



Implementation Of The Sociodrama Model In Developing Social Competence And Empathy Of PGMI Students In The Sociology Of Educational Anthropology Course

**Hasmiati¹, Leli Qadrianti², Diarti Andra Ningsih³, R. Nurhayati⁴, Nurhasanah⁵,
Wahyuningsih⁶**

^{1,2,3,4,5,6}Universitas Islam Ahmad Dahlan Sinjai

Korespondensi Penulis. E-mail: miaelbugis@gmail.com

Abstract

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Doi:
<https://doi.org/10.47435/jpdkv11i01.4152>

This study uses a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design. The focus of the research is to gain a deep understanding of how the sociodrama model is implemented in the course of Sociology and Anthropology of Education and its impact on the social competence and empathy of PGMI students. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for a rich exploration of the learning process, classroom dynamics, student reflections, as well as affective and social transformations. This approach enables the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the personal experiences of students during their participation in sociodrama. The study was conducted on 27 students from class C of the second semester of the PGMI program at Universitas Islam Ahmad Dahlan, with 16 meetings as part of one semester. Data collection techniques included participatory observation, in-depth interviews, documentation, and students' written reflections. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the steps outlined by Braun & Clarke. The findings indicate that the implementation of the sociodrama model is effective in developing students' empathy and social competence. Students who were initially passive in social interactions began to show active participation, improve their communication skills, and demonstrate changes in their social attitudes. This study contributes to the understanding of how the sociodrama model can be an effective tool in character education and the development of social skills in higher education.

Keywords: sociodrama, social competence, empathy, PGMI students, sociology and anthropology of education

1. Introduction

The ability to critically and humanistically understand and respond to socio-cultural dynamics is a crucial competency for future educators in the 21st century. Teachers are not only required to master the subject matter but also to build healthy social relationships, understand the diversity of students, manage differences, and demonstrate empathy in the educational process. Social competence and empathy are essential components of the professional quality of future teachers, as both are related to the ability to create an inclusive,



supportive learning environment that focuses on the holistic development of students.(Jiang, N., Li,2023) Studies on teachers' emotional and social competence emphasize that the ability to recognize emotions, build relationships, make responsible decisions, and understand others' perspectives are essential elements of quality education (Lozano-peña et al., 2021). Empathy also plays a key role in preparing future teachers to face diverse classrooms, including in the context of inclusive and multicultural education.(Choquette et al., 2024).

Sociology learning is not only oriented towards mastering concepts about society but also on students' ability to understand social interaction processes, social roles, values, norms, conflict, cooperation, and social change in real life. Sociology views humans as social beings who form identity, meaning, and actions through relationships with others (Tran, 2025). Therefore, sociology learning should not stop at conceptual explanations but should provide learning experiences that allow students to experience, interpret, and reflect on social situations directly (Kaspar & Massey, 2023). In the context of teacher education, understanding sociological theory is crucial because future educators will face students from diverse social, cultural, economic, religious, and character backgrounds.

The intersection between Sociological Theory and the sociodrama model lies in their shared view of learning as a social process. Sociological Theory emphasizes that understanding society is constructed through interaction, role-taking, symbol interpretation, and reflection on social actions. Meanwhile, sociodrama provides a platform for students to role-play specific social situations, understand other people's perspectives, simulate social conflicts, and discuss the meanings of actions that emerge during role-playing (Aura et al., 2023). Thus, sociodrama can be understood as a concrete form of active, reflective, and experience-based sociology learning. Sociodrama is not only a dramatization technique but also a pedagogical strategy that brings sociological concepts to life in real learning experiences (Winardy & Septiana, 2023). Veiga's study shows that the dramatic space in higher education can develop transversal competencies in students, while role-playing studies reveal that role-playing experiences can strengthen 21st-century skills such as collaboration, communication, and social understanding in learners (Veiga, 2022).

