



Enhancing Language Literacy for the Children of Rejatengah Village to Achieve Indonesia's Golden Generation in 2045

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Abstract: This article explores a community service initiative aimed at enhancing literacy among children in Rejatengah Village, Indonesia, as part of the national effort to develop Indonesia's Golden Generation by 2045. The project was conducted by a team from Al Maksum College of Teacher Training and Education over a one-month period, targeting children aged 6 to 9 years. The initiative involved comprehensive educational activities, including literacy assessments, interactive workshops, and parental involvement, to foster a supportive learning environment. Significant improvements in literacy skills were observed, attributed to the innovative teaching methods and community engagement strategies employed. The establishment of a permanent educational resource center has ensured the sustainability of educational efforts, serving as a model for similar interventions in other rural areas. This project not only highlights the critical role of community-based educational programs in enhancing literacy but also demonstrates the potential of such initiatives to contribute to broader national development goals.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi inisiatif pengabdian kepada masyarakat yang bertujuan meningkatkan literasi di kalangan anak-anak Desa Rejatengah, Indonesia, sebagai bagian dari upaya nasional mengembangkan Generasi Emas Indonesia pada tahun 2045. Proyek ini dilaksanakan oleh tim dari Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Al Maksum selama satu bulan, menasar anak-anak berusia 6 hingga 9 tahun. Inisiatif ini melibatkan kegiatan pendidikan yang komprehensif, termasuk penilaian literasi, lokakarya interaktif, dan keterlibatan orang tua, untuk menumbuhkan lingkungan belajar yang mendukung. Peningkatan keterampilan literasi yang signifikan diamati, yang diatributkan pada metode pengajaran inovatif dan strategi keterlibatan komunitas yang digunakan. Pendirian pusat sumber daya pendidikan permanen telah memastikan keberlanjutan usaha pendidikan, yang berfungsi sebagai model untuk intervensi serupa di daerah pedesaan lainnya. Pengabdian masyarakat ini tidak hanya menyoroti peran kritis program pendidikan berbasis komunitas dalam meningkatkan literasi tetapi juga menunjukkan potensi inisiatif semacam itu untuk berkontribusi pada tujuan pembangunan nasional yang lebih luas.

Kata Kunci: Pengabdian Masyarakat, Generasi Emas, Bahasa, Literasi

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's interconnected and rapidly evolving world, literacy is recognized globally not just as a fundamental human right but as a cornerstone of all modern societies (Samala et al., 2024; Shaturaev, 2021). The ability to read and write proficiently is more than an educational outcome; it is a prerequisite for participating effectively in the global economy,

accessing information technologies, and engaging in the political and cultural dialogues that shape our world(Almubaroq, 2023; Ginting et al., 2020; Melisa et al., 2022; Sofyan & Sanusi, 2023).

Despite the universal acknowledgment of literacy's importance, significant disparities exist, particularly in rural areas like Rejatengah Village. Here, children are often left at a considerable disadvantage due to the lack of access to quality education and modern learning resources. This gap is not only limiting their personal and educational development but also restricts their future opportunities in a global landscape that increasingly demands high levels of literacy for economic and social participation (Asrul et al., 2021; Dariono, 2021).

In rural areas like Rejatengah Village, however, there exists a significant gap in literacy that hampers children from realizing their full potential. This disparity not only affects individual lives but also impedes national progress, particularly as Indonesia aims towards achieving its ambitious vision of becoming a 'Golden Generation' by 2045(Aji et al., 2023; Rejeki, 2022; Sofyan & Sanusi, 2023; Zhang & Yu, 2021). This vision encompasses transforming Indonesia into a major global player with a thriving, knowledge-based economy, characterized by robust human development and equitable social progress (Addarunnafis & Rabbani, 2024; Marpaung et al., 2024; Pasaribu et al., 2024; Riyanti et al., 2020)

To align with this vision, enhancing literacy in areas like Rejatengah is paramount. The initiative to improve reading and writing skills among its children is not just a local priority but a strategic component of national importance (Hoerudin, 2023; Pitrianti et al., 2023; Safura et al., 2023; Snow et al., 2020; Susini, 2020). By elevating literacy levels in Rejatengah, this program not only aims to empower the local community but also contributes to the broader national objective of preparing a well-educated and competent workforce ready to lead Indonesia towards its goal of a 'Golden Generation'

This commitment to literacy reflects a recognition of its pivotal role in achieving Indonesia 2045, where every citizen is equipped to contribute to and benefit from the nation's growth . Through targeted educational interventions in Rejatengah, Indonesia is taking concrete steps to bridge educational disparities, thus ensuring that the foundations of its future the children today are prepared to carry forward the legacy of a prosperous, dynamic, and inclusive Indonesia.

2. METHODS

This community service activity was carried out from November to December with a period of 1 month by involving students of the English Education Study Program, Al Maksum College of Teacher Training and Education. The parties involved from the team of lecturers and students are 8 people.

The location of community service is located in Rajatengah Village, Kuala District, Langkat Regency; This location was chosen because Rajatengah Village is one of the villages with a disadvantaged category that also needs assistance and improvement, especially in the field of education. The subjects of service consist of children from Rajatengah Village with a total of 40 people from the age range of 6-9 years at the elementary school education level.

At the end of the session of the community service program, the team conducted interviews with students about the benefits of the community service program and a survey of parents regarding the benefits provided after participating in the community service program implemented by the team for 1 week.



