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Participatory Library Revitalization to Strengthen Literacy Culture and Financial Literacy in Barosjaya Village

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Abstrak

Perpustakaan desa di Indonesia sering belum dimanfaatkan secara optimal akibat minimnya koleksi, lemahnya pengelolaan, dan rendahnya minat baca, kondisi yang juga ditemukan di Desa Barosjaya, Kecamatan Cinangka, Kabupaten Serang, Provinsi Banten. Program pengabdian ini dilaksanakan oleh KKM Tematik Literasi Kelompok 49 Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa pada 6 Juli–6 Agustus 2026 bersama enam belas mahasiswa untuk merevitalisasi perpustakaan desa dan memperkuat budaya literasi, termasuk literasi keuangan dasar. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan partisipatif dengan desain deskriptif kualitatif dalam lima tahap: observasi, koordinasi, perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi. Kegiatan meliputi inventarisasi koleksi, dekorasi ruang baca, membaca nyaring dan mengulas buku, proyek kreatif, pelatihan literasi keuangan, kunjungan sekolah, dan workshop menulis cerita pendek. Hasilnya, koleksi menjadi tertata, ruang baca lebih nyaman, partisipasi anak meningkat, dan pemahaman dasar peserta tentang menabung serta perbaikan pada pengelolaan uang saku. Pendekatan partisipatif, interaktif, dan kreatif ini mampu menghidupkan kembali perpustakaan desa sebagai pusat belajar masyarakat.

Kata kunci: ***Perpustakaan Desa; Budaya Literasi; Literasi Keuangan; Pengabdian Masyarakat; Metode Partisipatif***

Abstract

Village libraries in Indonesia are often underutilized because of limited collections, weak management, and low reading interest, a condition found in Barosjaya Village, Cinangka Sub-district, Serang Regency, Banten Province. This community service program was carried out by the literacy-themed Student Community Service (KKM) Group 49 of Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, involving sixteen students, from 6 July to 6 August 2026, to revitalize the village library and strengthen literacy culture, including basic financial literacy. A participatory, descriptive qualitative approach was applied in five stages: observation, coordination, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The activities comprised collection cataloguing, reading-room redecoration, read-aloud and book-review sessions, creative projects, financial literacy training, school visits, and a short-story workshop. The collection became organized, the reading room more inviting, children's participation increased, and participants' basic understanding of saving and pocket-money management improved. A participatory, interactive, and creative approach can revive a village library as a community learning center.

Keywords: Village Library; Literacy Culture; Financial Literacy; Community Service; Participatory Method

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Introduction

Literacy is one of the main determinants of the quality of human resources and community welfare. Libraries, including village libraries, play a strategic role as learning centers and sources of information for the community, rather than merely serving as places for storing and lending books. However, various community service studies have shown that village libraries in Indonesia generally do not yet function optimally, whether because of limited reading collections, weak management, or low public interest in using them (Muslim et al., 2025; Sari et al., 2022). This condition, in turn, prevents village libraries from serving as spaces for learning, creativity, and social interaction for the community, especially the younger generation.

A similar condition was found in Barosjaya Village, Cinangka Sub-district, Serang Regency, Banten Province. According to data from the Serang Regency office of Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik Kabupaten Serang, 2024), the population of Barosjaya Village was 1,507, consisting of 787 males and 720 females, distributed across 9 neighborhood units (RT) and 4 community units (RW). Most residents earn their livelihood in the agricultural sector, given that the village is located in a highland area with a cool climate. The available educational facilities include early childhood education (PAUD), elementary schools, and madrasahs, whereas the Barosjaya Village Library, located in the Village Office, has not been used optimally by the community. The main problems identified through the field survey were the small number of books in the collection, inadequate arrangement and management of the library space, and low reading interest among community members, particularly children and adolescents. In addition, school-age children still had a limited basic understanding of simple financial management. As a result, the library could not yet function as a learning center and a source of information for villagers.