In the Sociology of Education Anthropology course, sociodrama becomes relevant because this course requires future teacher candidates to understand the socio-cultural realities of students, the diversity of family environments, differences in values, social conflicts, social relations, and cultural dynamics that affect the educational process (Jiang, N., Li, 2023).Concepts such as social roles, interaction, norms, inequalities, conflict, tolerance, and empathy are more meaningful when students not only learn them as definitions but also experience them through social simulations (Shalev & Gidalevich, 2024).Through sociodrama, students can play various social positions, view problems from different perspectives, and reflect on the appropriate social responses to issues that arise. This approach aligns with the principles of social-emotional learning that emphasize self-awareness, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making in the educational process.

However, the reality of learning shows that students' social competence and empathy have not been optimally developed. Based on the practice of teaching in class C, semester 2 of the PGMI program, consisting of 27 active students in the Sociology Anthropology Education course, it was found that most students still showed passive tendencies in discussions, low collaboration skills in group tasks,



and limited critical responses to social issues raised during the learning process. When students were given case studies related to cultural conflict, social inequalities, or differences in perspectives in society, they still had difficulty expressing empathy and understanding the positions of other groups. This phenomenon indicates that the mastery of sociological concepts has not fully connected with students' ability to respond to social issues reflectively and humanistically.

This condition cannot be separated from the learning model that is still predominantly teacher-centered. Lectures that dominate the learning process can help students understand concepts cognitively but are not strong enough to develop affective and social aspects (Campbell, J.L., Quincy, C., Osserman, J., 2023). Students need learning experiences that allow them to interact, negotiate, take roles, express opinions, and reflect on social actions directly. Without concrete social experiences, sociology learning risks becoming just conceptual memorization, not a process of building social sensitivity. Yet, as future teachers, PGMI students need to have the ability to understand the diversity of students, build empathetic communication, and manage social interactions in the classroom wisely.

To address this issue, the sociodrama model is applied as an alternative approach in the Sociology of Education Anthropology course. Sociodrama provides students the opportunity to role-play social situations, enact conflicts or everyday life issues, understand the perspectives of different characters, and reflect together after the activity (Zahroin et al., 2023). In this process, students are not only listeners but also social actors involved in constructing the meaning of learning (Nur Laelah, Ainul Fahmi, 2025). Previous studies have shown that sociodrama can increase empathy, social skills, teamwork, communication, self-confidence, public speaking, and students' participation in learning (Bungatang, 2023).

Strengthening social competence and empathy through sociodrama also aligns with the needs of higher education, which is not only focused on academic achievements but also on the development of soft skills (Lavenda et al., 2025). Future teachers need to be equipped with communication skills, collaboration, reflective thinking, appreciation for differences, and ethical decision-making in complex social situations. (Zakaria et al., 2024) National studies show that sociodrama-based learning and social-emotional approaches can encourage collaboration, questioning skills, creativity, friendship quality, social care, and tolerance among students (Lestari, 2024). Therefore, sociodrama is relevant as a learning strategy that connects theoretical understanding with the formation of attitudes and social skills in students.

Although several studies have proven the effectiveness of sociodrama in increasing empathy, social skills, communication, and learning participation, studies that specifically connect Sociological Theory with the sociodrama model in Sociology Anthropology Education learning for PGMI students are still limited. Most previous studies have positioned sociodrama as a teaching method or guidance technique, but few have explained sociodrama as a meeting point between Sociological concepts and students' social learning experiences. This is the gap that this study aims to fill. This research not only views sociodrama as an active learning model but also as a pedagogical strategy rooted in the concepts of social interaction, social roles, conflict, values, norms, empathy, and social reflection.



Based on the above, this research is important to analyze the application of the sociodrama model in improving social competence and empathy in students in the Sociology Anthropology Education course. It is expected to contribute theoretically by strengthening the connection between Sociological Theory and the practice of sociodrama learning, while also providing practical contributions to the development of innovative learning in the higher education environment, especially in the PGMI Program. Through the sociodrama model, students are expected to not only understand social concepts academically but also develop social sensitivity, empathy, communication skills, collaboration, and reflective abilities as future teachers who are humane and responsive to the diversity of students.

