

LITERACY CORNER AT PARAVAN PARK: BUILDING A READING CULTURE IN OPEN SPACES

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Abstract - *The Literacy Corner program in Sekargadung Village aims to increase the reading interest of the community, especially children, by providing community-based literacy facilities. The low literacy rate in the village prompted this initiative to establish reading corners that function as mini-libraries. The activities were carried out through the stages of preparation, implementation, and evaluation, using a descriptive qualitative method to depict the literacy potential in the target location. The results of the study showed that the literacy corner successfully attracted community attention, increased children's engagement in reading, and strengthened the local literacy culture. Challenges such as a limited number of books and the absence of a borrowing system were addressed through innovations like ongoing supervision and book donations. This program is expected to continue developing to create an environment that supports sustainable literacy improvement in the village.*

Keywords : *Literacy Corner, Reading Interest, Mini-library, Community Literacy, KKN Program*

1. INTRODUCTION

Basically, the village community does not fully pursue education, both formal and non-formal. This results in low interest in reading and lack of knowledge. Therefore, the importance of literacy must not only be applied in education, but also in the community. This can be used as an effort to increase interest in reading and increase their knowledge so that people are not easily fooled by false news that is widely spread in the mass media. For example, it is easy to believe news that is not clear, so people need a broad knowledge to filter the information they receive by finding out the truth first. One way for the community to gain knowledge and not easily believe false news is to increase public interest in reading through literacy activities provided by the village in the form of a mini-library or reading corner.

A library is a facility that is typically utilized for the purpose of locating information from a multitude of sources, including books, newspapers, and magazines. A library offers not only a wealth of knowledge but also an engaging experience. Readers can discover new and intriguing concepts from the diverse range of books available, which they can then apply to their own lives and surroundings. It is not only large libraries in urban areas that are important; the creation of reading corners in rural communities is also crucial. These can be situated in local schools, village halls, or in reading houses constructed by residents. This ensures that the community does not lose access to information and can enhance their knowledge, cultivate an interest in reading and literacy, and develop their reading skills through reading in these reading corners.¹

The concept of literacy is one that is socially constructed by a variety of disciplines, as it serves to address the needs of society in order to facilitate the development of a knowledgeable and educated Indonesian population. The term 'literacy' is defined as the capacity possessed by an individual to The ability to read and write is fundamental to the comprehension and expression of ideas and information in both written and verbal forms.²The capacity for self-literacy represents the fundamental ability of an individual to process and search for information. The term 'literacy' is closely associated with the field of education, which originally referred to the capacity to read. However, over time, the concept of literacy has evolved to encompass a broader range of abilities. In addition to reading and writing, literacy encompasses a multitude of other skills, including numeracy, science, digital literacy, financial literacy, cultural literacy, and citizenship. A person who possesses a variety of literacy skills is able to perform a range of tasks with proficiency.

Two fundamental factors contribute to the emergence of literacy problems: teaching and the environment. Teaching factors include the absence of suitable literacy resources in the school environment, the use of ineffective teaching methods, and teachers' lack of knowledge about language and structure. Environmental factors include deficiencies in oral language development, a lack of reading materials in the home environment, and the attitudes and parenting styles of parents, which can influence a child's learning and

¹ Nurida Maulidia Rahma, Ratih Nur Pratiwi, and Niken V.A Lastiti, "Strategi Peningkatan Minat Baca Anak (Studi Pada Ruang Baca Anak Perpustakaan Umum Dan Arsip Daerah Kota Malang)," *Administrasi Publik (JAP)* 3, no. 5 (2015): 763–69.

² Abd. Muhiith, "Pembelajaran Literasi Membaca Di Pondok Pesantren Sidogiri Kraton Pasuruan," *Journal of Islamic Education Research* 1, no. 01 (2019): 34–50.

development. The concept of literacy can be defined as a person's fundamental ability which should be acquired in order to enable them to search for and extract information. In the context of education, literacy is also associated with an individual's reading ability. In essence, literacy encompasses not only the abilities to read and write, but also a multitude of other dimensions, including numerical literacy, scientific literacy, digital literacy, financial literacy, cultural and civic literacy, and more. An individual who has acquired proficient literacy skills will be able to perform a range of tasks with greater ease and effectiveness.

It is anticipated that the reading corner will stimulate interest in reading among the general public. The reading corner is typically situated in a corner of the room comprising bookshelves and is designed in an appealing manner to encourage people to not only observe the reading corner but also to read books there. In order to enhance literacy standards within the local community, it is essential to engage the support of village officials and students from local colleges in the promotion of reading. A designated reading area has been established. It is therefore proposed that community literacy development be combined with the reading corner as a medium to support literacy development.

