

FOSTERING CHILDREN'S READING INTEREST VIA STUDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE (KKN) INITIATIVES AT TPQ DARUSSALAM, QORYAH SAKINAH VILLAGE, MALANG CITY

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Abstract - *Qoryah Sakinah Village, nestled within Sukun District, benefits from the unwavering support of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Malang City. This ministry has brought about transformative change through its four pioneering programs in the village: Religious Cadre, Family Harmony, Religious Moderation, and Creative Economy. Together, these initiatives are steering Qoryah Sakinah Village towards prosperity and instilling a sense of dignity within its residents. One of the cornerstones of this progress is the establishment of a reading corner, a pivotal element of the Religious Cadre program. This reading corner is a testament to the commitment of uplifting literacy, particularly among the young minds of Qoryah Sakinah Village. Proficient literacy skills are not just about reading and writing; they are the bedrock for effective communication and the foundation for future cadres who will shape the destiny of this village. However, the journey towards higher literacy rates in Qoryah Sakinah Village is marked by the challenges stemming from both internal and external factors. The residents and the environment play crucial roles in shaping the education landscape. By addressing these challenges head-on, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the village community are working hand in hand to create a brighter and more enlightened future for this unique corner of Malang City.*

Keywords: *Reading Corner, Qoryah Sakinah, Literacy*

1. INTRODUCTION

Qoryah Sakinah Village, situated in Tanjungrejo Village, Sukun District, Malang City, is a focal point of attention for the KKN 111 UIN Sunan Kalijaga group in Malang City. Supported by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Qoryah Sakinah Village is engaged in four programs aimed at elevating the city's status with dignity, located in Tanjungrejo RW 07, Sukun District.

The Ministry of Religion oversees four programs, including Religious Cadre and community leadership, with numerous indicators. These initiatives aim to foster religiosity, intelligence, moderation, and empowerment among the residents of Qoryah Sakinah Village, ensuring educational continuity from kindergarten to university. Furthermore, robust religious cadres are fortified through 11 Taklim Assemblies and over 5 licensed TPQs, including the one at Darussalam Mosque. As members of the 111 UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta KKN Group, assigned to Qoryah Sakinah Village with a Religious Cadre theme, we executed a significant project: establishing a Reading Corner and promoting literacy interest at TPQ Darussalam.

Children's interest in reading plays a pivotal role in their personality development and intellectual growth. In today's digital era, the challenge to sustain this interest is even greater, given the distractions posed by modern technology. Thus, Taman Baca TPQ Darussalam in Malang City incorporated students into the Student Community Service (KKN) to invigorate children's reading enthusiasm within the Qoryah Sakinah community.

The Student Community Service (KKN) at Taman Baca TPQ Darussalam is an initiative designed to lay a solid foundation for early childhood interest in reading, with the aim of bestowing long-term benefits upon them and their community. In this article, we will present the findings of a study illustrating the impact of KKN activities on heightening children's enthusiasm for reading at Taman Baca TPQ Darussalam.

This literacy initiative seeks to instill a culture of reading and writing in the children of Qoryah Sakinah, particularly at TPQ Darussalam. Its overarching objective is to mold children's characters, endowing them with robust literacy skills, including the aptitude to comprehend and judiciously employ information. Endeavors to enhance reading proficiency are geared towards nurturing a passion for both reading and writing.

According to the 2019 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey, Indonesia's literacy level is positioned at 62nd out of 70 countries (Diantoro, 2021). Hence, within this Community Service Program (KKN), we, as students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, aspire to stimulate interest in reading among the populace of Qoryah Sakinah Village, located in Tanjungrejo Village, Sukun District, Malang City.

The adage "books are the windows to the world" underscores the notion that reading augments the knowledge and awareness of every individual. In light of this, the elevation of interest in reading assumes paramount importance as a core initiative.

Consequently, one of the primary objectives pursued by the Qoryah Sakinah 111 UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta KKN Group is to cultivate a fervor for reading among children in Qoryah Sakinah Village, particularly at TPQ Darussalam. Thus, we find it fitting to adopt the theme "Fostering Reading Enthusiasm in Children Through Student Community Service Endeavors at TPQ Darussalam in Qoryah Sakinah Village, Malang City".

2. METHOD

The research methodology employed was qualitative, involving direct community observation for data collection. This comprehensive fieldwork was conducted within the Qoryah Sakinah community environment (RW 7, Tanjungrejo Village, Malang City) to identify prevalent issues. The observation stages encompassed engaging with the RW head, followed by a thorough exploration of the community surroundings in Qoryah Sakinah neighborhood (RW 7, Tanjungrejo Village, Malang City). Information gathered from the local community highlighted the limited educational resources available to children in the Qoryah Sakinah area. This included a singular RA (Raudhatul Athfal) and a few TPQs (Taman Pendidikan al-Qur'an), resulting in restricted child literacy. In response, as UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta students participating in the KKN 111 UIN Sunan Kalijaga program alongside the Ministry of Religion in Malang City, we initiated community service with a "Religious Cadre" theme, endeavoring to heighten literacy awareness in the community. The deficiency in youth literacy emanates from insufficient learning resources and a scarcity of reading materials for children.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Student Community Service (KKN) agenda commenced with visits to local government figures, including the Village Head, Head of the Religious Affairs Office, and RT / RW representatives, along with various religious and community leaders of Kampung Qoryah Sakinah RW 07, Tanjungrejo Village, Sukun District, Malang City. Subsequently, we convened with Ustad Ari and the teaching staff of TPQ Darussalam to acquaint them with our KKN group. Following this, we sought permission to facilitate teaching and learning activities at TPQ Darussalam, located in Qoryah Sakinah Village RW 07 Tanjungrejo Village, Sukun District, Malang City.