2. Methodes

Approach and Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with an intrinsic case study design. The focus of the research is to gain a deep understanding of how the sociodrama model is implemented in the Sociology and Anthropology of Education course and its impact on the social competence and empathy of PGMI students. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for rich exploration of the learning process, classroom dynamics, student reflections, as well as affective and social transformations. This approach enables the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the personal experiences of students during their participation in sociodrama.

Participants and Research Location

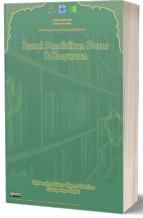
The study was conducted with 27 students from class C, semester II of the PGMI program at Universitas Islam Ahmad Dahlan. The study was conducted over 16 meetings in one semester, with the primary focus on meetings from week 7 to week 13 during the implementation of the sociodrama model. The research was conducted in the PGMI classroom, which had been set up as a space for practice and reflection within the context of social-emotional learning.

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Data Collection Techniques

This study uses four main techniques to ensure triangulation and data depth:

1. Participatory Observation

Observations were conducted throughout the learning process from meeting 1 to meeting 16, with a primary focus on week 7 (the start of scriptwriting), week 10 (group exercises), and weeks 11 to 13 (performance and reflective discussions). The researcher noted changes in participatory behavior, empathy expression, and group interactions.

2. *In-depth Interview*

Interviews were conducted with 10 selected students, representing different participation levels (active, passive, vocal, quiet), as well as the course lecturer. The semi-structured interviews focused on their experiences during sociodrama, personal reflections on the roles they played, perceptions of changes in themselves and the class, and short-term impacts on social relationships and empathy.

3. Documentation

Collected documentation included semester lesson plans (RPS), students' sociodrama scripts, students' papers and reflections, and classroom photos (with permission).

4. Written Reflections from Students

Students were asked to write personal reflections after the performances. These reflections were analyzed as primary data sources, illustrating the process of self-awareness, empathetic experiences, and changes in perspectives on social issues such as discrimination, bias, and social relations.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was performed using thematic analysis (Campbell et al., 2021) following these steps:

1) Familiarization with Data

The researcher repeatedly read through all interview transcripts, field notes, and student reflections to capture the nuances and context of the students' experiences during the sociodrama.

2) Initial Coding

Data were coded openly to identify segments related to changes in participatory behavior, empathy expression, group interactions, and reflections on social inequalities. Initial themes identified included Affective Transformation, Representational Empathy, Inclusive Social Dynamics, and Critical Reflection on Bias.

3) Grouping Themes

Similar codes were grouped into thematic categories such as "Affective Transformation" and "Representational Empathy". These themes describe changes in



students' emotional understanding of the roles they played and their interpersonal relationships after the sociodrama.

4) Refining Themes and Subthemes

The researcher reviewed the consistency between the data and the themes and looked for connections across emerging themes. Contradictory data were noted as control variables or contextual anomalies to provide further insights.

Measuring Empathy and Social Competence

1. Empathy was measured through students' written reflections post-performance and in-depth interviews. In these reflections, students were asked to identify changes in their views on social issues (e.g., discrimination and bias). In-depth interviews provided further information on how students felt their understanding of others had improved through role-playing experiences in the sociodrama.
2. Social competence was measured through participatory observation during the performances and reflections on group social interactions and collaboration. The researcher observed students' ability to collaborate, communicate, and demonstrate inclusive behavior during the implementation of sociodrama. (Campbell, J.L., Quincy, C., Osseman, J., 2023)

3. Results and Discussion

The Implementation of Sociodrama in the Learning of Sociology and Anthropology Education

