



The Role of Family in Encouraging School-Age Children's Interest in Reading at SDN Sosak Praya Timur

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Abstract

This research aims to describe the role of the family in encouraging interest in reading in school-age children at SDN Sosak, East Praya District, Central Lombok. The background to this research is based on the low interest in reading among children in elementary schools which requires active support from the family as the first and main educational environment. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive research type. Data was collected through observation, interviews and documentation of parents, teachers and students. The research results show that the family has an important role in building children's interest in reading through various forms of action, including getting into the habit of reading at home, parental example, providing motivation, providing reading materials, and accompanying children when reading. Factors that influence interest in reading include family support, socio-economic conditions, availability of reading materials, and the role of schools. Even though there are limited facilities, the family shows a strong commitment to building a culture of literacy through simple but consistent means.

Keywords: Children, Family Roles, Interest in Reading

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan peran keluarga dalam mendorong minat baca anak usia sekolah di SDN Sosak Kecamatan Praya Timur Lombok Tengah. Latar belakang penelitian ini didasari oleh rendahnya minat baca anak di lingkungan sekolah dasar yang memerlukan dukungan aktif dari keluarga sebagai lingkungan pendidikan pertama dan utama. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi terhadap orang tua, guru, dan siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keluarga memiliki peran penting dalam membangun minat baca anak melalui berbagai bentuk tindakan, antara lain pembiasaan membaca di rumah, keteladanan orang tua, pemberian motivasi, penyediaan bahan bacaan, serta pendampingan anak saat membaca. Faktor yang memengaruhi minat baca meliputi dukungan keluarga, kondisi sosial ekonomi, ketersediaan bahan bacaan, serta peran sekolah. Meskipun terdapat keterbatasan fasilitas, keluarga menunjukkan komitmen kuat untuk membangun budaya literasi melalui cara sederhana namun konsisten.

Kata Kunci: Anak, Peran Keluarga, Minat Baca

Introduction

Education is a process that does not only take place in schools, but also starts in the family environment (Nasution, 2019). The family as the first and main educational environment has a

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fundamental role in shaping children's habits, character, and learning interests (Suhartono et al., 2024). One of the important aspects in the development of school-age children is the interest in reading, because reading is the gateway to knowledge and understanding of the world. Children who have a high interest in reading tend to show better learning achievements, critical thinking skills, and richer imagination (Sunardi et al., 2025). And the development of children's language, occurs in tandem with the intellectual development of children, when the child enters elementary school age, the child will be coordinated to learn written language. (Husairi and Suaheli 2023)

However, in reality, children's interest in reading in Indonesia is still relatively low. Data from UNESCO (2022) shows that the literacy level of the Indonesian people is still below the average of ASEAN countries (Handayani & Maknun, 2022). This low reading culture is often influenced by a lack of support from the family environment, limited access to interesting reading materials, and the dominance of digital activities that attract more attention from children (Tyaningsih et al., 2021).

The family has a strategic role in fostering children's interest in reading from an early age, both through the provision of reading materials that are appropriate for children's age, habituation of reading time together, and the example of parents in reading (Seprina et al., 2025). When children see their parents like to read, they will tend to imitate this behavior. On the other hand, a family environment that does not encourage reading activities will have an impact on children's low motivation to read (Hasan & Khosiah, 2025).

In rural areas such as East Praya District, Central Lombok, the challenges in fostering children's interest in reading are increasingly complex. Economic factors, the availability of literacy facilities, and parents' awareness of the importance of reading are obstacles that need to be studied further (Sele et al., 2024). SDN Sosak as one of the basic educational institutions in the region reflects the social conditions of the community that are still in the process of building a family literacy culture.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the role of family in encouraging reading interest in school-age children at SDN Sosak, East Praya District, Central Lombok. This research is expected to provide a real picture of the form of family involvement, the factors that affect children's reading interest, and strategies that can be applied to improve reading culture in the family environment.

By understanding the dynamics of the role of families in fostering children's interest in reading, it is hoped that the results of this research can be the basis for schools, local governments, and the community to jointly build a stronger literacy ecosystem in the Central Lombok region.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach to describe in depth the role of the family in fostering reading interest in school-age children. This approach was chosen because it is able to reveal the meaning, behavior, and experiences of families and children in the context of real life (Moleong, 2022). The research was carried out at SDN Sosak, East Praya District, Central Lombok Regency in the month, namely March to May 2025. The location was chosen purposively because

it is considered to represent the condition of rural communities with varying levels of family literacy. The research subjects consisted of 9 parents of students, 9 children in grades III–V, 2 teachers, and 1 principal who were selected by purposive sampling based on relevance to the focus of the research (Scott, 2019).

