



# The Effectiveness of Utilizing the Reading House Media in Fostering Reading Interest among Early Childhood Learners

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effectiveness of utilizing *rumah baca* (reading house) media in fostering reading interest among early childhood learners. Designed as an interactive learning tool, the reading house supports both cognitive and affective development through engaging reading activities. The research was conducted at TKIT Al-Karima, located in Kubu Raya, West Kalimantan, using a descriptive quantitative approach with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The sample consisted of 15 children aged 4–5 years from class A2. Data collection involved administering a pretest, implementing the reading house media as the treatment, and conducting a posttest. The results were analyzed using a paired sample t-test via SPSS software. The analysis revealed a t-value of 4.342 at a 0.05 significance level, with the critical t-table value being 1.013. Since the calculated t-value exceeded the critical value ( $4.342 > 1.013$ ), and the significance (2-tailed) was 0.001 ( $< 0.05$ ), the findings indicate a statistically significant improvement between pretest and posttest scores. Furthermore, interviews with teachers showed that the use of the reading house media increased children's enthusiasm for reading, boosted their self-confidence, and enhanced their active participation in the learning process. These results suggest that the reading house is an effective medium for improving both reading interest and ability in early childhood education settings.

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## 1. Introduction

Early childhood education institutions (PAUD) play a vital role not only as centers for instruction but also as environments that foster comprehensive child development (Daeni, 2020). Through participation in foundational learning activities at the PAUD level, children are better equipped to handle academic demands in future stages of education. To realize this developmental goal, formal early childhood institutions such as kindergartens must be staffed with qualified educators who can deliver developmentally appropriate stimulation (Eviliyanto & Anggela, 2018). In the context of globalization, many parents tend to focus more on meeting their children's material needs, while emotional and social aspects are often neglected. As a result, children are increasingly drawn to digital devices and spend less time engaging in reading. However, fostering an interest in reading from an early age is crucial for building sustainable reading habits. When provided with suitable stimulation, support, and motivation, children can maximize their developmental potential through rich learning experiences. This can be effectively supported by incorporating learning media that are both interactive and enjoyable. Fibri et al (2019) highlight that media function as instruments that aid and enhance the learning process. In agreement, Aning Waningyu (2021) describes instructional media as tools and materials used to communicate ideas, concepts, and messages from teachers to students. Similarly, Syarqawi et al (2022) stress the importance of instructional media as essential aids for teachers in guiding students throughout the learning journey.

Instructional media act as conduits for transmitting information from educators to learners, encompassing both traditional print and modern digital forms. These tools are instrumental in fostering student motivation, promoting active participation in learning activities, and facilitating the attainment of effective learning outcomes (Tati Hamdiah & Nita Priyanti, 2023). According to Tati Hamdiah & Nita Priyanti (2023), instructional media are described as tools, intermediaries, or communication technologies—ranging from hardware to software—used within educational settings to help achieve instructional goals. Meisendi et al (2016) further clarify that instructional media serve as teaching aids that facilitate message comprehension, capture learners' attention, boost motivation, and foster better interaction between students and the material being taught. Supporting this, Syakur et al (2020) note that instructional media encompass physical resources such as books, videos, slides, and educational software that

assist in delivering content more effectively. In the context of early childhood education, Hasan et al (2021) stress the importance of using media that are not only engaging but also stimulate curiosity and creativity in young learners. Instructional media thus hold a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of early childhood learning experiences. As stated by Alifah et al (2023), appropriate media can drive children's motivation and interest, make learning more dynamic, promote active engagement, and maintain learners' focus. One important form of media is environmental media, which refers to the physical or situational contexts that influence children's development. These environments can be intentionally designed or utilized to support early learning by exposing children to spaces that contribute to their holistic growth (Khovia, 2021).