These problems are consistent with the findings of community service programs in other locations, which show that the physical revitalization and collection management of village libraries can increase reading interest and community participation when carried out in a participatory and sustainable manner (Hoerudin, 2023; Rafael et al., 2024; Sarif et al., 2024). In addition to physical improvements, interactive learning approaches such as read-aloud have also been shown to be effective in fostering reading interest and developing children's language skills, because they involve children actively in understanding a story rather than merely listening ((Masliyah & Kurniawaty, 2023; Ulimawati et al., 2026; Wulandari & Nurmasyitah, 2022) . Based on the partner's problems and the literature review, the literacy-themed Student Community Service (Kuliah Kerja Mahasiswa, KKM) Group 49 of Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa formulated a solution in the form of revitalizing the Barosjaya Village Library, combined with a series of interactive and creative literacy activities, both in the library and in educational institutions around the village.

This community service program was carried out over one month, from 6 July to 6 August 2026, and involved sixteen students from various faculties under the guidance of a field supervisor. The program aimed to: (1) realize one of the orientations of the Tridharma of Higher Education, namely community service; (2) provide learning and social experiences for students in developing the potential of the target area while fostering sensitivity to community problems; (3) improve the community's literacy culture,

including basic financial literacy, through educational activities that encourage reading interest, critical thinking skills, and everyday life skills; (4) optimize the function of the village library as a learning center and a center for community literacy activities; and (5) strengthen relations among the university, the village government, and the local community. Through this program, it is expected that the Barosjaya Village Library can develop into an active, inclusive, and sustainable community literacy center after the KKM period ends.

Implementation Method

The material underlying this community service program was the concept of library revitalization as a community literacy center, which encompasses the physical arrangement of the reading space, the inventory and management of the book collection, and the organization of literacy programs that appeal to visitors (Sari et al., 2022). In addition, the reading activities were guided by the read-aloud approach, which emphasizes interaction between the facilitator and the child through questions, discussion, and retelling of the text so that children's comprehension and language skills can develop optimally (Purba & Ritonga, 2023; Ulimawati et al., 2026). The program also integrated basic financial literacy material for children, covering the concept of saving, the difference between needs and wants, and simple pocket-money management, delivered through finance-themed reading materials and simulation games so that it could be easily understood by elementary and junior secondary school students.

The program employed a participatory approach with a descriptive qualitative design, in which students were directly involved with the community and relevant stakeholders from needs identification through to the evaluation of results. The problem-solving framework consisted of five interconnected stages: (1) observation and identification of the condition of the library, its collection, and the community's literacy culture; (2) coordination and communication with the village government, library managers, educational institutions, and community leaders; (3) planning of a work program adapted to field needs; (4) direct implementation of the program with the community as participants and activity partners; and (5) evaluation and reflection to assess the implementation, participation, and sustainability of the program. These stages are presented in the flowchart in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Stages of the Implementation of the Literacy-Themed KKM Program

The problem solving began with the arrangement and inventory of the Barosjaya Village Library collection, followed by the decoration of the reading room to make it more comfortable for children. Subsequently, a series of interactive literacy activities was carried out, comprising read-aloud sessions, book reviews, creative projects based on reading materials, and basic financial literacy training, which were extended through collaboration with educational institutions in the village. The target audience of the program included children at the early childhood education (PAUD/RA) level, elementary school students (SDN Mendong), junior secondary school students at Yayasan Turida

Pancuran Mas, and the general public of Barosjaya Village, including the village government and community leaders. The activity methods included lectures and material delivery, hands-on practice, small-group mentoring, educational games (ice breaking), and creative writing workshops. Monitoring and evaluation were conducted through daily briefings and evaluations led by the group leader together with all members, weekly evaluations of the achievement of the work programs, and a final evaluation held at the workshop and the withdrawal of students from the village, as the basis for accountability to the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) of Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa.

Result and Discussion

The one-month community service program produced a number of outputs that can be grouped into several main activities, as described below.

Arrangement and Management of the Village Library

The arrangement and management of the Barosjaya Village Library were carried out over five consecutive days by dividing the group members into a collection inventory team and a room decoration team. The books were grouped by readers' age level, assigned classification codes in accordance with the provisions of the National Library of Indonesia, and then placed on the available shelves. The reading room, which had previously been poorly organized, was transformed into a more comfortable and child-friendly space through the decoration of the library walls and entrance (Figure 2). This condition shows a marked change compared with the situation before the program, when the book collection was not yet organized and the reading room did not attract visitors. This result is in line with the findings of Sari et al. (2022), who emphasized that physical revitalization is an important first step before a village library can be developed toward independent and sustainable management.