Data was collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and documentation. Interviews were used to explore family experiences, observations to look at children's reading behavior, and documentation to complement field data. Data analysis uses the model of Miles and Huberman (1996) which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data validity tests are carried out through triangulation of sources and methods, as well as member checking to informants to maintain the credibility and validity of research results.

Results and Discussion

The Form of the Role of the Family in Encouraging Children's Interest in Reading

The results of the study show that the role of the family in encouraging the reading interest of school-age children at SDN Sosak is quite significant, although it varies from one family to another. Most families understand that reading is an important foundation for a child's intellectual development, especially to broaden horizons and improve critical thinking skills. In interviews, a number of parents admitted that they realized that without encouragement from their families, children find it difficult to develop the habit of reading independently. This awareness is the main basis for the emergence of family efforts to build literacy habits at home.

The first role of the family appears to be in the habit of reading at home. Many parents read stories to their children before bedtime, invite them to read prayers together, or ask them to read a certain part of the textbook aloud. This activity not only helps children practice reading skills, but also instills the habit of reading as a fun activity. As explained by (Krisnawati, 2025) Reading habits that are done consistently in a fun context can foster a strong interest in reading from an early age.

The second role is the role of parents in reading. Children who see their parents reading newspapers, magazines, or scriptures on a regular basis tend to imitate these behaviors. In interviews, some children mentioned that they wanted to be "like Dad" or "like Mom" who loves to read. This phenomenon strengthens the view of Bandura (1986) in social learning theory that children's behavior is largely formed through the process of observation and imitation of models in the immediate environment, in this case parents (Tullah, 2020).

In addition to being an example, the family also plays the role of a facilitator. Parents try to provide reading materials that are appropriate for their child's age and interests, such as picture story books, children's religious books, or children's magazines. Although some families have economic limitations, they still try to buy books at the weekly market or borrow from the school library. This simple facilitation shows the awareness that access to reading materials is very important in building children's interest in reading.

The fourth role is to provide moral support and motivation. In many cases, children feel more enthusiastic about reading when they receive praise or attention from parents. Some families give small rewards, such as favorite foods or extra playtime, to children who are diligent in reading. This kind of emotional support has a positive effect on the child's intrinsic motivation to read (Frühwirth, 2020).

In addition, the family also plays a role in regulating conducive learning time and atmosphere. Some parents consciously reduce their time watching television or playing with their children's gadgets so that they have time to read. The family creates a daily routine, such as reading every afternoon for 15–30 minutes before studying. This habit has been shown to be effective in forming consistent patterns of reading behavior.

Finally, the family acts as a companion and guide in reading activities. Parents help children understand the meaning of reading, explain difficult words, or discuss the content of the story they read. Through this kind of interaction, children not only learn to read texts, but also learn to understand the content of reading critically. This is in line with Snow's view that emphasizes the importance of active parental involvement in the children's literacy process to develop higher-level thinking skills (Sari et al., 2024).

Factors Affecting Children's Reading Interest

Children's reading interest in SDN Sosak is influenced by several factors that interact with each other, including family support, socioeconomic conditions, availability of reading materials, the role of the school, the social environment, and technological developments. Among these factors, family support emerged as the most dominant factor. Children who received attention and guidance from their parents showed higher interest in reading than those who did not receive similar support. For example, some children say that they are diligent in reading because their parents often accompany them when reading textbooks or stories.

The second factor that has a big influence is the availability of reading materials at home. Some families at SDN Sosak have a very limited collection of books, often only in the form of school books or religious books. The lack of reading materials is the main obstacle in building a family literacy culture. Children who have access to picture storybooks at home tend to prefer to read independently. This is in line with Tanjung's (2023) opinion that the availability of interesting and age-appropriate reading materials is one of the main drivers of children's interest in reading (Tanjung, 2023).

Furthermore, the socioeconomic conditions of the family also determine the extent to which the family can support reading activities. Families with better economic conditions are generally able to buy books or provide more adequate learning facilities (Rachmania, 2020). In contrast, low-income families tend to rely on school facilities and libraries. Nonetheless, economic limitations do not necessarily hinder a child's interest in reading, as parental enthusiasm and emotional support can be an important compensation in building reading motivation.

