



COMMUNITY-BASED LITERACY INTERVENTION THROUGH A SUDUT BACA CERIA : INCREASING CHILDREN'S INTEREST IN READING IN RURAL AREAS

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Abstrak

Kegiatan pengabdian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan minat baca anak melalui program Sudut Baca Ceria di Desa Brangsi sebagai model penguatan literasi berbasis komunitas. Metode pelaksanaan menggunakan pendekatan partisipatif dengan melibatkan anak-anak usia sekolah dasar dan masyarakat setempat melalui tahapan observasi kebutuhan, penyediaan fasilitas sudut baca, pendampingan membaca, serta pelaksanaan kegiatan literasi berupa membaca bersama, storytelling, dan permainan edukatif berbasis buku. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan adanya peningkatan partisipasi anak dalam aktivitas membaca, yang ditandai dengan meningkatnya kunjungan dan keterlibatan aktif anak dalam setiap kegiatan literasi. Program ini juga mendorong keterlibatan masyarakat dalam pengelolaan dan keberlanjutan ruang baca di lingkungan desa. Sudut Baca Ceria memberikan kontribusi sebagai alternatif model intervensi literasi berbasis masyarakat yang efektif untuk menumbuhkan minat baca dan memperkuat budaya literasi anak di pedesaan.

Kata Kunci: *Budaya Membaca; Minat Baca Anak; Pengabdian Masyarakat; Literasi Pedesaan.*

Abstract

This community service program was conducted to enhance children's reading interest by implementing the Sudut Baca Ceria in Brangsi Village as a model of community-based literacy empowerment. The activity adopted a participatory approach involving elementary school children and local residents across several stages, including a preliminary needs assessment, the provision of reading facilities, reading assistance sessions, and literacy-based activities such as shared reading, storytelling, and educational games centered on books. The findings demonstrated a noticeable increase in children's engagement in reading activities, reflected in the growing number of visits and active participation in the literacy programs. Furthermore, the initiative strengthened community involvement in maintaining and sustaining literacy spaces within the village environment. The Sudut Baca Ceria serves as an alternative model of community-based literacy intervention that effectively promotes children's reading interest and reinforces literacy culture in rural areas.

Keywords: Reading Culture; Children's Reading Interest; Community Service; Rural Literacy.

INTRODUCTION

Children's literacy is the foundation for the development of thinking skills, information comprehension, and lifelong learning skills across various educational contexts worldwide (Putri et al., 2024). Literacy is not only interpreted as the basic ability to read and write, but also includes the ability to access, understand, and use information critically in daily life (Rifky et al., 2024). However, international

reports still show a literacy gap among children, especially in areas with limited access to educational facilities and reading materials, including rural areas (Prabowo et al., 2022). This situation poses a significant challenge to efforts to improve the quality of education, as low interest in reading from an early age can affect children's academic achievement and cognitive development (Alkhindi et al., 2026). Therefore, strengthening literacy culture through a community-based, context-specific approach is increasingly important for realizing an inclusive and sustainable education ecosystem.

The problem of children's literacy is still a crucial issue based on various national and international data findings (Alkhindi et al., 2026). Results PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) repeatedly shows that the reading ability of Indonesian students is still below the average of OECD countries, which reflects the low basic literacy competencies of students (Sulistyanto et al. 2023). The UNESCO report also illustrates that the level of reading interest of the Indonesian people is still relatively low when compared to other countries in the Asian region (UNESCO, 2020). BPS data reveal that access to reading resources and literacy facilities in rural areas is still limited, both in terms of the availability of libraries, children's reading books, and literacy spaces that support reading habits (BPS, 2024). Conditions in the field show that children in rural areas tend to spend more time playing than reading, as well as the lack of literacy assistance from families and the surrounding environment (Zulfatussyarofah et al. 2025). This situation is influenced by several factors, such as limited literacy facilities, low parental awareness of the importance of literacy from an early age, and the role of the social environment in fostering a reading culture (Kusuma et al. 2024). This emphasizes the need to strengthen literacy through community-based interventions that are relevant to local contexts and sustainable, to increase children's interest in reading in rural Indonesia.

