

***ANALYSIS OF SILENT READING BOOK CLUB'S ROLE IN DEVELOPING
COMMUNITY READING INTEREST AND LITERACY***

**ANALISIS PERAN KELOMPOK MEMBACA BUKU TANPA SUARA DALAM
MENGEMBANGKAN MINAT MEMBACA DAN LITERASI MASYARAKAT**

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Abstrak

Studi ini meneliti *Silent Reading Book Club* "Baca di Bandung", yang berfokus pada perannya dalam meningkatkan minat membaca dan mempromosikan literasi masyarakat melalui inisiatif akar rumput. Metode kualitatif deskriptif digunakan untuk memberikan pemahaman mendalam tentang pengalaman peserta dan faktor kontekstual yang mempengaruhi keberhasilan program. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan enam peserta yang dipilih secara sengaja, pengamatan langsung terhadap kegiatan klub, dan analisis dokumentasi media terkait seperti tampilan 2data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Triangulasi sumber memastikan validitas dan keandalan temuan dengan mereferensikan silang data dari wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa klub menumbuhkan motivasi intrinsik untuk membaca dengan menciptakan lingkungan yang mendukung dan bebas penilaian sambil menjembatani kesenjangan generasi dan profesional. Penggunaan ruang publik dan model yang digerakkan oleh peserta menyoroti pentingnya visibilitas dan kemampuan beradaptasi dalam promosi literasi. Tantangan seperti hambatan logistik dan aksesibilitas diidentifikasi, dengan peserta menyarankan integrasi alat digital dan format hibrida untuk meningkatkan inklusivitas dan keterlibatan. Studi ini menggarisbawahi potensi transformatif program literasi akar rumput dan memberikan wawasan yang dapat ditindaklanjuti untuk merancang model yang dapat diskalakan dan dapat disesuaikan.

Kata Kunci: Inisiatif Akar Rumput; Literasi Komunitas; Klub Buku Senyap; Minat Membaca, Promosi Literasi

Abstract

This study examines the Silent Reading Book Club "Baca di Bandung," focusing on its role in enhancing reading interest and promoting community literacy through grassroots initiatives. Descriptive qualitative method was employed to provide an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and the contextual factors influencing the program's success. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with six purposively selected participants, direct observations of the club's activities, and documentation analysis of related media such as 2data display, and conclusion drawing. Triangulation of sources ensured the validity and reliability of

findings by cross-referencing data from interviews, observations, and documentation. Findings reveal that the club fosters intrinsic motivation to read by creating a supportive, judgment-free environment while bridging generational and professional divides. Its use of public spaces and participant-driven model highlights the importance of visibility and adaptability in literacy promotion. Challenges such as logistical barriers and accessibility were identified, with participants suggesting the integration of digital tools and hybrid formats to enhance inclusivity and engagement. This study underscores the transformative potential of grassroots literacy programs and provides actionable insights for designing scalable and adaptable models.

Keywords: *Community Literacy; Grassroots Initiative; Literacy Promotion; Reading Interest; Silent Book Club*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is widely regarded as a pivotal activity for intellectual and cultural development, serving as a gateway to knowledge acquisition, critical thinking, and emotional growth. Despite its acknowledged importance, the prevalence of reading has declined in recent decades, largely influenced by the proliferation of digital media and the subsequent shift in recreational habits. Addressing this decline necessitates innovative and inclusive strategies that reinvigorate interest in reading and foster communal engagement (Kobasah & Nurhayati, 2024; Nurhayati et al., 2020). Silent Reading Book Clubs have emerged as one such innovative approach, blending the individual act of reading with the collective benefits of community interaction.

The Silent Reading Book Club “Baca di Bandung” exemplifies this model by creating a unique space where reading is celebrated as both a personal and social activity. Unlike traditional book clubs, which focus on structured discussions and literary analysis, Silent Book Clubs prioritize uninterrupted reading in a shared space, fostering focus and mindfulness. Conducted in open and serene environments like parks, “Baca di Bandung” creates an atmosphere of tranquility that enhances participants' reading experiences. Additionally, it serves as a platform for community members to connect over shared interests, thereby strengthening social ties and cultivating a culture of mutual support. The importance of community-based literacy initiatives has been extensively explored in the academic literature. Research indicates that such programs play a critical role in promoting reading habits, enhancing cognitive abilities, and addressing literacy disparities (Majid & Nurhayati, 2020; Nur’aeni et al., 2023; Nurhayati et al., 2020). For example, Studies advocate for literacy as a tool for empowerment and liberation, emphasizing the role of communal education in fostering critical consciousness (Agustino, 2019; Nurhayati, Musa, et al., 2021; Nurhayati & Falah, 2020). This perspective underscores the transformative potential of reading programs in addressing systemic inequalities. Similarly, Nur’aeni and Nurhayati (2023) examine the effectiveness of community-driven literacy programs, emphasizing their role in promoting lifelong learning and reducing educational disparities. Their findings highlight how collaborative and inclusive approaches can overcome barriers to literacy, particularly in marginalized populations.

