Online teaching and learning have become commonplace in educational institutions since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even after the pandemic subsided, many institutions continued to adopt online or hybrid learning because of its flexibility, allowing education to take place from virtually anywhere. However, limited teacher skills in conducting online instruction can negatively affect the quality of the learning process and outcomes. This international community engagement initiative aimed to analyze the enhancement of teacher capacity through innovative online teaching training at the Sasnupatam School, Pattani, Thailand. The program was conducted in collaboration with the Department of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universitas Islam Indonesia. The methods employed in this initiative included remote observations and interviews with key stakeholders at the Sasnupatam School. The program's main concept focused on providing high school teachers with online teaching techniques. Based on the results of the observations and interviews, the proposed solution was to conduct an online teaching training program for teachers. The training outcomes indicated that teachers improved their skills in utilizing educational applications, classroom management, and motivation-based teaching approaches. The three main topics covered in the training were motivation-based instructional design, selection of appropriate learning media, and active learning methods in online teaching contexts. The program was successfully implemented and contributed to teachers' improved capacity in designing engaging online lessons through motivation-based approaches, effective media selection, and active learning practices.

Keywords: digital learning, innovative teaching techniques, learning media

ABSTRAK. Proses belajar mengajar secara daring telah menjadi hal yang lumrah di lembaga pendidikan sejak terjadinya pandemi COVID-19. Bahkan setelah pandemi mereda, banyak institusi pendidikan yang masih memanfaatkan pembelajaran daring atau hybrid karena fleksibilitasnya yang memungkinkan proses belajar dari mana saja. Namun, keterbatasan keterampilan guru dalam mengajar secara daring dapat menurunkan kualitas proses pembelajaran. Kegiatan pengabdian masyarakat internasional ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis peningkatan kapasitas guru melalui pelatihan teknik mengajar daring yang inovatif di Sasnupatam School, Pattani, Thailand. Kegiatan ini dilaksanakan atas kerja sama dengan Jurusan Studi Islam, Fakultas Ilmu Agama Islam, Universitas Islam Indonesia. Metode yang digunakan dalam pengabdian ini adalah observasi dan wawancara jarak jauh dengan pihak pemangku kebijakan di Sasnupatam School. Konsep utama dari kegiatan ini adalah pelatihan teknik mengajar kepada guru-guru sekolah menengah atas. Berdasarkan hasil observasi dan wawancara, solusi yang ditawarkan adalah pelatihan teknik mengajar yang dilaksanakan secara daring. Hasil pelatihan menunjukkan bahwa guru mampu mengembangkan keterampilan dalam penggunaan aplikasi pembelajaran, manajemen kelas, serta pendekatan berbasis motivasi dalam pengajaran. Tiga materi utama yang disampaikan dalam pelatihan ini adalah desain sistem pembelajaran berbasis motivasi, pemilihan media pembelajaran, dan metode pembelajaran aktif dalam konteks pembelajaran daring. Program ini berhasil dilaksanakan dan berkontribusi pada peningkatan kapasitas guru dalam merancang pembelajaran daring yang menarik melalui penerapan pendekatan berbasis motivasi, pemilihan media pembelajaran yang tepat, serta praktik pembelajaran aktif.

Kata kunci: pembelajaran daring, teknik mengajar inovatif, media pembelajaran

INTRODUCTION

The global shift toward digital education, initially accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has revealed both opportunities and structural challenges in educational systems worldwide. As schools transitioned to remote and hybrid learning modalities, many educators were compelled to adopt unfamiliar technologies, reconfigure lesson designs, and engage with students on virtual platforms. Although necessary, this transformation has posed significant pedagogical, psychological, and technological demands on teachers, particularly in developing regions. In Southeast Asia, where infrastructural disparities and professional development gaps persist, the urgency for equipping teachers with digital pedagogical competencies has become especially pressing (Lesiak et al., 2021; Whitelock et al., 2024).

Numerous studies have highlighted the critical role of teacher professional development (TPD) in supporting educational resilience and instructional quality during and after pandemics. According to Stavermann (2025), TPD programs that focus on motivation, relevance, and practical engagement whether conducted fully online or in blended formats enhance teaching effectiveness. Similarly, Bourke et al. (2024) concluded that capacity-building interventions are most successful when they incorporate contextual needs, active learning strategies and sustained follow-up. However, many educators in Southeast Asia, particularly in remote and culturally specific regions such as Southern Thailand, have had limited access to high-quality, tailored training programs that bridge digital competence with pedagogical relevance.