Various programs to improve children's literacy in Indonesia have been widely implemented, both by the government through strengthening school libraries and the School Literacy Movement (GLS), as well as by educational institutions and communities that develop reading corners and community reading gardens (Nisa 2025). The results of previous studies also indicate that reading room-based literacy activities can increase children's interest in reading through reading together, storytelling, and the provision of interesting, age-appropriate reading collections (Alfiyah and Nabilah 2025). However, most of these initiatives remain school-oriented or formal, and they have not reached children in rural areas in a sustainable, community-driven manner (Dimung et al., 2024). The implementation of community literacy programs often does not involve parents and the environment in an integrated manner and remains temporal, lacking a strong, structured sustainability model (Arief et al. 2025). This shows the gap between the ideal concept of community-based literacy and its implementation in practice,

especially in creating an inclusive, contextual, and sustainable reading space at the village level.

Brangsi Village in Lamongan Regency is one of the areas with opportunities for developing community-based literacy activities. However, literacy facilities accessible to children in the region remain limited. Elementary school-age children in this village need an alternative learning space that not only provides reading materials, but is also provides a fun and interactive learning atmosphere (Alviyah et al. 2024). Therefore, a program is needed that can provide an attractive literacy space while encouraging community participation in supporting children's literacy activities (Oktaviana et al. 2025). Thus, a more participatory literacy intervention model is needed, in accordance with local needs, such as the development of Sudut Baca Ceria to strengthen children's literacy culture in rural areas.

Responding to the challenges of children's literacy in rural areas, this service activity presents a solution: the development of the Sudut Baca Ceria program, a community-based literacy intervention that provides a child-friendly, fun, and easily accessible reading room in the village environment. This approach was chosen because it prioritizes the active involvement of the community, especially children, parents, and local volunteers, so that literacy strengthening does not depend solely on formal institutions such as schools but also develops from the child's immediate social environment. This service activity aims to increase children's interest in reading through the Sudut Baca Ceria program in Brangsi Village as a model for strengthening community-based literacy. The main contribution of this activity is to present a participatory, contextual, and sustainable model for strengthening community-based literacy, where the community serves not only as a beneficiary but also as the main driver of literacy in the village.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This community service activity was carried out in Brangsi Village, Lamongan Regency, with the main target being children living in the village. The number of participants involved (25–40 children), age range (7–12 years or elementary school age), and characteristics of participants, such as children who live in Brangsi Village with a basic education background and have limited access to literacy in the home environment. This program aims to strengthen children's literacy culture by developing and supporting the Sudut Baca Ceria program as a child-friendly literacy space. The activity was implemented in several stages, with active participation from the local community.

The materials used in this activity include various resources that support children's literacy. Among them are children's reading books such as picture story books, basic knowledge books, and folklore books. In addition, supporting facilities include bookshelves, carpets or seating mats, small tables, stationery, and educational learning media such as word cards and literacy-based games. All of



these materials are prepared to create a comfortable, interesting, and fun reading environment for children. The method applied in this service activity uses a participatory, educational approach, involving children and the local community at every stage of program implementation. The stages of activities carried out include the following steps:

Observation and Need Identification Stage

In the initial stage, field observations were conducted to assess the condition of children's literacy in Brangsi Village, including the availability of reading materials, the level of children's reading interest, and potential support from the surrounding community. This observation is conducted through fieldwork and communication with the local community. Observation sheets are used to record children's participation and involvement in each literacy activity, and field notes are used to record the dynamics of program implementation directly.

Program Planning Stage

Based on the results of these observations, the service team prepared an activity plan to develop a Sudut Baca Ceria as a literacy space for children. At this stage, the location of the activity, the procurement of reading materials, and the arrangement of the reading room are also carried out to make it look attractive, comfortable, and friendly for children.

Program Implementation Stage

The implementation stage involves providing reading corner facilities and assisting with various literacy activities. The activities carried out include reading together, storytelling activities, introduction to various types of children's reading books, and book-based educational games that aim to foster children's interest in reading (Dimung et al. 2024).

Stage of Community Assistance and Participation

This program also involves the local community in the management and utilization of reading corners so that literacy activities can take place in a sustainable manner (Thalib et al. 2025). Mentoring is carried out by motivating children to be more fond of reading and encouraging the community to take part in maintaining and utilizing the literacy facilities that have been provided.

