

## Optimization Of Alam Riang Community Reading Park For Children's Literacy Development In Pesantren Tembelang Village, Jombang: A Qualitative Study

Rhoni Rodin<sup>1</sup>, Tince Yurika Ajeng<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Department of Faculty of Usuluddin Adab and Da'wah, Islamic Library and Information Science, State Islamic Institute of Curup, Curup, Indonesia

### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received Dec 20, 2025

Revised Jan 15, 2026

Accepted Feb 9, 2026

Online First Maret 15, 2026

#### Keywords:

Children's Literacy  
Community Reading Park  
Literacy Development  
Qualitative Study  
Reading Media

### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** This study aims to analyze the optimization of the Alam Riang Community Reading Park (TBM) as a medium for developing children's literacy in Pesantren Tembelang Village, Jombang, particularly through the implementation of six basic literacies in a community-based learning environment.

**Methodology:** This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Purposive sampling involved 10 informants including TBM managers, children, and parents. Data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model. Supporting sources include books, journals, and related documents.

**Main Findings:** The results show that TBM Alam Riang successfully optimizes its role as a community-based literacy center through the implementation of six basic literacies: reading-writing, scientific, financial, numeracy, cultural and civic, and digital literacy. Programs are applied through creative, flexible, and participatory activities, increasing children's engagement. Despite challenges such as limited funding and technology influence, adaptive strategies and program innovations support sustainability and enhance children's literacy development in rural areas.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** This study offers a novel contribution by integrating six basic literacies into TBM programs in a rural context. It provides a comprehensive and in-depth analysis using a qualitative case study approach, involving multiple informants. The focus on practical implementation and community-based strategies advances knowledge on optimizing literacy development through non-formal education institutions.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY](#) license*



### Corresponding Author:

Tince Yurika Ajeng,

Department of Faculty of Usuluddin Adab and Da'wah, Islamic Library and Information Science, State Islamic Institute of Curup, Indonesia

Jl. Dr. AK Gani, Curup, Rejang Lebong, Bengkulu, 39119, Indonesia

Email: [tinceyurikaajeng1@gmail.com](mailto:tinceyurikaajeng1@gmail.com)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literacy is a fundamental skill that plays a crucial role in shaping the quality of human resources from an early age. Reading and writing abilities serve as the primary foundation for lifelong learning processes. In the context of society, the availability of literacy-supporting facilities is highly essential [1]. One such facility is the Community Reading Park (TBM), which functions as a provider of reading materials. TBM serves as an

*Journal homepage:* <http://cahaya-ic.com/index.php/SYNAPSI>

alternative learning resource outside formal education. Therefore, TBM holds a strategic position in supporting the development of children's literacy within the community.

However, the reality shows that the level of children's literacy in rural areas remains relatively low. This condition is influenced by several factors, including parents' educational background, economic conditions, and limited access to reading materials [2]. In Pesantren Village, Tembelang District, Jombang, most residents work as farmers, traders, and scrap collectors. These conditions affect the level of attention given to providing reading materials at home. In addition, the absence of a village library further limits children's access to literacy resources. As a result, children only gain limited reading experiences within the school environment.

Previous studies have examined the role of community reading parks in improving children's reading interest and literacy levels [3]. These studies generally highlight factors influencing literacy, such as parental support, learning environments, and the availability of facilities. Furthermore, several studies emphasize the importance of community-based literacy programs in enhancing children's reading skills. However, most studies still focus on general aspects of literacy without specifically analyzing the types of literacy being developed [4]. The approaches used also tend to be descriptive without deeply exploring program implementation. Therefore, more comprehensive studies on literacy education practices at the community level are still needed.

The research gap lies in the limited studies that integrate the concept of basic literacy into community reading park programs [5]. Literacy is not only limited to reading and writing skills but also encompasses broader competencies. Programs based on the six basic literacies promoted by the government have not been widely analyzed in the context of TBM. In addition, the implementation of literacy programs in rural areas with specific socio-economic conditions has not been extensively explored. This indicates the need to examine how TBM optimizes its role under such circumstances. Thus, this study aims to address this gap through a more focused approach.