It is understood that media serve as tools to support teachers in delivering educational messages effectively (Ahmad Zaki, 2020). Story-based media that emphasize illustrations over text tend to present content that is easier for children to comprehend, while also helping them remain engaged without becoming easily bored. Vivid and colorful illustrations stimulate children's curiosity and assist in understanding the narrative content. Therefore, reading materials dominated by visual elements are essential to stimulate young learners (Okayanti et al., 2023). Although such media may appear costly or sophisticated, even simple forms of interactive media can significantly aid educators in capturing children's attention and fostering their interest in reading. Reading interest is a crucial factor in supporting educational success, particularly from an early age. A consistent reading habit helps nurture enjoyment and encourages voluntary reading behavior without coercion (Syafriana, 2020). Reading interest arises not only from curiosity but also from sustained enjoyment and habitual practice. According to Azhari et al (2020), reading interest in early childhood reflects an intrinsic motivation to read with joy and without external pressure. Thus, cultivating reading interest from an early age is a key strategy in shaping active lifelong learners. Reading is not merely an academic task, but a fundamental habit essential for developing high-quality human resources in the future.

Introducing community reading centers (*taman baca masyarakat*) during early childhood serves as a strategic initiative to nurture young children's reading interest. Early exposure to reading activities is broadly acknowledged as a means to enhance children's overall life quality, stimulate creativity, promote independence, and strengthen their future competitiveness. (Khoiruddin et al., 2017). When children develop a strong inclination toward reading, they tend to independently seek out reading materials, driven either by intrinsic motivation or external encouragement. At around 4 to 5 years of age, children begin to encounter structured learning systems while still requiring play-based experiences, as this stage marks a critical transition toward discipline and academic preparation (Yuliatun, 2018).

A keen interest in reading is a key component of academic achievement. In today's era, literacy must be complemented by a strong reading culture to address increasingly complex challenges. Nevertheless, modern children are often more engaged with digital devices than with books. Reading interest in early childhood is characterized by an internal drive and enjoyment in reading, which encourages children to read voluntarily (Alifah et al., 2023).

One effective way to cultivate this interest is by introducing interactive and engaging learning tools. Among these, the "reading house" stands out as a child-friendly, miniature reading environment that supports educators in facilitating enjoyable literacy experiences. This concept aligns with the Montessori method, which underscores the value of a well-structured and stimulating setting that enables children to explore and learn freely (Novitaria et al., 2022).

The reading house creates an inviting literacy environment where children can experience pleasure and engagement during reading activities. The development of reading interest requires intentional environmental support and should be seen not just as a cognitive task but also as an emotional experience that helps children find joy and meaning in reading (Afriani et al., 2021). Therefore, the role of the family—especially parents—is crucial as the primary environment where reading habits are shaped. This awareness must be reinforced through the collaborative support of schools and peer networks.

Children's reading interest can be understood through two main dimensions: cognitive and affective. The cognitive aspect relates to the child's developmental stage and its connection to interest, where children begin to recognize that reading is an enjoyable and beneficial activity (Syafriana, 2020). During reading, children anticipate certain benefits, which make the time spent worthwhile in relation to the satisfaction gained. Consequently, reading becomes perceived as a necessary and fulfilling activity. At this stage, children also begin to comprehend sentence structure and read with increasing fluency (Khoiruddin et al., 2017). On the other hand, the affective aspect involves the emotional responses and attitudes of children toward reading. This aspect is shaped by personal experiences and reinforced by environmental support, including from parents, teachers, and peers (Syahrial, 2019). Children who receive positive reading experiences and supportive interactions tend to exhibit a stronger interest in reading and a willingness to dedicate time specifically for this activity (Rahmiza Muzana et al., 2022). They experience enjoyment and satisfaction while reading, and are even able to express their emotional responses to the content they have read.

The acquisition of early reading abilities in young children takes place during the emergent literacy stage, a period in which they start recognizing letters, associating them with sounds, and identifying basic words. During this pre-reading phase, children are gradually introduced to reading through enjoyable and engaging experiences, while simultaneously developing foundational language understanding (Dianawati et al., 2024; Nahdi & Yunitasari, 2019). Early interaction with visual stimuli, symbols, and phonetic cues plays a crucial role in building reading preparedness (Desy, 2021). As their skills progress, children begin forming phonemic awareness by linking specific letters to their respective sounds—an essential precursor to both reading and writing. The implementation of the "Sing Song"

instructional model has proven effective in supporting children's ability to recognize letters of the alphabet (Yandhari et al., 2019). Ultimately, within the emergent reading phase, children come to comprehend that letters correspond to particular sounds, and that letter combinations form coherent, meaningful words (Simatupang & Ariani, 2022).