Figure 2. Decoration Process of the Library Room and Condition of the Library Room After Rearrangement

Reading and Book Review Activities

The reading and book review activities were carried out by giving children the freedom to choose reading materials according to their interests, followed by reading assistance and question-and-answer sessions on the content of the story, the characters, and the moral message (Figure 3). This approach is consistent with the principle of read-aloud, which positions children as active participants in understanding the text rather than merely passive listeners, thereby enhancing their self-confidence and speaking skills (Masliyah & Kurniawaty, 2023; Wulandari & Nurmasyitah, 2022). During the activities, children appeared increasingly confident in expressing opinions and retelling the content of books in their own words, which indicates an improvement in reading comprehension

compared with the initial condition, when some children still had difficulty recognizing letters and spelling words.



Figures 3. Reading Activities with Children

Literacy Activities in Educational Institutions

Literacy activities were also extended to educational institutions in the vicinity of Barosjaya Village. At SDN Mendong, the activities were organized by grade level: students in grades 1 to 3 took turns attending literacy visits to the Barosjaya Village Library on 15, 22, and 29 July 2026, while students in grades 4 to 6 received assistance with book reviews and creative projects directly at school. At the PAUD/RA level, the activities were carried out at RA Al-Khairiyah Mendong, PAUD Mendong, and PAUD Pasir Tangkil, prioritizing enjoyable activities such as singing, educational play, and simple book introductions. This series of activities provided a learning experience that combined reading with creativity and, at the same time, fostered children's interest in reading from an early age, as emphasized in various studies on the importance of literacy stimulation in early childhood education (Ulimawati et al., 2026).

Book-Based Creative Projects

Book-based creative projects were carried out at SDN Mendong and the Barosjaya Village Library using simple materials such as felt cloth, used cardboard, and colored paper to produce works such as flower creations and other forms inspired by the reading materials (Figure 4). This activity encouraged children to connect the information obtained from books with hands-on creative experience, while training their creativity, carefulness, and ability to cooperate with one another. The resulting works were then displayed in the library room as part of the decoration and as a form of appreciation for the children's creativity, thereby reinforcing the child-friendly atmosphere of the library and supporting continued interest in visiting it.



Figure 4. SDN Mendong Students Making Felt-Cloth Creations and Results of the Children's Creative Projects

Workshop on Writing Stories Based on Reading Books

At the secondary education level, a workshop entitled “Writing Stories Based on Reading Books” was held at Yayasan Turida Pancuran Mas in two sessions, on 17 and 25 July 2026 (Figure 5). Participants were introduced to the relationship between reading and writing and were then guided to use the books they had read as a source of inspiration for composing short stories. At the second session, the best works were announced and awarded, and the partner school’s certificate was presented as a token of appreciation for the cooperation established. This activity gave participants the experience that reading and writing are two interrelated activities, while also training their critical thinking, idea organization, and writing skills.



Figure 5. Opening of the Activity at Yayasan Turida Pancuran Mas and Students Participating in the Short-Story Writing Activity

Basic Financial Literacy Training

As an effort to strengthen the financial literacy component of the program, a Basic Financial Literacy Training was also conducted for grade 4 to 6 students of SDN Mendong and workshop participants at Yayasan Turida Pancuran Mas. The material covered the concept of saving, the difference between needs and wants, and simple ways of managing pocket money, and was delivered through finance-themed reading materials and a “mini market” simulation game so that it could be easily understood by children. Through this activity, participants gained not only reading and writing skills but also basic insight into personal financial management that is relevant to everyday life, thereby strengthening the link between literacy culture and the development of economic skills among the community at the basic level.

Strengthening Community Participation and Supporting Activities

In addition to the main activities, the program was supported by activities strengthening social relations, namely regular coordination with the Village Head, the Village Consultative Body (BPD), neighborhood (RT/RK) heads, and community leaders; visits to various hamlets in Barosjaya Village; participation in village deliberations; involvement in religious activities; and group exercise sessions with residents, carried out in collaboration with KKM groups from other universities at the same location. These supporting activities played an important role in building community trust and support for the continuity of the literacy program, while also giving students social experience in adapting to village community life. To conclude the series of activities, a literacy-themed drawing and coloring contest was held, together with an award for the child who was the most active in the library activities, at the KKM closing night on 5 August 2026. This event served as both an appreciation and a motivation for children to continue using the Barosjaya Village Library as a space for learning and creating.

