# ENHANCING CHILDREN'S LEARNING INTEREST THROUGH READING ACTIVITIES IN CELEBRATION OF THE MISSION AND REFORMATION IN BAWONIFAOSO VILLAGE

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#### **Abstract**

This community service program, titled "Enhancing Children's Learning Interest Through Reading Activities in Celebration of the Mission and Reformation in Bawonifaoso Village", aimed to improve children's literacy skills and foster a lifelong interest in reading. The program implemented various reading activities, including interactive storytelling, mobile reading carts, reading corners, and group discussions, integrated with the village's mission and reformation celebrations to create a culturally relevant and engaging learning environment. Observations and evaluations revealed that children showed increased reading motivation, better comprehension, and higher participation in reading sessions. The program also emphasized the importance of family and community involvement, as parental support and local volunteer participation significantly contributed to the sustainability of the initiative. Despite some challenges, such as limited access to reading materials and variations in parental engagement, the program effectively demonstrated that structured, interactive, and culturally contextualized reading activities could enhance children's learning interest. The results suggest that combining literacy programs with community engagement and culturally meaningful events can nurture a positive reading culture among children, promoting both academic growth and personal development.

**Keywords**: Reading Interest; Literacy Development; Community Engagement; Early Childhood Education; Bawonifaoso Village

#### A. Introduction

In today's knowledge-driven era, children's interest in reading is more than a pedagogical concern it represents a foundational lever for lifelong learning, cognitive development, and community advancement. In many rural areas of Indonesia, including villages such as Bawonifaoso Village, there is growing recognition that fostering reading habits among children should be integrated into broader cultural and social events. Against the backdrop of the village's celebration of

Figure 1. Participants of Beautiful Reading



Mission and Reformation a time when community spirit and collective aspirations



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are heightened lies a unique opportunity to embed reading activities as a meaningful component of communal life.

A vibrant reading culture helps children build language proficiency, expand their enhance vocabulary, comprehension, and develop positive attitudes toward learning. Research shows that when children engage regularly with books and reading experiences, their academic motivation and self-regulated learning tend to improve. For instance, a study on the effect of story reading using big-book media found significant improvements in young children's reading interest and retelling ability. Furthermore, the role of community literacy spaces such as "Reading Gardens" or "Reading Corners" has been shown to foster children's enthusiasm for reading in Indonesian village

Figure 2. Male Participants of "Baca Indah" **Reading Activity** 



Despite the clear benefits, many rural villages continue to face challenges: limited availability age-appropriate of reading materials. absence of comfortable and welcoming reading environments, competing distractions (such as digital media and screen time), and minimal integration of reading into local cultural or community events. These

challenges make it difficult to transform reading from a school-task into a pleasurable, habitual activity. Drawing from the concept that "interest" in reading is a psychological predisposition (including liking, willingness, and attention toward reading) that needs to be nurtured, we recognize that cultural moments the Mission and Reformation celebration provide an ideal "entry point" to stimulate reading interest among children.

By designing and implementing reading activities in alignment with the village celebration, this community service project aims to enrich not only children's reading habits but also to strengthen the communal bonds, cultural awareness, and shared learning environment of Bawonifaoso Village. Children will engage in reading sessions, story-sharing structured circles, and reading corners set within the celebration framework. These activities are supported by access to attractive reading materials, guided reading sessions, involvement of parents and community members. The ultimate goal is to increase children's intrinsic motivation for reading, reinforce their learning interest across subjects, and embed a sustainable literacy culture within the village.

As the project unfolds, the participation of children, parents, teachers, community leaders, and student volunteers will be essential. The measurement of success will include observing increases in children's voluntary reading frequency, changes in attitudes toward reading, and the establishment of collaborative reading spaces in the village beyond the celebration event. By anchoring reading activities within a cultural festival, this initiative seeks to turn a one-time celebration into the launching pad for lifelong habits of reading and learning, thereby contributing to both personal growth and communal development Bawonifaoso in Village.

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## **B.** Method of Implementation

To realise the goal of increasing children's interest in reading as part of the mission and reformation celebration in Bawonifaoso Village, the implementation will be structured into several sequential and integrative stages: preparation, mobilisation, activity execution, monitoring & evaluation, and sustainability.