Fostering a child's interest in reading during their developmental years is crucial, as reading offers access to extensive knowledge and life experiences (Syaqawi et al., 2022). Interest serves as a key internal factor that must be present for optimal personal growth. Even with strong motivation, a lack of genuine interest can obstruct goal achievement. This concept is especially relevant to reading interest—without a natural inclination to read, individuals are unlikely to participate in reading activities, which are essential for information acquisition (Lubis & Azhar, 2023). Interest may be described as a compelling desire or attraction toward a specific activity. Consequently, reading interest refers to a person's willingness and enthusiasm to engage in reading (Syahrial, 2019). A variety of factors contribute to reading interest, both internal and external (Nuraeni et al., 2025). Internal factors involve intrinsic motivation, whereas external factors encompass environmental influences such as family dynamics and educational settings. As the primary environment in early life, the family has a significant role in encouraging and sustaining reading habits. Moreover, peer interactions and the broader school environment—including early childhood education institutions—play supportive roles in nurturing children's enthusiasm for reading.

Observations at TKIT Al-Karima Pontianak revealed that young children's interest in reading remains relatively low. This condition stems from the limited diversity of instructional media, insufficient access to appealing reading materials, and a learning environment that inadequately supports the development of reading habits. As a result, children often become disengaged and tend to favor physical play over literacy-related activities. Consequently, both educators and parents continue to encounter difficulties in nurturing a genuine enthusiasm for reading among early learners. In response to this issue, the researcher is motivated to conduct a study entitled “*The Effectiveness of Utilizing Reading House Media in Fostering Reading Interest in Early Childhood Learners.*”

## 2. Metode

This study applied a quantitative method with a pre-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design, which enables the evaluation of treatment effectiveness by comparing pretest and posttest results (Sugiyono, 2020). The research was conducted at TKIT Al-Karima, located in the Mawar Indah Complex, Sungai Raya District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan. The target population was students in class A2 during the 2025/2026 academic year, from which a purposive sample of 15 children was selected. The independent variable was the implementation of reading house media, while the dependent variable was early childhood reading interest. Data collection employed observation, interviews, and documentation. Research instruments included observation sheets, interview guides, pretest and posttest forms, a recording camera, and the reading house media.

**Tabel 1. Desain Penelitian One Group Pre-test Post-test**

Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
$O_1$	X	$O_2$

Keterangan :

$O_1$  : Pre-test before treatment

$O_2$  : Post-test after treatment

X : Treatment of the Experimental Group

The research will be conducted through three structured stages: pretest, treatment, and posttest. Initially, a one-time pretest will be administered to assess participants' abilities in four areas: (1) identifying animals through image recognition, (2) recognizing and naming vowel and consonant letters, (3) individually stepping forward to point at designated letters, and (4) categorizing images based on identical initial sounds. In the treatment phase, children will engage with the “Reading House” media, where they will be guided through a simulated reading experience structured as a thematic journey—beginning at the entrance on the ground floor and continuing to the second floor. This design aims to create an immersive and developmentally appropriate literacy experience. The final stage, the posttest, will be conducted to measure the impact of the intervention, focusing on participants' ability to identify animals and recognize letters. Data analysis will employ a paired sample t-test to determine statistically significant differences between pretest and posttest scores. Additionally, the validity and reliability of the research instruments will be tested using SPSS to ensure consistent and accurate measurement across repeated applications.

## 3. Results

This study aimed to explore how effective “reading house” media is in cultivating reading enthusiasm among young children. The research was conducted at TKIT Al-Karima, located within the Mawar Indah Complex, Block C, on Jalan Sungai Raya Dalam, Sungai Raya District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan Province. This educational institution, established in 2008, operates from Monday to Saturday, with learning activities taking place between 07:30 and 11:00 a.m.

TKIT Al-Karima boasts seven classrooms, a communal office for the principal and administrative personnel, one restroom for teachers, and two for students. Its facilities also include air conditioning, various educational play equipment, a collection of children's storybooks, and Iqro books. The school's team comprises a principal, an administrative operator, and seven teachers. A total of 104 students are currently enrolled, distributed across seven

classes: B1 (16 students), B2 (16 students), B3 (14 students), B4 (16 students), A1 (13 students), A2 (15 students), and A3 (14 students).



