



Literacy Support through Community Reading Centers in Kotabumi Urban Village, Cilegon City

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Abstrak

Kegiatan Kuliah Kerja Mahasiswa (KKM) Tematik Literasi Kelompok 45 Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa dilaksanakan di Kelurahan Kotabumi, Kecamatan Purwakarta, Kota Cilegon, sebagai upaya meningkatkan akses dan partisipasi masyarakat dalam kegiatan literasi. Kegiatan ini bertujuan mengoptimalkan pemanfaatan koleksi Perpustakaan Kelurahan Kotabumi melalui penyediaan akses bahan bacaan yang lebih dekat dengan masyarakat dan pendampingan literasi secara interaktif. Metode pelaksanaan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif melalui observasi, pendampingan, pencatatan administrasi, dokumentasi, dan evaluasi kegiatan. Program dilaksanakan pada 8–30 Juli 2026 dengan sasaran utama anak usia 0–16 tahun serta melibatkan orang tua dan masyarakat. Intervensi dilakukan melalui penataan koleksi berdasarkan jenjang usia, pembukaan layanan TBM pengairan baru, membaca nyaring, bacakan Saya buku, diskusi dan ulasan buku, *storytelling*, penulisan cerpen dan puisi. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan tercatat 363 kunjungan selama periode layanan, dengan rata-rata 25–35 peserta per hari dan pada kondisi tertentu mencapai sekitar 40 peserta, sehingga melampaui target layanan sebesar 15 peserta per hari.

Kata kunci: *KKM Tematik Literasi, membaca nyaring, minat baca, perpustakaan, TBM*

Abstract

The Thematic Literacy Student Community Service (KKM) program by Group 45 from Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University was conducted in Kotabumi Urban Village, Purwakarta District, Cilegon City, as an effort to enhance community access to and participation in literacy activities. The initiative aimed to optimize the use of the Kotabumi Urban Village Library's collection by bringing reading materials closer to the community and providing interactive literacy support. The implementation employed a descriptive approach involving observation, mentoring, administrative record-keeping, documentation, and activity evaluation. The program ran from July 8 to July 30, 2026, primarily targeting children aged 0–16 while also involving parents and the wider community. Interventions included organizing the collection by age group, launching new community reading services, read-aloud sessions, "Read Me a Book" activities, book discussions and reviews, storytelling, and creative writing (short stories and poetry). Results showed a total of 363 visits during the service period, with an average of 25–35 participants per day peaking at



around 40 participants on certain occasions thereby exceeding the service target of 15 participants per day.

Keywords : *Thematic Literacy Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM), read-aloud, reading interest, library, Community Reading Center*

Introduction

Reading literacy is a crucial foundation for developing the quality of human resources, as it relates to the ability to acquire, comprehend, process, and utilize information. A culture of literacy must be fostered not only through formal schooling but also within family and community environments that provide access to reading materials and encourage sustained reading habits. In this context, libraries hold a strategic position as hubs for community learning, offering both information resources and learning spaces accessible to people of all ages. Consequently, strengthening the culture of literacy requires more than just providing collections; it also necessitates creating environments and activities that actively encourage the community to engage with reading materials (Atmi et al., 2022), (Dewi, 2022).

The mere availability of reading materials and library facilities does not automatically guarantee optimal public utilization of these services. Library usage is also influenced by ease of access, the alignment of the collection with user needs, service management, and activities that attract the community to actively engage with reading materials. Based on Suwanto, (2017) explains that Community Reading Centers (TBM) hold a significant position due to their proximity to the community and their potential to foster an interest in reading when managed effectively. Consequently, the development of literacy services must take into account the interplay between the availability of reading materials, service accessibility, facility management, and activities that encourage community engagement (Suwanto, 2017).

In the context of children, shared book reading can serve as a relevant approach for fostering an interactive reading experience. Through this activity, children not only engage with the text but also have the opportunity to listen, discuss, answer questions, and comprehend the reading material. A meta-analysis by Noble et al., (2019) indicates that shared book reading interventions influence the development of children's language skills, although the effect size is relatively small and contingent upon study design characteristics and comparison groups. These findings provide a basis for using shared book reading as an approach to children's literacy activities, particularly when implemented in a focused and interactive manner (Noble et al., 2019).