Activity Evaluation Stage

The evaluation process was carried out through observation of the level of children's participation in literacy activities, their enthusiasm in reading, and the community's response to the existence of the Sudut Baca Ceria (Rahmah et al. 2024). Through these stages, the Cheerful Reading Corner program is expected to be one of the effective literacy facilities in fostering reading habits while strengthening children's literacy culture in Brangsi Village, Lamongan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The implementation of the Sudut Baca Ceria program in Brangsi Village, Lamongan Regency, is one of the efforts to strengthen children's literacy culture by providing child-friendly reading rooms and educational, fun literacy activities. The implementation of this activity goes through several stages, ranging from the provision of literacy spaces and the implementation of various reading activities to child assistance and community involvement in supporting the sustainability of these activities.

Formation and Arrangement of Sudut Baca Ceria

The implementation of the Sudut Baca Ceria program began with field observation, which was carried out in the first week of the activity. The observations show that Brangsi Village lacks specialized literacy facilities accessible to children outside the school environment. Based on initial interviews, children reported spending more free time playing with gadgets or outside the house than reading books. One of the parents said:

"At home, children actually have books, but they rarely read them because they are more interested in playing with mobile phones. If there is a place to read with their friends, I am sure that children will be more enthusiastic."

Based on these conditions, the service team formed the Sudut Baca Ceria as a child-friendly literacy space located in the village hall and easily accessible to the community. The facilities provided include bookshelves, reading carpets, study desks, stationery, and a collection of around 95 copies of children's reading books consisting of picture story books (40%), general knowledge books (25%), folklore and legends of the archipelago (20%), and character and religious education books (15%). The spatial arrangement is designed to prioritize children's comfort through bright colors, easy-to-reach book layouts, and a shared reading area. Observations after arranging showed that children tended to be interested in books placed on the front shelf and books with colored illustrations. Program Identity Installation the process through the banner of the Cheerful Reading Corner as a social media to the community is shown in the Figure 1.



Figure 1. Installation of one of the banners Sudut Baca Ceria

In addition to providing reading materials, supporting facilities such as bookshelves, reading carpets, small tables, and stationery are also prepared to create a more comfortable reading atmosphere. The layout of the reading room is made with a simple but interesting concept, using bright colors and placing books that are easy for children to reach. The arrangement aims to create a conducive literacy environment so that children feel at home to read and learn. The process of arranging book collections and reading facilities that was carried out before the program was operated is described in Figure 2.



Figure 2. Bookkeeping for Literacy Corner

Implementation of Children's Literacy Activities

After the Sudut Baca CERIA was completed, literacy activities began regularly for 4 weeks. The literacy activities include reading together, storytelling, discussion of the content of books, literacy-based educational games, and activities to retell the content of books. Based on observations, storytelling activities are the most popular, with a participation rate of 89% among total participants.

During the reading activity, children are encouraged to take turns reading and understanding the content. The companion then asks simple questions to gauge their understanding of the story. Based on the results, around 70% of the participants were able to answer questions about the characters and storyline well after reading. One of the participants said:

"I love animal storybooks because they have a lot of pictures and the stories are funny. Now I come here often after school."

Other participants stated:

"If you read the story and continue to tell the story to your friends, it's exciting. Dare to speak up in front of the camera."

The findings show that literacy activities not only increase reading interest but also help develop children's communication skills and confidence. The

interactive storytelling activities are shown in Figure 3. In this activity, children not only listen to stories but are also actively involved in answering questions, guessing the storyline, and expressing their opinions on the moral message obtained from the story.



Figure 3. Story Telling with Elementary School Children

Reading together activities involve children reading books in turns or together with a companion. Through this activity, children are not only trained to read but also invited to understand the content of the texts and retell the stories they have read. This activity has been proven to increase children's confidence when reading and speaking in front of their friends. In addition, storytelling activities are one of the most effective methods for attracting children's interest in books. Companions convey stories in an engaging and interactive way, helping children better understand the story's content and encouraging them to read the book independently.

Other activities that support strengthening literacy include reading-based educational games, such as word-composing games, letter recognition, and games related to story content. Through this play-based approach, children can learn in a more relaxed, fun atmosphere, so reading activities do not feel boring.