**Figure 1.** Demonstration of the Utilization of Reading House Media

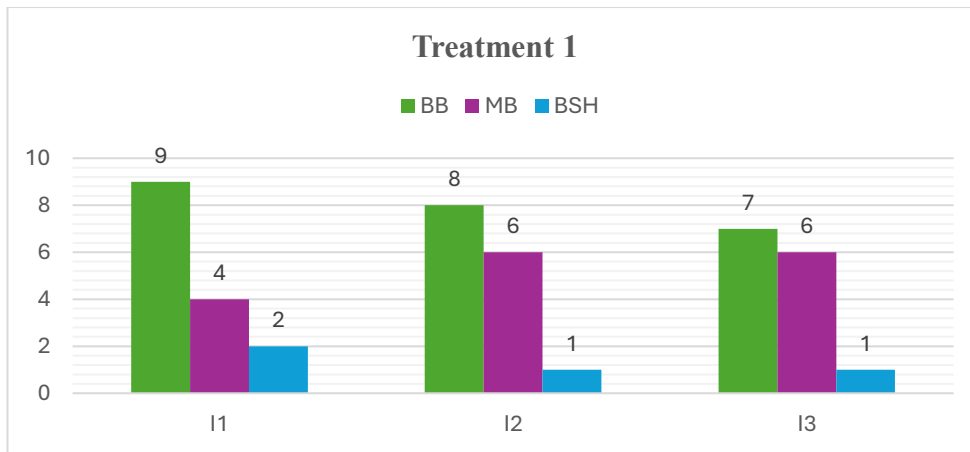


**Figure 2.** The Utilization of Reading House Media

### **3.1. Quantitative Result**

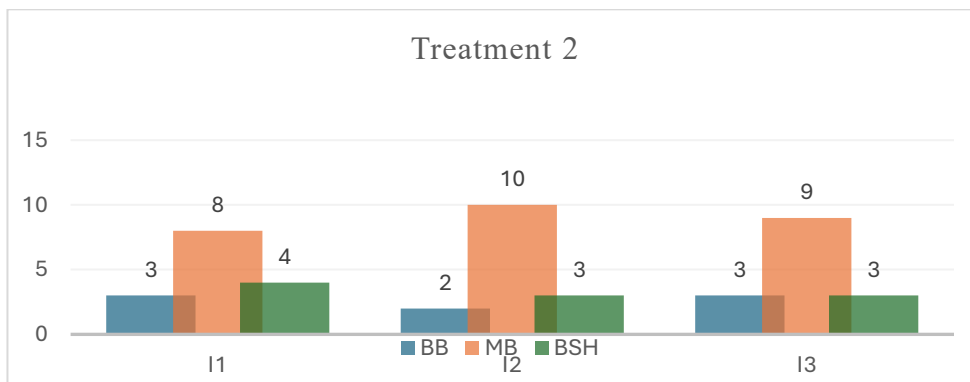
The pre-test phase represents the initial stage conducted prior to the implementation of the treatment in this study. The pre-test instrument utilized consisted of student worksheets developed based on predetermined learning indicators. The first indicator aimed to assess the children's ability to recognize and name both vowel and consonant letters. The second indicator evaluated their ability to arrange letters from A to Z based on corresponding images. The third indicator tested their ability to retell the content of a story they had listened to, while the fourth indicator assessed their skill in identifying image groups with the same initial sound or letter. The objective of the pre-test was to obtain a baseline understanding of early childhood reading abilities. The results were analyzed and revealed an average reading ability score of 8.73%. These findings are aligned with the research title, "The Effectiveness of Reading House Media Utilization in Developing Reading Interest among Early Childhood Learners." For the first indicator, 3 children were categorized as 'Not Yet Developed' (NYD), 8 children as 'Emerging' (E), and 9 children as 'Developing as Expected' (DE). In the second indicator, 4 children were rated NYD, 7 as E, and 8 as DE. Meanwhile, for the third indicator, 3 children were rated NYD, 8 as E, and 9 as DE.

The findings from the initial pre-test phase established the baseline for advancing to the intervention stage. This treatment involved three distinct sessions, each designed to evaluate the reading competencies of the students. During these sessions, children were arranged in a circular formation and individually invited to engage in the planned activities. Before commencing, the "Reading House" learning media was introduced to the children. Subsequently, they were prompted to begin reading using this new resource. The pre-test was administered initially to gauge the children's foundational comprehension of reading. Following this, the treatment was implemented to monitor the evolution of their learning focus. Concluding the study, a post-test was carried out to measure the children's reading proficiency subsequent to their engagement with the "Reading House" media.