The role of schools is also a key factor in strengthening children's interest in reading. SDN Sosak carries out a morning literacy program every day, which is a reading activity for 10-15

minutes before the lesson starts. The program received a positive response from children, who felt motivated to bring reading books from home and read them in class. According to Rahmawati and Suryadi, collaboration between schools and families in literacy activities has a significant influence on the formation of reading culture in children (Tyaningsih et al., 2021).

In addition to internal factors such as family and school, the social environment and peers also play an important role. Children often influence each other when it comes to reading interests (Dharmayanti et al., 2023). Some students stated that they love to read because they see their friends bringing interesting books to school. The exchange of reading books between friends became a positive spontaneous literacy activity. This factor shows the importance of a social ecosystem that supports reading activities outside the family environment.

Another factor that has begun to affect the children of SDN Sosak is the use of digital technology. Some children claim to enjoy reading stories from their parents' phones or watching educational videos that contain reading texts. However, some parents are worried that excessive use of gadgets can distract their children from reading printed books. Therefore, some families try to balance the use of technology with traditional reading activities so that children still have healthy reading habits.

Finally, the family's perception of reading also affects children's interest in reading. Families who view reading as an important activity for a child's future are more likely to encourage children to love reading. On the other hand, families who consider reading only as a school obligation tend to be less active in providing encouragement. These findings affirm the importance of building literacy awareness at the family level as the foundation for the formation of a reading culture in society.

Family Strategies in Fostering an Interest in Reading

Families at SDN Sosak apply various strategies to foster children's interest in reading, most of which are born from the realization that the role of the family cannot be replaced by school. The first and most common strategy is to set an example of reading. Parents try to show reading behavior at home, such as reading the Qur'an, newspapers, or children's books. This example provides a real example for children that reading is a valuable activity. As stated by Vygotsky, the child's learning process is formed through social interaction and imitation of the behavior of adults in his environment (Dewi, 2013).

The second strategy is to read stories together. Many families make reading folklore or Islamic stories a routine the night before bed. This activity not only increases children's interest in reading, but also strengthens the emotional connection between children and parents (Hanif & Mustofa, 2024). Children seem to enjoy this moment because reading is done in a relaxed and intimate atmosphere. Through these activities, children learn to understand moral values and enrich vocabulary.

The third strategy is to provide simple motivation and rewards. Some parents give compliments, small gifts, or extra playtime to children who demonstrate perseverance in reading. This form of appreciation has proven to be effective in increasing children's enthusiasm. As

explained by Deci and Ryan, extrinsic motivation given in a positive way can give rise to intrinsic motivation to continue reading without coercion (Atmaja, 2024).

The fourth strategy is the creation of a reading environment at home. Even though many families live a simple life, they still try to provide a reading corner with a small bookshelf made of used materials. Children are invited to arrange their own books and keep them neat. The existence of this small reading room fosters a sense of belonging to books and creates a more meaningful reading experience.

In addition, some families use the strategy of limiting the use of gadgets and televisions to make room for reading activities. A specific time for reading is set, for example every afternoon after taking a shower or before going to bed. These restrictions are not intended as a hard ban, but rather as a timetable that supports a balance between digital entertainment and literacy activities.

The next strategy is to associate reading activities with religious and social activities. Children are invited to read prayers, recite the Qur'an, or read announcements of school activities at the mosque. In this way, reading is no longer seen as a school assignment, but as part of everyday life (Navida et al., 2023). This strategy is effective because it associates reading with values that are close to the child's life.

Finally, the family seeks to build positive communication about reading. Parents often ask about the content of the story that the child reads, discuss the characters in the book, or ask the child to retell the content of the reading in their own language. This method not only fosters reading habits, but also trains children's critical thinking and communication skills. This communicative approach makes reading an interactive activity that enriches the relationship between parents and children.

Conclusion

This research shows that families play an important role in fostering reading interest in school-age children at SDN Sosak, East Praya District, Central Lombok. This role can be seen through the example of parents, reading habits at home, providing motivation, providing reading materials, and assisting children in reading. Factors that affect children's reading interest include family support, socioeconomic conditions, book availability, and school collaboration. Although limited facilities are still an obstacle, families show a high commitment to building a literacy culture through simple but consistent ways. Thus, the family becomes the main foundation in the formation of children's interest in reading. Strengthening cooperation between schools, parents, and the community is needed to create a sustainable literacy ecosystem and support children's development as a whole.

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