

Optimization of Integrated Promotion Strategies to Increase Visits, Reading Interest, and Community Literacy at the Wukirsari Village Library

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Abstract

Information literacy heavily relies on the crucial role of education, especially in equipping individuals with the ability to discover, assess, and properly utilize information. However, various regions still face challenges such as low reading enthusiasm and minimal community involvement in utilizing village library facilities. This article aims to explore and implement a comprehensive and relevant promotional approach to encourage an increase in the number of visitors and reading interest at the Wukirsari Village Library, located in Bantul, Yogyakarta. This community service program employs a descriptive qualitative method with a purposive sampling approach to identify the initial conditions, development potential, and obstacles that need to be addressed.

The results of the activities indicate that the low library visits are caused by still conventional promotional strategies, minimal digital innovation, and lack of involvement from local organizations such as PKK and Karang Taruna. The interventions carried out included training on digital promotion, the preparation of community-based promotional content, and strengthening collaboration among village stakeholders. The impact is reflected in the increased community involvement, particularly among mothers and youth, in literacy programs and the use of library services. In addition, the capacity of library managers to utilize social media as a promotional tool has also improved. These findings suggest that a participatory integrated promotional strategy can create an inclusive, dynamic, and sustainable village literacy ecosystem.

Keywords: Literacy, Reading Interest, Library Promotion, Village Library, Community Involvement, Collaboration

I. INTRODUCTION

An individual's ability to critically process information—such as understanding, analyzing, and evaluating the accuracy of information—cannot be separated from the important role of the educational process. Through an effective education system, one will be more skilled in exploring and utilizing relevant and credible information to address issues in daily life. Information literacy and education are closely related; advancements in education will encourage improvements in literacy, while a good level of literacy will strengthen the learning outcomes achieved. Literacy, in a broader context, becomes a crucial foundation for the development of adaptive and innovative human resources in the era of information disruption.

Literacy is a fundamental element of knowledge that is the right of every citizen to ensure equal access to information (Sari et al., 2022). In addition, literacy includes an individual's ability to access (Oktafiani & Wasisto, 2023) and make use of information accurately and clearly (*Sustainable_Development_Goal_04QualityEducation*, n.d.). In various studies, literacy is not only understood as the ability to read and write but also encompasses the ability to process information that has implications for historical, philosophical, and social aspects.(Amri & Rochmah, 2021). In today's digital era, the urgency of literacy is increasingly strengthening along with the rapid flow of information and the rising risk of misinformation spread (Desa et al., 2024)(Putri & Rochman, 2023).

On the other hand, the issue of low literacy remains a challenge in various regions with different social backgrounds. Some common obstacles that often arise include uneven quality of education, weak economic conditions in communities, limited learning support facilities, minimal access to sources of information, negative views on the importance of education, and gaps in the utilization of digital technology. The digital divide refers to the disparity in access to digital devices and technology such as smartphones, laptops, and internet networks (Pahrijal & Novitasari, 2023).

This gap creates inequality in access to information and other resources. In the current information age, when information and communication technology (ICT) has become a main foundation of the economy and global social connectivity, individuals who do not have access to the internet and other ICTs tend to be socially and economically marginalized. They experience limitations in job searching, conducting online transactions, participating in democratic processes, and engaging in learning and research activities (Haniko et al., 2023).

The role of libraries is very strategic in promoting the growth of a literacy culture within society. This institution serves as a gateway to various types of information, both through printed collections such as books, magazines, and newspapers, and through ever-evolving digital media. More than just a storage space for reading materials, libraries can also serve as an active learning space by offering various educational programs, such as digital literacy classes, writing workshops, literature introductions, and community-based learning activities. The availability of supporting facilities such as computers, internet connectivity, and other technological devices further strengthens the library's function as an inclusive and modern center for knowledge access. Libraries, especially at the village level, have great potential as centers for literacy development and community empowerment (Rohman & Sukaesih, 2018).