Overall, a comparison of conditions before and after the program shows meaningful change. Before the program, the Barosjaya Village Library had no clear system for arranging its collection, the reading room was unattractive, and the level of community visits was low. After one month of the program, the book collection had been arranged and given classification codes, the reading room had become more comfortable and child-friendly, and the frequency of visits by children and students had increased through routine reading, book review, and creative project activities. These findings reinforce the results of similar community service programs showing that a combination of physical revitalization and interactive literacy activities can revive the function of village libraries as community learning centers (Muslim et al., 2025; Rafael et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the sustainability of this program depends heavily on the commitment of the village government and library managers to maintain the management system that has been initiated, given that KKM student activities are time-limited.

Obstacles and Solutions in Program Implementation

The implementation of this community service program was not free from several obstacles in the field. First, the one-month implementation period required students to schedule activities tightly and efficiently; this was addressed by dividing tasks among teams and preparing clear daily and weekly work plans. Second, the library's initial book collection was limited and lacked variety; as a solution, the students gathered book donations from the university and other parties and regrouped the available collection to make it more representative. Third, children's reading interest was still low at the beginning of the program, and some were reluctant to visit the library; this was addressed through educational games (ice breaking) and by giving appreciation to children who were active in reading, so that interest in visiting increased gradually. Fourth, limited supporting facilities such as shelves and decorative materials were overcome by using used goods and simple materials on a self-help basis. Fifth, the financial literacy material, which was relatively new to the children, was addressed by simplifying it through simulation games and contextual reading materials so that it remained easy for elementary and junior secondary school participants to understand. In general, these obstacles could be overcome through intensive coordination among the students, the schools, and the village government, so that they did not diminish the overall achievements of the program.

Conclusion

Overall, the implementation of the literacy-themed Student Community Service (KKM) of Group 49 of Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa in Barosjaya Village, Cinangka Sub-district, Serang Regency, successfully addressed the five objectives formulated at the outset of the program. First, the program realized one of the orientations of the Tridharma of Higher Education, namely community service, through a series of literacy activities carried out participatively over one month. Second, the involvement of sixteen students from various faculties in all stages of the activities provided real learning and social experiences for the students while fostering their sensitivity to the problems of village communities. Third, the community's literacy culture was successfully improved through the arrangement of the book collection, read-aloud sessions, book reviews, creative projects based on reading materials, a short-story writing workshop, and basic financial literacy training that introduced the concepts of saving and pocket-money management to children. Fourth, the function of the Barosjaya Village Library as a

learning center and a center for community literacy activities was successfully optimized, as indicated by a better-organized book collection, a more comfortable and child-friendly reading room, and an increased frequency of visits by children and students. Fifth, relations among the university, the village government, and the local community became closer through routine coordination with the Village Head, the Village Consultative Body, community leaders, and partner schools, which also built trust and support for the sustainability of the program. These five achievements show that an interactive, creative, and collaboration-based approach can have a positive impact on strengthening literacy culture, including basic financial literacy, at the village level.

Based on these results, several matters need attention for the sustainability of the program. The Barosjaya Village Government is advised to continue supporting the development of the village library, both by providing facilities and by adding to the reading collection, while the library managers are expected to maintain the collection arrangement system that has been initiated and to continue routine activities that appeal to children and the community, including the basic financial literacy activities that have been introduced. Community members and parents are expected to play an active role in using the library as a learning space by encouraging children to read and visit the library regularly, while educational institutions around the village are advised to continue collaborating with the village library in developing literacy activities suited to the characteristics of their students. Future KKM implementers and researchers interested in developing the theme of village literacy are advised to conduct a more in-depth needs mapping and to design more diverse literacy innovations, including the possible use of digital technology, so that the program can be sustained after the community service period ends. Consistent collaboration among the university, the village government, schools, and the community is ultimately the key to ensuring that literacy culture in Barosjaya Village continues to grow and becomes a sustainable part of community life.

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