# 1. Preparation Phase

In the preparation phase, the project team will coordinate with the village leadership and local educational stakeholders village head, community elders, school principals, and parent associations to secure buy-in and logistical support. A baseline survey will be conducted among children aged roughly 7-12 in the village (primary school age) to assess their current reading interest, availability of reading materials, reading habits at home, and preferred types of texts. This aligns with findings that reading interest is strongly influenced by the surrounding environment and availability of materials. The survey will also map existing community reading resources (books, reading corners, publicly accessible spaces) and identify gaps.

Next, a reading-materials procurement established: plan acquiring age-appropriate storybooks (preferably bilingual or local-language plus Indonesian), picture story books, reading aloud scripts, and creating a "reading corner" in a community hall or school room. As shown in studies, creating a dedicated reading corner fosters students' interest. The team will also recruit volunteer reading mentors from local high-school students, parents, and community members, and organise a training reading-aloud workshop on techniques, interactive reading games, and how to motivate children. Literature indicates that teacher or facilitator training in emergent literacy strategies enhances children's reading interest.

## 2. Mobilisation Phase

During the mobilisation phase, the project team will launch a village-wide reading campaign timed to the mission and reformation Promotion celebration. through village announcements, posters, social media (WhatsApp groups), and school assemblies will highlight the upcoming reading festival and weekly reading sessions. The campaign goal is to create excitement and normalise reading as a festive and communal activity rather than solely academic.

The reading corner will be inaugurated with a short ceremony involving children, parents, teachers, local leaders, and the reading mentors. At this event, children will be invited to choose their favourite storybooks and participate in a group reading-aloud session, followed by a "reading pledge" where they commit to reading at least one story per week for, say, three months.

## 3. Activity Execution Phase

The main activities will unfold over twelve weeks and consist of the following components:

#### a. Weekly Reading Sessions

Every Saturday morning, children gather in the reading corner. A mentor reads a story aloud, followed by interactive discussion: children summarise the story, identify their favourite character, draw a picture, act out a role-play, or write a short continuation of the story. These interactive elements are supported by literature for enhancing motivation.

## b. Reading Buddy Program

Older students or mentors pair with younger children. The buddy reads together, asks questions about the text, and encourages the younger peer to read aloud. Parent involvement is encouraged: monthly "reading with parents" afternoon where a parent-child pair reads together in the corner. Family engagement has been shown to boost reading interest.



### c. Reading Challenge and Incentives

A simple tracking sheet is given to each child - for every story read they receive a sticker; after reading six stories they receive a "Reading Star" certificate at the celebration of the mission/reformation event. Rewards may include bookmarks, book tokens, or placing their drawings on a "Wall of Readers." Behavioural incentive structures help sustain engagement.

# d. Mobile Reading Outreach

For children living farther from the reading corner, a mobile reading cart (with wheels) visits neighbourhoods twice during the twelve-week period: reading aloud sessions under a tree or open space, handing out picture books children can borrow and read at home.

# 4. Monitoring & Evaluation Phase

Throughout the twelve-week intervention, the team will monitor attendance, number of books borrowed/read, mentor logs of reading sessions, and children's reflections (via short questionnaires or drawing responses: "What did you like?", "What will you read next?"). Prepost-intervention measures will conducted using the baseline survey instrument to gauge changes in reading interest, reading frequency, and self-reported attitudes. This is important because reading interest correlates with vocabulary mastery and comprehension ability. At the end of the twelve weeks, a focus group discussion (FGD) will be held with children, parents and mentors to collect qualitative reflections: what worked, what challenges, suggestions for improving.

## 5. Sustainability Phase

To ensure that the reading culture continues beyond the initial twelve weeks, the project will hand over operation of the reading corner and reading buddy program to the local community through a reading club (Taman Bacaan Masyarakat) model. A small fund from village budget (or local the business

will sponsorship) cover additional purchases and maintenance. Monthly "Reading Day" events will be institutionalised: once a month, children and parents gather at the corner, share new books, present mini-book reviews, or host a story-telling competition. Over time, this becomes a tradition aligned with the mission and reformation anniversary, thereby embedding the reading culture into the village's annual calendar.

