

EMPOWERING MOTHERS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LEARNING READING AND INTERPRETING MEANING IN ME TRIBE STUDENTS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the empowerment strategies of Mee tribe mothers in Papua in teaching reading to primary school-aged children. The study uses the literature review method to analyse the challenges Mee students face in learning to read and identify effective approaches to improve their literacy skills. The results show that Mee students face various barriers, including limited access to education and language differences. Effective learning strategies include the use of syllable card media, game-based methods and the utilisation of educational technology. The involvement of parents, especially mothers, was found to be very important in supporting the development of children's reading skills. Creating a supportive learning environment at home and empowering mothers as educators can be an effective alternative in improving the reading skills of Mee children. This study recommends the development of a special training programme for Mee mothers, the provision of culturally appropriate learning resources, increased access to educational technology and collaboration between various stakeholders in developing a sustainable literacy programme. The implementation of these recommendations is expected to improve the reading skills of primary school-aged Mee students and empower mothers as important partners in their children's learning process.

KEYWORDS Mee Tribe, Reading Learning, Mother Empowerment, Literacy, Primary Education, Papua



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INTRODUCTION

Reading difficulties among primary school-age children are a significant problem that can have a long-term impact on their academic and social development. These problems often come in a variety of forms, including poor reading comprehension, fluency, and the ability to interpret words effectively. Understanding the root causes and implications of this reading problem is essential for educators, parents, and policymakers.

One of the main problems identified is the lack of reading comprehension skills among students. Research shows that many elementary school students have difficulty understanding the material they are reading, which can hinder their ability to solve problems, especially in subjects such as mathematics where reading comprehension is essential (Cahyani et al., 2022). This is in line with the findings of Basuki (2012) as cahyani, which highlights that students' reading comprehension skills are still inadequate, which indicates a systemic problem in early literacy education (Cahyani et al., 2022). The implications of this deficiency are enormous, as children who do not develop strong reading comprehension skills early on are more likely to face challenges in academic activities later in life, leading to a cycle of underachievement (Juma & Osaki, 2022).

Early reading difficulties in elementary school students are related to word omission, word substitution, spelling, incorrect word pronunciation, and patent letter pronunciation, influenced by daily activities, comprehension, psychological conditions, learning motivation, and teacher/family environment (Arifianto, T., & Supriyadi, 2023). Limited language skills, phonetic awareness, cognitive deficiencies, and lack of preschool education contribute to reading difficulties among elementary school students in rural areas (Yustisia, K., & Salsabila, 2023).

The me tribe, located in the Papua region of Indonesia, has unique challenges in terms of education, especially in mastering reading skills among their children (Manurung et al., 2021). Various factors, including cultural background, language, and socioeconomic conditions, contribute to the reading difficulties experienced by students in this area. One of the main problems faced by me Tribe students is the lack of access to suitable and quality reading materials. Research shows that access to relevant books and learning materials is essential for the development of children's reading skills. In many remote areas, including the me tribe region, the availability of books in the local language or Indonesian is often limited, which hinders students' ability to practice and develop their reading skills (Pittman et al., 2019). This is exacerbated by a lack of support from the home environment, where parents may not have the knowledge or resources to help their children in learning to read (Pytash, 2013). In addition, the language factor is also a significant challenge.

Access to primary school education in Papua is still lagging behind, especially in remote and remote areas. The main factors causing the lag in access to education are geographical, economic, and socio-cultural factors. The limitations of teachers and infrastructure are the main factors in the low quality of education. Many schools in Papua have a shortage of teachers, especially qualified and trained teachers. School facilities in many places are also still inadequate, schools in Papua often involve local communities in the education process (Central Statistics Agency of Papua, 2022).

Many me students speak their regional language, which is different from the language of instruction used in school, which is Indonesian. Research shows that language differences can affect reading comprehension and students' ability to adapt to learning materials taught in school (Nadelson et al., 2021). The inability to connect the spoken language they use daily with the written language taught in school can lead to confusion and frustration, which in turn can hinder their motivation to learn (Cerdán et al., 2021).

Socioeconomic conditions also play a role in the reading problem among me students. Many families in the area live in difficult economic conditions, the number of poor people in Papua Province in March 2022 reached 922.12 thousand people (Central Statistics Agency of Papua, 2022). which can limit their ability to provide the necessary educational resources, such as books and other learning aids (Prawiyogi, Anggy G., 2023). Research shows that students from low economic backgrounds often have greater difficulty in reading compared to their peers from more established backgrounds (Chang, 2022). This creates a cycle of poverty that is difficult to break, where a lack of reading skills can result in a lack of educational and employment opportunities in the future (Alenizi, 2019) (Alenizi, 2019).