Further studies such as those by Andersen (2022) highlights the psychosocial benefits of group reading activities, demonstrating that shared reading experiences reduce stress levels,

enhance emotional well-being, and build social connections. These findings underscore the dual impact of reading initiatives: they contribute to individual development while simultaneously fostering community cohesion. The role of informal literacy initiatives, such as Silent Reading Book Clubs, has gained attention in recent years. Elena et al. (2020) explore Silent books increased motivation towards books and activated cognitive precursors in Spanish kindergarten children, thereby improving both personal growth and social interaction, identifying their potential to foster inclusivity and adaptability in dynamic urban settings.

The Silent Reading Book Club model diverges from traditional book clubs by prioritizing the act of reading over structured discussions, offering a flexible and judgment-free environment. This unique approach is particularly effective in addressing the declining interest in reading amidst digital distractions (Schüller-Zwierlein et al., 2024). Research highlights the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation and creating supportive communities to counteract the pervasive influence of technology on leisure activities (Aminah et al., 2021; Astuti & Nurhayati, 2022; Majid & Nurhayati, 2020; Nurhayati, 2024). Studies also emphasize the impact of environmental factors on reading habits, underscoring the value of serene and accessible spaces in enhancing focus and motivation (Kobasah & Nurhayati, 2024; Nur'aeni et al., 2023).

Despite these advancements, current research predominantly focuses on institutionalized literacy programs, such as those led by schools and libraries, leaving informal, participant-driven initiatives underexplored. This gap in the literature highlights the need for localized studies that examine the unique challenges and opportunities associated with grassroots literacy initiatives. By situating “Baca di Bandung” within this broader discourse, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how grassroots initiatives can foster both individual and collective growth. It emphasizes the dual role of Silent Reading Book Clubs in enhancing individual literacy and fostering community bonds, addressing both cognitive and societal dimensions of reading. The novelty of this research lies in its focus on a culturally embedded, participant-driven literacy initiative within Indonesia. Unlike formal literacy programs characterized by hierarchical structures and standardized objectives, “Baca di Bandung” operates with minimal formal oversight, relying on the intrinsic motivation and organic participation of its members. This decentralized approach not only aligns with the socio-cultural dynamics of Bandung but also offers a replicable model for other urban communities seeking to foster literacy in innovative ways. Additionally, the study sheds light on the significance of contextual factors, such as cultural preferences and urban infrastructure, in shaping the success of grassroots literacy movements.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method to understand and explain a phenomenon within a specific context by collecting data in the form of narratives, images, and descriptive tables (Iswahyudi et al., 2023; Nurhayati, Kurnianta, et al., 2024). The qualitative approach provided insights into community perspectives and behaviors, enabling an in-depth exploration of the role played by the Silent Book Club “Baca di Bandung.” The researcher acted as the primary instrument for data collection, observation, and analysis, ensuring a direct and immersive engagement with the phenomenon under study. This approach allowed for a rich and nuanced description of the Silent Book Club’s influence on fostering a sustainable reading culture within the Bandung community.

Data were collected through interviews with participants who were purposefully selected to ensure the acquisition of detailed and relevant information. The interviews provided insights into participants' experiences and perceptions of the activities organized by the Silent Book Club. In addition, direct observations were conducted during events to capture the dynamics of the activities, including the registration process, the implementation of the events, and the post-event interactions. These observations offered a holistic understanding of the club's operations and its engagement with the community. Supplementary documentation, including photographs, videos, and social media content from the Silent Book Club's Instagram account (@bacadibandung), was analyzed to enrich the contextual understanding of the activities. The research was conducted at Taman Balai Kota Bandung (Taman Badak) located at Jl. Wastukencana No.2, Babakan Ciamis, Kec. Sumur Bandung, Kota Bandung, West Java. The observation period spanned from March to December 2024, with interviews conducted on December 7, 2024. This timeframe allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the club's seasonal and event-specific activities.