The challenge becomes more acute when examining the experiences of teachers working in ethnolinguistically diverse and religiously grounded communities. In southern Thailand, particularly at Sasnupatam School in Pattani, a Muslim-majority region, teachers have faced not only technological constraints but also pedagogical and cultural difficulties in adapting to online education. Although general online teaching training programs are available, they are often designed in generic formats and lack sensitivity to local contexts, resulting in limited pedagogical impact. Prior research has shown that many Thai teachers experience difficulties in designing interactive online instruction due to restricted exposure to student-centered learning models and a continued reliance on lecture-based approaches (Phraratsutaporn & Klomkul, 2021).

In this context, the core problem addressed in this community service initiative can be stated explicitly as follows: secondary-level teachers at Sasnupatam School lacked adequate pedagogical capacity to design and implement engaging, student-centered, and motivation-oriented online instruction that aligns with their cultural and institutional context. This limitation was reflected in several interrelated issues, including the limited and instrumental use of digital media, minimal incorporation of active learning strategies, and the absence of structured motivational design principles in online lesson planning. As a result, online teaching practices tended to prioritize content delivery over learner engagement, interaction, and reflective learning processes.

Conventional teacher professional development (TPD) programs, which are typically standardized and technology-focused, have proven insufficient in addressing these localized and practice-oriented challenges. Studies have indicated that one-size-fits-all training models often fail to respond to teachers' contextual realities and pedagogical needs, particularly in settings characterized by cultural specificity and uneven digital readiness (Hendrajaya et al., 2023; Wetcho et al., 2023). This gap underscores the need for a contextualized capacity-building approach that integrates digital tools with motivational design and active learning strategies tailored to teachers' lived teaching environments.

While several solutions have been proposed in the literature to mitigate these challenges, they often remain too general or technologically deterministic. For example, Songkram and Osuwan (2022) apply the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to argue that perceived usefulness and ease of use are essential for teachers' adoption of digital platforms. Yet, this perspective may overlook deeper pedagogical and motivational elements that affect instructional quality. Similarly, Fies and Packham (2021) advocate for transitioning STEM teacher training from face-to-face to online formats, but their framework requires careful adaptation to non-STEM and multicultural teaching contexts.

To address this gap, emerging models emphasize the need for integrated training approaches that combine digital tools with pedagogical strategies rooted in learner engagement and cultural responsiveness. Ho et al. (2023), for instance, underline the importance of

designing digital pedagogy that balances content delivery with motivational design, while El-Hamamsy et al. (2024) propose a cascading model of professional development that allows localized knowledge transfer within school communities. Such models suggest that effective capacity building must be both systemic and situated grounded in context while scalable in impact.

A growing body of scholarship also affirms the need to incorporate 21st-century skill development into online teaching, including creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking (Binheem et al., 2021; Boonmoh & Kamsa-ard, 2023). These competencies are especially relevant in post-pandemic education, where learner autonomy and digital fluency are key. However, most training programs still emphasize platform navigation rather than pedagogical transformation, thereby perpetuating passive learning environments.

Within this scholarly context, the current study was developed to respond directly to the contextualized needs of Sasnupatam School teachers by designing and delivering an online training module that integrates motivational-based instructional design, digital media selection, and active learning methods. Drawing from cross-cultural partnerships and grounded in empirical evidence, the program aimed to offer a reflective, participatory, and relevant learning experience. The training's novelty lies in its use of culturally sensitive content, its alignment with established pedagogical frameworks, and its emphasis on experiential engagement rather than one-directional instruction.

The objective of this community engagement initiative was to strengthen high school teachers' capacity to design and implement online instruction that is pedagogically engaging, contextually relevant, and responsive to students' learning needs in under-resourced and culturally distinct educational settings. Specifically, the program aimed to: (1) enhance teachers' understanding of motivation-based instructional design through the application of the ARCS model; (2) improve teachers' ability to select and utilize digital learning media in alignment with pedagogical goals and contextual constraints; and (3) support the adoption of active learning strategies that promote student engagement, interaction, and reflective learning in online classrooms.

These objectives were addressed through structured training modules and evaluated qualitatively through participant reflections, facilitated discussions, and post-training communication. By translating established pedagogical frameworks into practice-oriented instructional strategies, the initiative sought to bridge the gap between theoretical principles and everyday teaching practices. In doing so, the program contributes to community-based professional development by offering a contextualized model that can be adapted by similar educational institutions across Southeast Asia and comparable settings.