The teaching methods used in schools as well and the availability of teachers in the interior of Papua can contribute to reading problems. Many teachers may not be on duty and the school is empty with teachers at school. In addition, teachers do not have adequate training in teaching reading, especially in contexts involving students with different language and cultural backgrounds (R'boul, 2021). Research shows that teachers' understanding of effective teaching strategies is essential for improving students' reading skills, especially in schools with diverse student populations (Muhamad Ario Setiawan & Zaitun Qamariah, 2023). Without proper training, teachers may struggle to apply appropriate methods to help students overcome their reading difficulties (Hansson & Öhman, 2021). Early intervention and additional support are also crucial in addressing reading problems among me Tribe students.

Relevant theory in this study Social Learning Theory: This theory, developed by Albert Bandura, suggests that individuals learn from observation and interaction with others. Mothers as educators can set a good example and support the child's learning process through social interaction.

The Theory of Cognitive Development by Jean Piaget emphasizes that mothers can create a supportive environment. The Theory of Cognitive Development by Jean Piaget, emphasizes that children learn through experiences and interactions with the mother's environment.

Research shows that interventions carried out at an early age can help students develop better reading skills and reduce the risk of reading difficulties later in life (Takala et al., 2018). Programs designed to improve reading skills, such as game-based learning and the use of educational technology, can have a positive impact on students who are experiencing difficulties (Gamson et al., 2013). Mothers at home need to be trained to use games in teaching their children to read. However, the implementation of these programs requires support from the government and educational institutions to ensure that all students have equal access to the necessary resources and support (Hasbullah et al., 2022). The importance of parental involvement in their children's education cannot be ignored either. Research shows that parents who are involved in their children's learning process can improve their

children's motivation and reading skills (Qiao et al., 2021). Programs that involve parents in reading activities at home, such as reading together or discussing books, can help create an environment that supports the development of reading skills (Nurhayati, 2023). However, challenges in terms of parental education and access to information on how to support their children's learning are often barriers (Cliffe & Solvason, 2020).

In a broader context, educational policies that support the development of reading skills in remote areas such as the me tribe are urgently needed. Governments need to develop policies that ensure that all children, regardless of socioeconomic or linguistic background, have equal access to quality education (Köksal et al., 2023). This includes the provision of appropriate learning materials, training for teachers, and support for parents in supporting their children's education (Lu et al., 2022).

In addition, the link between reading difficulties and emotional health is increasingly recognized. Longitudinal studies have shown that children with dyslexia often exhibit behavioral problems from the age of five, which can continue into childhood (McArthur et al., 2021). This relationship underscores the importance of addressing reading problems not only as an academic challenge, but also as a factor that can affect a child's overall emotional and psychological well-being (Martinez et al., 2022). In addition, children with poor reading skills have a higher risk of experiencing social and emotional difficulties, including problems related to self-esteem and relationships with peers (Dennis & Horn, 2011). In addition, a phenomenon known as the "Matthew Effect" will become an academic difficulty in the future if elementary school students are hampered in reading (Cain & Oakhill, 2011). This lack of involvement can lead to significant disparities in literacy outcomes between children from different socio-economic backgrounds, further exacerbating educational inequalities (Castro et al., 2023).

Reading difficulties among primary school-aged children, particularly in remote areas such as the Mee tribe in Papua, are a significant concern. These challenges, which include poor reading comprehension, fluency, and word recognition, hinder students' academic development and have long-term implications for their educational and social outcomes. Factors contributing to these reading difficulties include limited access to quality education, language barriers, and socio-economic conditions, all of which exacerbate the existing educational disparities in Papua. The lack of appropriate learning materials and insufficient support from the home environment further aggravate these issues, making it crucial to explore alternative learning strategies that can support the reading development of children in these regions.

Empowering mothers to support their children's literacy skills has emerged as a viable solution to this problem. In the Mee tribe, where formal education is often inaccessible, mothers play a crucial role in their children's education, especially in the absence of teachers or learning resources. However, despite the potential of maternal involvement, there is limited research on how mothers in the Mee tribe can be effectively empowered to teach reading skills at home. The study seeks to address this gap by investigating the role of maternal empowerment in enhancing the reading abilities of children, using accessible and culturally appropriate strategies.