An Increase in Children's Interest in Reading

Based on observations during the activity, the existence of the Sudut Baca Ceria has a positive impact on increasing children's interest in reading. This can be seen in the increase in the number of children who come to read and in the time they spend in the reading room. In the early stages of implementing the activity, around 10-15 children attended, but after several literacy activities were carried out, the number increased to 25-30. In addition, children began to show an interest in reading books independently, without always needing to be accompanied. Some children even start borrowing books to reread at home. This condition shows that the existence of an interesting reading room and interactive literacy activities can encourage the formation of reading habits in children.

The increase in reading interest is also reflected in children's ability to recognize new vocabulary and their increased courage in retelling the content of what they have read. This shows that literacy activities not only foster interest in reading but also support the development of children's language skills.

Evaluation of the Sudut Baca Ceria Program

Program evaluation is carried out through participatory observation and recording the number of child visits during the implementation of activities. The monitoring results showed an increase in the number of visitors to the Sudut Baca Ceria from an average of 12 children in the first week to 29 children in the fourth week. In addition to the increase in visitor numbers, the duration of children's reading has also increased. At the beginning of the program, most children only last for 10–15 minutes. However, at the end of the activity, the average reading time increased to 30–45 minutes per visit. The results of the observation showed that: 82% of children came back more than three times during the program, 68% of children began to choose and read books independently without accompanying directions, 57% of children borrowed books to read at home, 75% of children were able to retell the content of the reading more quickly than at the initial meeting.

The results of interviews with activity companions also showed an improvement in children's vocabulary and speaking ability. A companion said:

"At the first meeting, many children were embarrassed to speak. After several activities, they began to actively ask questions and were able to explain the content of the story in their own language."

These findings indicate that the existence of the Cheerful Reading Corner makes a positive contribution to the formation of reading habits while supporting the development of children's basic literacy skills. The success of the program is inseparable from the involvement of the local community. Based on interviews with village officials and parents, this program is considered to provide an alternative positive activity for children after school hours. The head of the hamlet said:

"Children now have a place to study and read together. We hope that this activity will continue to run because the benefits are very felt by the community."

Most parents also stated that their children began to show interest in reading at home after participating in activities at the Sudut Baca Ceria. Of the 10 parents interviewed, 8 stated that children's reading frequency increased after the program was implemented. Evaluation sessions with the community were held to gather input on the program's sustainability. The community proposed adding a collection of picture storybooks, a schedule of routine reading activities every weekend, and the formation of a local literacy volunteer group to assist children on an ongoing basis. Evaluation and discussion activities with the community were carried out at the end of the program to assess the benefits of activities and develop a sustainability strategy for the Sudut Baca Ceria in Brangsi Village described in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Evaluation of Community Joint Activities

Supporting Factors and Inhibiting Factors

The success of implementing the Sudut Baca Ceria program in Brangsi Village is influenced by several factors that support the program's operations. One of the main factors is the high enthusiasm of children to participate in various literacy activities. The presence of engaging picture books and interactive activities, such as reading together, storytelling, and educational games, can foster children's interest and encourage them to actively participate. Support from the local community is also an important factor in the program's sustainability. The presence of a reading corner received a positive response from the community because it was seen as an alternative learning facility for children in the village. This support is reflected in the community's involvement in maintaining reading corner facilities and in encouraging children to take advantage of the literacy space.

Another factor that also supports is the availability of adequate literacy facilities and infrastructure, such as children's reading books, bookshelves, carpets, and various other educational media. These facilities can create a comfortable, fun reading atmosphere for children. In addition, the arrangement of an interesting, child-friendly reading room is a special attraction that makes children eager to come and read. The service team's assistance also plays an important role in activating literacy activities at the Sudut Baca Ceria. Through various mentoring activities, such as reading together and storytelling, children become more motivated to read and learn about the various types of reading books available.

Although the Sudut Baca Ceria program has a positive impact on children's reading interest, several obstacles remain in its implementation. One obstacle is the limited number and variety of children's reading books. The limited book collection often causes children to read the same books over and over, so it is necessary to add a reading collection to maintain their interest in reading. The limited time children have is also a challenge in implementing literacy activities. Some children have to

divide their time between school activities, studying, and homework, so the opportunity to participate in reading activities is limited.