In addition to supporting TPQ Darussalam, we extended our assistance to RA Perwanida 3 Qoryah Sakinah. Our group, placed in Qoryah Sakinah Village, which is aided by the Ministry of Religion of Malang City, aligned our efforts with the development programs emphasizing Religious Cadre, Family Harmony, Religious Moderation, and Creative Economic Development. Given the presence of four KKN groups in Qoryah Sakinah Village, these themes were allocated accordingly. With our group focusing on the Religious Cadre Theme, we contributed to existing programs,

such as Majelis Ta'lim, Nukus Cerdas, and educational support at TPQ Darussalam, RA Perwanida, and MI Ma'arif 2 Sukun.

We actively participated in organizing competitive events in Qoryah Sakinah Village to commemorate the 78th Independence Day of the Republic of Indonesia. Our contributions ranged from village cleanup to adorning public spaces with patriotic embellishments. As part of the event series, our group organized a Pildacil competition, enriching the religious education of Qoryah Sakinah Village's children. Preceding the competition, we provided training and guidance, focusing on effective public speaking skills.

Our flagship initiative under the Religious Cadre Theme culminated in the establishment of the Darussalam Reading Corner, located at the Darussalam Mosque in Qoryah Sakinah Village. We firmly believe that a reading corner is imperative for the children of Qoryah Sakinah Village, aiming to expand their intellectual horizons.

The initial phase of implementing KKN 111 UIN Sunan Kalijaga in Malang City centered on meticulous planning and comprehensive observational activities, including surveys and field investigations. These endeavors aimed to identify prevalent issues within the Qoryah Sakinah Village community. The issues unearthed during this process were subsequently deliberated within the group, leading to the identification of a suitable and pertinent work program aligned with the theme of religious regeneration. Our observations highlighted a conspicuous lack of interest in reading, attributed to various factors, encompassing environmental influences, motivational deficits, and inadequate facilities. Among these factors, the inadequacy of resources, both in terms of reading materials and accessible locations, propelled the initiation of the TPQ Darussalam reading garden as a pivotal work program. Reading interest embodies an individual's inclination or propensity towards engaging in reading activities (Afandi, 2021, cited in Darmono). Therefore, we anticipate that the TPQ Darussalam Reading Park, a brainchild of KKN 111 UIN Sunan Kalijaga, will kindle an enduring interest in reading within the community, thereby enhancing overall societal quality.

Saputri *et al.* (2017) underscored that literacy proficiency is influenced by two primary factors: endogenous (inherent) and exogenous (external). Endogenous factors encompass heredity, innate talent, and individual IQ, while exogenous factors encompass motivation, familial support, environmental conditions, and educational guidance. These factors are intimately intertwined, meaning that a community exhibiting low literacy levels invariably experiences a confluence of these influences.

The outcomes of our comprehensive fieldwork impelled us to institute the Reading Corner work program, designed to facilitate and augment reading interest among the children of Qoryah Sakinah village. This work program unfolded on the second floor of the Darussalam Mosque, Qoryah Sakinah Village, Malang City. The Reading Corner, a miniature library housing 166 books covering a spectrum of topics

including children's literature, Islamic family law, and the Islamic Encyclopedia, also featured dedicated literacy sessions aimed at transitioning Quranic recitation activities into reading sessions every Saturday. The Reading Corner's establishment addresses a crucial need for the residents, particularly children, who harbor a desire for literary engagement but face logistical barriers in accessing a conventional library. With the Reading Corner, these individuals no longer contend with the obstacle of distance, allowing them to peruse a diverse array of reading materials with ease.

Based on firsthand observations and field research conducted by our group, the Qoryah Sakinah residents, particularly children, embraced the Reading Corner program with palpable enthusiasm. This fervor was palpable during the inauguration of the Reading Corner on August 20, 2023. Children flocked to the corner, engrossed in reading and enjoying the conducive atmosphere. This heightened interest persisted beyond the inauguration, extending to the Quranic activities at TPQ Darussalam each afternoon. The strategic placement of our Reading Corner on the second floor of the Darussalam Mosque further streamlined access for children, affirming its role in stimulating reading interest. Ustadzah Indra, the Quran teacher at TPQ Darussalam, attested to the children's newfound enthusiasm, noting their propensity to delve into the books in the Reading Corner post-Quranic recitation. Traditionally, children would promptly depart after concluding their Quranic studies, but the introduction of the Reading Corner has notably shifted their priorities towards literary exploration.

4. CONCLUSION

The Student Community Service (KKN) activity at Taman Baca TPQ Darussalam stands as an instrumental initiative, cultivating a robust foundation of reading interest in children. This endeavor holds the promise of enduring benefits for both the children themselves and their broader community. Consequently, within this Student Community Service (KKN), we, as students of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, strive to kindle and sustain community interest in reading within Qoryah Sakinah Village, Tanjungrejo Village, Sukun District, Malang City. The focal work program of the Qoryah Sakinah 111 UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta KKN Group centers on advancing reading interest among the children of Qoryah Sakinah Village at TPQ Darussalam. Our comprehensive observations spotlighted the scarcity of educational resources and reading materials, motivating us to institute the TPQ Darussalam Reading Park. During its inaugural event on August 20, 2023, a palpable wave of excitement and participation permeated the Reading Corner, indicating a notable surge in reading interest among the children of Qoryah Sakinah village.

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