The urgency of this research is driven by the need to improve the educational outcomes of children in the Mee tribe, where access to formal schooling and resources is limited. Reading skills are foundational for children's academic success and future opportunities, and without intervention, the existing educational gaps in these areas will persist, further entrenching socio-economic inequalities. Empowering mothers as educators at home presents an immediate opportunity to improve literacy levels in this underserved population. Given the widespread lack of trained teachers and educational infrastructure, this study aims to provide practical solutions for enhancing the learning environment at home, which could serve as a model for other similar regions facing similar challenges.

Previous research highlights the importance of parental involvement in early childhood education and its significant impact on literacy development. Studies by Rahayu (2023) and Havisa et al. (2021) demonstrate that creating a supportive literacy environment at home, with the involvement of parents, significantly enhances children's reading abilities. Specifically, the use of syllable cards and game-based learning has been shown to improve reading skills, especially in contexts where children lack access to formal education. Furthermore, research by Agustina (2023) and Ariyani (2023) underscores the importance of creating engaging learning environments at home, where parents facilitate reading activities that go beyond school-based instruction.

In the context of the Mee tribe, however, there is limited literature on how maternal involvement can be optimized for reading instruction. Manurung et al. (2021) and Mote Chrisantus Manfred (2013) explored the cultural aspects of the tribe's educational practices but did not specifically address maternal roles in literacy development. Moreover, while studies such as those by Pytash (2013) and Pittman et al. (2019) highlighted the challenges of language differences and socio-economic barriers to education in rural areas, there is a gap in understanding how indigenous parenting practices can be adapted and empowered to support children's learning outcomes effectively.

Additionally, while studies like those by Nurani et al. (2021) and Kurniawan (2023) have explored the impact of technology and community-based learning, there is still limited research on integrating these elements into the traditional educational frameworks of indigenous communities. This gap is critical as the use of educational technology, despite its potential, has yet to be fully leveraged in such regions to overcome reading difficulties among children.

Despite the growing body of literature on the role of parents in literacy development and the use of alternative learning strategies in underserved communities, there remains a significant gap in understanding how to empower mothers in the Mee tribe, specifically in remote Papua, to support their children's reading skills. While various studies have highlighted the importance of parental involvement in general, they have not addressed the unique cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic factors that affect the ability of mothers in this region to facilitate reading instruction effectively. This research aims to fill this gap by exploring culturally appropriate strategies that can empower Mee mothers to enhance their children's reading abilities at home.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on maternal empowerment as a strategy for improving reading skills in the Mee tribe of Papua. While there is substantial research on parental involvement in children's education, this study

uniquely examines the specific role of mothers in a tribal, rural context where educational resources are scarce, and language barriers exist. By incorporating culturally relevant methods, such as the use of syllable cards, game-based learning, and interactive reading, this study provides a fresh approach to literacy development that is tailored to the needs of indigenous communities. Additionally, the study explores how empowering mothers as primary educators at home can provide an alternative solution to the challenges of limited access to formal education.

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the role of maternal empowerment in improving the reading skills of primary school-aged children in the Mee tribe of Papua. By identifying effective, culturally appropriate teaching methods and empowering mothers to become active participants in their children's education, the study aims to develop a model for enhancing literacy in this underserved community. This research seeks to provide actionable recommendations for local governments and NGOs to support mothers in creating a conducive learning environment at home, ultimately improving the academic outcomes of Mee children.

This research offers both theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, it contributes to the understanding of the role of mothers in literacy development, particularly in culturally and socio-economically disadvantaged settings like the Mee tribe. By providing a framework for maternal empowerment in early literacy, the study adds to the growing body of research on parental involvement in education. Practically, the study provides valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and NGOs working in Papua, offering a sustainable, community-based approach to improving reading skills among children. The findings can inform the development of training programs for mothers, as well as strategies for overcoming barriers to education in rural and indigenous communities.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this article is a literature review, a process that involves reviewing existing scientific articles, books, dissertations, conference proceedings, and other published materials on a specific topic. The main objective of a literature review is to provide a summary, description, and critical evaluation of a given subject or research area. Language research methods using a literature study typically involve several steps. First, the researcher identifies the specific topics or phenomena to investigate, such as language use in particular contexts or linguistic theories. Then, relevant literature sources are gathered, including books, journal articles, and theses, that address the chosen topic. The next step involves analyzing these sources carefully, paying close attention to the theories, methods, and results presented by other authors while noting the strengths and weaknesses of each source.

