

# Increasing Reading Interest in The Community in Kemlakagede Village, Tengah Tani District, Cirebon District Through Reading Park Activities

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received Augst 19, 2023

Revised September 14, 2023

Accepted October 19, 2023

### Keywords:

Reading garden;

Childreen;

KKN Program;

Community;

Motivation;

## ABSTRACT

This activity started with the lack of interest in reading among children in Kemlakagede Village, so it was necessary to create a love of reading books through the "Taman Baca" or reading park activity. Reading park activities are a culture of creating interest in children in reading books. This service aims to increase interest in reading among the community in Kemlakagede Village through Reading Park Activities. The results of the research prove that the implementation of reading garden activities which are carried out regularly, namely every Sunday at 09:00 at the Orchid Park in Kemlakagede Village, can effectively increase interest in reading among the people in Kemlakagede Village, especially children. However, children's interest in reading must also be supported by the synergy between parents and teachers.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

"Taman Baca" or reading park is an important element in supporting the teaching and learning process. It is hoped that the existence of a reading park can help all levels of society both in increasing interest in reading and also instilling an interest in reading from an early age. This reading park is also non-formal education. Non-formal education is also included in educational programs that can contribute to the intelligent life of the nation. In non-formal education, some programs help eradicate illiteracy [1]. Having a reading group will help increase the love of reading [2] so that a society that loves to learn is created. This can help people who cannot or are not accustomed to reading.

Reading is one of the easiest ways to learn among people and can be done anywhere [3] [4]. Through reading parks you can also create new ideas, get information, and increase your knowledge so that your insight becomes broader and develops, as well as making it a place for community activities so that people are more motivated to be able to develop a more creative society and make people like reading [5], one example of an activity is a literacy activity held by Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN) students in Kemlakagede Village, Tengah Tani District, Cirebon Regency, together with the Sinau Wong Kemlak Literacy Community.

The Sinau Wong Kemplaka literacy community was initiated by Mrs. Tri in 2022. At that time the whole world was hit by the Covid-19 virus outbreak. The impact of the outbreak requires learning to be carried out at home. And when at home, children will play with devices more often. This causes a decrease in children's interest in reading. The existence of this reading community is a solution to this problem.

Various facilities can be used to read and learn, one of which is a reading garden. The education movement program through Taman Baca refers to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia, article 26 paragraph 4 Number 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system, which states that non-formal education units consist of special institutions, training institutions, study groups, community activity centers, assemblies, as well as education units.

The people in Kemplakagede village regarding the Reading Park regarding their level of knowledge are already aware of the establishment of the Community Reading Park, but there is still minimal interest in coming to visit the TMB. Based on observations made by researchers, Reading Park has visitors who are from the lower classes or children, while there are fewer visitors from the upper classes or teenagers. The Reading Park in Kemplakagede village provides reading materials such as magazines, story books, fairy tale books, comics, and so on. With this reading material, many children come to read story books and fairy tales. Apart from providing books, we assist children who visit the reading park. Not all reading parks provide books based on formal school subjects, because these reading parks are aimed at increasing interest in reading and eradicating illiteracy in the community so the books provided are books that are interesting to read to the community.

Taman Baca Masyarakat (TBM) is often considered a social moral movement. As an institution for cultivating people's love of reading, TBM is a reading place that carries out the function of providing access to reading and services in the field of reading materials in the form of reading books. TBM is a place to read books, not a book warehouse. The community and literacy activists need to understand the legal basis for community reading parks (TBM). Because in reality, everything in human life cannot be separated from the applicable legal rules. TBM is not without a legal basis. Whatever activities are carried out must be on a legal basis. The state was founded on a strong constitutional basis as stated in the 1945 Constitution. Understanding the legal basis of TBM, consciously or unconsciously, aims to strengthen legal arguments and become the basis for TBM activities. Because it could be that currently, many literacy activists do not understand the legal basis for TBM. So the arguments and persuasion regarding the importance of TBM become "blunt" or less sharp. So it is very important to understand the legal basis surrounding TBM activities in Indonesia.

TBM are non-formal education institutions (which are now called Community Education (Dikmas) that provide reading culture services to the community directly. The basic legal reference is first, the 1945 Constitution in the Preamble to paragraph 4 concerning national goals, namely 1) protect the entire Indonesian nation and all of Indonesia's bloodshed; 2) promote the general welfare; 3) enlighten the nation's life; and 4) participate in implementing world order based on freedom, eternal peace, and social justice [6].