This study was conducted with second-semester Class C students of the PGMI Study Program in the Sociology and Anthropology of Education course. A total of 27 students were actively involved over 16 meetings. The first seven meetings focused on introducing basic theories of sociology and anthropology of education, such as role theory, social structure, cultural dynamics, and social relations within educational institutions. After the midterm examination, students were asked to prepare group papers based on social issues they found in their surrounding environment. These papers were then developed into sociodrama scripts and performed from the 11th to the 13th week. The three main themes addressed in the sociodrama were cultural discrimination in schools, power relations in the classroom, and the marginalization of students from low-income families. Each group performed a sociodrama lasting 30–40 minutes, followed by a reflective discussion guided by the lecturer. In the 11th week, the classroom atmosphere still appeared rather stiff. Several students looked awkward during the performance, particularly those who were not accustomed to speaking in public. However, students who had previously been passive began to show initiative and even voluntarily took on leading roles. One student stated “I usually just sit quietly, but when I was asked to play the role of a student from an underdeveloped area, it made me reflect. All this time, I had been indifferent, but it turns out that being excluded is really difficult” (Hz)

These findings indicate that sociodrama does not merely function as a performance activity, but also serves as a space for social experience. Students did not simply understand discrimination and marginalization as academic concepts; rather, they entered a symbolic position as individuals experiencing marginalization. This process is in line with Mead's theory of role-taking, which emphasizes that social identity and empathy develop when individuals



are able to take on the social roles of others (Nurohman Dede, Abd Aziz, 2021). In the context of prospective teacher education, the experience of role-taking is important because teachers are required to understand the diverse social backgrounds, emotions, and needs of their students. Student involvement in sociodrama also reflects the process of perspective-taking. (Ismah yunika afryaningsh & suriyana, 2024). Students learn to view social issues not from their own position, but from the perspective of the characters they portray. (Mochizuki et al., 2022) shows that role-play and reflection in prospective teacher education can strengthen perspective-taking, dialogue, and empathy, as learners are trained to understand the voices and positions of others in learning situations. Thus, the willingness of previously passive students to perform does not merely indicate increased self-confidence, but Another student's reflection also demonstrated strong emotional engagement: "I thought this would just be something funny. But when I had to play the role of a child who was bullied because of having special needs, I kept thinking about it even after I went home" (Student 2). This statement indicates a shift from performative involvement to affective involvement. Initially, students viewed sociodrama merely as an ordinary role-playing activity. However, after experiencing the position of a character who was bullied, they began to realize the emotional burden experienced by the victim. (Atamau et al., 2025) This reinforces the view that sociodrama is a form of experiential learning, namely learning that involves direct experience, reflection, and personal meaning-making (Chan et al., 2021). In such an experience, students' understanding does not only operate in the cognitive domain but also touches the affective and social domains.

By the 13th week, students' reflection process had become deeper. The post-performance discussion became more open and emotional. Students began to connect the characters they portrayed with their personal experiences, either as victims of discrimination or as witnesses of injustice in educational settings. One student stated, "I just realized that empathy is not only about understanding, but also about feeling what it is like to be someone else. This is the first time I have understood why some people give up easily, because we never really know the burdens they carry" (Nd). This quotation shows that students' empathy developed from cognitive empathy into affective-reflective empathy. Students not only understood that others experience difficulties, but also began to feel and interpret the social burdens that may be hidden behind someone's behavior. This finding is in line with Hoffman's concept of empathic arousal, which suggests that empathy can grow through strong emotional experiences, whether real or representative Zahroin et al(2023). also show that sociodrama can enhance empathy because learners are encouraged to understand the feelings and social positions of others through the roles they play.