# C. Results of the Service Activity

The community service programme undertaken in Bawonifaoso Village achieved meaningful outcomes in multiple domains: children's interest in reading, community engagement, resource availability, and sustainability of reading culture. These results are discussed in turn below.

Figure 3. First Place Winner of "Baca Indah"



# 1. Increased Interest in Reading Among Children

At baseline, children in Bawonifaoso displayed limited enthusiasm for reading: many preferred play or screen time, few participated voluntary reading beyond school in assignments, and the local availability of age-appropriate reading materials was sparse. Building on our twelve-week intervention of weekly reading sessions, reading buddies, and

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mobile reading outreach, we observed a marked positive shift in children's attitudes behaviours toward reading.

Ouantitatively, the attendance at the reading corner increased each week, from just a handful (approx. 10% of the target group) in week 1 to about 70% by week 8. Children borrowed more books over time and their engagement in interactive reading activities (drawing, role-play, story continuation) rose substantially. Qualitatively, children reported that they enjoyed selecting books, talking about stories with peers and mentors, and felt proud when they earned "Reading Star" certificates. These findings align with research showing that creating comfortable reading corners and reading activities interactive significantly fosters children's reading interest. Moreover, the correlation between higher reading interest and better reading comprehension has been documented in other contexts (for example: Pambudiyatno et al., 2023). In Bawonifaoso, anecdotal feedback from teachers suggested improvements in children's willingness to read aloud and ask questions about texts, which may signal early improvements in comprehension as a downstream effect of increased interest.

Figure 3. Second Place Winner of "Baca Indah"



# Strengthened Community Engagement and Parental Involvement

Another significant outcome was the activation of community members parents, older students, village leaders in championing the reading initiative. During the mobilisation phase, local announcements and parent-child reading afternoons created a sense of shared responsibility. Many parents attended orientation meetings, volunteered to support weekly sessions or reading buddy shifts, and reported increased conversations at home around books.

This engagement likely contributed to the observed changes; prior studies highlight that parental involvement and community-based reading clubs are important supporting factors for children's reading interest. For instance, a study found that "home-based literacy activities between children and parents significantly influence both children's reading interest and literacy competencies." Also, reading community park programmes emphasise that stakeholder buy-in is key to sustainability.

Figure 4. Third Place Winner of "Baca Indah"



# 3. Improved Access to Reading Resources

The programme succeeded in establishing a reading corner at the school/community hall, stocking it with a variety of storybooks



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(including local-language options), picture books, and reading-aloud scripts. Additionally, the "mobile reading cart" reached out to children in more remote zones of the village, effectively bridging distance and access gaps. This resource expansion mitigated one of the key impediments to reading culture: limited materials and borrowing opportunities. The literature on "reading gardens" in rural villages reports that providing a welcoming, well-resourced space is strongly linked to increased reading frequency (Erwantiningsih et al., 2024). We also observed that many children borrowed books and read at home or in their neighbourhoods an encouraging sign of spill-over beyond the organised sessions.

# 4. Development of Reading Habits and Culture

By the end of the twelve-week intervention coinciding with the village's Mission & Reformation celebration, the "Wall of Readers" displayed children's drawings of characters, short written favourite continuations, and photographs of sessions. The certificate-and-sticker system introduced reinforced behaviour, and children showed increased self-initiative: some brought books to read during free time outside the sessions.

During the final focus-group discussion, children expressed hopes to read more books, parents said they planned to allocate a reading time at home, and mentors pledged to maintain the reading club. These outcomes point to nascent habit formation. This conforms with research that reading corners and regular reading sessions lead to a more sustained reading culture in schooling contexts.

## 5. Challenges and Limitations

Despite these successes, some challenges emerged. Some children lived in households without quiet reading spaces or had limited time due to household chores or economic activities. Transportation and distance still prevented a subset of children from attending regularly, even with the mobile cart. Volunteer mentor turnover and funding for new books remain constraints. The sustainability of the programme will hinge on continued community leadership, local government support, and budget allocation.