METHOD

This community service initiative employed a participatory and needs-based approach to strengthen the online teaching capacity of high school educators at Sasnupatam School, Pattani, Thailand. The program was implemented through a collaborative partnership between the Department of Islamic Studies, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII), and the leadership of Sasnupatam School. This collaboration encompassed joint planning, needs assessment, program implementation, and reflective evaluation, ensuring that the activity was responsive to the institutional context and the pedagogical realities faced by teachers. The initiative was grounded in the principle that effective teacher professional development should be context-sensitive, practice-oriented, and closely aligned with educators' everyday teaching experiences.

Sasnupatam School, a secondary education institution serving a Muslim community in southern Thailand, was selected as the community partner based on its prior collaboration with Universitas Islam Indonesia and its expressed need for pedagogical support during the transition to online and hybrid learning. Participants in the activity consisted of approximately 37 teachers from various subject areas, including both general and religious education. In addition, school administrators and institutional leaders were involved to support alignment between the training outcomes and the school's broader educational development goals. The community service team comprised 12 members from Universitas Islam Indonesia, including academic facilitators, moderators, and technical support staff, who were responsible for program design, delivery, coordination, and documentation.

Prior to implementation, a diagnostic phase was conducted to identify teachers' instructional needs and contextual challenges. This phase involved virtual coordination meetings with school leadership, structured interviews with the school principal, and informal consultations with teachers. The needs assessment identified several interrelated issues, including limited pedagogical use of digital media, minimal application of student-centered learning strategies in online contexts, and insufficient familiarity with motivation-based instructional design. These findings informed the development of the training content, which was deliberately tailored to the cultural, institutional, and technological conditions of Sasnupatam School rather than relying on generic professional development materials.

The training was conducted online via the Zoom platform on October 17, 2021, and lasted approximately three and a half hours (08:00–11:47 WIB). The session began with institutional welcoming remarks and proceeded with the delivery of three interconnected modules. The first module focused on motivational-based learning design and introduced the ARCS framework (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction) as a foundation for fostering student engagement in online learning. The second module addressed the selection and application of digital learning media, emphasizing pedagogical decision-making based on instructional goals, learner accessibility, and contextual constraints. The third module explored active learning strategies in online classrooms and introduced the MI-KIR instructional cycle (Mengalami, Interaksi, Komunikasi, Refleksi) as a practical framework for designing interactive and reflective digital learning experiences. Each module combined conceptual explanation with illustrative examples and interactive discussion to encourage participant engagement.

Formal pretest-posttest instruments or standardized evaluation questionnaires were not employed in this community engagement program. Instead, the assessment of training outcomes relied on qualitative, process-oriented evaluation methods commonly used in community-based professional development initiatives. These methods included structured observation during training sessions, facilitated reflective discussions at the end of each module, and post-training follow-up communication with participants. Through these approaches, facilitators were able to capture participants' reflections on their learning experiences, perceived pedagogical development, and readiness to apply motivation-based instructional design, digital media selection, and active learning strategies in their online teaching practices.

Although the activity was implemented in 2021, the issues addressed remain relevant to current educational conditions. Post-pandemic schooling continues to involve blended and digitally mediated learning environments, requiring teachers to integrate motivational strategies, active learning approaches, and effective media use into their instructional practices. Accordingly, this program responds not only to challenges that emerged during the pandemic but also to ongoing needs for sustainable and contextually grounded digital pedagogy, particularly in under-resourced and culturally specific educational settings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participant engagement during the training sessions indicated a strong demand for structured and contextually relevant support in digital pedagogy. Active involvement in discussions and reflective exchanges suggested that teachers perceived the training as addressing challenges they commonly encounter in online instructional settings. Rather than merely engaging with technical features of digital platforms, participants demonstrated sustained interest in pedagogical strategies that could enhance student engagement and learning quality in virtual classrooms.

The first session, delivered by M Nurul Ikhsan Saleh, focused on the ARCS model; Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction as a framework for enhancing students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in online learning. The presentation introduced practical strategies to stimulate curiosity, align content with learners' needs, promote confidence, and create a sense of satisfaction throughout the instructional process. These themes resonate with Stavermann (2025), who found that motivation-centered training significantly improves instructional quality in both fully online and blended environments. Similarly, Ho et al. (2023) underscored the role of motivation in the success of digital pedagogy. Participants reported that the session deepened their understanding of student engagement and prompted them to reconsider their approach to lesson planning. Additionally, teachers recognized the connection

between motivational design and classroom management, noting that an awareness of learner psychology facilitates better classroom structure and behavior anticipation.