B. METHODS

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, which is a methodology that aims to describe the condition of the object of the variable under study without making comparisons and is independent. This research is conducted directly in the field, otherwise known as field research, with the objective of collecting data directly at the specified location in order to produce optimal and accurate data. The objective of qualitative research is to provide a detailed account of phenomena, social activities, attitudes, events, beliefs, and thoughts as expressed by individuals and groups. The findings of the research are presented in a descriptive manner, in accordance with the research problem and objectives.

The Pojok Literasi programme has its roots in one of the key strengths of one of the neighbourhoods in Sekargadung Village. The location is situated within RT.03 RW.07, and there is a designated gathering point for local residents and children. The location is designated 'Paravan Park', which is designed in the style of a playground but is accessible to all age groups. It offers recreational facilities for children, sporting facilities for adults, and a further facility in the form of a meeting point for men situated in a secluded area of the park.

In order to gain further insight and substantiate the planning of the programme, observations were conducted in order to gather additional data. The objective is to revitalise the post at the corner of the park, transforming it into a laboratory for children's creativity. This will be achieved by holding a Literacy Corner programme, which will raise awareness of the importance of early literacy to children.

The programme was implemented during the period of community service, from 25 July to 10 August 2024. The implementation phase comprised three stages: preparation, implementation, and evaluation. Program Pojok Literasi ini berangkat dari salah satu potensi yang sangat kuat dari salah satu kawasan RT yang berada di Kelurahan Sekargadung. Lokasinya berada tepat di RT.03 RW.07, ditambah dengan adanya lokasi titik kumpul untuk warga sekitar dan anak-anak. Tempat tersebut bernama "Paravan Park" yang bertemakan seperti taman bermain pada umumnya namun dapat menjangkau semua tingkatan usia, yang

mana menyediakan fasilitas bermain untuk anak-anak, fasilitas olahraga bagi orang dewasa, dan fasilitas lainnya adalah adanya tempat semacam posko untuk perkumpulan bapak-bapak yang berada di pojok taman.

1. The initial of

The preparation process entailed verifying the programme data with local stakeholders and soliciting opinions and support for the proposed programme. Once the requisite data had been obtained and the necessary support from the aforementioned stakeholders had been secured, the next step was to proceed with the design of all the requisite components. This encompassed both the technical aspects, such as the physical form of the facility, and the substance of the programme, which was designed with an emphasis on effective output, the promotion of usefulness and sustainability, and the advancement of the value of these factors.

2. Implementation Stage

The implementation of the aforementioned literacy corner commenced on 25 July and concluded on 10 August 2024. The activity is situated at Paravan Park, specifically within field RW.7 RT.3, Sekargadung Village.

3. Evaluation Stage

The impact and influence of the literacy corner are evaluated by examining the community's response to the facility after its implementation.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Literacy Corner represents a principal component of the activities undertaken by our group, 310 KKN 114 UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, in the Sekargadung Village, Pasuruan City context. The objective of this programme is to establish a literacy corner in Pesona Candi 2, RT 03, RW 07, specifically in Paravan Park. The literacy corner, established as part of the community service initiative, takes the form of a mini library. It comprises a collection of reading materials aimed at children, including works of fiction such as stories about prophets, fairy tales, inspirational narratives, guidebooks, and educational modules designed for children at the early stages of learning.

The initial stage of the process entailed a discussion with relevant stakeholders in the local community, specifically the head of the neighbourhood association (RT). Subsequently, the findings of the discussion were processed in order to map out the optimal concept for a literacy corner or mini library. The books to be displayed were provided by one of the families from our group and a few additional books from local children. Subsequently, a framework was developed for the activities that will be held at the aforementioned Literacy Corner, and the items necessary for its revitalisation were sourced and prepared.



Picture 1 A discussion was held with the head of the neighbourhood regarding the implementation of the Literacy Corner programme.

Following the conclusion of the discussion process with the relevant stakeholders, the purchasing of items that would subsequently be employed as materials for the revitalisation of the aforementioned post was initiated. At this juncture, the team was subdivided into smaller units, which would subsequently be dispatched to prepare the requisite items and equipment. The objective was to identify and procure materials that would facilitate the implementation process, thereby reducing the overall time required. Subsequently, the revitalisation of the post commenced, commencing with the installation of carpets, which were then coated with clear mica. This was followed by the installation of banners as backgrounds and mini library writing banners, the installation of tumbler lights and synthetic vines, and the installation of property in accordance with the planned specifications.