Second, Republic of Indonesia Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System article 26 paragraph (4) which states that non-formal education units consist of course institutions, training institutions, study groups, community learning activity centers, taklim councils, and similar educational units [7]. Third, Law no. 43 of 2007 concerning Libraries Chapter Bab 3 Cultivating a Love of Reading Article 49 states "the government, regional government and the community encourage the growth of community reading parks and reading houses to support the cultivation of a love of reading" [8]. Fourth, the Republic of Indonesia Law no. 25 of 2009 about Public Services. So, based on the four legal bases above, TBM is not only necessary but important to be present in Indonesia. As a joint effort to support non-formal education and cultivate a love of reading in society.

This means that TBM plays an important role in increasing the love of reading and providing access to reading for Indonesian children and society to improve the quality of human resources [9].

Due to the low interest in reading among the people in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency, students Kuliah kerja nyata (KKN) from the Syekh Nurjati Cirebon State Islamic Institute (IAIN) campus took the initiative to carry out Community Service (PkM) to minimize the lack of interest in reading in the local community through the "Reading Park" activity, so that with this activity it is hoped that the community's insight and knowledge will be about the importance of reading in the local environment. to increase. The work program or Reading Park activities are intended as an effort to increase people's interest in reading in Kemlakagede village. This reading garden work program is carried out in collaboration with the Sinau Wong Kemlaka Literacy Community, where this community is the initiation of Community Service Lecture Students (KPM) in 2021, to be precise, it was founded on October 3, 2021. When the KKN students arrived, this literacy community was in a state forum. Factum literacy community, due to lack of attention from the village. So the KKN students in Kemlakagede Village are trying to revive the literacy community in the village.

Programs created by KKN students to foster interest in reading include storytelling, reading guidance, eco-literacy, used goods processing, and foreign language learning. Apart from that, KKN students also donated books to support literacy facilities in Kemlakagede Village. All programs created aim to foster children's enthusiasm for learning, especially learning to read.

Interest in reading is a fairly important and deep concern for reading activities so that it can encourage someone to read of their own accord [10]. An interest in reading should be instilled in children from an early age because at that time it is the ideal age for children to accept new things and indirectly instill the values of everyday life. One way to increase interest in reading is by establishing a community reading park service, to make people more interested in reading and increasing their interest in reading, with reading materials provided by the reading park.

From the above background, the researcher has an interest in raising the theme of community service with the title "Increasing Reading Interest in the Community in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency Through Reading Park Activities". The problem formulation is: first, how are community service activities carried out in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency?; Second, what is the role of the "Reading Park" activity in increasing the reading interest of the Kemlakagede Village Community, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency"; Third, what are the obstacles to implementing the "Reading Park" activity in increasing the reading interest of the Kemlakagede Village Community, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency?.

## 2. METHODS

The method used in carrying out this research is a qualitative approach [11] [12] [13] [14]. Meanwhile, this type of research is a type of phenomenological research, namely the researcher explains the phenomena that exist in the field [15]. Phenomenology [16] can be defined as the study of a person's life experiences or a method for studying how individuals subjectively perceive experiences and provide meaning to these phenomena [17]. This research focuses on studying people's interest in reading, especially children in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency, through reading park activities.

The time for the reading garden activities is every Sunday, 09.00 WIB, namely at formal institutions such as the Taman Anggrek PAUD Study Group (KB) on Jl. Kemlaka Village Hall No.26 Rt.03 Rw.01, Kemlakagede Village, District. Tengahtani, Cirebon Regency. The duration of the KKN implementation starts from 17 July - 31 August 2023 in collaboration with UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. The theme of KKN is Collaborative KKN between Universities.

The data collection techniques used by researchers are observation, interviews, and document study [4]. First, observations or observations in this research were carried out directly on visitor

activities, to get an idea of visitors' reading interest in the Reading Park in Kemlakagede Village. Second, interviews were conducted by seeking information about visitors' reading interests. The interview technique used in this research was an open interview where the resource person was asked questions and answered freely. Third, Document Study, namely collecting information by studying documents to obtain information related to the problem being studied, namely regarding the reading interest of visitors to the Reading Park in Kemlakagede Village.

Meanwhile, data analysis techniques in this research were carried out through data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusion. First, data reduction is carried out by selecting, simplifying, and transforming data obtained from the field. Second, data presentation is carried out by compiling a research report and then presenting it simply and clearly so that it is easy to read. Third, verification and conclusion are carried out by testing the truth of each data source by verifying/rechecking the data obtained in the field. Next, conclusions are drawn by taking data that has been processed and then conclusions are drawn using the inductive method, namely the process of concluding specific matters to general matters to obtain objective conclusions.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### a. **Implementation of Community Service Activities in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency.**

Implementation of these community service activities includes licensing, identification and solving problems, facilitation, and socialization of activities.