Once the sources are analyzed, the findings are classified into themes or categories, which helps streamline the further analysis. The synthesis step combines the information from various sources to form a more comprehensive understanding of the topic, highlighting the connections between existing findings and the research at hand. Finally, the research report is written, incorporating an introduction, literature review, methodology, analysis, and conclusion, with proper citations for all sources. The evaluation stage involves questioning the validity and reliability of

the sources used, reflecting on how the results contribute to a broader understanding of the language field. This systematic approach ensures a thorough review of the existing literature, offering valuable insights into the chosen research area.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Reading Learning Strategies and Interpretation of Meaning in Students in Elementary School

The strategy of reading letters and words in the students of the me tribe in Papua, especially in remote areas without the presence of teachers, requires an innovative and adaptive approach. Given the challenges faced by students in these areas, such as limited access to formal education and minimal resources, it is important to develop methods that can help them learn to read independently. Research shows that the use of appropriate media and methods can improve students' reading skills, even in difficult contexts (Havisa et al., 2021), (Rahayu, 2023).

One effective strategy is the use of syllable card media. Another study shows that the syllable method using the medium of letter cards can improve students' initial reading ability. By using syllable cards, students can more easily recognize and remember letters and words. These cards can be designed with attractive images to increase students' motivation in learning (Havisa et al., 2021) In addition, the use of syllable cards also allows students to practice independently, which is especially important in contexts where they do not have direct access to the teacher (Rahayu, 2023), (Yampap & Hasyda, 2021).

In addition to the medium of syllable cards, another strategy that can be applied is a game-based learning method. Learning through games can make the process of learning to read more fun and interesting for students. Rahayu, et al. stated that it is important to teach reading in a creative way and in accordance with the child's developmental stage, so that they consider reading as a fun activity. By integrating game elements into reading learning, students can be more motivated to practice and learn independently.

The importance of parental and community involvement cannot be ignored either. In the context of the me tribe, where the presence of teachers may not always be available, parents and community members can play a supporting role in the process of children's learning to read. Research shows that support from parents in reading activities at home can improve children's reading skills (Ariyani, 2023), (Agustina, 2023) Therefore, providing training to parents on how to support their children in learning to read can be an effective step

The use of technology can also be a solution to improve students' reading skills in remote areas. Although internet access may be limited, the use of technology-based learning media, such as reading learning applications that can be accessed through mobile devices, can provide an alternative for students to learn independently. Research by Nurani et al. (2021) shows that the use of technology in education can improve students' reading skills. By utilizing existing technology, students can access a variety of learning resources that can help them learn to read better. (Nurani et al., 2021).

Finally, it is important to create a supportive learning environment. A positive and supportive environment can increase students' motivation to learn. Oktadiana noted that creating a fun and non-stressful learning atmosphere can help students

feel more comfortable in learning to read (Oktadiana, 2019). Therefore, creating a supportive atmosphere at home and in the community is essential to help me students overcome difficulties in reading.

Empowering Mothers as an Alternative to Learning to Read and Interpret Meaning in Me Tribe Students in Elementary Schools

With a comprehensive and integrated approach, it is hoped that the reading problem among the students of the me tribe can be overcome and they can reach their full potential in education. The empowerment of mothers in the me tribe in teaching alphabet recognition and as parents and teachers in supporting the basics of reading at home is very important, especially in the context of early childhood education. The role of parents, especially mothers, in children's education is not only limited to the aspect of parenting, but also includes aspects of formal education that can be carried out at home. Research shows that parental involvement in children's education can improve the quality of learning and overall child development (Suharyat et al., 2023), (Hardiyanti, 2021).

The culture of the me tribe in parenting is the responsibility of a mother. The biological ability to conceive and give birth makes the role of parenting inherent to women, while the role of earning a living becomes the duty of men as fathers.

The division of the roles of mothers and fathers based on biological conditions often raises problems in the practice of marriage because mothers also work. Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization Center of Early Childhood Care Education and Parenting (SEAMEO CECCEP) researcher Assila Prianggi said that the success parameter of a father is measured by salary. Meanwhile, the success of a mother is judged by her role in organizing and managing the house, including childcare (Fahmida et al., 2022).