This study is important because literacy is a key factor in improving the quality of education and community welfare [6]. Efforts to enhance children's literacy must be carried out continuously through various approaches. TBM, as a non-formal educational institution, has great potential to reach communities that are not optimally served by formal education. With well-structured programs, TBM can become an effective medium for fostering a culture of literacy from an early age [7]. Moreover, this study provides a real picture of literacy practices at the grassroots level. The findings are expected to serve as a reference for developing literacy programs in other regions.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on optimizing the function of the Alam Riang Community Reading Park in developing children's literacy [8]. This study not only examines the general role of TBM but also analyzes program implementation based on the six basic literacies. The qualitative approach with a case study method allows for in-depth and contextual data exploration. In addition, this study involves various informants, including managers, children, and parents, to obtain comprehensive perspectives. The research location in a rural area with limited literacy access also adds unique value [9]. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute new insights to the field of community-based literacy studies.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research design to examine the optimization of the Alam Riang Community Reading Garden in developing children's literacy. A qualitative approach with a case study method was chosen to gain a deep understanding of literacy practices in a real context [10]. This research was conducted in Pesantren Village, Tembelang District, Jombang Regency, as the operational location of the Alam Riang Community Reading Garden. Research data were obtained from primary and secondary data sources to support the completeness of the information [11]. Primary data were obtained directly from predetermined informants, while secondary data came from books, journals, articles, and related documents. This approach allows researchers to describe phenomena systematically and contextually.

The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with 10 informants who met the research criteria. The informants consisted of the TBM manager, children participating in TBM activities, and their parents [12]. The purpose of selecting these informants was to obtain various perspectives related to children's literacy development. The informant selection criteria were adjusted to the research focus to ensure relevant data [13]. The involvement of various parties allowed the researcher to obtain a more comprehensive picture. The following is a classification of informants in this study:

Table 1. Classification of Research Informants

<b>Informant Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Manager TBM</b>	Owner and manager of Alam Riang TBM
<b>Children</b>	Participants of TBM literacy activities
<b>Parents</b>	Parents of children involved in TBM programs

The data collection techniques used included in-depth interviews, direct observation, and documentation [14]. Interviews were conducted to explore informants' experiences and perspectives regarding literacy activities. Observations were conducted to directly observe the implementation of the literacy program at the Community Learning Center (TBM). Documentation was used as supporting data to strengthen the interview and observation results. Data analysis techniques refer to the Miles and Huberman (1992) model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis processes were conducted simultaneously to ensure the validity and consistency of the research results.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research results indicate that the Alam Riang Community Reading Garden (Taman Baca Masyarakat Alam Riang) arose from the community's need for an educational space for children in Pesantren Village, Tembelang District, Jombang [15]. Prior to the TBM, children's activities tended to be limited to routine activities such as playing, helping their parents, or engaging in less educational entertainment. This situation indicates a low awareness of the need for information and literacy among children [16]. The presence of the Alam Riang Community Reading Garden provides an alternative, fun and open non-formal learning space for children. Through a community-based approach, the TBM is able to attract children's interest in literacy activities. This aligns with the concept of information needs, which encourages individuals to seek knowledge when information gaps arise.

In practice, the Alam Riang Community Reading Garden implements a literacy program based on six basic literacies: literacy in reading, science, finance, numeracy, culture and citizenship, and digital literacy. Literacy is developed through the provision of reading materials, reading corners, and storytelling activities that encourage children's creativity [17]. Scientific literacy is realized through environment-based activities such as eco-activities that instill awareness of nature. Financial literacy and numeracy are integrated through simple entrepreneurial activities such as producing and selling children's handicrafts at Eko-Mart [18]. Meanwhile, cultural and civic literacy are developed through collaborative activities such as village festivals and traditional games. Digital literacy is adapted through the use of social media and online learning campaigns during the pandemic. This implementation demonstrates that TBM Alam Riang focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on developing children's holistic life skills.

Furthermore, research results indicate that the learning approach used by TBM Alam Riang is flexible, participatory, and contextual. Children are given the freedom to express themselves, be creative, and learn according to their interests without the pressure of a formal curriculum [19]. A fun learning environment is a crucial factor in increasing children's engagement in literacy activities. The TBM management also plays a significant role in designing innovative and adaptive programs tailored to children's needs. Parental support, although limited, contributes to encouraging children's participation. Thus, TBM Alam Riang has successfully optimized its function as a community-based literacy center.