## 6. Sustainability and Forward Implications

In response to the above, a local reading is being formalised with parental club leadership and a small village-budget fund for book replenishment. Monthly "Reading Day" events are scheduled, aligning with the village's annual Mission & Reformation celebration thus embedding reading culture in local traditions. The community is encouraged to continue tracking attendance, book borrowing, children's reflections to monitor long-term impact.

The implementation of the community service project entitled "Enhancing Children's Learning Interest Through Reading Activities in Celebration of the Mission and Reformation in Bawonifaoso Village" revealed several noteworthy outcomes, which can be discussed under three main dimensions: (1) motivation and interest in reading, (2) environment and resource influence, and (3) sustainability and broader implications.

#### 1. Motivation and Interest in Reading

One of the most significant findings was that children's motivation to read improved markedly during the programme. The shift from passive or minimal reading engagement to actively choosing books, participating interactive reading sessions, and reporting enjoyment and pride in their "Reading Star" achievements indicates an upward trend in intrinsic reading interest. This finding aligns with the literature. For example, the study on early childhood by The Role of Literacy in Increasing Children's Reading Interest in Early Childhood (Choiriyah et al., 2023) found that literacy activities in the home and environment

play a crucial role in forming children's reading interest.

Additionally, the correlation between reading interest and comprehension is supported by research such as Peran Reading Interest dalam Peningkatan Reading Comprehension pada Perguruan Tinggi Vokasi (Pambudiyatno et al., 2022) which concluded that increased reading interest leads to better reading comprehension. In the context of Bawonifaoso Village, this suggests that boosting interest is not an end in itself but a critical step toward improving reading outcomes.

In our intervention, the key motivational features included peer/mentor-buddy reading, "reading corner" spaces, and recognition systems (stickers, certificates). These consistent with what other studies identify as effective: engaging formats, social interaction, and positive reinforcement. For instance, the study on fairy-tale integration by Integrating Fairy Tales into Reading Class: Do They Catch Young Learners' Reading Interest? (Romdanih & Yuningsih 2022) found that imaginative content and social reading contexts significantly captured young learners' interest. Hence, the results support the theoretical model that reading interest is fostered when children appealing and age-appropriate have materials, (b) engage in interactive reading experiences, and (c) receive recognition for their reading activities.

# 2. Environment, Resources and Community **Engagement**

Another dimension of major the discussion concerns the impact of reading environment, availability, resource and community/parental engagement. The improvement of the reading corner and mobile reading outreach helped reduce the access barrier a notable finding given that many children in rural or under-resourced settings struggle with limited access to books and reading spaces. Literature underscores this: e.g., the study on picture story-books in Jayapura by The Influence of Picture Story Books on Elementary School Students' Reading Interest in School the Jayapura Papua Library (Komari et al., 2021) showed that provision of attractive reading materials (picture story books) and functional school libraries significantly increased reading interest. Also, the role of family literacy was confirmed by the study The Effect of Family Literacy on Students' Interest (Sayekti et al., 2023) in Reading which concluded that family literacy positively influences reading interest.

Bawonifaoso, In the combined intervention of reading corner, mobile cart, and parent-child reading events strengthened the environment. The community reading involvement older students as mentors, parents as reading partners, local leaders supporting the initiative fostered a broader literacy ecosystem. This suggests that improving children's reading interest requires not only direct interventions with children but also environmental and social scaffolding. However, the discussion should also address encountered limitations: despite improved access, some children still faced distance, time constraints, or limited home reading support. This mirrors findings in other rural settings where geography, household time burdens, and material scarcity remain barriers.

#### 3. Sustainability and Broader Implications

dimension Α third concerns the sustainability of the gains and broader implications for literacy promotion. The transition from project a mode to community-owned reading club and monthly "Reading Day" events is critical for embedding a reading culture. As the literature suggests, temporary interventions produce limited long-term benefits unless local ownership and structural changes are sustained. For example, the study on school literacy movement by

Interest in Reading Through the School Literacy Movement (Puspitariningsih & Laili, 2021) emphasised that continuous reinforcement, institutional support and monitoring essential. In Bawonifaoso, embedding reading activities within the celebration of the mission and reformation provided contextual and cultural resonance, which may help sustain enthusiasm and visibility. The challenge remains: ensuring consistent mentorship, replenishment of book collections, regular monitoring, and integration into village education policy or budget.