One strategy that can be applied is to create a literacy environment at home. A good literacy environment includes the provision of diverse and interesting reading materials for children, such as storybooks, magazines, and other reading materials. Mothers can act as facilitators by providing access to the reading material and inviting children to read together. Research by Hermawati and Sugito shows that parents who actively provide reading materials and create a fun reading atmosphere can increase children's interest in reading. Thus, mothers can help children develop reading skills from an early age (Hermawati & Sugito, 2021).

In addition, mothers can also apply interactive and fun learning methods. For example, using games that involve reading, such as letter or syllable card games, can make the process of learning to read more interesting for children. Rahayu and Wiarta Dahlia (2023) emphasized that fun learning can increase children's motivation to learn (Rahayu, 2023). Thus, mothers can play an active role in creating a positive learning experience at home.

The importance of communication between mother and child cannot be ignored either. Mothers can establish good communication with children to discuss books they have read, ask about stories, and encourage children to share their opinions. This not only improves children's understanding of reading, but also strengthens the emotional bond between mother and child. Research shows that good communication between parents and children can contribute to the development of children's language skills and literacy (Retnowati & Widiana, 2021).

Mothers can also involve their children in daily activities related to reading. For example, reading a recipe while cooking, reading instructions while playing a game, or reading labels on products in a store. This activity not only makes children accustomed to reading, but also shows that reading is an important part of daily life. According to research by Kurniawan, parental involvement in daily reading activities can help children understand the importance of reading in a broader context (Kurniawan, 2023).

Training and support for mothers in teaching reading is also very important. Training programs that provide mothers with skills and strategies for teaching reading to their children can increase their effectiveness as home educators. For example, training on how to use books in an interactive way or how to teach letters and syllables in a fun way can provide mothers with the tools they need to support their child's learning. Research by Adyani and Susiloningtyas shows that women's empowerment through training can improve their ability to educate children (Sari & Esariti, 2019).

In addition, it is important for mothers to understand their children's development and their way of learning. By understanding the stages of child development, mothers can adjust the teaching methods used to suit the needs and abilities of children. Research shows that parents' understanding of children's development can increase the effectiveness of teaching at home (Hardiyanti, 2021), (Hermawati & Sugito, 2021). Therefore, mothers need to be provided with adequate information and resources to support them in this role.

Finally, support from the community can also strengthen the role of mothers in children's education. Programs that involve the community in a child's education, such as study groups or reading activities together, can provide mothers with opportunities to share experiences and learn from each other. This not only improves children's reading skills, but also strengthens the mother's social network as an educator. Research by Mulia shows that parental participation in the educational community can improve the quality of children's education (Mulia, 2023).

Empowering mothers as parents in educating children to read at home is an important step to improve children's literacy skills from an early age. In this context, there are several strategic steps that mothers can take to create an environment that supports reading learning at home. Here are these steps, which are supported by various studies.

Creating a Supportive Literacy Environment

One of the first steps that mothers can take is to create a literacy environment at home. This can be done by providing a variety of reading materials, such as storybooks, magazines, and other reading materials that are appropriate for the child's age. Research shows that a rich literacy environment can increase children's interest in reading (Shaleha, 2023), (Hermawati & Sugito, 2021). The mother of the me tribe can arrange a comfortable and attractive reading room, and invite children to participate in choosing the books they want to read. The habits of the me tribe who have a crocodile eating or not eating are important schools so that the mother of the me tribe will have a strong intention to teach her children even though the economy is lacking.

Reading with Children Reading with children

Reading with Children Reading with children is one of the most effective ways to teach reading. Mothers can take time every day to read with their children, whether it is a storybook, a poem, or a short article. This activity not only improves children's reading skills, but also strengthens the emotional bond between mother and child (Rosiah & Machawan, 2021), (Melianti, 2023). In addition, reading together also provides an opportunity for mothers to explain new vocabulary and discuss the content of the reading, which can improve children's understanding of the text.

Using Interesting Learning Methods

Mothers can apply interactive and fun learning methods, such as using educational games that involve reading. Writing letters on dried leaves by burning the middle or arranging wooden branches arranged to resemble letters as a substitute for letters can be modified into traditional letter cards. For example, a letter or syllable card game can help children recognize letters and words in a fun way (Kurniati et al., 2020).



Figure 1. Making the Letter "M" from a Tree Branch
(<https://www.pngegg.com>, 2024)

Research shows that a creative approach in teaching reading can increase children's motivation to learn (Yahono & Prasetyo, 2022).