First, Licensing is the initial stage in this community service activity, which aims to inform the government or a group of people regarding the plans for implementing the Reading Park work program in the community service activities in question. This activity was carried out using a direct discussion method with the Chair of the Sinau Literacy Community, Wong Kemlaka. Before we arrived, this community had already received permission and was already running. But it stopped and we came to revive it.

Second, identification, which is the stage after carrying out permits for the Reading Park work program in community service activities in Kemlakagede Village. Where in this problem identification, we look at what problems arise in the social sphere of the region, so that from the identification of these problems conclusions can be drawn and solutions can be drawn as a solution to the problems obtained.

Third, Facilitation. Namely providing several books, including reading books, comics, magazines, and so on. As well as equipment needed when reading garden activities take place, such as tarpaulins and bookshelves.

Fourth, Socialization of Reading Park Activities. Outreach was carried out to each relevant RT/RW, and some were also taken from the author's observations regarding the condition of the Kemlakagede village community who were less interested in the importance of reading books. As well as making pamphlets regarding implementation times which are distributed on social media. Apart from that, socialization is also carried out through social media such as Instagram and WhatsApp. The aim of this socialization itself is so that the people of Kemlakagede Village, especially children, and teenagers, know information about the Taman Baca work program and are interested in books and think that books are a window to knowledge that is very useful for future life. Because reading books makes children critica.



Figure 1. Socialization of Reading Park Activities

A reading park is a space that provides opportunities and facilities for the community or other group associations to read books. Reading parks are one of the efforts that can be made to increase literacy levels, especially reading literacy in a group of people. In this reading garden work program, people, especially children, can read any book that interests them. This is in line with what was said by the Directorate of Community Education, 2008, that "Reading Park is a place or space provided to store, maintain, use a collection of books, magazines, newspapers, and other multi-media materials to be read, studied, discussed and utilized. by the community individually, in groups or institutionally".

The most basic steps in implementing a reading park are socializing the understanding of the meaning, purpose, and timing of activities to the community. Explaining to the public what a reading garden is, what the purpose of a reading garden is, and when reading garden activities will be carried out are important steps to attract people's interest, especially children, to participate in this activity. Socialization of reading garden activities was carried out in several schools such as kindergartens or RA, MTS, and SMP in Kemlakagede Village, Tengah Tani District, Cirebon Regency. This outreach was carried out both to the school and to the students directly. For the RA level, outreach is also

carried out to parents or guardians of students who are currently present at school to accompany their children in learning.

The second step in carrying out reading park activities in Kemlakagede, Tengah Tani District, Cirebon Regency is to prepare the facilities or things that need to be prepared, such as various books, seating mats, bookshelves, and stationery. In preparing these facilities, especially providing a variety of books, book donation pamphlets were distributed long before the reading park activities were carried out. The distribution of book donation pamphlets aims to provide an opportunity for the public to donate their books to this reading park activity. So, the books they have can be useful and help other people, especially children, to read the books they want. The distribution of book donation pamphlets also aims to collect and increase the number of books for future reading garden activities, so that the books collected can be diverse and varied according to the cognitive level of reading garden activity participants.

The final step is to divide the reading garden participants into several groups. The grouping is done based on their cognitive level. Participants who cannot read are grouped with participants who cannot read either so that in this reading garden activity they can learn to read together. Likewise, participants who can read but not yet fluently and quickly are grouped with the same participant criteria so that they can learn how to read fluently and quickly together.

Reading garden activities in Kemlakagede Village were carried out as an effort to increase people's interest in reading in Kemlakagede Village, Tengah Tani District, Cirebon Regency. The activities were carried out well by what had been previously planned, through socialization, preparing facilities, and dividing participants according to level. cognitively, then at the final stage, namely the implementation of a reading garden. Apart from that, the people of Kemlakagede Village also welcomed this reading park activity.

Residents' enthusiasm for this reading park is very high. Especially parents of children and teenagers who are enthusiastic about enrolling their children in this reading park. According to the community, this reading park program is very beneficial for children and teenagers who still have little interest in reading.

Based on observations with the Kemlakagede village secretary, show that the community, especially children and teenagers, still has a low interest in reading, they mostly use gadgets more than reading books. So, the Kemlakagede village secretary himself hopes that children and teenagers can take part in this work program well so that it can increase their interest in reading because this is very beneficial for them in the future.