Literacy support was subsequently developed through read-aloud sessions, the "Read Me a Book" program, discussions and Q&A sessions regarding reading content, book reviews, retelling activities, and creative projects based on the reading material, such as short stories, poetry, and storytelling. Prior to conducting read-aloud activities, university students received training from the Cilegon Membaca Nyaring (CMN) community on how to conduct read-aloud sessions and support participants. The program was further expanded through literacy visits to SDN Kotabumi, SDN Kubang Kalak, and TK YPWKS III, as well as by involving parents as part of the environment supporting children's literacy. This approach positions literacy activities as a process involving interaction among reading materials, participants, facilitators, families, schools, communities, and the broader public.

Previous studies indicate that enhancing access to and the management of literacy services can foster community engagement in reading activities. Suwanto, (2017) demonstrated that establishing Community Reading Centers (TBM) when accompanied by efforts to cultivate an interest in reading and collaboration with communities elicits a positive public response and can serve as a hub for learning activities and meeting the community's information needs. Atmi et al., (2022) also showed that social inclusion-based village libraries can be developed into venues for community activities and learning through a participatory approach. Meanwhile, (Suwanto, (2017) emphasized that Community Reading Centers can play a vital role in fostering an interest in reading due to their proximity to the community.

Implementation Method

The implementation of the Thematic Literacy Student Community Service Program (KKM) by Group 45 of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University employed a descriptive-qualitative approach rooted in community engagement and support. This approach was utilized to describe the program's implementation process, the nature of literacy support provided, community involvement, and the target audience's response to the activities. Data regarding the activities were gathered through field observations, service administration records, activity documentation, and interviews with parties involved in the program's execution.

1. Activity Schedule and Location

The Thematic Literacy KKM activities were conducted from July 8 to August 6, 2026, in Kotabumi Urban Village, Purwakarta District, Cilegon City. Literacy services and operational activities at the *TBM Pengairan Baru* (Pengairan Baru Community Reading Center) were carried out intensively from July 8 to July 30, 2026, with service hours scheduled for weekdays from 15:00 to 17:00 WIB. The primary target areas were determined based on coordination with and recommendations from the Kotabumi Urban Village government, specifically the Pengairan Baru neighborhood (RW 008/RT 003) and the Leuweung Sawo neighborhood.

Program implementation was not limited to the *TBM Pengairan Baru* site but also involved outreach activities targeting educational institutions and local communities. These activities included literacy visits to SDN Kotabumi, SDN Kubangkalak, and TK YPWKS III in Cilegon City, as well as collaborative initiatives with local residents and stakeholders. Consequently, the activity locations encompassed the *TBM* service point, the urban village library, educational institutions, and the community neighborhoods targeted by the program.

2. Activity Subjects and Implementers

The primary target audience for these literacy activities consists of children and students aged 0–16, with a particular focus on early childhood and school-age children. In addition to the children, the activities involve parents or guardians as part of the support system for fostering reading habits. Stakeholders such as the Kotabumi Urban Village Library management, local government officials, community and youth leaders, schools, literacy communities, and local residents are also involved in the program's implementation and the development of its sustainability.

The implementation team comprises 18 students from various study programs and faculties at Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University, led by Bubun from the History Education Study Program. All members participate in executing activities based on program requirements ranging from collection organization, community reading center (TBM) services, reading guidance, and read-aloud sessions to school visits, documentation, and activity evaluation. Prior to each activity, the team conducts

briefings, assigns tasks, and finalizes technical details to ensure the activities are well-coordinated and aligned with the program's objectives.

3. Program Implementation Stages

The program is implemented through several interconnected stages. The initial stage involves student orientation regarding literacy concepts and implementation strategies, serving as preparation for the Thematic Literacy KKM (Community Service Program). This orientation is conducted in collaboration with program partners including the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia and includes "read aloud" training with the Cilegon Membaca Nyaring (CMN) community to provide technical preparation before students begin assisting children and the local community.

The subsequent stage involves observing and identifying the state of literacy in Kotabumi Urban Village. Observations revealed that the village already possesses a library with a collection of approximately 1,200 books, supplemented by a grant of around 1,000 additional books from the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia. Despite the availability of facilities and a collection, community utilization of the library remains suboptimal, primarily due to issues regarding service accessibility and the lack of reading service points close to the target neighborhoods. Based on these findings, the team collaborated with village officials to utilize a portion of the collection at a Community Reading Center (TBM) service point in the Pengairan Baru neighborhood.

The next stage focuses on organizing and strengthening library services, as well as establishing the Pengairan Baru TBM service point. Activities include inventorying, cataloging, categorizing, and arranging library materials based on age groups and reader needs. A selection of the collection relevant to children was transferred from the Kotabumi Village Library to the KKM command post located in RW 008/RT 003, Pengairan Baru. This TBM then served as a literacy service space accessible to the local community throughout the duration of the literacy program.