The village library is the most fundamental unit in the network of public libraries, managed under the responsibility of the village government or active participation of local residents. This type of library plays a role in providing reading materials that are relevant to the needs of rural communities, such as information about agriculture, forestry, and fisheries (Jusriani, 2021). In addition to reading collections, several village libraries have also developed additional services in the form of internet access and the organization of educational activities. The main essence of the existence of village libraries is to open space for the community to obtain information and learning more evenly, thus being able to encourage improvements in their quality of life.

The level of reading interest in Indonesia is still considered very low. According to a UNESCO report in 2024, only about 0.001% of the Indonesian population shows high enthusiasm for reading activities—meaning, out of every thousand people, only one truly enjoys reading. In fact, a reading culture plays a crucial role in developing the quality of human resources. In the context of rural areas, the establishment of village libraries is one of the government's initiatives to provide easier access to information and reading materials. Unfortunately, the low number of visits and the involvement of residents in utilizing these facilities indicate that this effort has not yielded optimal results. This low reading interest poses a serious challenge that requires innovative and collaborative approaches (Dipayanti et al., 2022; Farel, 2022).

To address this issue, a more strategic and adaptive promotional approach is necessary. One promising solution is the implementation of an integrated promotion strategy, which involves combining various communication channels and engaging the local community in the process. This approach not only conveys messages about the existence and benefits of libraries but also builds emotional bonds and a sense of ownership between residents and the village library. With such a

strategy, libraries have the potential to become more recognized, sought after, and actively used by various segments of society. Effective promotion in the digital age requires the use of social media and online platforms to reach a broader audience (Indawati et al., 2024).

In addition, the existence of the PKK organization (Family Welfare Education) and Karang Taruna at the village level plays a significant role in supporting library promotion. As an institution focused on improving the quality of life for families through education and training, the PKK has programs that align with the development of reading culture. Activities such as providing reading materials, training for library managers, and campaigns on the importance of reading are tangible contributions from the PKK in fostering literacy in the village. The collaboration between the PKK and village libraries creates a potential synergy in developing relevant and sustainable literacy programs (Putri & Setiawan, 2023).

Based on this background, this article discusses the strengthening of integrated promotion strategies to increase visits and reading interest in the Wukirsari Village Library. The main focus of this activity is to design and implement promotion strategies that are aligned with local characteristics, expand cooperation with village institutions such as PKK and Karang Taruna, and encourage community participation in various literacy activities. It is hoped that the Wukirsari Village Library can develop into an active, inclusive, and attractive learning space for the entire village community.

II. METHODS

This community service activity is conducted at the Wukirsari Village Library, located in Imogiri District, Bantul Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The event lasts for 3 days from May 19 to May 21, 2025. The choice of location is based on the actual needs of the village community for increasing reading interest and utilizing the village library as a center for information and community learning.

The Wukirsari Village Library faces challenges of low visitor numbers and minimal community involvement in literacy activities. Although there is a collection of books and internet access available, community participation has not been optimal. The library's promotional strategies have tended to be passive, limited to conveying information through printed media, without a participatory approach that directly involves the community. The existence of community organizations such as PKK and Karang Taruna, which have structure and regular activities at the village level, has not been maximally utilized as strategic partners in strengthening the culture of literacy.

The main objective of this activity is to develop and implement an integrated promotional strategy that is relevant to the characteristics of library visits, strengthen collaboration with village organizations such as PKK and Karang Taruna, and encourage active community involvement in sustainable literacy activities. Thus, the village library can transform into an inclusive, dynamic, and engaging public space for all layers of society.

The program to increase visits and reading interest at the Wukirsari Village Library is implemented through a community empowerment approach using qualitative descriptive research methods. Data is collected through semi-structured interviews conducted directly with the library management and several involved parties in the surrounding area.

The data collection process was carried out using a purposive sampling approach. The results of the interviews and observations were then analyzed descriptively to identify the initial

conditions, development potentials, and obstacles that need to be addressed in efforts to improve public visits and reading interest.