In the context of teacher education, empathy occupies an important position. Aldrup et al Aldrup et al. (2022) emphasize that teacher empathy is part of educators' social-emotional competence because it is related to the quality of teacher-student interaction. Empathetic teachers are better able to understand students' emotions, needs, and conditions in a humane way. Therefore, the findings of this study show that sociodrama is relevant for PGMI students, as they will later encounter learners with diverse social, economic, cultural, and psychological backgrounds Socially, the implementation of sociodrama created a more open, inclusive, and collaborative classroom atmosphere. Observations showed increased respect among students, more active discussions, the absence of dominance by certain voices, and the emergence of a willingness to provide space for students who had previously been less vocal. This finding



supports Annisa Luthfi (2023), study, which explains that sociodrama can improve cooperation, listening skills, flexibility, and the ability to respond constructively to differences of opinion. Student engagement also extended beyond the classroom. Discussions continued outside lecture sessions. Groups that did not perform were assigned to observe the dialogue, expressions, and social dynamics of other groups, and the results were later discussed in a reflection forum. Interviews with students revealed changes in their perspectives on discrimination and bias. One student stated, “When I played the role of a child from an ethnic group that was always treated differently, I began to think that maybe I had also acted in a discriminatory way without realizing it. This sociodrama made me rethink how I treat other people” (Is).

This statement indicates the emergence of critical self-reflection, namely the ability to reassess one’s own prejudices, attitudes, and behaviors. At this point, sociodrama not only improved students’ understanding of social issues but also encouraged their ethical awareness. Students began to realize that discrimination does not always appear in major actions, but can also emerge through stereotypes, jokes, neglect, or a lack of sensitivity toward others’ experiences Moreno (2025). This is in line with Freire’s idea that education is not merely the transfer of knowledge, but the development of critical consciousness toward social reality. The course lecturer also emphasized that changes among students occurred not only in the cognitive aspect but also in affective and social aspects: “Students became more reflective. They do not only understand theory, but are also able to voice social issues personally. That is a very meaningful development. There was a student who usually never spoke, but suddenly was able to lead. The student wrote the script, distributed roles, and even facilitated the discussion. That was a major leap” (HS).

The lecturer’s statement shows that sociodrama bridges social theory and students’ personal experiences. Students were not only able to explain the concepts of inequality, discrimination, marginalization, and power relations, but also to articulate these concepts through symbolic experience (Handayani & Sumbawa, 2022). In addition, sociodrama has been shown to have a positive impact on cognitive learning outcomes and learning interest, bridging the gap between theory and students’ social realities. Students did not merely understand theory, but were also able to voice social issues personally and demonstrate leadership, such as writing scripts, distributing roles, and facilitating discussions, which represents a significant leap in their affective and social development (Veiga, 2022). This, sociodrama is not only relevant to the course learning outcomes, but also supports the formation of PGMI students as prospective teachers who are sensitive to social issues and able to respond reflectively to learner diversity.

Development of Social Competence

The findings of this study reinforce that the sociodrama model is not merely an instrument for delivering course material, but also a pedagogical approach that addresses students’ social and emotional dimensions. In the context of the Sociology and Anthropology of Education course in the PGMI program, this model provides students with opportunities to directly experience the process of social learning, as explained by Bandura (1977), who states



that individuals learn primarily through observation, imitation, and active involvement in meaningful social interactions (Veiga, 2022).

The development of students' social competence was evident from the preparation stage of the sociodrama. At the initial stage, students tended to work based on personal closeness. However, after the process of scriptwriting and role distribution began, students became more open to working across groups, dividing tasks flexibly, and giving space to members who had previously been less active. Field observation notes from the 10th meeting showed that "students appeared actively involved in writing the script together. No single voice dominated. Even group members who usually remained silent began to provide input and take notes on their friends' ideas" (Field Observation Notes, 10th Meeting). This observation was supported by a student's narrative "At first, I only helped look for props, but over time I began to think about the script content and discuss it with my group. It turned out to be enjoyable to work together like this" (Fn). This statement indicates that student participation developed gradually. Students who initially only helped with technical tasks began to engage in developing ideas, storylines, and group discussions. On the other hand, students who were usually dominant also showed a change in attitude "Usually, I like to take over when the group does not run well. But in this sociodrama, I learned to listen to my friends' opinions first, and it turned out that they also had great ideas" (Ft).