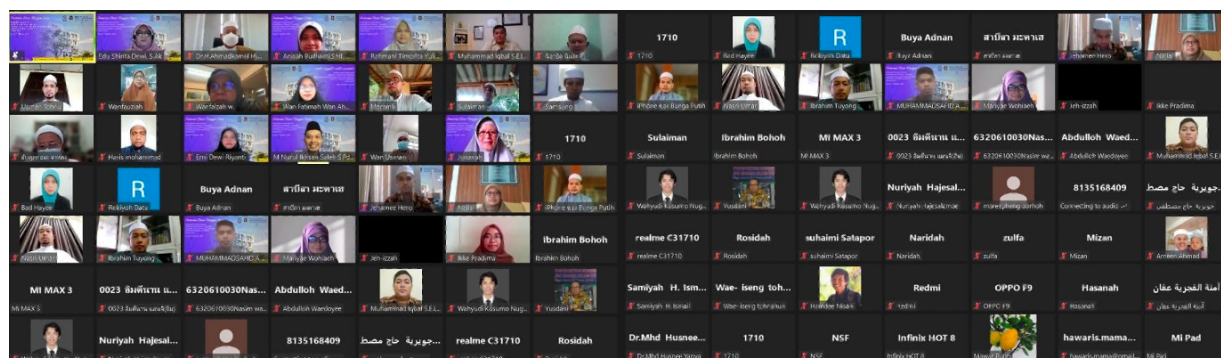


Figure 1. Delivery of the Community Engagement Program (Source: UII Documentation)

The second session, led by Muhammad Iqbal, addressed the practical use of digital media in virtual classrooms. Participants were introduced to a variety of media types including audiovisual tools, interactive platforms, and asynchronous learning resources alongside guidance on selecting tools based on content complexity, learner characteristics, and contextual limitations. This session aligned with Songkram and Osuwan's (2022) study, which found that perceived usefulness and ease of use are key drivers in educators' adoption of digital learning tools, as explained through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Participant feedback validated this perspective, expressing appreciation for frameworks that considered both technological feasibility and student accessibility. The session also encouraged reflective critique of traditional practices, especially among educators who had previously relied on static, lecture-based methods. These observations echoed Phraratsutaporn and Klomkul's (2021) findings regarding the challenges Thai teachers faced with platform unfamiliarity and lack of adequate training, reinforcing the need for targeted guidance in digital tool integration.

The third module, presented by Mir'atun Nur Arifah, emphasized interactive strategies drawn from the 21st Century Learning Framework. Teachers were encouraged to adopt student-centered approaches fostering creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and digital communication. The session outlined practical steps for active learning, including content structuring, instructional clarity, digital tool utilization, and worksheet design. The MI-KIR model, *Mengalami* (experiencing), *Interaksi* (interacting), *Komunikasi* (communicating), and *Refleksi* (reflecting) was introduced as a method to promote higher-order thinking in virtual classrooms. These instructional principles supported findings by Boonmoh and Kamsa-ard (2023), who stressed the importance of structured pedagogical guidance to alleviate pre-service teachers' anxiety about online instruction. Likewise, Binheem et al. (2021) highlighted that training in participatory methods enhances teachers' digital fluency and creativity. Teachers in this program reported that using active learning strategies not only improved student engagement but also helped mitigate online fatigue and passive behavior. These results align with Bourke (2024), who emphasizes that experiential and participatory models are central to impactful teacher development.

It should be noted that indications of improvement in teachers' online teaching capacity are derived from participants' reflective statements, facilitated discussions, and observational insights during the training process, rather than from standardized quantitative measurements. In line with this approach, the community engagement program did not employ formal pretest-posttest instruments or standardized evaluation questionnaires. Instead, the assessment of training outcomes relied on qualitative, process-oriented methods, including facilitated verbal reflections, interactive question-and-answer sessions, and post-training follow-up communication. These reflective evaluations provided insight into participants' perceived pedagogical understanding, confidence, and readiness to apply motivation-based design, digital media selection, and active learning strategies in their teaching practices.

Participants consistently indicated that the training addressed gaps in their prior online teaching approaches, which were often described as lacking intentional structure, interactivity, and motivational design. The emphasis on engagement-oriented pedagogy and contextualized instructional strategies was therefore perceived as particularly relevant to their everyday

teaching challenges. This finding supports Wetcho et al. (2023), who identified the need for responsive and adaptive professional development models for Thai teachers during and after the pandemic.