In the implementation of promotional strategies, engaging the local community is a key factor in fostering a sense of ownership towards the library. This collaboration across community elements aligns with the findings of Ramadhani & Nurhidayati (2022) which state that community-based approaches can enhance the effectiveness of literacy programs and strengthen public participation sustainably. Furthermore, digital promotion programs are a strategic step in addressing the challenges of the information transformation era, where managing digital media has become an important part of disseminating information effectively and widely (Pamungkas et al., 2024) (Ngurah et al., 2024).

With this approach, the service does not only focus on increasing visits, but also aims to build a sustainable literacy ecosystem based on community participation, as well as strengthening the role of village libraries as community learning centers. Evaluations are conducted effectively to measure changes that occur and to formulate long-term development strategies that can be adopted by other village libraries.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The community service activities at the Wukirsari Village Library show significant challenges related to the low participation of the community in accessing the available literacy services and programs. Initial observations indicate that the number of visits to the library ranges from 10 to 20 children per week, most of whom are kindergarten children whose learning has been redirected to the Village Library. The lack of active promotion and limited innovation in delivering information are among the main causes of this condition. This situation indicates that the library is not yet fully recognized or utilized by a broader segment of the community, such as teenagers and adults, and has not been able to independently attract reading interest.



Picture: Visit of Kindergarten Children

Based on in-depth interviews with the Pustaka managers, it was found that the promotional strategies employed so far are still conventional, such as disseminating information through printed media and regular community meetings, without any digital or collaborative approaches. Additionally, the suboptimal involvement of village organizations such as PKK and Karang Taruna further weakens community engagement in supporting sustainable literacy programs. This limitation highlights the need for a paradigm shift from passive promotion to a more dynamic and interactive approach, utilizing digital potential and existing community networks.

The implementation of the integrated promotion optimization program is carried out with a purposive sampling approach that emphasizes the active involvement of library managers in the activities process, from planning to evaluation. The necessary actions include (1) the development of promotion strategies, (2) training in digital promotion media, and (3) strengthening collaboration with village organizations. Training in digital promotion media is provided for library managers as well as representatives from the Family Welfare Empowerment Program (PKK) and Youth Organization (Karang Taruna), covering topics such as the utilization of social media, like Instagram and WhatsApp, to design informative and engaging promotional content. This training not only enhances the digital literacy of library managers but also serves as a preliminary step in expanding the library's information outreach to the wider community. The gradual implementation of these steps is expected to create significant transformation in library promotion efforts.

The findings indicate the success of a participatory-based integrated promotion approach. This aligns with the results of the study by Ramadhani and Nurhidayati (2022), which emphasizes that a community-based approach in literacy programs can enhance effectiveness and strengthen the sense of ownership towards the implemented programs. Collaboration across different elements of society has proven to be an effective strategy in building an inclusive and sustainable literacy ecosystem. Furthermore, community involvement also strengthens local capacity in making village libraries dynamic, educational, and relevant public spaces for community needs. Thus, a collaborative and digital-based approach is not merely a promotional tool, but rather a foundation for ensuring the sustainability and relevance of village libraries in the future.

IV. CONCLUSION

Literacy skills play a vital role in supporting the achievement of the national education vision as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System. There is a mutually reinforcing relationship between literacy and education, where education serves as the main foundation in shaping an individual's literacy competency. Through educational pathways, both formal and non-formal, literacy skills can be honed and developed, from basic literacy such as reading and writing skills, to advanced levels such as technology, science, financial, and other literacies.

Meanwhile, libraries serve as an important means of supporting the strengthening of community literacy. They not only function as a place for book collections, but also provide wide access to various information, and organize a variety of training and educational activities that directly help improve literacy in the community at various levels.

To make the library an integral part of community life, promotional activities are very important. Library promotions need to be conducted in a structured, sustainable, and systematic manner so that the presence of the library remains relevant and beneficial. Through effective promotion, libraries not only can attract public interest but also make a real contribution in opening access to literacy for both children and adults, while also encouraging the development of libraries in a more optimal way.

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