**b. The Role of "Reading Park" Activities in Increasing Reading Interest in the Community of Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency.**

Through the work program carried out by Collaborative KKN students of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta in 2023, the reading park can provide benefits to the community in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency:

- 1) Provide direct learning experiences to children in Kemlakagede Village. This is proven by the organizers assisting children in learning to read. Apart from that, the organizers also facilitate picture story books and other books that are suitable for children to read.
- 2) Can improve reading literacy. By providing a collection of general books such as magazines, guidebooks, religious books, and others, the children of Kemlakagede Village can learn to read and improve their reading skills using the books they want. This can increase enthusiasm and interest in reading among the children of Kemlakagede Village.

- 3) Increase your love of reading from an early age. Introducing children to various kinds of book collections from an early age positively impacts children's souls. A passion for reading can grow if children are introduced to interesting and suitable books.

Apart from that, reading parks can also act as a learning resource for early childhood, a source of information for parents in developing early childhood, and a recreational-educational facility for the community. In this way, community reading gardens can act as a means of learning for both young children and their parents, especially young housewives, to expand their knowledge.

**c. Obstacles in Implementing "Reading Park" Activities in Increasing Reading Interest in the Community of Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency**

Apart from having several important roles in increasing reading literacy, reading parks also have various benefits, especially for children. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2013, which was explained in research conducted by Atika Widya Wati,[11] the benefits of a reading park are as a learning resource, information source, and a recreational-educational place.

First, the reading park is a learning resource, so the community, especially children in Kemlakagede Village, can use the reading park as a place to learn to read and facilitate their reading using the books they want and accompanied directly by the organizer. Second, as a source of information, reading park participants in Kemlakagede Village can exchange information with the organizers and other participants to discuss matters related to learning. Third, the reading park is a place for recreation and education. The majority of participants in the reading park in Kemlakagede Village are children. In this reading park activity, they can learn interspersed with games. This is done so that they do not get bored easily and remain interested in participating in reading park activities.

Apart from the benefits above, there are several obstacles faced in implementing the "Reading Park" activity in increasing the reading interest of the Kemlakagede Village Community, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency, namely the lack of reading book facilities. Namely, the available reading books are poorly sorted and there is little reading. This is the result of observations by researchers who found comic books for adults 18+, and several heavy books such as introductory literature or reading materials that were not suitable for children's ages. So the solution to this problem is that KKN participants sort the books that are not (not) suitable, and then replace them with books donated by donors. In holding the opening of the book donation there were three donors, namely Kang Ubaedillah, who donated textbooks. And Kang Assegaf who donated Fiction books in the form of novels, and from Instagram.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

From the results and discussion of community service activities regarding "Increasing Reading Interest in the Community in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency through Reading Park Activities" which was carried out on 17 July - 31 August 2023, by IAIN student KKN participant Syekh Nurjati Cirebon in collaboration with UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta can be concluded that :

First, related to the implementation of community service activities through the "Reading Park" activity in Kemlakagede Village, Tengahtani District, Cirebon Regency, the stages are licensing, problem identification and solving, facilitation and socialization of activities. Second, through the work program carried out by the Collaborative KKN students of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta in 2023, namely, the "Reading Park" activity which has the role of, among others :

- a. Providing a role as a form of direct learning experience for children in Kemlakagede Village. This is proven by the organizers assisting children in learning to read. Apart from that, the organizers also facilitate picture story books and other books that are suitable for children to read.
- b. Providing a role that can increase community reading literacy, especially for children in Kemlakagede. This is proven by the availability of a collection of general books such as magazines, guidebooks, religious books, and others. Apart from that, the children of Kemlakagede Village can learn to read and improve their reading skills using the books they want. This can increase enthusiasm and interest in reading among the children of Kemlakagede Village.
- c. Providing a role in increasing the love of reading from an early age positively impacts children's souls. Apart from that, a spirit of love for reading can grow by itself if the community, especially children in Kemlakagede Village, are introduced to unique and interesting books.

Third, through the work program carried out by the Collaborative KKN students of IAIN Syekh Nurjati Cirebon and UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta in 2023, namely the "Reading park" activity, there are obstacles, namely the lack of reading book facilities. Namely, the available reading books are poorly sorted and there is little reading. This is the result of observations by researchers who found comic books for adults 18+, and several heavy books such as introductory literature or reading materials that were not suitable for children's ages. So the solution to this problem is that KKN participants sort the books that are not (not) suitable, and then replace them with books donated by donors. In holding the opening of the book donation there were three donors, namely Kang Ubaedillah, who donated textbooks. And Kang Assegaf who donated Fiction books in the form of novels, and from Instagram.

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