Picture 2. Following the revitalisation and installation of the requisite property.

Once the aforementioned process was concluded, we proceeded to construct the agreed design for the bookshelves with the assistance of the residents. This task required a considerable investment of time, as we were obliged to await the drying of the wood, which was still somewhat damp. This was necessary to ensure the durability and longevity of the shelves. Subsequently, in the evening, we proceeded to affix ownership labels to the books and to imprint the KKN UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta group stamp.



Picture 3. Bookcase construction

The subsequent step is to place the previously painted bookshelves in a state of readiness for utilisation, concurrently with the arrangement of the books according to the categories that have been determined.



Picture 4. The optimal configuration for the bookshelf in the literacy corner is as follows.

The process entailed numerous stages, including consultations with key stakeholders, the construction of the literacy corner shelf, the revitalisation of the post, the arrangement of books, and the introduction of these resources to the children.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all residents who have provided invaluable assistance to our programme. This has been in the form of practical support, as well as input and ideas that have enabled us to complete our work programme. It is hoped that this new facility will provide a more comfortable environment for the children and encourage a greater interest in reading.

While the creation of a literacy corner will undoubtedly offer advantages to visitors, it is important to acknowledge the potential challenges that may emerge, both in the immediate future and in the longer term. An evaluation of these challenges is therefore essential. The obstacles that must be overcome include:

1. The number of books is still relatively limited, and books tend to be dominant in the context of children's literature, given that children have been the primary target audience from the outset.
2. The absence of a record of borrowed books renders it challenging to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the loss of a book. Despite the absence of a borrowing rule, the absence of supervision is notable.
3. It is necessary to solicit book donations from the local village or city library, as well as from the surrounding community, in order to augment the collection of books at the literacy corner post.

In light of the current limitations, it is evident that novel approaches are required to ensure the continued relevance and engagement of this literacy initiative. The following innovations are required:

1. It is imperative that the condition of the post be supervised following its abandonment by KKN students and subsequent transfer to the local party. This is to ensure that the atmosphere and form of the revitalisation results are maintained in the future.
2. This reading corner represents a form of work programme initiated by KKN students with the objective of providing motivation to younger siblings, particularly those still engaged in their education at the primary level. It is hoped that this initiative will encourage them to apply themselves more assiduously to their studies.

The utilisation of the literacy corner has been identified as a significant factor in facilitating insight and knowledge acquisition, as evidenced by the results of the employed methods. In order to foster a desire to read in children, it is evident that the provision of supportive facilities and an appropriate environment is essential. The introduction of a literacy corner has been observed to have a favourable impact on the development of literacy culture and an interest in reading. By making the space as attractive as possible and ensuring a large and well-organised collection of books. The strategic location of this facility ensures convenient access for the general public, thereby facilitating an efficient environment conducive to reading.

The provision of open reading materials represents a crucial initial step in enhancing literacy in Indonesia. With regard to formal education, the Ministry of Education and Culture, which is responsible for matters pertaining to education, provides support for initiatives aimed at enhancing literacy in schools. The introduction of the reading corner is anticipated to enhance interest in reading, which represents a key objective of the school literacy movement. The programme encompasses the introduction of the reading corner. A reading corner is a designated space within a classroom where books and other learning resources are arranged in order to foster students' interest in reading and learning through reading activities (Kemendikbud, 2016). In contrast, Hartyatni (2018) defines a reading corner as a space that provides a variety of books for reading activities, book borrowing, and activities related to literacy.

The activities were designed in a gradual manner to enhance children's enthusiasm and foster a sense of interest in reading. This undoubtedly facilitates student learning activities within the educational institution. The literacy corner facility has the potential to enhance

reading, writing and counting abilities among students in lower grades, while reinforcing these skills among their higher-grade counterparts.

The implementation was conducted following consultations with relevant stakeholders and the identification of an appropriate location for the literacy facility.

D. CONCLUSION

The objective of the literacy corner is to foster an interest in reading and literacy among the local community, with a particular focus on teenagers and children. The programme is implemented by establishing a conducive and strategic location for reading and the storage of books. By providing access to a comfortable reading environment, it becomes more feasible for children and the local community to engage in reading activities and enhance their literacy skills. The results of the implementation of this programme indicate that it has been successful in increasing community involvement with the objective of improving the quality of literacy. It is anticipated that the establishment of a literacy corner in the local area will stimulate interest in reading and enhance literacy skills among the population. In this way, they can engage in the process of developing a more advanced system of education.

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