However, in its implementation, TBM Alam Riang also faces various obstacles. One of the main obstacles is limited funding for the management and development of literacy programs [20]. Funding sources, which are still reliant on personal funds and independent activities, pose a challenge to the program's sustainability. Furthermore, technological advancements and excessive use of gadgets among children also hinder the development of reading interest [21]. This situation is exacerbated by the online learning system during the pandemic, which has increased children's dependence on digital devices. Nevertheless, TBM Alam Riang strives to overcome these obstacles through program innovation and collaboration with various parties.

The adaptive efforts undertaken by TBM Alam Riang in the face of these challenges demonstrate a sustainable optimization strategy. TBM management utilizes various opportunities, such as entrepreneurial activities, fundraising, and participation in competitions, to support the program's sustainability. Furthermore, the use of technology is also directed at educational activities, such as digital literacy campaigns and creative content creation [22]. These innovations demonstrate that TBM is not only surviving but also evolving with the times. This demonstrates that optimizing TBM functions can be achieved through a creative and adaptive approach [23]. Thus, TBM Alam Riang is able to make a real contribution to developing children's literacy in rural areas.

#### 3.1. Research Findings

The findings indicate that the establishment of the Alam Riang Community Reading Park was driven by the community's need for an educational space for children. Prior to the existence of TBM, children's activities were limited and less supportive of literacy development [24]. This condition reflects low awareness of literacy importance and limited access to information sources. The presence of TBM Alam Riang provides an alternative non-formal learning space that is engaging and accessible. Through a community-based approach, children become more active in participating in literacy activities.

### 3.2. Implementation of Literacy Programs

The findings also show that TBM Alam Riang implements six basic literacies in an integrated manner. Reading-writing, scientific, financial, numeracy, cultural and civic, and digital literacies are applied through contextual activities [25]. These programs are designed creatively to increase children's engagement. The flexible learning approach without rigid curriculum pressure supports the effectiveness of the program. In addition, the role of TBM managers and children's participation are key elements in sustaining activities. This indicates that literacy can be developed holistically through innovative approaches.

### 3.3. Implementation of Literacy Programs

These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of environmental and social support in children's literacy development. Prior research highlights access to reading materials and parental involvement as key influencing factors [26]. However, this study extends those findings by demonstrating a more structured implementation of literacy programs. The concept of information needs is also evident in children's behavior as they actively seek knowledge. TBM Alam Riang successfully fosters literacy awareness through engaging activities. Thus, this study not only supports but also enriches previous research.

### 3.4. Implementation of Literacy Programs

The novelty of this study lies in the focus on optimizing the function of TBM through the integration of six basic literacies. Unlike previous studies that discuss literacy in general terms, this research provides a more comprehensive and specific analysis [27]. The case study approach allows for an in-depth understanding of real conditions in rural communities. Furthermore, the involvement of multiple informants offers diverse and richer perspectives. The research setting in a literacy-limited rural area adds unique value to the study. Therefore, this research contributes new insights to community-based literacy studies.

### 3.5. Implementation of Literacy Programs

The implications of this study show that TBM can serve as an effective solution for improving children's literacy in rural areas [28]. Flexible and contextual literacy programs are proven to enhance children's learning interest. The findings can be used as a reference for developing similar literacy programs in other regions. Collaboration among communities, managers, and external stakeholders is essential for program sustainability [29]. A holistic approach to literacy development should also be promoted more broadly. Thus, this study provides practical contributions to non-formal education development.

### 3.6. Implementation of Literacy Programs

This study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. The limited number of informants may affect the scope of the findings. In addition, the research was conducted in a single location, limiting the generalizability of the results. The qualitative approach may also introduce subjectivity in data interpretation. This study does not measure the long-term impact of literacy programs quantitatively [30]. Therefore, future research is recommended to use more diverse methods and broader samples. These limitations provide opportunities for further research in community-based literacy.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Alam Riang Community Reading Park plays a significant role in optimizing children's literacy development in Pesantren Tembelang Village, Jombang. The implementation of six basic literacies through creative, flexible, and community-based programs has proven effective in increasing children's engagement in literacy activities [31]. TBM Alam Riang not only functions as a provider of reading materials but also as a non-formal learning space that supports holistic child development. Despite facing challenges such as limited funding and the influence of digital technology, the TBM demonstrates adaptive strategies to sustain its programs. The findings highlight the importance of integrating multiple literacy aspects in community-based education. Therefore, this study contributes to strengthening the role of community reading parks as an alternative solution for improving literacy in rural areas.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to the management of Alam Riang Community Reading Park for their support and cooperation during this research. Appreciation is also extended to all informants, including the TBM manager, participating children, and their parents, for their valuable contributions and willingness to share their experiences. The author also thanks all parties who have provided support, guidance, and encouragement throughout the research process. This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