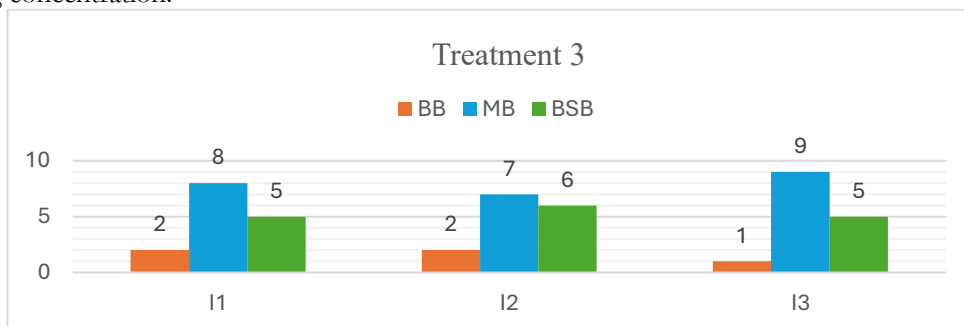
**Figure 3. Grafik Hasil Treatment 1**

The graph indicates that after the first treatment, the majority of children remained in the "Not Yet Developed" (Belum Berkembang) category in terms of learning concentration. For the first indicator, 9 children were scored as BB, 4 as MB (Mulai Berkembang) "Starting to Develop", and 1 as BSH (Berkembang Sesuai Harapan) "Developing as Expected". The second indicator recorded 8 children in BB, 6 in MB, and 1 in BSH. The third indicator showed 7 children in BB, 6 in MB, and 1 in BSH. These findings suggest that improvements in concentration are still necessary and should be further enhanced.



**Figure 4. Grafik Hasil Treatment 2**

The results of the second treatment, as shown in the graph, indicate an improvement across all indicators. In the first indicator, 3 children were scored as BB (Not Yet Developed), 8 as MB (Starting to Develop), and 4 as BSH (Developing as Expected). For the second indicator, 2 children were in BB, 10 in MB, and 3 in BSH. The third indicator recorded 3 children in BB, 9 in MB, and 3 in BSH. These data suggest a notable progression in the children's learning concentration.



**Figure 5. Grafik Hasil Treatment 3**

The graph from the third treatment demonstrates an increase in children's learning concentration. For the first indicator, 2 children were scored as BB (Not Yet Developed), 8 as MB (Starting to Develop), and 5 as BSH (Developing as Expected). The second indicator recorded 2 children in BB, 7 in MB, and 6 in BSH. The third

indicator showed 1 child in BB, 9 in MB, and 5 in BSH. These results indicate a positive trend in the development of children's learning concentration following the third treatment.

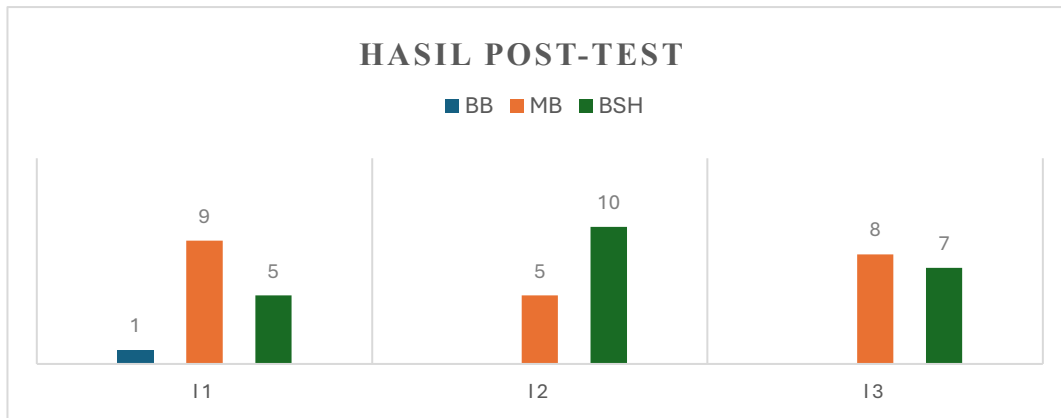


Figure 6. Hasil Post-test

Following the intervention, the post-test outcomes revealed a notable enhancement in participants' performance. Specifically, for the first indicator, five children were classified as Developing as Expected (BSH), nine as Starting to Develop (MB), and one as Not Yet Developed (BB). The second indicator demonstrated that five children fell into the MB category, while ten were categorized as BSH. Concurrently, the third indicator documented eight children in the MB category and seven in the BSH category. Cumulatively, these results underscore the efficacy of the applied treatment in fostering children's reading proficiency.