These two quotations show that sociodrama created a more equal group dynamic. Passive students gained space to contribute, while dominant students learned to listen and provide opportunities for others. In this context, social competence was reflected in students' ability to cooperate, communicate, listen, share responsibilities, and appreciate the contributions of group members. This finding is in line with Annisa Luthfi (2023), who explains that the sociodrama technique can be used to improve social interaction skills because learners are trained to understand problems in human relationships through enacted social situations. In this study, students' social skills did not develop through lectures about cooperation, but through direct experience when they had to negotiate ideas, resolve differences of opinion, and build group consensus.

Students' active involvement also influenced the way they perceived their peers' potential. One student stated, "In our group, there was someone who was very quiet, but when given a role, that person became active. After that, they even contributed ideas during the discussion. It made me think that everyone has potential as long as they are given the opportunity" (Student 7). This statement indicates that sociodrama opens a space for recognizing individual potential that may have previously gone unnoticed. Students learned that being quiet does not necessarily mean being incapable, and that dominance within a group can prevent other members' contributions from emerging. In the context of prospective teacher education, this awareness is important because teachers need to be able to recognize the diverse potential of students, including those who are less vocal or not easily visible in the classroom.



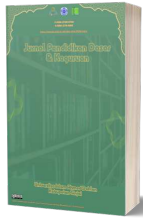
Observation notes from the 13th week also showed that discussions became more democratic “The discussion ran smoothly and was not dominated by a single voice. Students who had previously rarely spoken began to raise their hands and share personal reflections, often followed by empathetic responses from other members” (Field Observation Notes, 13th Meeting). This finding shows that sociodrama fosters an ethic of participation in academic spaces. Students not only learned to speak, but also to listen, respond, and appreciate others’ experiences.. Nikmah et al (2025) also show that culture-based sociodrama techniques can improve social skills, including cooperation, empathy, self-control, and interaction skills. Thus, in this study, sociodrama functioned as a space for social practice that strengthened students’ ability to build inclusive and collaborative relationships. The social competence developed through sociodrama was not mechanical or temporary. It grew through direct experience, group work, role negotiation, minor conflicts in script development, and collective reflection after the performance. For PGMI students, this experience has pedagogical significance because they learn not only to become active students, but also prospective teachers who are able to manage classrooms communicatively, collaboratively, and sensitively to student dynamics.

Empathy Competence

In addition to developing social competence, sociodrama also strengthened students’ empathy. Empathy emerged when students internalized the roles of characters who experienced discrimination, poverty, bullying, or marginalization. In one interview, a student described their emotional involvement when portraying a child from a poor family: “I played the role of a child from a poor family who could not participate in school activities. When I read the script, I immediately remembered my childhood. It felt like an old wound had been reopened” (SR). This quotation shows that sociodrama connects role experience with students’ personal experiences. Students did not merely understand poverty as a social concept, but related it to memories, emotions, and lived experiences. This indicates that sociodrama is able to provide embodied learning, namely learning that is not only understood cognitively but also felt through emotional experience.

A similar pattern appeared in another student’s reflection: “When I played the role of a child from an ethnic group that was often bullied, I realized that I had also talked about people using stereotypes. I immediately felt guilty” (RJ). This statement shows that the empathy formed through sociodrama did not stop at pity, but developed into ethical awareness. Students began to reassess their prejudices, language, and attitudes toward certain social groups. Mochizuki et al.,(2022) explain that sociodrama can develop empathy because learners are trained to understand the position of others through role experience. They also emphasize that empathy is related to the ability to align one’s thoughts and feelings with others, enabling learners to respect and understand one another.