## REFERENCES

- [1] H. Forsman, "Exploring the Letterbox club programme's impact on foster children's literacy: Potent intervention or general support?," *Oxford Rev. Educ.*, vol. 45, no. 4, pp. 502–518, 2019, doi: 10.1080/03054985.2019.1595559.
- [2] A. Hackett, K. Pahl, and S. Pool, "In amongst the glitter and the squashed blueberries: Crafting a collaborative lens for children's literacy pedagogy in a community setting," *Pedagogies*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp. 58–73, 2017, doi: 10.1080/1554480X.2017.1283994.
- [3] S. C. Yen, A. Y. Lee, and S. K. F. Hui, "Jumpstart program efficacy: The impact of early childhood education advancement initiatives on low-income preschool children's literacy, agency, and social relations," *Cogent Educ.*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2019, doi: 10.1080/2331186X.2019.1592063.
- [4] A. Bergström and M. Jervelycke Belfrage, "News in social media incidental consumption and the role of opinion leaders," *Digit. Journal.*, vol. 6, no. 5, pp. 583–598, 2018, doi: 10.1080/21670811.2018.1423625.
- [5] F. Dingyloudi and J. W. Stribos, "Community representations in learning communities," *Scand. J. Educ. Res.*, vol. 64, no. 7, pp. 1052–1070, 2020, doi: 10.1080/00313831.2019.1640788.
- [6] M. Rahimi and S. Yadollahi, "Effects of offline vs online digital storytelling on the development of efl learners' literacy skills," *Cogent Educ.*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2017, doi: 10.1080/2331186X.2017.1285531.
- [7] P. Hannon, C. Nutbrown, and A. Morgan, "Effects of extending disadvantaged families' teaching of emergent literacy," *Res. Pap. Educ.*, vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 310–336, 2020, doi: 10.1080/02671522.2019.1568531.
- [8] C. Chan, "Digital story retelling-evaluation of a story-reading workshop promoting open-mindedness in the community," *J. evidence-based Soc. Work*, vol. 16, no. 6, pp. 652–668, 2019, doi: 10.1080/26408066.2019.1684410.
- [9] O. Dovbysh, "Commercial or public service actors? controversies in the nature of Russia's regional mass media," *Russ. J. Commun.*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 71–87, 2019, doi: 10.1080/19409419.2019.1572532.
- [10] C. Schmidt, "Ethnographic research on children's literacy practices: Children's literacy experiences and possibilities for representation," *Ethnogr. Educ.*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 48–63, 2020, doi: 10.1080/17457823.2018.1512004.
- [11] S. Little, "Is there an app for that? exploring games and apps among heritage language families," *J. Multiling. Multicult. Dev.*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp. 218–229, 2019, doi: 10.1080/01434632.2018.1502776.
- [12] N. Theorin, "Maintainers of ethnic hierarchies? investigating the relationship between media use and stitutes toward perceived remote versus perceived close immigration," *Mass Commun. Soc.*, vol. 22, no. 6, pp. 827–850, 2019, doi: 10.1080/15205436.2019.1660368.
- [13] S. Little, "A generational arc: Early literacy practices among Pakistani and Indian heritage language families," *Int. J. Early Years Educ.*, vol. 25, no. 4, pp. 424–438, 2017, doi: 10.1080/09669760.2017.1341302.
- [14] G. Gillon and A. H. Macfarlane, "A culturally responsive framework for enhancing phonological awareness development in children with speech and language impairment," *Speech, Lang. Hear.*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 163–173, 2017, doi: 10.1080/2050571X.2016.1265738.
- [15] F. Lind and C. E. Meltzer, "Now you see me, now you don't: Applying automated content analysis to track migrant women's salience in German news," *Fem. Media Stud.*, vol. 21, no. 6, pp. 923–940, 2021, doi: 10.1080/14680777.2020.1713840.