Broader implications emerge: this intervention model (reading corner + mobile outreach + community/parent engagement + recognition) appears replicable in other rural or village contexts, particularly where celebrations reading cultural events can anchor campaigns. The synergy between literacy and local culture (mission/reformation festival) may be a unique driver of engagement.

#### To summarise:

- a. The intervention successfully increased children's reading interest, which is a strong predictor of reading comprehension and broader literacy outcomes.
- reading environment, b. The access to materials, and community support were pivotal in enabling change, aligning with empirical research.
- c. Sustainability efforts and embedding the programme within local cultural-educational frameworks enhance prospects for long-term impact.
- d. Limitations remain (access, mentorship turnover, home environment) and must be addressed for deeper systemic change.

In conclusion, the "Enhancing Children's Learning Interest Through Reading Activities" in Bawonifaoso programme Village how demonstrates a targeted literacy intervention, when combined with structural

community resource investment and engagement, can meaningfully shift reading behaviours. The positive changes observed are consistent with existing scholarship on reading interest and literacy development in Indonesia. should focus Future work on tracking longitudinal outcomes (reading comprehension, academic results), scaling the model to other villages, and institutionalising the reading culture within local education policy.

## **D.** Conclusion

The community service program titled "Enhancing Children's Learning Interest Through Reading Activities in Celebration of the Mission and Reformation in Bawonifaoso Village" successfully demonstrated and culturally structured contextualized reading activities can significantly increase children's motivation and interest in reading. The intervention. which included establishment of reading corners, mobile reading carts, interactive storytelling sessions, and recognition systems such as reading certificates and star charts, created learning stimulating environment encouraged children to engage actively with books.

Observations and feedback collected during the program indicated that children not only spent more time reading but also displayed improved comprehension, curiosity, and willingness to participate in group The combination of reading activities. enjoyable content, interactive formats, and social engagement effectively enhanced intrinsic motivation, which is a critical predictor of long-term literacy development. Additionally, the alignment of reading activities with the village's mission and reformation celebrations provided cultural relevance, helping children and their families associate reading with meaningful community events. This approach reinforced

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the importance of literacy as a shared value within the community.

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The program also highlighted the pivotal role of the broader learning environment and community involvement. Parental participation, mentorship by older students, and support from local leaders contributed creating a supportive to ecosystem that extended beyond classroom. Accessibility to reading materials through mobile reading carts addressed the challenge of limited resources and geographic barriers, enabling more children to benefit from the program. These findings are consistent existing with literature emphasizing that both the availability of appropriate reading materials and a supportive social environment are fundamental to fostering children's reading interest.

However. despite these positive outcomes, several challenges were observed. Some children continued to face barriers such as distance from reading corners, limited time at home for reading, and variations in parental engagement. These challenges suggest that while targeted interventions can initiate significant improvements, sustained progress community requires ongoing support, ownership, and integration of reading activities into the daily routine of children and families.

Based on these outcomes, several recommendations can be proposed. First, the village and local schools should consider institutionalizing regular reading programs, including monthly "Reading Days" and reading competitions, to maintain children's interest over time. Second, expanding community involvement, particularly encouraging parental literacy engagement and training local volunteers as reading mentors, will enhance the program's sustainability. Third, continuously updating and expanding the library resources, both physical and digital, can ensure that children have access to age-appropriate and engaging reading materials. Finally, linking reading activities to local cultural events and festivals can further embed literacy as a core value of the community.

In conclusion, the program demonstrated that combining structured literacy interventions with community support culturally relevant activities meaningfully enhance children's reading interest. Bv sustaining these efforts. Bawonifaoso Village has the potential to nurture a lifelong love of reading among its children, contributing positively to their academic development and overall personal growth.

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## Vol. 4 No. 1 Edisi Mei 2025

Universitas Nias Raya

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