In this study, students’ empathy developed through three main processes. First, role internalization, in which students entered the position of characters experiencing injustice. Second, personal reflection, in which students connected the roles they played with their own life experiences or behaviors. Third, ethical awareness, in which students began to reassess the



way they treated others. This process shows that sociodrama does not only shape empathy as a momentary emotional response, but also as reflective awareness that can influence students' social attitudes. A deep impression also emerged from a student who observed a change in a friend's attitude after playing the role of an angry teacher: "I saw my friend, who is usually very indifferent, play the role of a teacher scolding a student. Afterward, my friend said, 'I didn't expect it to feel that hurtful.' It made me think that maybe I have also hurt others without realizing it" (AD).

Sociodrama has a significant impact on students' emotional awareness, empathy, and psychological well-being because they are invited to internalize roles and social situations that are relevant to real life (Polat & Ceylan, 2023). Through this process, students not only learn to understand the emotions of others, but also confront and reflect on their own emotional experiences, which can strengthen emotional autonomy and stress management skills (Tsaniah et al., 2020). In addition, emotional involvement in sociodrama helps build social sensitivity and increase concern for social issues around them. The student's experience reinforces the evidence that sociodrama is effective in developing students' emotional awareness and emotional skills through direct involvement and deep reflection. (Atamau et al., 2025). The sociodrama technique significantly improves students' ability to understand and feel the experiences of others, even generating empathetic concern not merely cognitive understanding, but also emotional feeling (Lubis & Wahyuni, 2022). Menurut Briones (2022) sociodrama is effective in encouraging students to reflect on their values, attitudes, and behaviors, resulting in a shift from theoretical understanding to the internalization of empathy and social ethics. The students' experiences strengthen the evidence that sociodrama not only builds empathy, but also encourages ethical awareness and real changes in everyday behavior.

In the PGMI context, empathy occupies an important position because prospective teachers will encounter students with diverse family backgrounds, academic abilities, emotional conditions, and social experiences. Empathetic teachers do not easily label students negatively, but instead seek to understand the possible social and emotional problems behind students' behavior. Therefore, sociodrama contributes to the formation of prospective teachers who are more sensitive, reflective, and humanistic.

This atmosphere created a safe space for sharing and affirming experiences. Students felt that their suffering or awareness was not mocked or dismissed, but accepted and appreciated. This indicates that the empathy formed was not merely a momentary reaction, but a deeply rooted reflection that influenced the way they would build social relationships in the future. The classroom atmosphere during discussion sessions was strongly influenced by social relationships, interaction norms, and the lecturer's facilitation skills, which together created a productive and safe learning environment for sharing personal experiences and deep emotions (Sætra, 2021). Authentic and open discussions often occur when students feel valued, listened to, and not judged, making them more willing to express feelings or stories they had never shared before (Siegel-Stechler, 2023). Lecturers who are sensitive to students' emotions and are able to build mutual trust and respect can create a quiet yet meaningful classroom atmosphere, where emotional participation such as crying or sharing personal experiences becomes possible. Such an environment rarely occurs without deliberate efforts to build participation norms, clear classroom procedures, and strong relationships among class



members. Effective discussion also encourages collaboration, critical thinking, and active engagement, while providing space for reflection and personal growth. Thus, a classroom atmosphere that supports deep discussion not only improves understanding of the material, but also strengthens social bonds and students' confidence in speaking publicly.