Despite the program's overall success, some challenges were noted. Technical issues such as brief audio disruptions and last-minute adjustments to ceremonial components (e.g., tilawah and national anthem playback) highlighted the importance of careful logistical preparation. Nevertheless, these challenges did not detract from the quality of content delivery or participant engagement. A further limitation relates to the absence of longitudinal or quantitative outcome measures, which constrains claims about long-term pedagogical change. As Fies and Packham (2021) suggested, while single-session workshops can be impactful, they are most effective when integrated into ongoing professional development and mentoring structures.

Participants expressed strong interest in follow-up sessions and access to shared instructional resources, reinforcing Whitelock et al.'s (2024) argument that digital capacity-building should be continuous and iterative. The program also aligns with El-Hamamsy et al.'s (2024) call for scalable yet context-sensitive digital education initiatives. The use of localized examples and sensitivity to the educational and cultural contexts of Thai Muslim teachers contributed to the perceived relevance and acceptability of the training. In line with recent scholarship, teachers' capacity to work effectively in digital learning environments is closely associated with their pedagogical beliefs and professional dispositions, alongside technical skills, as these elements shape how technology is integrated into everyday instructional practice (Tondeur et al., 2017).

Beyond individual pedagogical development, the program also created opportunities for cross-border academic interaction between educators from Indonesia and Thailand. Through shared discussions and collaborative reflection, participants were able to exchange instructional experiences shaped by different institutional and cultural contexts. This collaborative dimension reflects broader arguments that international training initiatives can contribute to reducing educational disparities while strengthening professional networks across national boundaries, particularly in settings with limited access to sustained professional development (Lesiak et al., 2021).

Overall, the results of this community engagement activity indicate that the training achieved its stated objectives at a process and perceptual level. Based on participants' reflective statements, facilitated discussions, and observational insights during the sessions, teachers demonstrated increased awareness of motivation-based instructional design, greater consideration of pedagogical criteria in selecting digital learning media, and stronger orientation toward student-centered and active learning strategies in online classrooms. These outcomes correspond directly to the three core objectives of the program, namely strengthening teachers' understanding of motivational design, enhancing pedagogically informed media use, and supporting the adoption of active learning approaches in digitally mediated instruction.

While no pretest-posttest measures or standardized evaluation instruments were employed, the qualitative evidence suggests that the training contributed to teachers' perceived readiness to reconsider and refine their online teaching practices. Participants' engagement in reflective dialogue and their articulation of intended pedagogical adjustments provide concrete indications of learning at the level of professional awareness and instructional intention. In this sense, the program's impact is reflected not in quantified learning gains but in documented shifts in pedagogical orientation and reflective capacity, which are widely recognized as meaningful outcomes in community-based teacher professional development. By integrating globally informed pedagogical frameworks with strategies adapted to local cultural and institutional contexts, the program offers a practice-oriented model for professional development in digital education. The findings underscore that effective capacity-building initiatives require more than technical skill acquisition; they depend on reflective engagement, contextual relevance, and sustained professional dialogue. Future initiatives may strengthen claims of impact by incorporating longitudinal follow-up or complementary quantitative measures; however, the present findings provide grounded insight into how structured, context-responsive training can support teachers' engagement with digital pedagogy in under-resourced educational settings.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that a context-sensitive and needs-based training program can support the development of online teaching practices among high school educators at Sasnupatam School, Pattani, Thailand. Through a structured yet flexible set of modules encompassing motivational-based learning design (ARCS model), digital media selection, and active learning strategies, the program addressed pedagogical challenges commonly encountered in online instructional settings. The discussion highlights the importance of aligning teacher professional development with local cultural contexts, technological conditions, and pedagogical considerations.

As discussed in the Results and Discussion section, the training encouraged participants to reflect on their existing online teaching practices and to engage with alternative approaches that emphasize learner engagement, instructional intentionality, and pedagogical relevance. Qualitative reflections and facilitated discussions indicated that the program supported teachers' readiness to engage more critically with digital platforms, adopt more student-centered instructional strategies, and consider motivational elements as part of online lesson design. These insights are consistent with existing scholarship that emphasizes participatory, responsive, and practice-oriented approaches to digital teacher professional development.

The significance of this community engagement initiative lies in its capacity to translate pedagogical frameworks into culturally grounded and practice-oriented interventions. By situating digital pedagogy within the lived realities of teachers working in a Muslim-minority context, the program contributes to discussions on community-based teacher development in underrepresented settings. Future initiatives may benefit from incorporating longitudinal follow-up and more systematic evaluation strategies to examine sustained pedagogical change. Overall, this study affirms that equitable digital education requires not only access to technology, but also intentional, contextual, and collaborative capacity-building efforts.

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