The qualitative data analysis employed systematic stages to ensure a rigorous and thorough exploration of the collected information. The first stage, data reduction, involved summarizing and focusing the data gathered from interviews, observations, and documentation. This process aimed to distill the information to its most relevant elements, aligning it with the research objectives and reducing the complexity inherent in unstructured data. The second stage, data presentation, organized the summarized data into coherent narratives. This facilitated the identification of relationships, patterns, categories, and findings, highlighting the Silent Book Club's role in enhancing community literacy and reading interest. Conclusions were drawn by interpreting the analyzed data to uncover significant findings and relate them to the research questions. The final stage involved data triangulation, which integrated multiple sources and methods of data collection to validate the findings.

DISCUSSIONS

The empirical data gathered from participants of the Silent Book Club "Baca di Bandung" was analyzed to identify three key themes: the enhancement of reading interest, the promotion of community literacy, and the challenges and opportunities for sustainability. These themes reflect the multifaceted impact of the club in fostering a vibrant reading culture while addressing barriers to participation.

Enhancement of Reading Interest

Participants consistently emphasized how the Silent Book Club revitalized their enthusiasm for reading and fostered sustained engagement with books. Respondents noted that the inclusive and judgment-free atmosphere of the club created a safe space to explore diverse genres and develop new literary interests. One participant, a 21-year-old student, stated, "Joining the Silent Book Club made reading a daily habit for me. The support and encouragement I received from other members kept me accountable and motivated. I even started exploring genres I hadn't considered before, like self-improvement and romance." Similarly, a 23-year-old professional observed, "The outdoor settings were so calming and focused. It felt like I was reconnecting with books as a way to relax and grow personally. It was refreshing to step away from distractions like social media." The structured yet flexible format of the club was instrumental in helping participants integrate reading into their routines. For instance, a 30-year-old healthcare worker reported, "I used to struggle to finish books, but the consistency of these sessions helped me read

more efficiently. Seeing others engrossed in their books inspired me to stay committed." Another participant, a 25-year-old marketer, highlighted the club's role in reducing digital distractions, describing it as "a necessary antidote to the overwhelming presence of social media." The focus on personal growth through reading also revealed a ripple effect in participants' lives. Several respondents noted how their improved reading habits inspired those around them, including family members and colleagues, to pick up books or inquire about the club. One participant reflected, "My friends and siblings have started asking me about the books I read at the club. It's inspiring to see them get interested in reading because of what I share."

The Silent Book Club "Baca di Bandung" effectively revitalized participants' enthusiasm for reading, aligning with studies that emphasize the importance of structured yet flexible reading environments. Research by Munoz et.al. (2020) highlights how communal reading initiatives can sustain individuals' motivation by providing accountability and reducing barriers to engagement. The club's success in transforming reading into a daily habit for many participants underscores the critical role of peer support and consistent, distraction-free spaces in fostering intrinsic motivation. Participants' descriptions of their improved reading habits, such as reading daily or completing books more efficiently, demonstrate the impact of the club's structured yet flexible approach. This finding is consistent with theories of habit formation, which suggest that consistent engagement in supportive environments can transform behaviors into routines (Abdullah et al., 2024; Nurhayati, Haluti, et al., 2024; Nurhayati & Lahagu, 2024). The choice of serene outdoor venues also played a pivotal role, creating spaces conducive to focus and reflection, thereby enhancing participants' reading experiences.

Furthermore, the ripple effects of enhanced reading habits, as reported by participants, align with findings by Colgate and Ginn (2016), who observed that individual reading behavior often influences social circles. Several participants noted that their engagement with the club inspired friends and family members to inquire about or adopt similar reading habits, showcasing the club's broader societal influence. These ripple effects underscore the wider cultural impact of grassroots literacy initiatives, reflecting their potential to create enduring changes in reading practices within broader communities. The intrinsic motivation cultivated through these activities also illustrates the psychological benefits of shared reading spaces (Nurhayati, Wibowo, et al., 2024). For many participants, the club provided not just a place to read but a supportive community that validated their literary pursuits. The alignment between individual autonomy in choosing reading material and collective encouragement demonstrates a nuanced approach to fostering lifelong literacy habits.

Promotion of Community Literacy

Beyond individual reading habits, the Silent Book Club served as a platform for collective learning and social interaction, significantly contributing to community literacy. Respondents frequently mentioned the value of exchanging book recommendations and engaging in discussions with fellow participants. A 49-year-old entrepreneur reflected, "Through the club, I was introduced to so many new authors and genres. It inspired me to build my own library and share books with my family. The recommendations from other members were invaluable."