After all the treatment data were collected, the data were analyzed using normality and t-test procedures. For the normality test, the Wilks–Shapiro method was used, as the sample size in this study was fewer than 50 participants. To examine the effectiveness of the treatment, the Paired Samples Statistic test was applied.

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
PRETEST	,148	22	,200 <sup>*</sup>	,939	22	,189
POSTTEST	,114	22	,200 <sup>*</sup>	,948	22	,290

Figure 7. Hasil Uji Normalitas

The current study's pretest and posttest data were determined to be normally distributed. This conclusion is drawn from the results of the normality assessments, including both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, where all significance (Sig.) values consistently exceeded the 0.05 threshold. Specifically, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test yielded a significance value of 0.200 for both pretest and posttest datasets. Furthermore, the Shapiro-Wilk test reported significance values of 0.189 for the pretest and 0.290 for the posttest, respectively. Adherence to the established criterion—that a Sig. value greater than 0.05 indicates a normal distribution—confirms the distributional assumption. Consequently, these data are suitable for subsequent analysis using parametric statistical methods, such as the t-test, contingent upon the fulfillment of other underlying assumptions, including homogeneity.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Tes Awal - Tes Akhir	-4.400	3.924	1.013	-6.573	-2.227	-4.342	14	,001

Figure 8. Hasil Uji Paired Samples Statistic

The Paired Samples Test constitutes the principal analytical output, directly reflecting the experiment's findings. This is clearly substantiated by the significance (2-tailed) value presented in the accompanying table, which stands at 0.001 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Such a result unequivocally denotes a statistically significant disparity between the scores obtained in the pre-intervention and post-intervention phases. Furthermore, a review of the descriptive statistics confirms that the post-test scores notably surpassed those of the pre-test. Consequently, it can be cogently inferred

that the integration of the Reading House media exerted a beneficial and efficacious influence on improving early childhood learning outcomes.

### 3.2 Qualitative result

An interview was held with the homeroom teacher of class A2 to gather insights into the children's reading progress, the instructional media previously developed by the teacher, and how students responded to the use of the Reading House media. Concerning reading development, the teacher noted that several students had begun to exhibit reading fluency and understanding. Nonetheless, some children were still at the stage of letter recognition and naming, without yet acquiring the skills to read full words or sentences. In discussing instructional media, the teacher acknowledged that although some media had been created earlier, their impact was limited. The earlier materials were not sufficiently engaging to capture students' interest in reading. With regard to the Reading House media, the teacher observed that it generated highly positive and enthusiastic reactions from the students. Their classroom engagement notably increased, as the media encouraged active involvement. The children also became more self-assured, participating more freely and asking questions during lessons. This boost in self-confidence, attributed to the Reading House media, contributed positively to their learning behavior. Furthermore, the children could recall and narrate stories from the Reading House, suggesting improvements in both comprehension and memory retention.

## 4. Discussion

Drawing upon the Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation (Permendikbud) No. 137 of 2014, which delineates the National Standards for Early Childhood Education (ECE), this regulation serves as the foundational reference for the nationwide provision of ECE services in Indonesia. These comprehensive standards encompass six pivotal domains of child development: religious and moral values, physical-motor skills, cognitive abilities, language acquisition, socio-emotional capacities, and artistic expression. Essentially, early childhood education is defined as a holistic developmental stimulation process specifically designed to foster the comprehensive growth and development of young children, thereby establishing a critical groundwork for their progression to subsequent educational stages.

One of the key indicators in the implementation of these standards is the Child Development Achievement Level Standards (STTPA), which outlines the developmental milestones across the six domains. Observational results from the three stages of treatment revealed variations in developmental achievements, particularly in the cognitive domain. In the first treatment phase, most children were still categorized as "not yet developed" (BB), while others were in the "beginning to develop" (MB) and "developing as expected" (BSH) categories. As the second and third treatments were conducted, a noticeable shift occurred, with an increasing number of children progressing into the MB and BSH categories.