The Lecturer's Role in Developing Students' Social Competence and Empathy in Learning

The course lecturer played an important role in maintaining the classroom as a safe space for students' reflection. The lecturer did not merely act as an observer, but also as a facilitator who encouraged students to connect their symbolic experiences in sociodrama with the social realities they encounter in everyday life. "Students are now not only able to explain the theory of inequality, but also to speak from their own experiences. This means that they truly understand it personally, not only academically. There was a student who had never spoken at all before. However, after the sociodrama, that student was the one who led the scriptwriting process and facilitated the discussion. It was a change I had not expected"

The lecturer's statement indicates that students' understanding of social theory was no longer abstract. They articulated theory through symbolic experience and critical reflection. This is in line with Freire's (1970) idea that true education is not the transfer of information, but a process of liberation through critical consciousness, or conscientization. Furthermore, students also showed that the empathy developed through sociodrama did not end with the performance activity, but was carried into their everyday interactions "I have become more sensitive. Sometimes when I see that a friend seems uncomfortable, I immediately ask them. If I speak harshly, I now apologize quickly, whereas before I had never thought about it"

This affective transformation indicates that sociodrama has gone beyond its role as an instructional method and has functioned as a tool for social-emotional character formation. This process forms empathy that is not merely momentary and reactive, but reflective and sustainable. In other words, students did not only learn about empathy; they became more empathetic individuals. Based on the overall findings, the implementation of sociodrama in the Sociology and Anthropology of Education course produced four main themes: affective transformation, inclusive social dynamics, representational empathy, and critical reflection on prejudice. These four themes show that sociodrama not only increased students' participation in learning, but also shaped new ways of understanding the self, others, and the social realities of education. Affective transformation was evident when students who initially regarded sociodrama as an ordinary activity began to experience deep emotional involvement. Inclusive social dynamics appeared when passive students began to contribute more confidently, while dominant students began to learn to listen. Representational empathy emerged when students understood the burdens of the characters they portrayed, especially characters who experienced discrimination, bullying, and marginalization. Meanwhile, critical reflection on prejudice was seen when students began to reassess stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes that they had



previously been unaware of. Thus, sociodrama can be positioned as a relevant pedagogical approach in prospective teacher education. This model bridges the gap between social theory and students' concrete experiences. For PGMI students, sociodrama not only helps them understand the concepts of sociology and anthropology of education, but also strengthens the social competence and empathy needed in the teaching profession.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of the sociodrama model in the Sociology and Anthropology of Education course has been shown to contribute to the development of social competence and empathy among PGMI students. Through the processes of scriptwriting, role distribution, performance, observation, and reflective discussion, students not only understood social concepts cognitively but also directly experienced the dynamics of discrimination, power relations, marginalization, and inequality within educational contexts.

Students' social competence developed through improved abilities to collaborate, listen to others' opinions, share roles, appreciate peers' contributions, and build more open and inclusive communication. Students who had previously been passive began to participate more confidently, while dominant students learned to provide space for other group members. This indicates that sociodrama is able to create a participatory and collaborative learning environment. In terms of empathy, sociodrama encouraged students to understand others' experiences through role internalization. Students did not merely recognize social issues as abstract concepts, but also felt the emotional burdens of the characters they portrayed. This process fostered more reflective empathy, marked by an emerging awareness of the need to reassess prejudices, stereotypes, and the ways they treat others in everyday life.

The lecturer's role as a facilitator of reflection was an important factor in the successful implementation of sociodrama. Through post-performance discussions, the lecturer helped students connect their role-playing experiences with the concepts of sociology and anthropology of education. Thus, sociodrama did not stop as a performance activity, but developed into a pedagogical approach that fosters social awareness, empathy, and ethical sensitivity among students as prospective teachers. Overall, the sociodrama model is suitable as an alternative active and reflective learning approach in higher education, particularly in courses related to social, cultural, and educational issues. This model is able to bridge academic theory with students' concrete experiences, while also strengthening the formation of PGMI prospective teachers who are collaborative, humanistic, empathetic, and sensitive to the diversity of learners.

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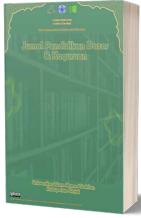
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JURNAL

Pendidikan Dasar dan Keguruan

Volume 11, No. 1, 2026

P-ISSN: 2527-578X

E-ISSN: 2715-2818

Homepage: <https://journal.uiad.ac.id/index.php/IPDK/index>

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