Similarly, a makeup artist in their fifties noted, "The club's activities bridged generational gaps, creating a shared space for participants from diverse backgrounds to connect through a common passion for reading." This dynamic underscores the club's potential as a model for

intergenerational literacy advocacy. Another informant commented, "Reading has always felt like a solitary activity to me, but this club made it social. Discussing books with others brought new perspectives and made the experience much richer." The Silent Book Club also demonstrated its capacity to normalize reading as a social activity, counteracting perceptions of reading as an isolated or solitary endeavor. A 23-year-old therapist highlighted, "The communal setting made reading more engaging and enjoyable. It fostered an appreciation for books as tools for both personal enrichment and community building." These findings align with theories on the role of shared intellectual activities in strengthening social cohesion and promoting lifelong learning. Moreover, the club's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility extended to its choice of venues and the organization of themed sessions. Participants noted that the creative use of public parks and cultural spaces not only made the sessions enjoyable but also emphasized the importance of integrating literacy into everyday life. As one participant remarked, "The public spaces we use for reading make the activity visible to others. It's a subtle but powerful way of encouraging more people to pick up a book and join us."

The Silent Reading Book Club's emphasis on shared intellectual activities reflects theory on the psychosocial benefits of communal learning (Dasgupta et al., 2022; Qolamani & Mohammed, 2023). By providing a platform for intergenerational and cross-disciplinary interaction, the club successfully promoted community literacy. Participants' experiences of exchanging ideas and recommendations reveal the club's role as a catalyst for intellectual curiosity and lifelong learning. The normalization of reading as a collective and enjoyable activity challenges traditional notions of reading as a solitary pursuit, aligning with research on the social dimensions of literacy programs (Kobasah & Nurhayati, 2024; Nurhayati, Musa, et al., 2021). The use of public spaces further enhances the club's accessibility and visibility. Freire's concept of education as a community-driven and participatory process resonates with the club's practice of holding sessions in open, shared spaces (Khairunnisa et al., 2024; Nurhayati, Hidayat, et al., 2021; Rahmat et al., 2024). Participants highlighted how these locations not only made reading enjoyable but also served as subtle invitations for onlookers to engage in literacy activities. This practice underscores the club's role in integrating literacy into public life and fostering a culture of reading that extends beyond its immediate members. Additionally, the club's ability to bridge generational and professional divides demonstrates its inclusivity and adaptability. Participants frequently mentioned the value of interacting with individuals from different backgrounds, which enriched their perspectives and fostered a deeper appreciation for diverse literary genres. These findings align with theories on intergenerational learning, which emphasize the mutual benefits of shared educational experiences across age groups (Nurhayati, 2024; Nurhayati, Tersta, et al., 2024; Nurhayati, Wibowo, et al., 2024). Furthermore, these interactions underscore the importance of communal literacy in cultivating empathy and understanding across diverse demographics (Nurhayati, Dina, et al., 2024). The active promotion of reading in communal settings also challenges stereotypes about literacy being confined to academic or institutional spaces. By normalizing reading in everyday environments, the Silent Book Club creates a visible narrative around the joy and accessibility of books. This visibility is instrumental in breaking barriers to participation and inspiring curiosity among the wider community, further cementing the club's role in literacy advocacy.

Challenges and Opportunities for the Program's Sustainability

While the Silent Book Club has achieved notable successes, participants identified logistical and practical challenges that must be addressed to ensure its long-term sustainability. Scheduling conflicts were a recurring issue, particularly for participants balancing professional, academic, and family commitments. A 21-year-old student noted, "Sometimes I couldn't attend sessions because they clashed with my academic schedule. I wish there were more flexible timing or even virtual options." Accessibility was another significant barrier, with some participants expressing difficulty in reaching the venues due to distance or lack of transportation options. A 25-year-old marketer suggested, "Hosting sessions in different locations or closer to residential areas could make it easier for more people to join." Additionally, participants proposed diversifying the club's activities to maintain engagement, including thematic book discussions, exchange programs, and collaborations with local organizations.

Participants also highlighted the potential of leveraging technology and social media to enhance the club's visibility and reach. One respondent suggested, "Using social media to share book recommendations or even hosting virtual reading sessions could bring in more participants who might not be able to attend in person. It's a way to grow the community." Another participant emphasized, "Documenting the activities and sharing them online could inspire others and show how impactful this initiative is." Despite these challenges, participants expressed optimism about the club's potential for growth and innovation. Suggestions such as leveraging social media for promotion and integrating hybrid formats demonstrate an awareness of evolving societal and technological dynamics. These insights provide actionable recommendations for enhancing the inclusivity and reach of the Silent Book Club model.