The observed developmental progress clearly indicates that the learning intervention positively impacted children's cognitive achievement. This finding is strongly supported by a comparison of pre-test and post-test data, which revealed a significant increase in achievement scores following the treatment. Statistical analysis, performed using an independent t-test in SPSS, further substantiated these results. The calculated t-value ( $t = 4.342$ ) notably surpassed the critical t-value ( $t\text{-table} = 1.013$ ;  $df = 14$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Additionally, the significance value (2-tailed) was 0.001, falling below the 0.05 threshold. This outcome strongly supports the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ), affirming the effectiveness of the "rumah baca" (reading house) media in enhancing children's cognitive development.

Based on these compelling findings, it can be definitively concluded that implementing the rumah baca media significantly contributes to improving early childhood learners' reading interest and reading ability. This aligns with existing research, which has shown that contextual media, when tailored to children's developmental characteristics, effectively boost both interest and learning outcomes (Wahyuni et al., 2018). Consequently, these results highlight the critical importance of selecting appropriate instructional methods and media to foster developmental achievements within early childhood education institutions, especially at places like TKIT Al-Karima in Kubu Raya.

The A2 classroom teacher observed that children's reading abilities varied widely, from fluent readers to those still recognizing letters. Previously used media were deemed unengaging and less effective in stimulating interest. In contrast, the introduction of *rumah baca* media led to increased enthusiasm, active questioning, stronger confidence, and improved recall of story content—highlighting its role in enhancing engagement and learning confidence (Hidayat et al., 2022). The media, designed contextually and aligned with developmental stages, effectively captured children's attention and facilitated meaningful participation in literacy activities (Feka & Watini, 2022).

However, improvements in reading interest cannot be solely attributed to instructional media. Internal factors such as family support and parental involvement significantly influence reading habits at home. Additionally, children's intrinsic motivation and curiosity determine how effectively media can be utilized. Those with high curiosity and positive reading experiences tend to develop faster. Thus, to maximize the impact of *rumah baca* media, it must be supported by nurturing parenting and teaching strategies that build internal motivation (Aysah & Maknun, 2023). Collaboration among schools, families, and communities remains essential in fostering a strong culture of early literacy.

While this investigation yielded valuable insights into the efficacy of "rumah baca" media in cultivating children's reading engagement and confidence, its constrained scope—evidenced by the limited number of participants and the brevity of the intervention period—renders the findings highly context-specific. Nevertheless, these inherent limitations present discernible opportunities for subsequent replication and adaptation within more varied educational contexts.

Despite the media's appropriate contextualization and developmental suitability, its generalizability would be substantially enhanced through broader validation via more extensive trials. Future research endeavors ought to incorporate longer-term interventions and consider additional pertinent variables, such as the influence of family involvement and children's intrinsic motivation, to foster a more profound comprehension of literacy development. Ultimately, rather than being perceived as deficiencies, these constraints serve as a foundational impetus for instigating more **comprehensive and collaborative literacy initiatives**.

## 5. Conclusion

This study was carried out in three main phases: pre-test, treatment, and post-test, aiming to evaluate the effectiveness of the "Reading House" media in enhancing early childhood reading interest and skills. The pre-test was administered to assess children's initial reading comprehension levels. The treatment phase, conducted over three sessions, involved the implementation of the Reading House media, which had been carefully designed to align with children's developmental indicators in terms of content, visual presentation, and instructional approach. The post-test was then administered to measure improvements in reading performance and concentration. Statistical analysis revealed a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores ( $t = 4.342$ ,  $df = 14$ ,  $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ ), indicating the effectiveness of the Reading House media in improving children's literacy outcomes. These quantitative findings were supported by qualitative data from teacher interviews, which highlighted increased student enthusiasm, engagement, and confidence during learning activities. Based on these results, it is recommended that early childhood educators employ developmentally appropriate and visually engaging instructional media to foster literacy skills. Furthermore, collaboration with families is essential to reinforce reading habits at home, ensuring that the development of children's literacy extends beyond the classroom and becomes an integral part of their daily lives.

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