Encouraging Independence in Reading

It is important for mothers to encourage their children to be able to read independently. Mothers can give children the opportunity to choose books, or form their own letters from branches and then read what they want to read on their own and give praise when the child succeeds in reading well. This can increase children's confidence in reading (Lilawati, 2020), (Wantassen et al., 2022). In addition, mothers can also provide challenges that are appropriate to the child's abilities, such as asking them to read a short story and retell it.

Integrating Reading into Daily Activities

Mothers can integrate reading activities into their daily routines. For example, reading all the writings at home by stringing prepared wooden branches into a letter and reading Back, reading recipes while cooking, reading product labels when shopping, or reading instructions while playing games. This activity not only makes children accustomed to reading, but also shows that reading is an important part of daily life (Wahyuni & Wimbari, 2021), (Azzahra et al., 2021). Research shows that parental involvement in daily reading activities can help children understand the importance of reading in a broader context.

Empowerment of me tribesmen who have a culture of stories, fairy tales, myths, tales, rhymes, or in the form of songs, such as Uga, totauga, komauga, kotekauga, bedouyouga, yametegauwa, tuupe, gowai and gaupeuga (Mote Chrisantus Manfred, 2013). Others in the form of advice, wills and in the form of parables and comparisons, proverbs and puzzles can be used as learning media for letter recognition and reading learning.

Provides Emotional Support and Motivation

Governments and NGOs need to create Emotional and Motivational support training for their children. Emotional support from mothers is very important in the process of learning to read children. The mother of the me tribe must provide encouragement and motivation to the child, especially when they face difficulties in reading. Research shows that children who feel supported by their parents tend to be more motivated to learn (Hermawati & Sugito, 2021), (Yulianingsih et al., 2020) Mothers can give praise for their children's efforts, not just the results, to build a positive attitude towards reading.

Attend Training and Workshops

The government and NGOs are thinking about how to provide training and workshops related to teaching reading to children in the Papuan me tribe. Mothers can also take part in training or workshops on how to teach reading to their children. Many educational institutions and communities offer training programs for parents to improve their skills in educating their children. Research shows that parents who receive training on children's education are more effective in supporting the child's learning process (Fikriyah et al., 2022), (Lamianor, 2023), With better knowledge, mothers can implement more effective strategies in teaching reading.

Building Good Communication with Children

The mother of the me tribe needs to be given training on how to build good communication with all her children in educating and nurturing. Building good communication with children is an important step in educating them to read. You can invite your child to discuss the books they have read, ask about their opinions, and encourage them to share their stories. This not only improves children's understanding of reading, but also strengthens the relationship between mother and child (Manafe et al., 2022), (Susanti & Prameswari, 2020). Research shows that good communication between parents and children can contribute to the development of children's language skills and literacy.

Using Technology Wisely

In today's digital era, mothers can also take advantage of technology to support children's reading learning. It is necessary for the government and NGOs to provide materials on the use of appropriate technology in the use of technology for maternal empowerment. There are many apps and websites designed to help children learn to read in an interactive and fun way. However, it is important for mothers to choose appropriate content and supervise the use of technology by children (Muhazir, 2022). Research shows that the use of appropriate technology can improve children's reading skills (Tanjung, 2023), (Ma'ruf & Syamsudin, 2021).

Engaging the Community

Mothers can involve the community in supporting children's education. For example, participating in reading groups or literacy programs in the surrounding environment can provide opportunities for children to interact with peers and learn together. Research shows that community involvement can strengthen support for children's education (Manurung et al., 2021), (Setyaningsih & Indrawati, 2022). By building a support network, mothers can create a more conducive environment for learning to read.

Overall, empowering mothers as parents and teachers in the basics of reading at home is an important step to improve children's literacy skills. By creating a supportive literacy environment, implementing interactive learning methods, building good communication, involving children in daily activities, and providing adequate training and support, mothers can play a key role in helping children develop strong reading skills

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded from this study that students of the me tribe in Papua face various challenges in learning to read, including limited access to education, lack of resources, and language differences. Effective reading learning strategies include the use of syllable card media, game-based learning methods, and the use of educational technology. The involvement of parents, especially mothers, is crucial in supporting the development of reading skills of me children. Creating a supportive and positive learning environment at home can increase students' motivation in learning to read. Empowering mothers as educators at home can be an effective alternative in improving the reading ability of me tribe children.

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