The challenges faced by the Silent Reading Book Club underscore the complexities of sustaining grassroots initiatives. Scheduling conflicts and accessibility issues, as reported by participants, reflect broader barriers identified in community-based programs (Musa et al., 2022; Sarah & Nurhayati, 2024). Addressing these challenges requires innovative strategies, such as hosting sessions in multiple locations and incorporating hybrid models, as suggested by participants. For instance, virtual sessions could accommodate those unable to attend in person, ensuring that the club remains inclusive and adaptable to diverse needs (Nurhayati, Hidayat, et al., 2023; Nurmalia et al., 2022). Participants' recommendations to leverage social media and digital platforms further highlight the evolving role of technology in literacy advocacy. Milyane et al. (2023) emphasize the potential of digital tools to enhance program visibility and engagement, particularly in urban settings. By documenting activities and sharing them online, the club could inspire a broader audience and create a digital archive of its impact, further solidifying its presence in the community. Such digital integration also aligns with contemporary trends in literacy promotion, where hybrid approaches cater to both physical and virtual audiences (Nurhayati et al., 2025; Ratnawulan et al., 2025; Tiarawati et al., 2023). The suggestions for diversifying activities, such as hosting thematic discussions, book exchanges, and collaborations with local organizations, point to the importance of innovation in sustaining participant interest. These initiatives could also serve as opportunities to forge partnerships with schools, libraries, and cultural institutions, thereby expanding the club's reach and resources (Fauzi & Nurhayati, 2025). Collaborations with educational institutions, for example, could facilitate literacy programs for younger demographics,

further embedding the club's influence within the community (Moksin et al., 2024; Musa et al., 2024; Nurhayati, Qudsi, et al., 2023).

Despite logistical challenges, the Silent Reading Book Club's adaptability and participant-driven innovations underscore its potential for long-term success. The club's ability to navigate societal and technological changes while maintaining its core mission of fostering reading and community engagement highlights its resilience and relevance. Moreover, its participant-driven model, which prioritizes feedback and shared ownership, ensures that the initiative remains responsive to the evolving needs of its members. The Silent Reading Book Club "Baca di Bandung" exemplifies a successful model for enhancing reading interest and promoting community literacy. By addressing logistical challenges and embracing participant-driven innovations, the club can continue to expand its impact. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on grassroots literacy initiatives and provide actionable insights for replicating and scaling such models in diverse contexts. Furthermore, the club's emphasis on inclusivity and collaboration serves as a template for future initiatives aiming to integrate literacy into the fabric of everyday community life.

CONCLUSION

The Silent Book Club "Baca di Bandung" demonstrates the transformative potential of grassroots initiatives in revitalizing reading interest and fostering community literacy. By creating an inclusive, supportive environment, the club has successfully normalized reading as a shared activity, bridging generational and professional divides while integrating literacy into public spaces. Its participant-driven model and adaptive strategies have proven effective in sustaining engagement and inspiring broader participation. This study highlights the importance of addressing logistical challenges, such as scheduling conflicts and venue accessibility, to ensure inclusivity. Leveraging digital platforms and diversifying activities are actionable strategies to expand the club's reach and align with contemporary literacy trends. These findings emphasize the role of innovative, community-centered approaches in overcoming barriers to literacy. This research contributes to understanding how grassroots literacy programs can foster individual and community growth. The Silent Book Club offers a replicable framework for designing inclusive initiatives that integrate literacy into daily life. Policymakers, educators, and community organizers can adopt similar models to enhance access, collaboration, and visibility in literacy promotion. The club's use of public spaces underscores the value of embedding literacy activities in accessible environments, inspiring wider community engagement. Digital tools provide additional opportunities to expand reach and engage urban, digitally connected audiences. Future studies should examine the long-term effects of Silent Book Clubs on literacy and social cohesion across cultural contexts. Comparative research could explore the adaptability of this model in diverse settings. Investigating the integration of digital tools into hybrid literacy programs can also provide valuable insights into how technology complements grassroots initiatives. Intergenerational interactions within such clubs warrant further study, particularly their impact on empathy, collective learning, and cultural understanding. Longitudinal research tracking participants' reading habits and community involvement could reveal the enduring effects of initiatives like the Silent Book Club "Baca di Bandung."

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