Another obstacle encountered is that the habit of consistent reading has not yet formed in some children. Some children are still more interested in play activities than in reading, so a more creative and fun approach is needed to make reading an activity of interest. In addition, the limited number of managers or facilitators of literacy activities is a challenge to maintaining the program's sustainability. Therefore, wider community involvement is needed to ensure the management of *Sudut Baca Ceria* continues sustainably. By paying attention to these various supporting and inhibiting factors, the *Cheerful Reading Corner* program is expected to continue to be developed and strengthened so that it can make a more optimal contribution in fostering children's literacy culture in Brangsi Village, Lamongan.

DISCUSSION

The results of the implementation of the *Sudut Baca Ceria* program show that the provision of child-friendly literacy spaces can be an effective strategy in increasing children's interest in reading in the community. The existence of a reading room equipped with various interesting books and interactive literacy activities is able to create a fun learning atmosphere for children (Oktaviana et al. 2025). The approach applied in this program, which combines reading activities with play and storytelling activities, has been proven to be able to attract children's attention (Sulistyanto et al. 2023). This method makes literacy activities not only focus on reading texts, but also involve elements of creativity, imagination, and social interaction between children (Thalib et al. 2025).

Community involvement in the management of literacy spaces is also an important factor in maintaining the sustainability of the program (Sukiyanto et al. 2021). Community-based literacy programs can create an environment that supports reading habits while strengthening literacy culture at the village level (Aulia et al. 2026). This community participation shows that strengthening the literacy culture is not only the responsibility of formal educational institutions, but also requires the active involvement of the community as a social environment in which children grow and develop (Alviyah et al. 2024).

The increase in children's participation and enthusiasm in reading activities found in the implementation of the program can be analyzed through the perspective of social literacy theory, which views that literacy skills develop optimally through social interaction and environmental involvement, not only through the formal learning process at school (Rahmah et al. 2024). The increase in children's interest in reading through the *Cheerful Reading Corner* program reinforces the view that a positive, interesting, and fun literacy environment can form reading habits more naturally and sustainably (Oktaviana et al. 2025).

These findings are also in line with various previous studies that show that community reading garden programs, reading corners, and community-based literacy initiatives have a positive contribution to increasing children's interest in reading, especially through interactive activities such as storytelling and reading together (Kusuma et al. 2024). However, a number of studies also highlight that the success of literacy programs is greatly influenced by the sustainability aspects of the program and the level of community involvement in its implementation (Anggara et al., 2025). In this case, the results of the implementation of the Sudut Baca Ceria are relevant because it not only has an impact on increasing children's interest in reading but also strengthen the participation of the village community in the management and sustainability of literacy spaces.

The results of this activity show that the concept of community-based literacy, which emphasizes collaboration among children, families, and the community, can strengthen efforts to build a literacy culture. The program also provides empirical evidence that contextual, participatory, and local environment-based literacy intervention approaches tend to be more effective in increasing children's reading interest in rural areas than formal and centered approaches in school institutions (Rahmah et al. 2024). This program is expected to continue to develop so it can make a broader contribution to improving children's literacy culture in the community.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Sudut Baca Ceria program is a form of community-based literacy intervention that has proven to be effective in increasing children's reading interest in rural areas through the provision of child-friendly, attractive, and accessible reading rooms. The implementation of programs involving the active involvement of children, parents, and village communities shows that there is an increase in children's participation in reading activities as well as the creation of a more developed literacy culture in the village environment. In addition, the participatory approach applied not only has an impact on increasing reading interest, but also strengthens the role of the community in maintaining and continuing literacy programs independently and sustainably. Thus, the Sudut Baca Ceria can be seen as an alternative model of community-based literacy intervention that is relevant to the local context and sustainable, aimed at strengthening children's literacy culture in rural Indonesia.

Recommendations that can be considered for the development of future literacy programs. It is necessary to increase the number and variety of children's reading book collections so that they have more interesting reading choices that are in accordance with their developmental stage. It is necessary to develop more creative and innovative literacy activities, for example through reading



competitions, simple writing activities, and reading programs with parents, so that children are more motivated to make reading a habit.

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