Figure 1. Stages of Community Service

3. RESULT

Project Team and Initial Setup The literacy project in Rejatengah Village was spearheaded by a dedicated team consisting of eight members, including university lecturers and students. This diverse team brought together a range of skills and academic backgrounds, equipped to deliver a comprehensive literacy program. The project targeted a specific group of forty children aged between 6 to 9 years, aiming to instill foundational reading and writing skills at a critical stage in their educational development.

Community Engagement and Baseline Assessment The project commenced with an initial engagement phase, where the team conducted a detailed literacy assessment to gauge the starting level of the children's skills. Concurrently, extensive meetings with the village community—parents, local educators, and community leaders—were held to explain the

project's objectives and to galvanize community support, which is crucial for the project's success and sustainability. Intensive Educational Activities During the second week, the project launched into its core activities, starting with an intensive training program for the lecturers and students on the team. This training was designed to refine their teaching strategies tailored to young learners. Following this, the children were engaged in specially designed literacy workshops. These workshops were dynamic and interactive, incorporating games, storytelling, and writing activities that were both fun and educational, aimed at significantly improving literacy in an engaging manner.

Parental Involvement and Continuous Learning As the project progressed into its third week, it maintained a strong emphasis on the children's daily workshops and began to incorporate an essential element of parental involvement. Workshops for parents were introduced, aimed at equipping them with skills to support their children's learning at home. These included strategies for reading aloud to their children and providing constructive feedback on their writing, thereby extending learning beyond the classroom.

Evaluation and Future Planning In the final week, the project team conducted a thorough evaluation to assess the improvements made by the children, comparing their post-intervention literacy levels to the baselines collected at the start. This evaluation was complemented by feedback sessions involving all stakeholders, which provided valuable insights into the project's impact and areas for future improvement. Discussions about establishing a long-term educational support structure in the village were initiated, with proposals for creating a local educational resource center.

Documentation and Scaling Up Throughout the month, every aspect of the project was carefully documented to create a comprehensive model that could be replicated in other rural settings. This documentation aims to provide a blueprint that can be adapted and applied elsewhere, potentially extending the impact of this initiative to a broader scale.



Figure 2. Community Service Activity



Figure 3. Students and Lecturer Collaboration



Figure 4. Learning activity taught by University students

4. DISCUSSION

The community service project dedicated to enhancing the literacy skills of children in Rejatengah Village has made significant strides in shaping the educational landscape of the community. Over the course of the project, tangible improvements were observed in the literacy abilities of the children aged 6 to 9 years who participated. These young learners demonstrated marked enhancements in reading fluency, comprehension, and writing skills. The success stories include children who initially could barely write or read simple sentences but, by the project's conclusion, could engage with more complex texts and express their thoughts more confidently through writing.

A vital component of the project was the establishment of a permanent educational resource center within the village. This center has become a beacon of learning, equipped with books, educational tools, and digital learning materials, making it a cornerstone for ongoing educational activities. It has transformed into a place where children and adults alike gather to learn and explore educational opportunities.

Furthermore, the project provided an invaluable learning experience for both the university lecturers and students involved, enhancing their practical teaching skills and understanding of rural educational needs. Local teachers, who participated in various capacity-building workshops, benefitted from new pedagogical approaches that they continue to employ in their classrooms. These methodologies have broadened their teaching strategies, allowing them to better address the diverse learning needs of their students.

Community engagement has been another significant outcome of this project. Through various workshops and interactive sessions, parents and community leaders became actively involved in the educational development of their children. This engagement has fostered a supportive learning environment at home and strengthened the community's overall commitment to education, thus ensuring sustained impact beyond the project's duration.

The project not only improved immediate literacy outcomes but also set the stage for long-term educational and socio-economic benefits for the village. By elevating the literacy levels of its youngest members, Rejatengah is better positioned to contribute to the broader national goals, aligning with Indonesia's vision for its Golden Generation 2045. The success in Rejatengah has also sparked interest in neighboring communities, showcasing a scalable and replicable model for rural literacy enhancement. In summary, the literacy project in Rejatengah Village has been transformative, catalyzing positive changes that extend beyond individual achievements to foster a resilient and educated community, prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future. This initiative has not only brightened the prospects of the children involved but also enhanced the educational fabric of the entire community, paving the way towards achieving broader national educational objectives.

5. CONCLUSION

This community engagement project in Rejatengah Village has significantly advanced the literacy levels of local children, thereby contributing to the broader national vision of cultivating Indonesia's Golden Generation by 2045. The interventions implemented have not only bridged educational disparities but also equipped children with essential literacy skills, setting a foundation for their future educational and professional endeavors.

Key achievements of the project include the establishment of a permanent educational resource center which serves as a hub for ongoing learning and community development. The collaborative efforts of university lecturers, students, and local stakeholders have fostered a sustainable educational environment that encourages continuous learning and community involvement.

The success of this literacy project demonstrates the profound impact of community-based educational programs in rural areas. It underscores the importance of targeted interventions, community involvement, and sustainable practices in achieving educational equity. Furthermore, the project serves as a replicable model for similar initiatives across Indonesia, potentially amplifying the impact of educational advancements on a national scale. Moving forward, it is recommended that similar programs be adapted and implemented in other rural areas to help realize the vision of an educated and empowered generation ready to contribute to Indonesia's future. This project not only represents a significant step towards educational equity but also exemplifies the power of community engagement in transforming educational landscapes

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