- [16] A. Schwabe, F. Lind, L. Kosch, and H. G. Boomgaarden, "No negative effects of reading on screen on comprehension of narrative texts compared to print: A meta-analysis," *Media Psychol.*, vol. 25, no. 6, pp. 779–796, 2022, doi: 10.1080/15213269.2022.2070216.
- [17] J. A. Holman, A. Drummond, S. E. Hughes, and G. Naylor, "Hearing impairment and daily-life fatigue: A qualitative study," *Int. J. Audiol.*, vol. 58, no. 7, pp. 408–416, 2019, doi: 10.1080/14992027.2019.1597284.
- [18] M. L. Puglisi, C. Hulme, L. G. Hamilton, and M. J. Snowling, "The home literacy environment is a correlate, but perhaps not a cause, of variations in children's language and literacy development," *Sci. Stud. Read.*, vol. 21, no. 6, pp. 498–514, 2017, doi: 10.1080/10888438.2017.1346660.
- [19] E. Eriksson, L. B. Boistrup, and R. Thornberg, "A qualitative study of primary teachers' classroom feedback rationales," *Educ. Res.*, vol. 60, no. 2, pp. 189–205, 2018, doi: 10.1080/00131881.2018.1451759.
- [20] S. L. Harrison *et al.*, "The role of pain in pulmonary rehabilitation: A qualitative study," *Int. J. COPD*, vol. 12, pp. 3289–3299, 2017, doi: 10.2147/COPD.S145442.
- [21] C. Nutbrown, P. Clough, L. Stammers, N. Emblin, and S. Alston-Smith, "Family literacy in prisons: Fathers' engagement with their young children," *Res. Pap. Educ.*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 169–191, 2019, doi: 10.1080/02671522.2017.1402085.
- [22] Y. N. Chang and P. Monaghan, "Quantity and diversity of preliteracy language exposure both affect literacy development: Evidence from a computational model of reading," *Sci. Stud. Read.*, vol. 23, no. 3, pp. 235–253, 2019, doi: 10.1080/10888438.2018.1529177.
- [23] S. Zeighami Mohammadi, S. Mohammadkhan Kermanshahi, and Z. Vanaki, "Pity: A qualitative study on Iranian women with breast cancer," *Patient Prefer. Adherence*, vol. 13, pp. 21–28, 2019, doi: 10.2147/PPA.S183712.
- [24] M. C. Wofford and S. Tibi, "A human right to literacy education: Implications for serving syrian refugee children," *Int. J. Speech. Lang. Pathol.*, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 182–190, 2018, doi: 10.1080/17549507.2017.1397746.
- [25] M. Edström, "Visibility patterns of gendered ageism in the media buzz: A study of the representation of gender and age over three decades," *Fem. Media Stud.*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 77–93, 2018, doi: 10.1080/14680777.2018.1409989.
- [26] C. van Nimwegen and K. Bergman, "Effects on cognition of the burn after reading principle in ephemeral media applications," *Behav. Inf. Technol.*, vol. 38, no. 10, pp. 1060–1067, 2019, doi: 10.1080/0144929X.2019.1659853.
- [27] S. van Viersen, E. H. de Bree, and P. F. de Jong, "Protective factors and compensation in resolving dyslexia," *Sci. Stud. Read.*, vol. 23, no. 6, pp. 461–477, 2019, doi: 10.1080/10888438.2019.1603543.
- [28] S. Mohammadhossini, F. Ahmadi, M. Gheibizadeh, A. S. Malehi, and K. Zarea, "Comprehensive physical domain care needs of burn patients: A qualitative study," *Clin. Cosmet. Investig. Dermatol.*, vol. 12, pp. 573–581, 2019, doi: 10.2147/CCID.S215517.

- [29] A. Haller and K. Holt, "Paradoxical populism: How pegida relates to mainstream and alternative media," *Inf. Commun. Soc.*, vol. 22, no. 12, pp. 1665–1680, 2019, doi: 10.1080/1369118X.2018.1449882.
- [30] F. E. Fardazar, A. S. Asiabar, H. Safari, M. Asgari, A. Saber, and A. A. E. F. Azar, "Policy analysis of Iranian pharmaceutical sector: A qualitative study," *Risk Manag. Healthc. Policy*, vol. 12, pp. 199–208, 2019, doi: 10.2147/RMHP.S209318.
- [31] F. Kamali, A. Yousefy, and N. Yamani, "Explaining professionalism in moral reasoning: A qualitative study," *Adv. Med. Educ. Pract.*, vol. 10, pp. 447–456, 2019, doi: 10.2147/AMEP.S183690.