The core stage consists of providing literacy guidance and services, carried out from July 8 to July 30, 2026, on weekdays between 15:00 and 17:00 WIB. These activities take place after the children finish their school day, utilizing reading materials selected based on the participants' ages and interests. Activities include read-aloud sessions, "Read Me a Book" sessions, Q&A regarding the reading material, retelling stories, and book reviews, as well as creative activities such as short story writing, poetry creation and recitation, storytelling, and book-based projects. Book selection is dynamic, and efforts are made to rotate the reading collection daily to provide participants with a varied reading experience.

Result and Discussion

Preliminary observations indicate that Kotabumi Urban Village possesses a dedicated library facility to support community literacy activities. Established on July 2, 2025, the library held a collection of approximately 1,200 books prior to receiving a grant of around 1,000 additional reading materials from the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia. In terms of organization, the library has an appointed manager Ms. Siti Rohmah meaning that both the facilities and the institutional framework provide a solid foundation for fostering a culture of literacy within the community. However, the availability of these collections and facilities has not yet translated into optimal utilization by the public.

Observations and information provided by the library manager and Kotabumi Urban Village officials reveal that visits specifically aimed at reading remain relatively

infrequent. Many of those who utilize the library space are residents visiting the urban village office for administrative matters or other business; consequently, reading is not the primary purpose of their visit. This situation highlights a gap between the availability of literacy resources and the extent to which they are actually used. Thus, the issue at hand is not merely a matter of book availability, but also concerns how these reading resources can be made accessible and actively utilized by the community. This activity can be seen in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. The process of inventorying, sorting, and organizing reading materials

These findings served as the basis for the community service team to develop a literacy service point closer to the local community. A portion of the collection suitable for children was relocated from the Kotabumi Urban Village Library to the KKM (Community Service Program) post in RW 008/RT 003, Pengairan Baru Neighborhood, to serve as the collection for the Pengairan Baru Community Reading Center (TBM). Prior to use, the materials were organized, cataloged, categorized, and arranged according to age groups and reader needs. This strategy reflects a shift in approach from services centered on the urban village library facility to services that bring reading materials closer to the target community's residential area.

This enhancement of access aligns with the findings of Suwanto, (2017) who noted that community reading centers can serve as spaces for learning and meeting information needs when developed based on local requirements and supported by reading promotion activities. Research by Atmi et al., (2022) further demonstrates that community-based libraries can be developed into hubs for activities and learning through strengthened management capacity and community engagement. Thus, relocating part of the library's collection to the TBM service point as part of the KKM initiative represents more than just the physical transfer of books; it is a strategic move to bridge the access gap between available reading materials and the community members who use them.

This temporary community reading service operated from July 8 to 30, 2026, on weekdays between 15:00 and 17:00 WIB, specifically after school hours. The available reading materials were selected and utilized based on the participants' ages and interests. Beyond providing access to books, students offered guidance through activities such as read-aloud sessions, "Read Me a Book" sessions, discussions, book reviews, storytelling, and creative reading-based activities. Consequently, the service point functioned not merely as a place for reading, but also as a space for interaction

and learning support for children in the surrounding neighborhood. The service for implementing literacy activities is illustrated in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2. Implementation of temporary literacy services

The launch of this service point met with a positive response from the community. The average number of participants ranged from 25 to 35 per day, sometimes reaching around 40 surpassing the target of 15 participants per day set in the activity matrix. A total of 363 visits were recorded in the community reading center's logbook during the service period. This high level of participation demonstrates that when reading materials are made more accessible within the community and accompanied by interactive guidance, children show a strong interest in literacy activities. These findings also suggest that the previous low utilization of libraries cannot be attributed solely to a lack of interest in reading; rather, it is also linked to issues of access to facilities and the nature of the literacy services provided.

Literacy support at the Community Reading Center (TBM) goes beyond mere individual reading; instead, it employs an interactive approach featuring read-aloud sessions, "Read Me a Book" activities, Q&A, story retelling, and book reviews. Reading materials are selected based on the participants' ages and interests, with the book selection varied daily to ensure a diverse reading experience. During sessions, participants may sit in a circle with a university student reading from the center, or follow a traditional classroom-style arrangement with the facilitator positioned at the front of the group. Following the reading, participants are asked questions and given the opportunity to retell the story based on their level of understanding. In some activities, participants even asked the facilitators to retell specific parts until they grasped the content of the story. This type of interaction demonstrates that reading can be developed into an activity centered on communication and comprehension, rather than merely an act of receiving information from a text. Reading support is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Implementation of read-aloud activities

The literacy program is not limited to activities at TBM Pengairan Baru but has also expanded through outreach to educational institutions. Visits were made to SDN Kotabumi, SDN Kubangkalak, and TK YPWKS III in Cilegon City, employing approaches used at the TBM such as read-aloud sessions, book-based activities, and direct interaction with students. One of the school-based activities was also supported by the Banten Provincial Library's mobile library service, successfully engaging over 100 students in literacy activities. This expanded reach demonstrates that the program is not solely focused on users visiting the TBM but also actively engages target groups directly within educational settings.

Activities at TK YPWKS III are distinctive because they involve both the children and their parents or guardians. In addition to shared reading sessions with the children, the program includes outreach regarding the importance of early literacy, age-appropriate book selection, and reading techniques tailored to children's developmental stages. Parental involvement is crucial because literacy activities do not occur solely at school or in reading spaces; they can also be reinforced within the family environment. This approach expands the scope of intervention from the child as the direct user of reading materials to the family, which serves as a supportive environment for fostering literacy habits.

The program's implementation also involves the Cilegon Membaca Nyaring (CMN) community as a partner in training university students and conducting outreach to parents. This collaboration strengthens the technical aspects of "read-aloud" activities, ensuring students gain a solid understanding before guiding the participants. Beyond the literacy community, support for the activities comes from various stakeholders, including the local sub-district government, library managers, neighborhood and community association heads (RT/RW), youth leaders, schools, parents, and the surrounding community. This collaborative model demonstrates that community-based literacy programs require the engagement of diverse actors to ensure an integrated approach to access, implementation, and sustainability. This activity can be seen in Figure 1 below.



Figure 4. Literacy outreach activities at YPWKS III Kindergarten in Cilegon City, Kotabumi Elementary School, and Kubangkalak Elementary School

High participation rates during the program indicate that community-based literacy service points hold potential for further development beyond the KKM period. However, sustainability cannot rely solely on the presence of university students; therefore, it is essential to strengthen the capacity of administrators and establish service systems that local stakeholders can maintain. This aligns with findings by (Atmi et al., 2022), which demonstrate that developing social inclusion-based libraries requires enhancing the knowledge and skills of administrators, as well as implementing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure the library's functions continue to evolve.

Consequently, the program's success is measured not only by participant numbers during the KKM but also by its ability to leave behind mechanisms that the community and local administrators can sustain. To ensure continuity, the community service team has formulated a Follow-Up Plan (RTL) comprising eight development areas: conducting regular read-aloud sessions, sustaining the "Read Me a Book" program, optimizing the library and community reading centers (TBM), strengthening the "one child, one book" initiative, enhancing administrator capacity, developing creativity-based literacy activities, strengthening stakeholder collaboration, and implementing program monitoring and evaluation. This plan aims to ensure that activities initiated during the KKM do not cease once the service period concludes. Library administrators and local sub-district officials are expected to utilize the organized collections and develop activities tailored to community needs.



Figure 5. Collaboration between the KKM team and literacy communities, parents, and the community of Kotabumi Urban Village.

Conclusion

The implementation of the Thematic Literacy Community Service Program (KKM) by Group 45 of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa University in Kotabumi Urban Village

demonstrates that optimizing access and providing literacy support can boost community engagement with reading materials. Relocating part of the Kotabumi Urban Village Library's collection to the Pengairan Baru Community Reading Center (TBM) combined with organizing the collection by age group and establishing regular service hours successfully created a literacy space that is more accessible to the community. During the service period of July 8–30, 2026, 363 visits were recorded; daily attendance averaged between 25 and 35 participants, peaking at around 40 on certain days, thereby exceeding the initial target of 15 participants per day.

Support activities including read-aloud sessions, the "Read Me a Book" initiative, discussions, Q&A sessions, book reviews, storytelling, short stories, and poetry provided children with opportunities to actively engage with reading materials. Beyond TBM services, the program expanded its reach through visits to SDN Kotabumi, SDN Kubangkalak, and TK YPWKS III, effectively involving parents, schools, community groups, and the general public. The positive response from participants and the community indicates acceptance of the activities and a desire for the program to continue.

Program sustainability is reinforced by a Follow-Up Plan (RTL) that encompasses periodic read-aloud sessions, the "Read Me a Book" initiative, optimization of the library and TBM, a "one-child-one-book" program, capacity building for managers, creative literacy development, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and monitoring and evaluation. Thus, the KKM program not only generated literacy activities during the service period but also established a foundation for library managers, the urban village government, schools, community groups, and residents to continue fostering a culture of literacy in Kotabumi Urban Village.

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